



Australian Government
Aid Program



Australia Awards

AUSTRALIA SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM (ASDiV) PROGRAM

Alumni Program Strategy

Annual Plan 2010-2011

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A b b r e v i a t i o n s

ACG	Alumni Consultative Group
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ADS	Australian Development Scholarship
ALA	Australian Leadership Award
AM	Alumni Manager
ASDiV	Australian Scholarships for Development in Vietnam
ASMC	Australian Scholarship Managing Contactor
AusAID	Australian Aid International Development
GAPSP	General Awareness and Promotion Strategy and Plan
HRD	Human Resource Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Managing Contractor
NACESTI	National Centre for Scientific and Technological Information
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OASIS	Online Australian Scholarships Information System
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PPI	Public Priority Institutions
SIMON	Scholarships Information Management On-Line
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TL	Team Leader
VGAC	Vietnamese Graduates from Australia Club

SECTION A

1. INTRODUCTION

The AusAID Concept Paper: AusAID Scholarship Alumni Network (February 2009) sets out five objectives of AusAID alumni networks:

1. Increased (individual and institutional) contributions made by alumni network members to respective country/regional scholarship program objectives.
2. Increased M&E coverage of country/regional scholarship programs, both in terms of proportion of alumni/recipient institutions monitored and the range of modest outcomes able to be assessed.
3. Increased networking and communication by alumni network members at the local, regional and global level relevant to respective country/regional scholarship program objectives.
4. Increased engagement of alumni network members with AusAID and other Australian organizations relevant to country/regional scholarship program objectives or broader AusAID program objectives.
5. Alumni network members are productively utilized as a resource for AusAID scholarship and broader country/regional program areas.

The above five objectives have been incorporated to a large extent in the ASDiV Design Document which envisages expanded alumni support under the ASDiV Program and more systematic assessment of alumni impact on Vietnam's development. This support is particularly directed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of alumni, and consolidating their professional links with Australian institutions, with a view to strengthening the sustainability of the development impact of the scholarship program. The five objectives also provide the framework for this Alumni Support Strategy and Plan.

However the further development of the AusAID Scholarships Alumni Network has been subsumed by the announcement by the Prime Minister in September 2009 of the Australian Awards concept consolidating Australia's international scholarships programs under one recognizable brand. The full implications of Australia Awards for the promotion and management of the AusAID scholarship programs in Vietnam are still not clear, but one outcome that is envisaged appears to be a strong alumni network under the Australia Awards brand. Such an Australia Awards alumni network is expected also to showcase the capabilities of Australia's education sector and more broadly contribute to Australia's foreign policy objectives of building closer ties with countries in the region.

The ASDiV Alumni Program Strategy is to some degree in a transitional phase awaiting the outcome of the full development of the Australia Awards concept and structure. For example, it is not clear whether the alumni network envisaged under the Australia Awards is to maintain a separate network for Australian Government supported graduates or whether the network will include all graduates from Australian universities. Another issue is whether a country's local alumni network should be structured on a national basis and have a national leadership. This is particularly relevant to Vietnam where the current AusAID alumni network inherited from the previous MC is structured on professional groups and there is no national organization and leadership.

ASDiV sees value in establishing a nationally based organization and leadership consisting of prominent alumni to give credibility and public presence to Australian alumni. However, until the Australia Awards alumni concept has been fully developed and the scope of the alumni network clear, action to establish a national alumni organization and leadership in Vietnam will be kept in abeyance for the time being. Nevertheless the establishment of a national Vietnam alumni organization will be a component in the Alumni Support Strategy and Plan and will be implemented at the appropriate time.

The ASDiV Alumni Strategy and Annual Plan 2010-2011 comprises three main components. Under each component key areas are analysed in terms of i) supporting alumni, ii) alumni support for the ASDiV Program, iii) monitoring alumni. The Alumni Program budget for 2010-2011 provides detailed information on estimated costs for activities under in these three components. The Alumni Business Process for the database has been modelled to facilitate the implementation of alumni activities (See Annex 1).

2. ALUMNI PROGRAM GOAL

The ASDiV Alumni Program goal is to strengthen the organization and public presence of the Australian alumni network in Vietnam and to enhance the impact of the Australian Scholarship program for Vietnam's development through supporting the further professional development of alumni and expanding their linkages with Australian organizations and other regional Australian alumni.

3. ALUMNI PROGRAM STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In 2010-11 the ASDiV Alumni Program will set priorities in the following areas:

- Prepare for the establishment of a national alumni organization with a national leadership of prominent alumni when the Australian Awards alumni network strategy is developed
- Maximize the publicity value of AusAID alumni through including alumni public events in visit programs of Australian political leaders and using alumni profiles for scholarship public relations and promotion purposes
- Strengthen the existing Alumni Consultative Group (ACG) structure by forming strong and committed ACG core teams; re-activate inactive groups and create linkages among all groups
- Focus professional seminars/workshops on enhancing alumni professional software skills, and ensure professional events are of high quality and are well attended
- Strengthen links with Australian organizations in Vietnam and other Australian alumni networks in Vietnam and in the region
- Develop the ASDiV website, online forum and Facebook as effective interactive vehicles and facilitate improved networking opportunities for ASDiV alumni and potential candidates
- Facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the development impact of the work of ASDiV alumni as set out in the ASDiV M&E Strategy and Plan
- Identify and mobilize relevant alumni to support ASDiV promotion and mentoring activities in conjunction with the ASDiV General Awareness and Promotion Strategy and Plan (GAPSP)
- Re-establish contact with 74 ADS and 433 Pre-ADS untraceable alumni on the current database
- Ensure accurate and consistent data records before their migration to the new ASDiV integrated database
- Ensure a continuous process of alumni mapping and updating of the alumni database.

