



Increase in aid backs New Zealand to make a difference in the world

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An increase in aid is long overdue and strengthens our ability to help in humanitarian emergencies, and work with some of the most vulnerable communities in an increasingly insecure world, says Director of the Council for International Development (CID), Josie Pagani.

Last night the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Winston Peters announced the biggest increase in aid for over a decade. An extra \$714 million over four years will increase New Zealand's share of aid from 0.21% of Gross National Income (GNI) to 0.28%.

"This is still well off our international commitment to increase aid to 0.7% of GNI (in line with countries like the United Kingdom), but it's a big step in the right direction and we welcome it."

The Council for International Development is the umbrella organisation for New Zealand's international Non-Government-Organisations (NGOs).

"It's not just about the quantity of aid, it's about the quality. How we work is what really sets us apart. Every time a New Zealander goes into a country to help in a humanitarian crisis in South Sudan or Syria, or lift people out of extreme poverty, save a young girl from child trafficking, or build a cyclone shelter in the Pacific, we are projecting New Zealand values in the world."

"That's what we offer that is unique, particularly in the Pacific where our family and regional connections are so strong. We treat people as equals, we're practical and we expect to make a difference.

"We share a climate with the Pacific. Security in the region matters as much to us. And a prosperous Pacific is good for New Zealand."

CID members also work in communities beyond the Pacific where people continue to live in intolerable conditions because of long protracted crisis - in places like South Sudan, Syria and Bangladesh (where Rohingya refugees have sought refuge).

"New Zealand must continue to do its bit in these regions too, and we hope that the extra aid budget will continue to support our ability to make a difference for the people who need New Zealand to be here too."

"Sometimes we are the only face of New Zealand in a crisis in the world. Give us the tools and the support to be the best of New Zealand in some of the most challenging places in the world," says Josie Pagani

The Council for International Development (CID) is the peak body for New Zealand's international development and humanitarian aid sector.

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