



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Africa and the Middle East

Africa and the Middle East

Africa region brief

Development assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa

Members of the Advisory Group on Australia-Africa Relations

International Financial Scams

Africa region brief

Africa is a diverse continent of great dynamism and economic potential. The Australian Government shares strong and vibrant partnerships with the countries of Africa and is committed to long-term ties of friendship and cooperation.

Political and diplomatic ties

Australia has diplomatic relations with all African countries.

Australia has established ties with regional African organisations—we are accredited to the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region, and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.

We have memorandums of understanding with the African Union Commission, the League of Arab States, Ethiopia, South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Comoros, The Gambia, Nigeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.

High-level bilateral meetings between Australian and African leaders and Ministers drive our engagement. Australian Ministers and senior officials have attended annual African Union Summits as well as high-level conferences such as Mining Indaba in South Africa and Africa Down Under in Perth.

Trade and investment

Economic diplomacy is at the core of the Australian Government's international engagement. DFAT is leading the Government's economic diplomacy agenda bringing together Australia's foreign affairs, trade, development and other international economic activities, to deliver greater prosperity for Australia, our region and the world. Australia has a clear national interest in the security, stability and prosperity of Africa.

Australian investment in Africa is thriving, particularly in the resources sector. There are over 200 ASX-listed companies operating more than 600 projects in Africa.

Australia's two-way goods and merchandise trade with Africa was valued at \$7.3 billion in 2015-16.

› For more [information on doing business and opportunities in Africa](#)  please see the Austrade website.

Development cooperation

› [More information on development assistance to Sub Saharan Africa.](#)

Australia Awards

Australia is investing in human resource capacity building through the Australia Awards for Africa program—Australia provided around 600 scholarships to Africa in 2014-15. The Australia Awards program to Africa offers Masters scholarships and short course awards. Our Awards focus on areas where Australia has world class expertise and existing development and economic interests. These areas include extractives governance, agricultural productivity and public policy. Australia Awards are open to high calibre applicants from the public, private and community sectors.

› [More information on the Australia Awards in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)

Extractives governance

Mining offers African countries an unparalleled opportunity to stimulate growth and reduce poverty. If well managed, the extractives sector can drive innovation, generate revenue to fund critical social services and upgrade productive physical infrastructure, and directly and indirectly create jobs. Our investment in effective governance of the extractives sector is leveraging off Australia's highly relevant expertise.

› [More information on our development work on extractives governance.](#)

Agriculture

Australia is investing in the agriculture sector, which plays a key role in Africa's development in terms of broad-based economic growth, jobs, and poverty reduction. Agriculture supports the livelihoods of 80 per cent of Africans and provides employment for about 60 per cent of the economically active population. Our programme focuses on better research and innovative technology adoption and on boosting private sector activity through improving the functioning of agricultural value chains and markets. Australia is sharing highly relevant technical, research and agri-business expertise through the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). We support market development to promote growth and improve livelihoods across a number of partnerships, including with the Alliance for a Green Revolution for Africa (AGRA) and global partners through the G20 AgResults Initiative.

A number of other investments complement our focus on the agricultural sector in sub-Saharan Africa including support to the Government of Kenya's System for Land-Based Emissions in Kenya (SLEEK) initiative (through the Australian Department of Environment).

› [More information on DFAT's broader Agriculture and Food Security program](#)

› [More information on ACIAR's work in sub-Saharan Africa](#) 

Australian NGOs in Africa

Australia provides funding to NGOs through the Australian Cooperation Program (ANCP), the Direct Aid Program (DAP) and the Civil Society WASH Fund.

Over 7,300,000 people in Africa had improved access to food security, health outcomes and better water and sanitation through the work of 28 NGOs funded under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) in 2015-16.

More than 80,000 people in Africa had better food security and agricultural outcomes and over 100,000 had improved access to water and sanitation through support from the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) in 2015-16.

› [More information on NGOs in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)

Humanitarian assistance

Australia has been responsive to Africa's humanitarian needs. DFAT monitors and responds to humanitarian situations based on the needs of people affected, the situation on the ground and our capacity to respond.

In 2016-17, Australia provided \$41.5 million in humanitarian funding to crises in Africa. These crises are multi-faceted,

often involving food insecurity, political instability, armed conflict and displacement. Where possible, DFAT links our life-saving assistance to longer-term efforts to build resilience in communities exposed to protracted crises. Australian core contributions to multilateral organisations have also enabled humanitarian programming in Africa by our multilateral partners, including the World Food Program, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

› [More information on DFAT's humanitarian assistance](#)

Volunteers

Australian volunteers achieve tangible results in developing countries, help to increase knowledge of Australia, build personal ties between communities, promote cross-cultural understanding and contribute to public diplomacy.