4. ALUMNI ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

Under ASDiV from November 2009 to April 2010, six seminars, one combined event (training workshop and excursion), 20 ACG meetings and one networking excursion have been organized, attracting a total of approximately 450 participants. The implementation of a series of ACG meetings has resulted in the formation of stronger and more committed core teams, the re-activation of Hanoi

Education ACG, and the HCM Science and Technology ACG and the formation of Hanoi Law ACG. Of particular note was the success of the pilot event in April 2010 consisting of a 2-day training workshop on project management some 80 kilometres from Hanoi which attracted 60 participants. This has become a model for future ACG events linking professional development and social networking activities.

5. LESSONS LEARNT

A number of lessons learnt can be considered for improving the effectiveness of the Alumni support program and they have been incorporated in the strategy.

Identifying alumni needs and interests

It is important that 'bottom-up' approaches be employed to identify needs and topics of interests of alumni for determining ASDiV support. This has been done through surveys and through personal interaction. Moreover the ACGs have been asked to provide their annual activity plans to ASDiV for consideration and inclusion in the ASDiV alumni plan. An important outcome of this 'bottom-up' process is the alumni expression of interest in soft skills and generic topics for professional development events, regardless of their various disciplines of study and work fields. This common interest is also appropriate to inter-group activities and accordingly professional development events have been opened up to all alumni.

Quality of trainers/guest speakers

The most critical success factor for professional development events is the quality of trainers/guest speakers in terms of their technical knowledge and pedagogical skills. Preferably the trainers/speakers should be well known in their field. Visiting Australian experts should also be invited as guest speakers where appropriate. In addition, alumni have expressed their interest in more interactive opportunities between trainers/guest speakers and participants and among themselves, rather than a lecture format. Thus each seminar/workshop should be an interactive forum for exchanging ideas, expertise and experience.

Importance of social networking activities

Alumni have emphasized the importance of social activities as a means of motivating a larger number of alumni to participate in alumni activities. Social activities enable alumni to interact in a relaxed social environment and to get to know each other better, hopefully encouraging them to support the professional development activities. Where possible, social networking activities should be combined with professional events to attract a larger number of participants. The organization of a large social networking event in conjunction with Australian political leaders' visits provides a good opportunity for strengthening broader AusAID alumni networks and enhancing the public credibility of the Australian alumni network. In addition, ACG core groups will be encouraged to co-organize inter-group social networking activities to optimize time and resources as well as to attract participants.

Access to academic information resources

During ACG meetings considerable interest has been expressed by alumni in accessing academic information resources. Some alumni revealed that their knowledge cultivated from their courses in Australia had become out-of-date quickly due to lack of access to online academic databases. Consequently facilitating access to academic information sources for alumni has been given importance in the strategy.

SECTION B: OBJECTIVES, ISSUES AND KEY INITIATIVES

6. ALUMNI SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Key area 1: Establishment of a national alumni organisation

1. Objective

To establish a national alumni organisation in Vietnam with a prominent national leadership to generate greater prestige and public presence for Australian alumni in Vietnam.

2. Issues

To date the AusAID alumni network has been structured on a group basis in the form of ACGs. There is no national organization and national leadership. This is in contrast to the Vietnam Graduates of Australia Club (VGAC) which is organized into three regional chapters with chapter leaders. For the purposes of establishing higher visibility and greater public presence as well as increased credibility of the AusAID alumni network, it is desirable to establish a nationally based organization with prominent alumni forming its leadership. Such a national organization could be structured on regional chapters as well as the current ACGs. However as discussed above, it is premature to establish such a national organization until the Australian Awards alumni network is fully developed and the organizational scope of the proposed network is clear.

3. Key initiatives and actions

In the meantime preparations for establishing a national organization will take the form of i) strengthening links among the ACGS, ii) linking the same titled ACGs in north and south, iii) expanding links with the VGAC, iv) opening up professional events to all AusAID alumni and well as to VGAC members, v) encouraging ACG core leaders to meet and exchange views with each other.

Key area 2: Publicity value of alumni

1. Objectives

To maximize the publicity value of AusAID alumni through associating alumni public events with visits by Australian political leaders and using alumni profiles for scholarship public relations and promotion purposes.

2. Issues

With AusAID alumni numbering some 3,000 persons, of whom many have risen to leadership positions in government, academia, business and NGOs, alumni can be seen as ambassadors for Australia and thus have the potential for promoting the broader Australian relationship, publicising the high quality of the Australian education system and as well as promoting the Australian scholarships programs in particular.

3. Key initiatives and actions

- The use of alumni in the promotion of the scholarship program is canvassed in detail in the ASDiV GAPSP and includes i) mobilizing alumni to promote the ADS program among their networks according to their relevant profile, ii) compiling an e-book of 20 prominent alumni and iii) using alumni profiles as the basis of a television series to promote the scholarship program.
- In addition there is the opportunity for capitalizing on the visits of prominent Australian leaders, such as the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, and their personal commitment to the international scholarship program, as evidenced by the Australia Awards announcement, by

organizing a large alumni event in conjunction with their visits. If the visits take place later in 2010 as indicated, this could coincide with further announcements about the Australian Awards. Such an event would be useful in galvanising a larger number of alumni to attend but also in publicizing the Australian alumni and the scholarships program in particular.

