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**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

Peer Review

Observer Report from Thailand – 2025 OECD DAC Peer Review of Australia

This document contains a report by Thailand who served as an Observer of the 2025 OECD DAC Peer Review of Australia.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade invited Thailand to participate as an Observer in the review in accordance with the agreed practice of Observerships in DAC peer reviews [[DCD/DAC\(2022\)57/FINAL](#)].

This document has been prepared by Thailand, which is solely responsible for its content.

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Report on Thailand's Observership in the 2025 OECD DAC Peer Review of Australia

Introduction

Thailand participated as an observer in the OECD DAC Peer Review of Australia, which took place from 13 to 28 June 2025 in Canberra and Dili. The Thai delegation was led by Mrs. Arunee Hiam, Deputy Director-General of the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

This participation offered Thailand an invaluable opportunity to gain first-hand insights not only into Australia's policies, institutional mechanisms, and experiences in development co-operation, but also into the DAC peer review process itself as an important platform through which members collectively enhance the quality and effectiveness of development assistance.

The engagement further enabled Thailand to exchange views and hold in-depth discussions with representatives from Australia and the OECD DAC, as well as with the reviewer countries, Finland and Ireland, thereby deepening mutual understanding and fostering closer cooperation.

This participation is meaningful as it is the first of its kind that TICA has engaged with OECD DAC peer review process, making the experience especially significant for Thailand's development co-operation.

Observing both components of the process—the main review in Canberra and the field visit to Dili, Timor-Leste—provided Thailand with a better understanding of how Australia's policy commitments are translated into concrete projects and actions on the ground. The review session in Canberra allowed the Thai delegation to observe how Australia articulates its development priorities, coordinates across various government agencies, and engages with diverse stakeholders. At the same time, the field visit to Dili offered insights into practices on the implementation of Australia's development assistance, including its long-term engagement with Timor-Leste, partnerships with local institutions, and the challenges and opportunities associated with delivering tangible and lasting outcomes. These experiences ultimately reflected the importance of the OECD DAC peer review process as a key driving force behind North-South co-operation, and as a valuable process that provided meaningful lessons for both the members and observers of the OECD DAC.

Lessons Learned from the Peer Review of Australia

The peer review of Australia offered numerous valuable lessons and best practices that Thailand can draw upon to further strengthen its development co-operation policies and institutional mechanisms. The key lessons are as follows:

(i) A clear strategic framework embedded in national foreign policy strengthens coherence and effectiveness in development co-operation.

As an observer, Thailand notes that Australia's ability to articulate a unified international development vision—closely linked with its broader foreign policy—helps ensure consistency across government agencies. This alignment allows development cooperation to be understood not as separate initiatives undertaken by individual agencies, but as an integral component of Australia's overall international engagement. Such an approach highlights the value of

establishing a high-level, whole-of-government framework to bring coherence to international development cooperation policy. This serves as a good practice for emerging development partners like Thailand, where international development cooperation remains fragmented, and where greater cohesion, coordination, and effectiveness are needed.

(ii) Prioritizing locally-led development enhances ownership and sustainability of development outcomes.

From meetings in Canberra and the field visit to Timor-Leste, Thailand observed Australia's commitment to localization through flexible funding mechanisms, engagement of local organizations, and increased reliance on domestic expertise. These practices promote local ownership and long-term sustainability by engaging the local actors and communities, thereby building mutual trust between partners and improving both the effectiveness and sustainability of the development assistance. Australia's approach underscores the importance of systematically empowering partner institutions, engaging local stakeholders, and creating space for local actors to lead project design and implementation.

(iii) Engagement with all stakeholders and innovative financing enhances the impact and broadens the scope of development assistance.

Thailand observed that Australia effectively leverages partnerships with the private sector, UN agencies, development banks, and research institutions to complement its bilateral efforts. By utilizing blended finance through mechanisms such as the Australian Development Investments (ADI), the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP), and the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), Australia delivers more coherent and comprehensive development assistance that can address the diverse needs of partner countries.

This modality offers a valuable lesson for Thailand, highlighting the importance of exploring more structured collaboration with relevant stakeholders. The blended finance approach would allow Thailand to broaden its development cooperation, mobilize additional resources, and strengthen its capacity to provide effective development assistance.

(iv) Strengthening monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems is essential to improving the effectiveness and accountability of development assistance.

Thailand's observation of Australia's MEL practices reinforced the importance of using evidence to guide strategic decisions and programme adaptation. While Australia has improved its performance systems and evaluation arrangements, the review also highlighted challenges such as limited evaluations and lack of use of the findings.

