



## Top 2017 blogs, best of the blog, and summer reading

By Sachini Muller and Stephen Howes  
22 December 2017

Here are our top ten most popular blogs in 2017, five in each of our two categories — aid and development; and PNG and the Pacific — each in alphabetical order.

### Aid and development

- [Facilities deserve a place in development](#) The growing use of large contractor-managed facilities by the Australian aid program has become controversial. Jacqui de Lacy of Abt Associates defends their use.
- [The end of the golden age](#) The end of the Cold War and the apparent triumph of Western liberalism ushered in a 'golden age' for international NGOs (INGOs). Paul Ronalds, CEO of Save the Children, argues that the golden age is over, and sets out what INGOs need to do.
- [The rise of new foreign aid donors: why does it matter?](#) From 1960 to 2014, the number of countries providing foreign aid to developing countries more than doubled. Nilima Gulranjani shows that the new donors are very different to the old.
- [Trump's new deal for international organisations: 40% off](#) In January, the media reported that Trump was planning to cut US funding for international organisations

by 40%. Robin Davies does the maths and works out the implications.

- [Want to sell aid to the Australian public? Look to values, not national interests](#) Does the Australian public want to give aid to serve the country's interests? Terence Wood and Camilla Burkot demonstrate that most Australians are in favour of giving aid to help the world's poor.

## **PNG and the Pacific**

- [Fiji Budget 2017-2018: an election bonanza](#) Matthew Dornan and Neelesh Gounder argue that Fiji's 2017-2018 budget is full of big spending promises aimed at winning votes in the 2018 election. They put the case for a more conservative fiscal policy.
- [Foreign aid to the Pacific: an overview](#) Matthew Dornan and Jonathan Pryke analyse the significant scale-up in aid to the Pacific over the last decade.
- [Tonga's King uses final 'check and balance' dissolving parliament](#) In October, Tonga's parliament was unexpectedly dissolved by the King, more than one year ahead of the planned date of the next election. Areti Metuamate defends the King's intervention.
- [The Papua New Guinea Election Results Database](#) Terence Wood launches the [PNG Election Results Database](#), and illustrates the interesting analysis that can be done with it.
- [The Seasonal Worker Programme: who is coming to Australia?](#) Henry Sherrell analyses the rapid growth in the Seasonal Work Programme in 2015-16, and shows that Tonga's dominance of the program is falling, with Vanuatu and Timor Leste showing rapid growth.

## **Best of the blog**

Kerry McCarthy is a farmer in the Darling Downs, three hours west of Brisbane. Every summer for the last five years she has used the Seasonal Worker Programme to bring out about a dozen Solomon Islanders, all from the same village in a remote part of the country - with no roads and no electricity. Kerry talks about the incredible bond that has developed between her family and the workers and their families. Read [her blog](#) and feel better about the world.

## **Summer reading**

For other summer reading, read our 2017 [Aid Profiles](#): five stories of incredible people and organisations who have done amazing things with help from Australian aid.

## Thank you

And that brings the Devpolicy Blog to a close for 2017. A huge thank you to the 201 authors who wrote the 348 posts we published this year. And to everyone who read our posts and commented on them. Have a great break, and see you in 2018. We start again on January 8.

## About the author/s

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Sachini Muller was a Research Officer at the Development Policy Centre. She is currently completing a Master of Globalisation at ANU.

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Link: <https://devpolicy.org/top-2017-blogs-best-of-the-blog-and-summer-reading-20171222/>

Date downloaded: 19 April 2024



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