- It would also be desirable as a matter of course to include meetings with alumni and/or alumni events in conjunction with visits of all Australian politicians (and Governors), whether Federal or State, again to bring greater credibility to the alumni network and to foster linkages with Australia.

Key area 3: ASDiV Alumni Consultative Groups

1. Objectives

To strengthen active ACGs and re-activate inactive groups by forming strong and committed ACG core teams, and to support these teams to develop strategic plans.

2. Issues

One of the priorities of the ASDiV Alumni Program to date has been to re-activate dormant ACGs. For example, the Hanoi Health ACG has had no activity since its formation. Due to limited members, the Danang Education ACG has been inactive until its involvement in the seminar organized by Hue ACG in December 2009. In the above cases, the coordination and communication among ACG core team members and more broadly among alumni groups have been relatively limited. However ASDiV has had recent successes in reactivating the Hanoi Education ACG and the HCM City Science and Technology ACG.

On the assumption that each ACG requires at least two professional development events and two social networking events annually to remain active, the total number of alumni events would total 44 per year (11 groups multiply by 4 events). However, several of the weaker ACGs may only manage a total of two events per year. On the other hand the PPI ACG, Hanoi Business ACG and HCMC Business ACG are very active and have planned some 3 seminars and 3 social activities annually due to their large number of members and their dynamism. This number of events per year will mean a heavy ASDiV Alumni program workload, if all are implemented.

3. Key initiatives and actions

The formation of dedicated and committed ACG core teams and the development of clear strategic plans will be the key factors in successful implementation of professional and social networking events. For effective coordination and communication within and beyond ACGs, the Alumni Manager will create opportunities for face-to-face and online interaction for Group Leaders and Group Coordinators.

The Alumni Manager will regularly organise ACG meetings to keep core team members engaged and committed to their group activities. ACGs will actively take responsibility to organise a range of alumni group activities. To encourage core team members and to acknowledge their contributions to alumni activities, the ASDiV Alumni Program will offer incentives such as accounts to access online academic resources databases and certificates of appreciation.

Seminars on generic topics will be encouraged to attract the involvement of alumni in other groups and to reduce the overall number of planned seminars.

4. Performance measurements

Strong ACG core teams are formed and meet regularly; core groups submit their group's annual strategic plans. ACG meetings provide ASDiV Alumni program with relevant feedback on alumni needs and ideas for support activities (e.g. seminar topics, speakers); and ACG core groups make contributions to ASDiV promotion and mentoring activities.

5. Timing

ACG core group meetings are organised on regular basis.

Key area 4: ASDiV alumni professional development events

1. Objective

To achieve high quality professional development events with a high level of attendance and cost effectiveness.

2. Issues

While several of the most recent professional events have been very well attended (seminars on the Vietnamese economy sponsored by the HCM City and Hanoi Business ACGs, and the training workshop/excursion organized by the PPI ACG), the challenge is how to ensure high quality and good attendance at all professional development events.

3. Key initiatives

To achieve the objective, a number of initiatives will be implemented as follows:

- 'Bottom-up' approach will be used to identify topics of interest (through surveys, meetings and personal contact).
- The quality of seminars/workshops largely depends on guest speakers, so the identification of potential and relevant guest speakers will be a top priority. Particular attention will be paid to their expert knowledge and pedagogical skills.
- Professional development events will aim at creating an interactive forum for exchange of ideas and expertise rather than take the form of a lecture.
- Professional development events will continue to be opened up to all alumni including VGAC alumni.
- Professional development events will be combined as appropriate with excursions to facilitate networking opportunities.
- The ASDiV alumni program will consider organising special alumni-wide events such as leadership and management training for women and ethnic minorities.
- ASDiV website and forum, and online social networking initiatives such as Facebook will be utilised to keep alumni well-informed of upcoming alumni events and to facilitate convenient alumni event bookings.
- Scheduling of professional development events will avoid the last month of both the calendar and the lunar year, if possible, to suit alumni personal and professional schedules.

4. Action

The Alumni Manager will work collaboratively with Group Leaders and Group Coordinators to survey topics of interests and to identify relevant guest speakers. In addition, good preparation (including

ACG meetings, logistics, and seminar content) will facilitate best timing, a convenient location and smooth operation for each event. The Alumni Manager and Professional Group Coordinators work with trainers/guest speakers to ensure appropriate course designs and interactive teaching approaches for any professional development events. Various communication channels such as email, website, forum, Facebook and telephone will be used to inform alumni of professional development events.

The Alumni Manager will coordinate with the Local HRD Adviser to organise a seminar related to the re-integration process for PPI alumni. The purpose is to create an interactive forum for PPI alumni to share their difficulties, experiences and lessons-learnt, when they seek to apply their new knowledge and skills into their workplaces. Other alumni concerned about this topic will be welcome to attend this event.

5. Performance measurements

Strong attendance by ASDiV alumni; the majority of attendees confirm the seminar is a positive professional development experience; and ACGs take initiative in organising their group seminars.

6. Timing

Up to 20 seminars conducted at regular intervals throughout 2010.

Key area 5: ASDiV alumni social networking activities

1. Objectives

To foster ongoing links and sharing of experiences among alumni through social networking events.

2. Issues

A major issue raised by both alumni and in the ASDiV Design Document¹ is the need for greater funding for social networking activities. Alumni feel that these activities could provide greater motivation to a broader group of alumni enabling them to get to know each other better in a social situation and therefore encouraging them to support other professional development activities. Strengthening professional networking opportunities through social activities can be seen as important to facilitating alumni professional knowledge improvement through seminars/workshops. Alumni have also expressed interest in attending large social networking activities that bring all groups together.

