

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Written Ministerial Statement

7 December 2017

Publication of the tailored review of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI)

The Secretary of State for International Development (Penny Mordaunt):

I am today publishing a mandated review of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), in accordance with my responsibility as the Minister accountable to Parliament for it. In line with standard Cabinet Office guidance the review examined the case for ICAI to exist and assessed its efficiency and governance arrangements.

In recognition of ICAI's role as a scrutiny body, an independent Challenge Panel was appointed to ensure the objectivity and impartiality of the review process, and included members of the National Audit Office and Institute for Government. The Cabinet Office was satisfied that the review demonstrated an appropriate level of independence. The review acknowledges the importance of ICAI's independence and its recommendations have been formulated to ensure this is preserved. The review gathered evidence from a wide range of stakeholders, drawn from Parliament, government, the wider development sector and ICAI itself.

The review concluded that ICAI is necessary and that it should continue to be delivered by ICAI in its current form as a Non-Departmental Public Body with advisory functions. ICAI's functions are of particular importance given the statutory obligation for independent evaluation of the impact and value for money of aid arising from the 2015 International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act.

The review found that ICAI's work has contributed to increasing the impact and value for money of UK aid, and that ICAI is appreciated across the development sector for its scrutiny of aid impact. The review made a number of recommendations for further improving ICAI's effectiveness, including by developing improved measures of its own performance and by adopting a more consultative approach to developing recommendations that will increase their value.

Though the review found that ICAI should continue in its current form, it recommended changes to its delivery model to improve both its efficiency and effectiveness, including making its Chief Commissioner full-time. The review also assessed ICAI's governance arrangements and found them to be largely in-line with best practice for public bodies.

I am grateful to all those who contributed to the review, which will be placed in the libraries of both Houses and is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tailored-review-of-the-independent-commission-for-aid-impact-icai>