

CAMBODIA COUNTRY PROGRAM REPORT
JOINT REVIEW OF ADVISER POSITIONS - THE AUSTRALIAN AID PROGRAM

Overview

[A Joint Adviser Review Report](#) was released on 15 February 2011, which provided a synthesis of the findings and key recommendations from individual country reviews, including country specific adviser figures and narrative.

Australia worked bilaterally with a large number of partner country governments to review each adviser position. While the underlying Review methodology and the core content of country-specific reports is consistent across programs, in each case the final country-specific Review Report reflects decisions made by the joint Review teams as appropriate for the specific cultural and language context. As a result there are some presentational differences between reports.

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the joint Review process undertaken between the Governments of Cambodia and Australia.

It is important to note that the Review process involved an assessment of the value and effectiveness of each adviser position – not the performance of individuals in those positions. The Review focused on the role of each position in meeting agreed country program objectives and development outcomes. On the basis of this assessment, the continued funding of adviser positions by AusAID was jointly considered and agreed with partner governments.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Country Program	4
Methodology	5
Review Findings	5
Current use of Advisers in the Cambodia Program	5
Trends in Advisers during CCJAP3	6
Key Effectiveness Issues	9
Recommendations	9
Annex 1: Terms of Reference	11
Annex 2: Definition of Advisers	14

Executive Summary

A total of 43 advisory positions funded from within the Australian development cooperation program were identified to be within the scope of the review. Each advisory position was assessed for its relevance and to ensure that it represents a value for money response to meeting Cambodia's development priorities.

The majority of the positions are associated with the Cambodia Criminal Justice Support Program (CCJAP3), and the Cambodian Agriculture Value Chain (CAVAC) project. These positions have been reviewed with our Royal Government counterparts in the Ministry of Interior (CCJAP) and the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Water Resources and Meteorology (CAVAC).

The results from the review are encouraging. All but one of the advisory positions reviewed were found to be relevant and rated as a high or medium priority. The position identified as a low priority within the CCJAP3 activity will be discontinued. The remaining 13 advisory positions in CCJAP3 will finish by the end of January 2012.

Furthermore, the review found adherence to **Guideline on the Provision and Management of Technical Cooperation** of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and a strong preference for national advisers. CCJAP3 currently has only three International Long Term Advisers and 11 national advisers. CAVAC has 6 international advisers and 18 national advisers.

AusAID will invite the Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC) to participate in future reviews.

We recommend that the checklist be adjusted to reflect RGC principles and guidelines for the use of Technical Cooperation as well as AusAID specific requirements.

Country Program

For the period 2010 to 2015, Australia's aid program to Cambodia will focus on four areas of development need where Australia has a comparative advantage and a history of engagement. These areas are, to reduce rural poverty through agricultural and rural development, improve health services, upgrade infrastructure for growth and trade and promote access to justice.

Australian activities in agriculture and rural development and law and justice are implemented through bilaterally managed projects and use advisers for capacity development of counterpart organizations. Australia's support for health and infrastructure programs is implemented through multilateral funding agreements.

In 2008 the Cambodian Government issued guidelines for Technical Cooperation that are directly relevant to the engagement and management of advisers as part of the Australian development cooperation program. Key principles include:

- Technical cooperation resources must be programmed to support an internally-led capacity development process that is rooted in national development priorities and planning processes;
- diversity, flexibility and innovation are considered to be key determinants of effective capacity development;
- Cross-sectoral challenges will require the formation and use of networks and cooperative alliances to identify obstacles and to develop responses;
- The sourcing of technical cooperation support will be a joint exercise under Government leadership.

Methodology

A total of 43 advisory positions funded from within the Australian development cooperation program were identified to be within the scope of the review (please see Attachment A for the Review's Terms of Reference and Attachment B for the full list of positions). These advisory positions relate to the following activities:

- Cambodian Criminal Justice Assistance Project (CCJAP): 14 positions
- Cambodian Agriculture Value Chain Project (CAVAC): 24 positions
- Cambodian Initiative for Disability Inclusion: 2 positions
- Australian Development Scholarships: 1 position
- Thematic advisers for AusAID's health and agriculture activities (located within the Australian Embassy): 2 positions

Each advisory position was assessed for its relevance and to ensure that it represents a value for money response to meeting Cambodia's development priorities.