3. Key initiatives

To increase the number of social networking activities, ACGs are encouraged to co-organise social events to create more interactive opportunities for members within and beyond their groups. By doing so, time and resources used for event organisation can be optimised. Ideally each ACG should nominate at least two Coordinators to take responsibility for facilitating social networking events.

4. Action

¹ AusAID Scholarships for Development in Vietnam (ASDiV) 2009-2016, Design Document, 10 December 2008, Final, page 5.

The Alumni Manager will coordinate with Group Leaders and Group Coordinators to develop clear work plans for social networking activities for their groups. Events will be organised specifically for all ACG core team members to attend in order to facilitate better coordination and cooperation among ACGs in Hanoi and HCM City. The ASDiV Alumni Program will continue to provide assistance to the Australian Embassy's organisation of alumni functions, providing the Embassy with lists of alumni by graduation year, and funding alumni functions such as the welcome event for new AusAID Returnees.

5. Performance measurements

The number of attendees and their positive feedback on the quality and usefulness of social networking activities for their professional networking.

6. Timing

Ongoing throughout 2010-2011.

Key area 6: Access to academic information resources

1. Objectives

To facilitate access by alumni to academic information resources to support their professional development and the development impact of their work; and to encourage and acknowledge those alumni who make significant contributions to the ASDiV Program.

2. Issues

There is widespread interest among alumni in gaining on-line access to academic resources to support their professional development, as only a limited number of alumni currently have these on-line privileges. Providing such access is also a means for providing incentives to and rewarding active alumni who contribute in different ways to the Alumni Program.

It is worthwhile noting the low price provided by local database services providers compared to international database suppliers. For example, the National Centre for Scientific and Technological Information (NACESTI) in Vietnam offers AUD\$18.2/database account/year compared to AUD\$60 - AUD\$90/database account/year provided by Australian institutions for their alumni.

3. Key initiatives and action

The ASDiV Alumni Program plans to offer approximately 200 database accounts to group leaders, group coordinators, guest speakers, mentors and those alumni assisting promotion in 2010. This figure is relatively low compared to the total of 2500 alumni.

ASDiV intends to maximise the opportunity to access these on-line academic resources for other alumni who have a strong need in their daily work, especially academics and researchers. They will need to apply to ASDiV for an account. In addition, the ASDiV website/forum will be used as a virtual platform for alumni to exchange information about other academic resources databases which are free of charge.

4. Performance measurements

The number of database accounts offered to eligible alumni and their confirmation that this access is useful to their professional development; the volume of free academic resources that is exchanged among users on ASDiV website/forum.

5. Timing

Ongoing throughout 2010-2011.

Key area 7: ASDiV alumni website and forum

1. Objectives

The ASDiV alumni website and forum become effective interactive vehicles to update alumni events, to exchange information and facilitate improved networking opportunities for alumni and potential candidates.

2. Issues

A new and interactive ASDiV website including a forum is being designed. The previous ADS Support forum was not very active since almost all postings were undertaken by the moderator, rather than users. Thus, it will be a challenge to mobilise alumni to participate in the new ASDiV online forum.

Assuming the forum successfully attracts a large number of users, it will generate a considerable workload for moderating activities. In addition, Facebook integrated into the website will be a very useful PR tool to keep alumni well informed of the ASDiV alumni activities. Again, Facebook requires a person to reply and to moderate questions/enquiries from its user community.

3. Key initiatives and actions

The Alumni Manager will be responsible for updating the ASDiV alumni website pages and moderating the online forum. However, relevant alumni will be identified to partly take on responsibility to moderate the forum on a voluntary basis. The forum facilitates an exchange of ideas and information among awardees, alumni and employers.

4. Performance measurement

Alumni confirm via surveys that the forum is a useful resource; minimal false or misleading information posted; the website is accurately updated with news of events or activities in areas of monitoring and support, and in the promotion and mentoring program.

5. Timing

The new ASDiV website and forum will be completed in May 2010. Updating information on the website and the moderation of the forum will be an ongoing process throughout 2010.

Key area 8: Small Grants scheme

1. Objectives

The Small Grant scheme aims to assist alumni to capitalise on knowledge and skills they have gained from the study programs and to consolidate the maintenance of professional links with Australian institutions, both of which are expected to contribute to enhancing sustainability of development impacts².

2. Issues

Clear guidelines and procedures need to be formulated for the implementation of the Small Grants scheme. Alumni have also raised a number of issues associated with eligible expenditures: i) whether the discretionary funds can be used for short course training or book publication; ii) should a panel of experts be formed to assess the feasibility and implications of research proposals related to specialised topics; iii) whether the Small Grants be available to a small research team led by an alumni, iv) can the limitation of eligibility of three years after return to Vietnam be made more flexible to allow those alumni, who have already been back Vietnam over three years, to apply.

3. Key initiatives and actions

Priority will be given to professional development activities or research projects that contribute to the Australia-Vietnam DCS objectives and to those applications which aim to strengthen professional links with Australian institutions.

It is crucial to establish a system for receiving applications/proposals from alumni, setting out clear criteria for awarding grants or rejecting applications and establishing a reporting format on the use of the grants. Information about the Small Grants scheme will be broadly disseminated to all alumni using email, ASDiV website and forum, Facebook, briefing sessions, introductory sessions at seminars and social events. All issues related to the Small Grant scheme will be approved by AusAID before its implementation.

The Alumni Manager is responsible for promoting the Small Grant scheme, collecting and initial screening of applications/proposals. The Alumni Manager will assist the Team Leader in final screening of applications/proposals, which are approved on a case by case basis by the Team Leader.

