



## POLICY ON DEFINING 'DEVELOPING COUNTRY'

### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The roles conferred on the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM; the College) by its Constitution include the facilitation of medical education and medical aid support to developing countries, as well as a number of endeavours related to the promotion and understanding of emergency medicine outside of Australia and New Zealand, particularly in Asia and the Pacific region.

The purpose of this policy is to provide the criteria by which, for ACEM purposes only, the term 'developing country' may be defined or understood.

### 2. DEFINING 'DEVELOPING COUNTRY'

There are no universal, agreed-upon criteria for what makes a country 'developing' and which countries fit into that category, the various designations used by United Nations organisations being primarily intended for statistical convenience. However, there are general reference points, such as a country's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita; its gross national income (GNI); the state of development of its industrial base compared to that of other countries; and its Human Development Index (HDI).

#### 2.1 ACEM Usage

For ACEM purposes, the expression 'developing country' is defined with primary reference to the HDI created by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This index, which is based on a variety of criteria, has four categories:

- very high human development
- high human development
- medium human development
- low human development.

#### 2.2 Criteria for inclusion in definition

- (a) For the purposes of ACEM, countries that are included in the HDI '*medium human development*' and '*low human development*' categories are considered 'developing countries'.
- (b) Countries that are included in the '*high human development*' category may, or may not, be considered 'developing countries' by the College, depending on the context in which the expression is being employed and at the discretion of:
  - the Council of Advocacy, Practice and Partnerships (CAPP) – in relation to matters coming within the Terms of Reference of the International Emergency Medicine Committee
  - the Board (upon recommendation from CAPP) – in relation to international affiliate membership and the granting of concessional fees to the Annual Scientific Meeting and other College events.

- (c) For the purposes of ACEM, countries that are included in the HDI '*very high human development*' category and are not considered 'developing countries'.

## 2.3 Guidelines for determining inclusion

Factors which the CAPP may take into account in determining whether a country in the HDI 'high human development' category may be a 'developing country' for ACEM purposes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (i) The classification given to the country by the World Bank – does it have a 'lower middle income' or 'low income' classification?
- (ii) Whether the country is:
  - part of an Australian Aid initiative (eg. SSCSiP)
  - listed on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) list of developing countries (as declared by the Minister for Foreign Affairs)
  - a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), as defined by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
- (iii) The standard of development of medicine in general, and specialist emergency medicine care in particular, in the country in question where such are limited by a continuing shortage of skilled health care workers, and the cost and challenges of organising service delivery.

Broadly, a country in the HDI '*high human development*' category, which is also in the World Bank 'high income' category, would not be considered a 'developing country' for the purposes of the College. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances in which, in the opinion of the CAPP, there are individual national circumstances that justify its inclusion.

## 3. REFERENCES

- United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Index: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>
- United Nations Least Developed Countries list (June 2017): [https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/ldc\\_list.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/ldc_list.pdf)
- United Nations Small Island Developing States member list: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sids/list>
- Strengthening Specialised Clinical Services in the Pacific, countries list: <http://sscsip.org>
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia), List of Developing Countries: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/list-of-developing-countries-as-declared-by-the-minister-for-foreign-affairs.aspx>

## 4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- ACEM Constitution
- Regulation A: Governance
- International Emergency Medicine Subcommittee Terms of Reference

## 5. DOCUMENT REVIEW

Timeframe for review: every two (2) years, or earlier if required – especially in relation to review of the United Nations and other listings

## 5.1 Responsibilities

Document authorisation: Board  
Document implementation: CEO  
Document maintenance: General Manager, Governance and Standards

## 5.2 Revision History

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	Oct-2015	Approved by Board
v2	Apr-2018	Revisions approved by Board