MEL are essential, as they enable Thailand, as an emerging donor, to use evidence to expand development partnerships with other partners. Such evidence can also support reporting to the government to secure additional funding. However, Thailand's monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems still require significant development.

(v) Establishing robust systems for ODA data collection and reporting strengthens transparency, accountability, and policy decision-making.

Through the peer review, Thailand observed Australia's comprehensive approach to managing official development assistance (ODA) data—covering collection, verification, classification, and reporting to the OECD DAC. Australia's system demonstrates the importance of having clear internal processes, well-defined roles across government agencies, and a dedicated central

coordinating body to ensure accurate and timely reporting. The review also highlighted how transparent data systems support decision-making, facilitate communication with the public, and reinforce accountability to stakeholders. For Thailand, this lesson underscores the need to continue strengthening its internal processes for ODA, including consolidating data from multiple agencies, improving internal reporting mechanisms, and aligning more closely with DAC statistical standards.

Ways forward

Building on the lessons observed from the peer review of Australia’s development co-operation, several key areas that could be adapted to enhance Thailand’s development cooperation as follows:

(i) Promote engagement with local actors to ensure community-led development projects in the partner countries.

Thailand’s development cooperation implementation is based on a demand-driven approach, aiming to ensure the participation and ownership of communities and beneficiaries. This approach enables them to jointly design initiatives and ensures that the outcomes of these cooperations address the needs of the communities or target groups. Furthermore, Thailand will explore the approaches learned from the peer review to further promote engagement with local actors to ensure that development projects in partner countries are community-led.

(ii) Deepen engagement with all stakeholders and explore innovative financing modalities.

Thailand is exploring ways to deepen its engagement with a broader range of stakeholders—including the private sector, philanthropic organizations, civil society, and regional institutions—in order to expand both its financial and technical resources. Currently, Thailand’s development assistance is delivered predominantly through government agencies, with academic institutions and small private organizations serving as implementing partners. By systematically integrating these stakeholders into both the financing and implementation process, Thailand could enhance its development cooperation and engage more actively in international development agendas.

(iii) Enhancing a more robust and comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system to improve the effectiveness and efficacy of development assistance.

Thailand faces several challenges in strengthening a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system for its development assistance. These include limited human resources and technical expertise, fragmented data systems, and weak coordination among government agencies and implementing partners.

Learning from and cooperating with OECD DAC to build technical capacity across agencies, including training on results-based management and OECD-DAC practices will support Thailand in developing an integrated MEL platform to harmonize data collection, reporting, and overall evaluation processes.

(iv) Improving ODA data management and reporting system.

Although Thailand is not a DAC member, we have voluntarily reported ODA data to the OECD

DAC since 2006. However, collecting data that accurately reflects Thailand's development cooperation activities remains a challenge. Learning from the data-collection practices of DAC member countries is therefore important for improving Thailand's ODA database management.

At present, Thailand is cooperating with the OECD DAC to enhance its ODA data management, and a third joint workshop is planned for early next year. This collaboration helps TICA, as the central coordinating body, to consolidate information and ensure alignment with DAC standards.

However, the process of learning and adapting these data-collection methods to Thailand's context should not create additional burdens in implementation, given the country's limited personnel resources. We, therefore, look forward to learning from DAC members about the use of Artificial Intelligence to enhance our ODA database management.

(v) Continue active engagement with OECD DAC processes

Participation in this peer review has underscored the value of mutual learning and international dialogue within the OECD DAC framework. Thailand wishes to continue engaging actively in DAC processes as part of its learning pathway toward eventually becoming a member of the OECD DAC. Continued engagement will support Thailand's efforts to advance development cooperation that is high-quality, efficient, and aligned with international standards. Those are essential foundation for Thailand for building new development partnerships. Such partnerships are crucial to ensuring that development cooperation serves as an important mechanism for reducing regional and sub regional disparities and promoting sustainable development.

Ongoing engagement will also help Thailand to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of its development co-operation system, and contribute constructively to future peer review processes. It will further support Thailand's long-term aspiration to deepen its collaboration with the DAC, including its ambition to become a DAC Participant in the future.

Conclusions

Thailand expresses its appreciation to the OECD DAC, the Government of Australia, and the reviewer countries for the opportunity to observe Australia's 2025 Peer Review. This experience has enhanced Thailand's understanding of the role and work of the OECD DAC and its standards, while also providing a valuable opportunity to learn from the good practices and experiences of DAC members in implementing international development. The lessons learned will contribute to strengthening Thailand's capacity to provide impactful and sustainable international development cooperation.