4. Performance measurement

The number and value of small grants offered to alumni; alumni reports on these grants demonstrate practical benefits for their workplace, benefits for their professional development and more broadly contribute to development impacts.

5. Timing

Guidelines on the Small Grants scheme will be drawn up and approved in May 2010. Funds will be available from AusAID from July 2010.

² AusAID Scholarships for Development in Vietnam (ASDiV) 2009-2016, Design Document, 10 December 2008, Final, page 32.

Key area 9: Alumni Partnerships and linkages with local Australian organizations

1. Objectives

To strengthen partnerships with Australian alumni associations active in Vietnam and establish links with regional AusAID alumni associations; to seek mutually cooperative opportunities to co-organise professional and social events with other Australian alumni groups in Vietnam; to increase alumni engagement with local Australian organizations.

2. Issues

Promotion of partnerships with local alumni associations including VGAC depends also on their level of motivation for cooperation. Many alumni have reported their strong professional linkages with their university alumni. The cooperation with regional AusAID alumni associations will be guided by the full development of Australian Awards concept and strategy.

3. Key initiatives and actions

The Alumni Manager will continue to initiate meetings with leaders of VGAC and university alumni associations to gain mutual understanding of their activity plans, and to seek cooperative opportunities to develop a broader and stronger AusAID alumni network in Vietnam. For example, ASDiV Program plans to sponsor 100 Gala tickets for AusAID-funded alumni to participate in the annual VGAC Gala event in Ho Chi Minh City in 2010. At regional level, the ASDiV Alumni Program will prepare for promoting links with Australian alumni associations in Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and other countries to share experiences in alumni network organization and to provide broader cooperative links for alumni in Vietnam.

The promotion of links with local Australian organizations aims to enhance alumni professional linkages with Australia and create opportunities to exchange experiences and views on development issues in Vietnam and other issues affecting Australia-Vietnam relations. In particular, the Alumni Manager will liaise with representatives of Australian Volunteers Abroad Program, AusCham, ACIAR, Australian NGOs and other Australian organizations in Vietnam to explore opportunities for cooperative activities.

4. Performance measurement

The number of organizations with whom links been established; the number of cooperative activities held, and the number attending professional development and social networking events co-organised by ASDiV Alumni Program and partner organizations.

5. Timing

Ongoing throughout 2010-2011.

7. ALUMNI SUPPORT FOR ASDIV PROGRAM

Key area 10: ASDiV Promotion activities through alumni networks

1. Objectives

To mobilise alumni support for targeted promotion for scholarship applications.

2. Issues

The ASDiV Program targets thirty percent of ADS scholarships for improved governance and poverty reduction in poor provinces, focusing particularly on ethnic minorities (Profile 1 and 2). The challenge is how to attract sufficient applicants to meet the scholarship targets especially among local government employees in Profile 1. Mobilizing those alumni working in provincial areas is one way of promoting the ADS scholarships. However only six percent of ASDiV alumni (1998-2009) are currently working in provinces and cities other than six major urban areas: Hanoi, HCM City, Hue, Danang, Can Tho and Hai Phong. More generally, the opportunity should be taken to mobilize alumni that can assist scholarship promotions in all five Profiles.

3. Key initiatives and actions

Alumni mapping will be used for identifying potential alumni to support ASDiV promotion activities targeted at potential candidates under the 5 Profiles. The Alumni Manager will provide the Promotion and Screening Manager with a list of relevant alumni with potential to conduct presentations in universities and priority provinces. The Alumni Manager will also encourage and mobilise alumni who are working as journalists or in media areas to write articles, news and to consult with ASDiV staff on effective media strategies. Alumni will be briefed before disseminating scholarships information and acting as contact points for potential candidates. Travel expenses incurred by alumni will be reimbursed. The Alumni Manager will indentify a list of prominent alumni who could be the subject of alumni profiles in both written and video format to be used for ASDiV promotion purposes. ASDiV promotion activities will be incorporated into Alumni Partnerships activities (Key area 9).

Alumni working in Hanoi University of Agriculture No. 1, HCM National Academy for Politics and Public Administration, HCM City University Agriculture and Forestry can be considered strategic partners in promotion activities for Profiles 1 and 2. Alumni in these institutions may assist the ASDiV Program to broadly disseminate information about Australian Scholarships through their professional networks and during field visits to the provinces.

The ASDiV Program also creates virtual platforms such as ASDiV website, online forum, Facebook, and emails to facilitate alumni contributions to ASDiV promotion activities. For example, alumni may write articles posted on the ASDiV website or exchange promotional information via the alumni mailing list.

4. Performance measurements

Number of alumni assisting ASDiV Program in promotional activities.

5. Timing

Depending on timing of the promotion campaign.

Key area 11: Mobilizing alumni to act as mentors

1. Objective

To identify and approach suitable alumni who are willing to act as mentors for ASDiV scholars while studying in Australia and on their return.

2. Issues

Many ASDiV scholars encounter difficulties adapting to their new life and the different learning skills when arriving in Australia. Knowledge and practical experiences shared by alumni acting as mentors could be a shortcut for many students to more rapidly adapt to Australian culture and to achieve better academic performance.

3. Key initiatives and actions

The Alumni Manager will broadly disseminate information about mentoring activities to new ASDiV scholars using the ASDiV website, forum, Facebook and email through pre-departure briefing sessions. Incentives/recognition should be offered to those alumni who act as mentors to encourage their participation as well as to acknowledge their contributions to the Alumni Program. One way is to offer them on-line access to academic resources.

