



Global Citizen's Pre-Budget Submission to the Australian Government's 2022-23 Federal Budget Process

From: Global Citizen Limited
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About Global Citizen

Global Citizen is the world's largest movement of action takers and impact makers dedicated to ending extreme poverty by 2030. With over 11 million monthly advocates, our voices have the power to drive lasting change around sustainability, equality, and humanity. We post, tweet, message, vote, sign, and call to inspire those who can make things happen to act — government leaders, businesses, philanthropists, artists, and citizens — together improving lives. By downloading our app, Global Citizens learn about the systemic causes of extreme poverty, take action on those issues, and earn rewards with tickets to concerts, events, and experiences all over the world.

To date, the actions of our community, along with high-level advocacy efforts and work with partners, has resulted in \$35.4 billion in funds disbursed, impacting the lives of over a billion people (1.09 billion). For more information, visit GlobalCitizen.org.

Introduction

The 2022-23 Federal Budget is set to arrive during a period of unprecedented uncertainty both in Australia and internationally. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen Australians persevere through adversity and embody the Australian spirit by working together to contain the effects of the pandemic on our health, communities and economies.

Australians have been lucky to have the support of a strong economy and a strong healthcare system in weathering the effects of the pandemic. Despite challenges, we have remained resilient and resolved to see it through together.

Unfortunately, for the [nearly 700 million people](#) living in extreme poverty around the world, access to support systems like ours has been far too rare. While wealthy nations like Australia have invested strongly in domestic responses, they have struggled to seize the moment for global solidarity in providing equitable and affordable access to vaccines and other critical healthcare for everyone.

As such, we have seen devastating impacts on developing economies and vulnerable communities as they continue to go unprotected against this virus, leading to uncontrolled transmission and the rapid emergence of variants.

The pandemic has pushed an estimated [150 million additional people](#) into extreme poverty and has had a measurable impact on the severity of other major global issues including hunger, where an [additional 54 million people faced hunger](#) in the Asia Pacific region alone,

and education where global learning [poverty is expected to rise](#) to 63% of all children. This emerging crisis is especially dangerous to girls who face a higher drop-out rate and higher rates of gender-based violence.

Over the past year, Australia has joined other wealthy and influential nations to provide further support to the developing world and expand their investment in global health mechanisms like COVAX. Australia has found itself as the global leader in supporting Pacific nations and communities through this pandemic.

Unfortunately, these efforts have proven insufficient, and the need for a further expansion of the Australian Government's support for our region and the developing world is now more urgent than ever.

Meanwhile, as nations around the world including Australia have spent an overwhelming amount of time, money and effort to respond to COVID-19, the effects of climate change have continued to worsen and the international community has so far not responded with necessary urgency to the impending impacts of global warming.

In this submission, Global Citizen sets out several recommendations for the Australian Government which seek to prioritise Australia's international leadership on global health and education, increase its efforts to empower all people, especially women and girls, out of extreme poverty, and respond more with more ambition to global climate change.

In this document, Global Citizen outlines nine key recommendations which fall into five areas of focus: Ending Poverty, Global Health Equity, Protecting the Planet, Women and Girls, and Education. These requests are summarised on the following page.

Global Citizen will work alongside our network of global citizens and Australia's international development sector to urge the Australian Government to fulfill these requests in this year's budget and the forward estimates.

Global Citizen is committed to a world without extreme poverty and advocates for global leadership on these issues from government, businesses and philanthropists alike.

Summary of requests for new funding announcements from the Australian Government: Budget 2022-23

In 2022, Global Citizens in Australia and all around the world will be calling on the Australian Government to step its investments in supporting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and setting up the Indo Pacific to protect the planet and defeat poverty:

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

Australia commits to lifting its spending on international development toward the internationally-agreed benchmark of 0.7% of GNI.

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

Australia contributes an additional AUD \$250 million to COVAX to expedite global vaccine access and bring the pandemic under control.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

Australia increases its 2030 emissions reduction target to 74% by 2030.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN:

Australia remains strongly committed to UNFPA by providing new financial support for the UNFPA Regional Prepositioning Initiative.

RECOMMENDATION NINE:

Australia renews its support for Education Cannot Wait with a new commitment of AUD \$32 million in 2022-23.

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

Australia makes a strong commitment to the Global Fund to Fight HIV Aids, TB and Malaria of at least AUD \$450 million as part of their 2022 replenishment this year

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

Australia makes a commitment of at least AUD \$25 million to support the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's 2022-26 polio eradication strategy.

RECOMMENDATION SIX:

Australia increases its climate financing investments toward the agreed fair-share of USD \$3.5 billion per year.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT:

Australia supports programs which unlock girls' time in the Pacific by making child care more accessible in the region.