Advisory positions within the Cambodian Initiative for Disability Inclusion were considered in this review. As the project commenced implementation in July 2010, the advisory positions were already considered as a high priority and endorsed in the project design phase with Cambodian Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation. A review of the effectiveness and relevance of these positions will be conducted in the second half of 2011.

REVIEW FINDINGS

Current use of Advisers in the Cambodia Program

CCJAP

CCJAP is currently in its third phase of implementation (the first phase commencing in 1998) and all project activities and advisory positions will finish at the end of January 2012.

The project has strong Cambodian Government ownership and is managed by a National Management Board, Chaired by a Secretary of State from the Cambodian Ministry of Interior. Membership includes senior government representatives from all national justice

sector institutions and the six partner provinces, AusAID, Australian Federal Police, DANIDA¹. The board meets twice a year and is the supreme decision making body for all project matters including the setting of strategic objectives and allocation of resources (including advisory inputs).

While project advisory positions (international and national) were initially approved through the design and tendering process conducted in 2006-07 they have been periodically revised to account for changing priorities within the project.

One significant change has been the transition from international advisers to one where local advisers provide the majority of support to strengthen individual, institutional and systems capacity in the justice sector.

This transition has been prompted by the change in direction of the project. CCJAP's original rationale as a nationally driven and focused program has gradually transformed into a community driven program (local government working with communities), supported by enabling policy and legal framework from national justice sector agencies. The mix of Advisers currently working for CCJAP3 reflects this shift and supports community safety, community justice and local justice administration (police, prisons and courts). This requires local advisers with a deep understanding of Cambodia's history, politics and culture and the sensitive issues involved in building links between local institutions and community stakeholders.

The local Advisers have developed capabilities to operate without the supervision of international advisers and their accountabilities are directly to their various Cambodian Government counterparts. The strategic direction for the program now comes from the National Management Board, but operates primarily at the sub national level.

Trends in Advisers during CCJAP3

Personnel	2008	2009	2010	%
International Long Term Adviser positions	5	4	3*	-60%
National Long Term Adviser positions	10	11	11	+29%
International Short-term Adviser positions	6	5	3	-50%
Flexible Support Fund International short term Adviser positions	4	4	0	-100%

* will reduce to 2 in early December 2010 with the recent resignation of the Deputy Team Leader/Corrections adviser. This position will revert to a national adviser position. Current advisory positions were jointly reviewed with a Cambodian Government representative nominated by the Chairman of the National Management Board. Interviews

¹ DANIDA is the Danish international aid agency

were conducted with National and Provincial counterparts and select District and Commune beneficiaries

The review found that 12 of the 14 advisory positions were rated as high priority against the criteria.

When asked to consider alternative uses of the funds, most counterparts valued the support of the local advisers above any alternative form of assistance. They were able to articulate the changes in their work and communities and gave credit to the approach of the adviser. In addition, they had confidence they were on the path to having sufficient capacity to sustain the changes with limited future assistance.

One local Adviser was rated as medium priority and another low priority.

- The adviser rated as medium priority is located with the Council for Legal and Judicial Reform and is valued primarily for his ability to access project resources and to provide logistical support to provincial discussions with civil society;
- The low rated Adviser was assigned to support the cross-cutting work of the project and while valued by the Deputy Team leader, had no counterpart or evidence of impact on project outcomes. This adviser position will be discontinued from the project.

CAVAC

CAVAC shares a similar management structure to the CCJAP3 activity. There is strong Government involvement in priority setting and resource allocation through a national project steering committee co-chaired by Secretaries of State from the Cambodian Ministries of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries and Water Resources and Metrology.

CAVAC has engaged six internationally-recruited advisers and 18 nationally-recruited advisers. All are involved in project management and capacity building roles.

Each adviser position was jointly considered and approved by the Cambodian Government and AusAID in March 2010 through agreement to the CAVAC Program Design Document and the Memorandum of Subsidiary Arrangements. There have been some minor changes since with the addition of an irrigation and water management specialist and the creation of a Cambodian Agricultural Research Fund Coordinator position.