4. Performance measurement

The number of alumni who act as mentors and the number of ASDiV scholars, who benefit from the mentoring program and give positive feedback to the program.

5. Timing

Particular emphasis will be given to the period just before and after new scholars' arrival in Australia.

8. ALUMNI MONITORING ACTIVITIES

Key area 12: Re-establishing contact with untraceable alumni

1. Objectives

To re-establish contact details (home and work email, phone number, and address) and keep track of employment histories (position, department, and organisation) of 74 ADS and 433 Pre-ADS untraceable alumni on the current database.

2. Issues

Two major challenges have been identified. First, a large number of the records of untraceable alumni lack either phone numbers or valid email and mail addresses. It is thus extremely difficult to re-establish contacts with those alumni. The second challenge is the apparent low level of motivation among those untraceable alumni which has led to a low response rate to questionnaires in the past.

3. Key initiatives and actions

A list of untraceable alumni (both ADS and Pre-ADS) will be analysed to work out appropriate actions. An Alumni Database Assistant (casual) has been hired to send online questionnaires to untraceable alumni who have an email address and to follow up by making phone calls, posting letters or using any contact information existing in the database. Also, the ASDiV website, online forum and Facebook will be used periodically to send short notices related to updating untraceable alumni information. Any unsolvable problems/lessons learnt will be incorporated into the Tracer Study in 2011.

4. Performance measurements

The number of untraceable alumni with whom contact has been re-established along with the updating of their employment status.

5. Timing

The actions will mainly be implemented from April to June 2010; however the updating process will be undertaken throughout 2010-2011.

Key area 13: Correct inaccurate and inconsistent data records and updating employment histories

1. Objectives

To fix inaccurate and inconsistent data records before their migration to the new ASDiV integrated database; to create new database functions to keep track of alumni employment histories.

2. Issues

A number of data records provide inadequate information about alumni employment status. In particular, the current database mostly stores information only about alumni positions and their organisations but does not include their job function or department.

The categorisations previously established under ADS Support are unclear, overlapping and confusing. For example, the Private Sector has been divided into sub-sectors, but there were no clear definitions of these sub-sectors.

In many cases, alumni information downloaded from SIMON is either inaccurate or inconsistent since data are inputted by different people at various Australian universities. Many institutions seem to have their own ways of defining disciplines of study. In addition, database fields are sometimes incompatible between SIMON and the current database.

3. Key initiatives and actions

The new ASDiV website, forum and Facebook will be used to maximise the opportunity to gather information about alumni sector of employment. Information about alumni job functions and department will be incorporated into the ASDiV questionnaire. Alumni will be required to provide information about their job duties when they register to become ASDiV forum users and make bookings for alumni events.

A revised list of clear and consistent definitions of all categorisations has been developed, which can be used as a guideline for the database input process. Regarding incompatible database fields

between SIMON and the ASDiV database, all inaccurate or inconsistent information loaded from SIMON will be manually checked and fixed before inputting into the new ASDiV database. Incompatible database fields/sub-fields will be consolidated if their coverage is equivalent.

4. Performance measurements

Number of inaccurate and inconsistent data records that are fixed; and alumni employment histories that are tracked.

5. Timing

Ongoing process, but more concentrated efforts will be made during the first half of 2010.

Key area 14: Establishing and updating ALA alumni database

1. Objectives

To update all ALAS and ALAF alumni contact details and employment status and input into the new ASDiV database.

2. Issues

The alumni database inherited from the ADS Support project did not contain any ALA alumni information. Following receipt of ALA data from AusAID, the newly employed Alumni Database Assistant has completed inputting information on a total of 381 ALAS and ALAF awardees and alumni. However these data records only provide some very basic information such as names, intakes and courses, and the records lack post award contact details and employment histories. What pre-award contact information there is on ALA and ALAF alumni may also be invalid. There is a possibility of incompatible database structure between the OASIS and the new ASDiV database, so that data migration may have to be done manually.

3. Key initiatives and actions

Updating of ALAS and ALAF alumni contact details and their employment status will be combined with measures to deal with untraceable alumni. Technical solutions will be developed in cooperation with the IT Manager to deal with the incompatible database structure, if needed.

4. Performance measurements

Number of ALAS and ALAF alumni with contact details and employment histories that are updated.

5. Timing

All ALA alumni will be contacted during April to June 2010. An ongoing updating process will then be conducted throughout 2010-2011 to keep contact with new ALAS and ALAF returnees.

Key area 15: Monitoring overseas alumni

1. Objectives

To understand what overseas alumni are doing overseas; whether they intend to return Vietnam; whether they are contributing to Vietnam's development in other ways; and what is the cost to the program of those who do not return to Vietnam³.

2. Issues

The 2008 Tracer Study identified approximately 20% of alumni who were overseas at the time the study was conducted. However, the survey response rate from this section of the alumni population was particularly low (12%). The main channel of contact to this group is via email.

3. Key initiative

Internet communication channels such as the ASDiV website and Facebook will be employed to keep contact with overseas alumni.

4. Action

The ASDiV website and forum, and social networking initiatives such as Facebook will be employed to develop a broader virtual network with the overseas alumni group. The ASDiV Alumni Program seeks support from alumni networks in Vietnam to update overseas alumni information.

The Alumni Manager will cooperate with the ASDiV M&E Adviser to undertake a special study of overseas alumni.

5. Performance measurements

The response rate of overseas alumni in and the findings of the special M&E study; number of overseas alumni providing relevant information for updating the ASDiV database using other channels.