Pillar 1: End Poverty

Australia must urgently halt the decline of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) spending and commit to regular increases to ODA towards the agreed international benchmark of 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI).

Australia's ODA spending currently stands at just 0.19% of GNI which is [among the lowest rates](#) in the world among developed nations.

If Australia is to meet the ambition of the global community in addressing the pandemic and all of its impacts, protecting the planet against the worsening effects of climate change and changing the course for people living in extreme poverty, we must pay our fair share to support the world's most vulnerable.

While other nations including long standing allies like the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada are all moving ahead with more ambitious international development agendas, Australia is being left behind.

Not only does this reflect poorly on Australia's standing in the international community, but it also puts Australians at risk as new health epidemics, like COVID-19 variants, emerge and spread in the developing world.

Global Citizens around the world have always been champions of ODA.

In Australia, Global Citizens have called on the Australian Government to do more for years. Despite countless strong investments from the Australian Government to support our Pacific neighbours, especially through the

pandemic, we have been disappointed by a continued refusal to increase Australia's ODA spending, which is critical to ending extreme poverty.

Now, as the effects of the pandemic on those living in extreme poverty become clear, the need for investment in global health and education has never been greater.

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

Australia commits to lifting its spending on international development toward the internationally-agreed benchmark of 0.7% of GNI.

That is why it is imperative that the Australian Government chooses to increase its ODA spending. Doing so is in the best interest of all Australians, and will secure Australia's position as a global leader for health and education at a time when its reputation is diminished.

The need for ODA will only increase in coming years. As this occurs, Australia should stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our neighbours and work to see a world without extreme poverty.

A strong ODA budget makes sense for everyone, at home and abroad.

Pillar 2: Global Health Equity

In 2021, Omicron changed the landscape of the pandemic here in Australia and around the world. The new variant demonstrated that as long as there are any communities which don't enjoy the protections of a vaccine and strong health systems, COVID-19 will continue to circulate and mutate.

This in turn keeps Australians at-risk of contracting vaccine-resistant variants of COVID-19.

When new variants emerge, vulnerable communities in the developing world [suffer disproportionately](#) from shortages in food and water, disruptions to education and healthcare services, and economic impacts of lockdowns.

Thousands of Global Citizens have joined us and other organisations over the past two years, as part of the [End COVID For All](#) coalition. to call on the Australian Government to do more.

Australia has made strong investments since then, but much more is needed.

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

Australia contributes an additional AUD \$250 million to COVAX this year.

We're calling on the Australian Government to make an additional contribution to COVAX, the global effort to get vaccines to everybody which recently delivered its one billionth dose to the developing world.



This year, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will seek renewed international support to fight these diseases at a time when the pandemic has made it harder than ever to prevent their accelerated spread.

The Global Fund will also take advantage of 'double-dividend' investment areas like pandemic preparedness and climate change mitigation which benefits communities everywhere while still working to end AIDS, TB and Malaria.

The Australian Government must recognise the urgency of this moment in global health by increasing their support for the Global Fund this year.

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

Australia makes a strong commitment to the Global Fund of at least AUD \$450 million as part of their 2022 replenishment this year.

Global Citizen originated as an organisation with a passion to achieve a world without polio.

That's why, more than a decade later, we remain committed to supporting The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) which has [coordinated the world's efforts](#) to vaccinate the world against polio and track its spread to remain one step ahead of the virus.

Thanks to the strong support of countless governments and foundations around the world, including Australia who has so far contributed more than USD \$100 million to the effort, the GPEI managed to do what many considered impossible. In 2014, India was declared [officially polio-free](#). By 2020, the same was true for the entire African continent.

Now, polio remains endemic in only two countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

But, as COVID-19 threatened to spread through the region, the GPEI's focus turned to limiting the impacts of the pandemic among these already vulnerable communities. In turn, we expected to see an increase in cases of polio.

Thanks to the decades of expertise and surveillance intelligence the GPEI provides, however, proved effective against both COVID-19 and polio.

The number of wild polio cases we've seen in the community remains at their lowest-ever levels. The GPEI reported just [five cases in 2021](#).

This success story demonstrates the power of international cooperation to advance global health, and it reaffirms the need for us to reach every child with

vaccinations to protect against diseases of poverty like polio.

To properly seize this moment, the GPEI has developed a [new roadmap](#) to polio eradication by 2026. The Australian Government has been a leader among GPEI supporters in developing this new strategy.



Australia must continue to affirm their longstanding support for polio eradication by providing a strong investment in the GPEI over the course of the 2022-26 strategy, bringing material support alongside Australian expertise which helped to develop this new strategy.

Doing so will ensure the Asia Pacific region's continued protection against outbreaks of polio and provide a leading contribution to eradicating a disease for only the second time in human history.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

Australia makes a commitment of at least AUD \$25 million to support the GPEI's 2022-26 polio eradication strategy.

