

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia



The Hon. Peter Dutton MP
Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Adam Bandt MP
Leader of the Australian Greens

Independent Members of the Crossbench

Dear Leaders of the Government, Opposition, Greens, and Crossbench,

We are writing as the leaders of Australia's Christian churches and faith-based international development organisations who care deeply about our nation's role in the world and our commitment to standing with our neighbours through Australian aid.

First, we want to **thank you for your service to our nation**. We recognise the weight of leadership, particularly in these times of global and economic uncertainty, and we continue to uphold you in our prayers as you lead and serve your community.

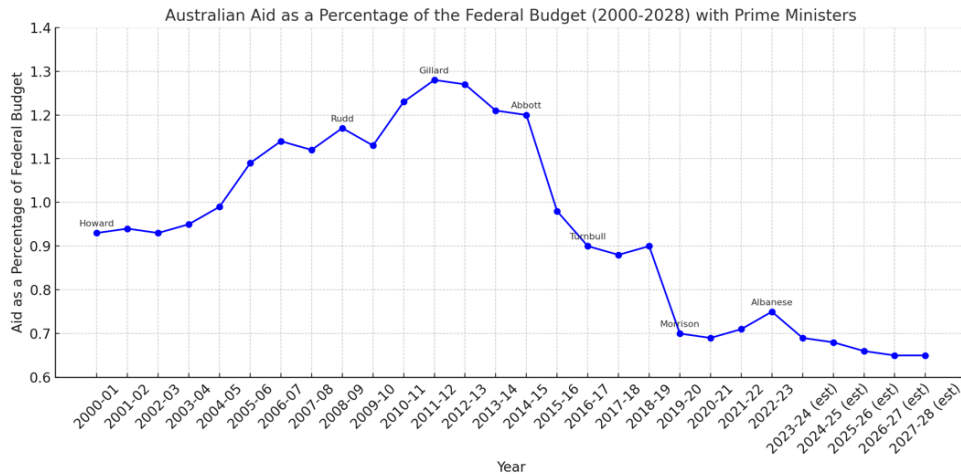
As church leaders, we see firsthand the hardship facing many Australians. Our churches are deeply involved in supporting those doing it tough—from food relief and crisis care to mental health support and pastoral care. **We wholeheartedly support efforts to ensure that domestic needs are met.** At the same time, we believe we are also called to care for our neighbours beyond our shores.

For many of our churches, this commitment is lived out through longstanding partnerships across the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and beyond. **We've seen the impact of Australian aid—helping communities overcome poverty, respond to disasters, and build resilience.** We are grateful for the Government's collaboration with faith-based organisations through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), which has demonstrated the effectiveness of these partnerships.

We acknowledge the importance of responsible budget management and share the desire for aid to be well-directed and effective. Australians rightly expect that every dollar of aid is used wisely to support those most in need. At the same time, **maintaining a stable and predictable aid program remains crucial for our relationships in the region.**

While Australia's aid has been stabilised in recent years, it remains at historically low levels as a share of the federal budget. **At just 0.68% of the budget, aid is now almost half of what it was under Prime Ministers Howard, Rudd, and Gillard.** As a share of Gross National Income (GNI), our aid stands at just 0.19%, placing Australia at 26th among OECD nations in 2023, down from 14th in 2015.

Graph: Structural Decline of Australia's Aid Budget (2000-2024)



Source: [ANU Dev Tracker](#), ODA from DFAT statistical summaries and budget documents, federal budget from Treasury budget document

While we recognise the need for ongoing fiscal discipline, research commissioned by Micah Australia and conducted by RedBridgE has shown that when Australians learn what a small fraction aid is of the federal budget, they **support modestly increasing it**. The same research found that framing aid as just 1% of the federal budget reassures Australians that 99% of spending remains focused at home, addressing domestic challenges.

As the graph above illustrates, **setting our sights on aid reaching 1% of the federal budget** would be a modest and achievable goal. *This is not an expansion—it is a restoration back towards levels of past bipartisan support.* A renewed commitment at a time of global need and uncertainty would send a strong message to our neighbours that Australia remains a steadfast friend and ally.

In the past six months alone, church leaders and members from across the country—not agency staff or lobbyists—have conducted over **55 meetings with MPs from all parties**, organised by Micah Australia. These meetings, led by constituents who care deeply about Australia's role in the world, have highlighted the strong and widespread support for aid within the Christian community.

We ask you to **affirm your commitment to maintaining Australia's aid program** and continuing to **build on the stability that has been achieved**. At a time of global uncertainty, Australia has an opportunity to provide genuine leadership in our region. We urge you to ensure that our nation remains a generous, reliable, and engaged partner, living out the values of compassion and justice that we hold dear.

We appreciate your leadership and look forward to your reassurance on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Please see the following page for signatories.

National Heads of Churches

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Rev Charissa Suli

President, Uniting Church in Australia

The Most Rev'd Geoffrey Smith

Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia

Ps Wayne Alcorn

President, Australian Christian Churches

Commissioner Miriam Gluyas

Territorial Commander, The Salvation Army Australia

Pr Terry Johnson

President, Seventh-day Adventist Church Australian Union Conference

Rev Mark Wilson

National Ministries Director, Australian Baptist Ministries

Rev Paul Smith

Bishop, Lutheran Church of Australia

Rob Nyhuis

National Chair, Churches of Christ in Australia

Rev John Gilmore

President, National Council of Churches

Church Based International Development Agencies

Rev'd Dr John Deane

Executive Director, The Anglican Board of Mission – Australia (ABM)

Elijah Buol OAM

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Melissa Lispett

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Kirsten Sayers

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Dr Sureka Goringe

National Director, UnitingWorld

Bec Oates

CEO, Tearfund Australia

Winsome Merrett

Chief Secretary, The Salvation Army

Jane Edge

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Jo Knight

CEO, Anglican Overseas Aid

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Executive Director, Australian Lutheran World Service

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