6. Timing

The special study of overseas alumni will be implemented in May 2010 as set out in the M&E Plan. This process will be followed up by an ongoing update throughout 2010-2011.

9. ALUMNI PROGRAM BUDGET

There are five areas of expenditure for alumni activities in the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 as described in the table following. The total cost for alumni activities is AUD 38,371. This amount is the sum of the two relevant budget lines in the Head Contract: Support Alumni Association Grant (AUD3,200) and Alumni Support-events/seminars (AUD35,171). For the period November 2009 to June 2010, a total of AUD 17,630 was expended on alumni activities. The total expenditure for the period November 2009 to June 2011 is thus expected to be AUD 56,001.

³ Australian Scholarships for Development in Vietnam (ASDiV), Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, November 2009, Draft, page 9.

However, the total Head Contract budget allocation is only AUD42,500 for the contract period to January 2012. The Alumni program outlined in this document is an expanded program from previous years. The MC considers that it reflects the ASDiV Design Document's emphasis on greater AusAID support for alumni activity. Thus, to enable a comprehensive alumni program of high quality and high profile to be implemented within the parameters of the proposed budget, the MC proposes that appropriate funds be re-directed to the two alumni budget lines from the AUD1,250,000 allocated to the Flexible Small Grants Scheme. The MC considers that it will be extremely difficult to spend this very considerable sum of money on the Small Grants Scheme during the Head Contract period (in fact expenditure will take place from September 2010 to January 2012).

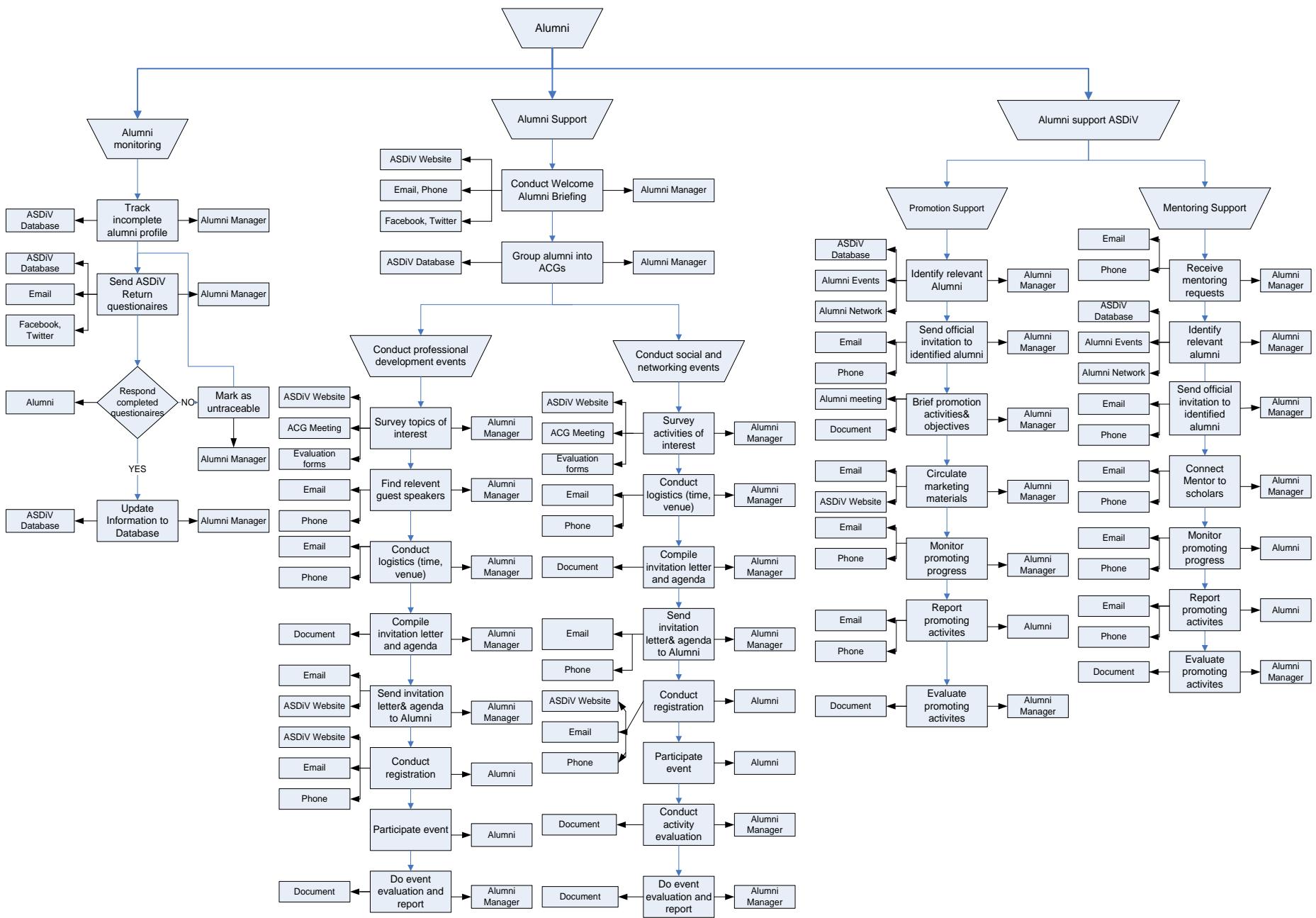
Summary of Annual Program Budget for 1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011

Seq.	Activity	Sub-total (AUD)
1	Training workshops	22,000
2	Seminars	10,750
3	Social networking activities	2,500
4	Alumni Consultative Group (ACG) meetings for core teams	700
5	Access to academic online resources	2,421
Grand total		38,371

Please see Appendices 2 and 3 for budget details of the five areas of alumni expenditure, the allocation between the two budget lines and the monthly budget allocation for the two expenditure periods. In addition, Appendix 2 contains estimated costs of several events which are not yet confirmed as well as estimated expenditure on the Small Grant scheme which is a separate budget line.