Pillar 3: Protect the Planet

In 2021, Global Citizen launched a new campaign with two objectives: defeat poverty and defend the planet. *Global Citizen Live* would ultimately [secure more than USD \\$1.1 billion](#) in new commitments for global health and addressing climate change.

Not only do the impacts of climate change impact outcomes for global health and vice versa, it is also true that one problem cannot be solved without addressing the other.

That is why, in the midst of a pandemic and at a time where decades of progress in global health is at stake, now is the moment for Australia to greatly increase its ambition to address climate change.

Though Australia is not among the list of the highest-emitting countries, it is the [world's third-largest exporter](#) of fossil fuels. This means Australia's overall carbon footprint is substantial.

The Australian Government must acknowledge this, and take further action to protect our environment before the effects of climate change worsen and Australians and our Pacific neighbours alike face more violent and more frequent natural disasters.

In the lead-up to COP26 in 2021, Global Citizen released [an open letter](#) to the Australian Government urging them to

increase their ambition and their commitments to addressing climate change. The letter was signed by almost 40 prominent Australians. Thousands of Global Citizens around the country added their own names to the open letter.

Australia did not deliver the ambition we hoped to see during COP26. As such, we will reiterate the urgent need for increased commitments this year.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

Australia increases its 2030 emissions reduction target to 74% by 2030.

RECOMMENDATION SIX:

Australia increases its climate financing investments toward the agreed fair-share of USD \$3.5 billion p.a.

Australia did not deliver the ambition we hoped to see during COP26. As such, we will reiterate the urgent need for increased commitments this year as we approach the next major climate summit, COP27, later this year.

Australia can wait no longer to support the rest of the world's efforts to take climate change seriously and act in the best interests of everyone — especially those living in extreme poverty, who will always stand to feel the worst effects of climate change.

Pillar 4: Girls and Women

In the Asia Pacific region, women spend [112 million hours doing unpaid work](#) every day. From looking after children and tending to housework to collecting supplies like water and fuel, women and girls in the Asia Pacific bear the majority of the unpaid labour burden.

This burden is a major barrier to women and girls in the Pacific, where in the Solomon Islands only [7 in 100 girls complete senior secondary school](#). Of those who do make it that far, one in two drop out.

At the same time Pacific nations struggle with low availability of contraception and one of the world's highest fertility rates.



These factors combined mean that women in the Pacific bear the overwhelming burden to care for children, their households and their communities.

As the situation stands, the valuable time of girls and women in the Pacific is too often tied up in unpaid labour and caregiving, standing in the way of a full education and a path to independence.

Innovative solutions are needed to unlock girls' time in the Pacific including new programs and incentives to allow more parents in the Pacific to access child care.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT:

Australia supports programs which unlock girls' time in the Pacific by making child care more accessible in the region.

Empowering girls and women by unlocking their time is still only one piece of the puzzle. In the Pacific, access to family planning enables women to choose when and if they have children.

Then, more girls can stay in school and more women can decide to enter or remain in the workforce. Ultimately entire families, communities and countries thrive.

UNFPA Supplies exists to meet this need as the world's largest supplier of donated contraceptive materials. Australia should remain strongly committed to this important mechanism.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN:

Australia remains strongly committed to UNFPA by providing new financial support for the UNFPA Regional Prepositioning Initiative.



Students with disabilities in-class at Tonga's Ngele'ia Primary School The Inclusive Education (TIE) program. Credit: Australian Government/Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Pillar 5: Education

In January 2022, Tonga was devastated by a powerful and damaging volcanic eruption off the country's northern coast. The small and emerging Pacific island nation endured the most serious impacts of this disaster, reporting tsunamis and toxic ash clouds which seriously degraded water and air quality and impacted food supplies.

Australia was quick to respond, along with our Pacific neighbours including New Zealand and Fiji. Together, Australia has provided Tonga with material support to encourage a quick and effective recovery.

The effects of this disaster, however, will be felt most by the children of Tonga, who stand to have their education disrupted after school houses were destroyed and teachers were displaced.

The Australian Government is in a position to greatly improve the education security of all children in our region, in addition to the emergency relief support.

By renewing their investment in Education Cannot Wait (ECW), Australia can protect children in our region against disruptions to their education whether they be natural disasters, civil unrest or other emergencies.

ECW exists to rapidly respond to emergencies where children's education has been compromised. ECW steps in, alongside other children's aid organisations like UNICEF to provide educational materials and resources, including teachers, rapidly and where they are most needed.

Australia should provide what more than 6,000 Global Citizens have requested of them by renewing their investment in Education Cannot Wait.

RECOMMENDATION NINE:

Australia renews its support for Education Cannot Wait with a new commitment of AUD \$32 million in 2022-23.