Volunteer placements in Africa are focused in eastern and southern Africa, and where possible, complement Australia's aid investments that contribute to poverty alleviation and economic growth. In 2016-17, the Australian Government will support approximately 45 volunteers in Africa.

› [Information on volunteers in Africa](#)

› [More information on the Volunteers Program](#)

Peace and security

Australia has a long history of supporting United Nations-led peacekeeping operations in Africa. Australian Defence Force personnel are currently serving in the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). We have also provided financial and logistical support for the African Union's Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The Australian Defence Force is also assisting the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai, Egypt. In the past, Australian personnel have served in UN missions in Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Western Sahara and Namibia.

Outside of the peacekeeping sphere, Australia and African countries also cooperate on a range of defence and peace and security matters. Since 2011, Australia has deployed a Defence Attaché to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Australia provides training to African Defence personnel through a range of courses with a peacekeeping focus. We also cooperate with countries in the Gulf of Guinea and the Horn of Africa, and with organisations such as the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Regional Fusion and Law Enforcement Centre for Safety and Security at Sea (REFLECS-3) on anti-piracy measures. Australia hosted an international counter-piracy conference in Perth in 2012, and contributes a naval ship to international maritime security operations in the Gulf of Aden.

We will continue to engage closely on peace and security issues in Africa, continuing on from our term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2013 and 2014. Australia was a strong and consistent advocate within the Council for the protection of civilians, including in nine UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

Advisory Group on Australia-Africa Relations

The Advisory Group on Australia-Africa Relations (AGAAR) was launched by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop, on 4 September 2015. AGAAR has been tasked with informing Australia's thinking and policies on Africa.

AGAAR's membership reflects the broad nature of the contemporary relationship between Australia and the 54 countries of Africa. Its 10 members are drawn from business, academia, civil society and the public sector.

› [Members of the Advisory Group on Australia-Africa Relations](#)

Contact us

Mail:

AGAAR Secretariat
Middle East and Africa Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
RG Casey Building
John McEwen Crescent
BARTON ACT 0221

Phone: (02) 6261 3430

Email: ✉ agaar@dfat.gov.au

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

SHARE:


6Share

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

R.G. Casey Building
John McEwen Crescent
Barton ACT 0221 Australia

Phone: +61 2 6261 1111
Fax: +61 2 6261 3111
ABN: 47 065 634 525

[> Contact us](#)

Follow us



[> All social media accounts](#)

About us

- [About the department](#)
- [About the website](#)
- [Corporate information and resources](#)
- [Business opportunities](#)
- [History of Australian diplomacy](#)
- [Our locations](#)
- [Our people](#)
- [Our services](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [DFAT annual reports](#)
- [Portfolio budget statements](#)

Careers

Ministers

- [Minister for Foreign Affairs !\[\]\(3292f5442e3b4027aa0bb60988f9fc82_img.jpg\)](#)
- [Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment !\[\]\(705a9285b25462d2e675759828e0d2ed_img.jpg\)](#)
- [Minister for International Development and the Pacific](#)
- [Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment](#)

News, speeches and media

- [Media releases](#)
- [News](#)
- [Speeches](#)

Countries, economies and regions

International relations

- [Global security](#)
- [Global themes](#)
- [International organisations](#)
- [Regional architecture](#)
- [Treaties](#)

Trade and investment

- [Economic diplomacy](#)

- Free Trade Agreements
- Trade and investment topics
- Trade resources

Aid

- Aid budget and statistical information
- Aid topics
- How we measure performance
- Where we give aid
- Who we work with

People-to-people

- Australia Awards
- Australia Global Alumni
- Australian Volunteers for International Development
- Direct Aid Program (DAP)
- Foundations, councils and institutes
- Like through sport
- New Colombo Plan
- Public diplomacy

About Australia

- Australia and the world
- Society and culture
- The land and its people
- Visiting Australia

Travel

- Smartertraveller - travel advice [↗](#)
- Smartertraveller - register your travel
- Passports [↗](#)
- Visas

Also in the portfolio

- Austrade [↗](#)
- Tourism Australia [↗](#)
- DFAT [↗](#)
- ACORN [↗](#)
- ASIO [↗](#)
- ASNO

[Copyright](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Freedom of information](#)