A P P E N D I X 1

Alumni Business Process



A P P E N D I X 2

Alumni Budget Plan for alumni activities from 1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011

Exchange rate: 1AUD = 17,820VND

Budget Plan for Alumni activities from 1 July 2010 - 30 June 2011

Activity	No. of act	Timing	Est. costs (AUD)	Notes
Hanoi				
Training workshops	2	Sept. 2010 and during first half of 2011	11,000	AUD 5500 x 2 two-day training workshops. All alumni in the North will be invited. Workshop themes to be of broad interest, beyond any specific group
Seminars	7	Seminar on "Risk Management in Financial Institutions" will be organized on 17 July 2010 at Bao Son Hotel.	5,950	AUD850 x 7 seminars. Generally topics of seminars to be of broad interest, except one or two may more specialized.
Social and networking activity	1	Jan 2011 (tentative)	1,000	Social networking event organized in conjunction with Embassy-Welcome Back Alumni Event to held at Embassy for approximately 40-50 participants. New Returnees in the North will be invited.
Sub-total	10		17,950	

Hue/Danang				
Seminars	1	15-Aug-10	850	Hue Australia Awards Alumni Group will organize the Seminar on Change Management. Guest Speaker will be Mr Kevin Egan - ASDiV International HRD Adviser.
	1	First half of 2011	2,250	Seminar and Social Event in Hue for alumni in Hue and Danang
	2		3,100	
HCM City				
Training workshops	1	24&25 July 2010	5,500	The Training Workshop: Project Management will be held at RMIT campus, HCM City. All alumni in southern Vietnam have been invited.
	1	First half of 2011	5,500	All alumni in southern Vietnam will be invited.
Seminars	2	July 2010 - June 2011	1,700	AUD 850 x 2 seminars. Topics to be of broad interest to alumni
Social and networking activity	1	February 2011 (tentative)	1,500	Social networking event organized in conjunction with the Consulate-General at restaurant/hotel. Welcome Back Alumni Event for approximately 30-40 participants. New Returnees in southern Vietnam will be invited.
Sub-total	6		14,200	

Alumni Consultative Group (ACG) meetings for core teams	14	July 2010 - June 2011	700	AUD50 x 14 ACG meetings
Access to academic online resources	133	July 2010 - June 2011	2,421	The price is AUD 18.2/Database account/year. Recipients will be Group Leaders, Group Coordinators, Promoting Assistants, Mentors, and Guest Speakers.
Total			38,371	

Notional Budget for events yet to be confirmed plus estimates for Small Grant scheme				
AusAID Alumni Gathering in Jakarta				
Accommodation	4 nights x 5 people	Nov. 2010	2,000	at AUD 100 per night
Air tickets	1 return ticket x 5 people		4,100	at AUD 820 per ticket
Per diem	5 days x 5 people		750	at AUD 30 per day
Taxi fare	5 portions x 5 people		2,500	at AUD100 per person
Total			9,350	

Gala Dinner				
Gala Dinner in conjunction with visit of PM	1	29-31 October 2010	11,100	Estimated 300 participants at AUD37 per head (see concept note). All alumni in the North will be invited.
Gala Dinner for all AusAID alumni in the South	1	Timing to be decided	7,400	Estimated 200 participants at AUD37 per head. Type of Event/Guest Speakers to be decided. All alumni in the South will be invited.
Sub-total	2		18,500	

Small Grant Scheme				
Small Grants	30 Grants x 5000	July 2010 - June 2011	150,000	4 Rounds at 3-monthly intervals

Monthly Budget Allocation 1 July 2010 – June 2011

A P P E N D I X 3

Break down costs for each type of seminars/excursions

Break down costs for each type of seminars/training workshops

Type of seminar/excursions	Items	Estimated costs per item (AUD)	Total (AUD)
Hanoi based seminars	Meeting room	250	850
	Banner	100	
	Fee for Guest Speaker(s)	Gifts and Flowers	
		Training fee (if trainers are hired)	
	Stationary (name tags, butcher paper etc.)	30	
	Tea break (50 participants at AUD 3/person)	150	
Workshops to places outside Hanoi or HCM City	Meeting room	500	5,500
	Banner	100	
		Training fee	
	For social activities at night	gifts for game, karaoke	
	Stationary (name tags, butcher paper etc.)	40	
	Vehicle rental (2 days)	420	
	Accommodation one night (60 participants at AUD 20/person)	1200	
	Meals x 3 (60 participants at AUD 30/person)	1800	
	Tea break x 3 (60 participants at AUD 9/person)	540	
Seminar in Danang(Alumni in Hue will be invited to Danang with travel costs and accommodation funded by ASDiV Program)	Meeting room	250	2250
	Banner	100	
	Tea break (50 participants at AUD 3/person)	150	
	Fee for Guest Speaker(s)	Gifts and Flowers	
		Training fee (if trainers are hired)	
	Stationary (name tags, butcher paper etc.)	30	

Type of seminar/excursions	Items	Estimated costs per item (AUD)	Total (AUD)
	Accommodation one night (for 25 participants at AUD20/person)	500	
	Dinner function (for 50 participants at AUD 15/person)	700	
	Vehicle rental (2 days)	200	