It is too early to make an informed assessment of the ongoing relevance and value for money of each position. As part of the 2011 annual planning process however, the CAVAC National Steering Committee are considering the placement and objectives of each of the 24 advisory positions. The draft annual workplan for 2011 explicitly identifies advisory assistance and priorities and was jointly developed with Cambodian national and provincial Government officials. This workplan will be formally endorsed in December 2010.

Australian Development Scholarships

The Team Leader for the management of the Australian Development Scholarships is paid at a 0.4 Full Time Equivalent and has other duties associated with the Manager Contractor's work in Cambodia. The team leader is supported by administration staff in the management of the program and is responsible for the marketing and administration of the Australian scholarships program in Cambodia and support to students during the application and pre-departure processes.

The Cambodian Government counterpart for the Scholarship program is the Council for the Development of Cambodia. Working with AusAID, CDC agrees on the sectoral priorities for the annual scholarships program and represents the Cambodian Government on the scholarships selection panel.

The position is rated as a high priority noting its importance to the effective management of the scholarships program. The doubling of ADS scholarships in Cambodia from 25 to 50 was a high profile commitment made by Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and has high level support from the Cambodian Government. In addition to the management of this process it is recommended that the Team Leader work with CDC and AusAID to develop a strategy to strengthen the reintegration of scholarship returnees, a priority for future attention recommended in the 2009 scholarships tracer study.

AusAID Thematic Advisers

The AusAID country office engages two thematic advisers to provide technical advice on agriculture and rural development activities and health activities within the Australian development cooperation program. Both positions are assessed as being of high ongoing relevance.

An Agriculture and Rural Development Adviser provides technical advice and support to facilitate the effective management of AusAID's agriculture and rural development activities in Cambodia. The Adviser's contract was renewed in October 2010. As part of this renewal process we received positive feedback on strong and productive working relationships established with key representatives in the Cambodian government and other development partners. The adviser also provides critical technical advice that has enabled AusAID to take a formal leadership role representing development partners on the Technical Working Group on Agriculture and Water.

A Health Adviser provides technical advice and support to what is now the largest individual activity in the Australian development cooperation program in Cambodia. The Adviser also represents the health sector interests of the UK Department for International Development under delegated cooperation arrangements negotiated with AusAID. The previous Health adviser resigned effective 5 November 2010. Prior to his resignation the Adviser made a significant contribution to Australia's re-engagement in the health sector and has taken a lead role in implementing a multi-donor funded health sector support program. We are currently in the process of reviewing the terms of reference for this position and will consult with key counterparts in the Cambodian Ministry of Health.

Key Effectiveness Issues

The longevity of the CCJAP activity provides a useful long term perspective on the effectiveness of advisory positions and the degree to which they support the national development priorities of the Cambodian Government.

A high degree of consistency is apparent between the management of CCJAP adviser support and the Cambodian Government Guidelines on Technical Cooperation. CCJAP Advisers:

- Work to priorities and workplans that are developed with and require the endorsement of key Cambodian Government counterparts;
- have several counterparts across justice sector institutions at national, provincial and district level;
- are co-located with National and Provincial government offices;
- perform cross sectoral, facilitation roles across justice sector organisations and between justice sector organisations and communities that do not exist within the government system; and
- support implementation of government policies by using and strengthening government systems.

One observation made during the review is that for all national advisors who were promoted; those that did not remain working directly under the full-time supervision of an international adviser demonstrated quicker improved capacity to deliver on work plans and objectives, than those senior project officers that remained working with an international adviser for an extended period. The lesson learnt from this is that to achieve improved capacity and knowledge national project officers must be empowered and perhaps given earlier responsibility for implementation activities with periodic supervision rather than remain under the constant supervision of international advisers. It is important for international technical advisers to strive to build the capacity of their national project officers as a priority, rather than just delivering on the technical requirements of a work plan.

Recommendations

Commitment to adviser positions

1. That the current level of advisory inputs to Cambodia through the Australian Development Cooperation program to Cambodia should be maintained with the exception of one position in CCJAP3 which was rated a low priority and will be discontinued and by the end of January 2012, the remaining 13 advisory positions under CCJAP3 will be concluding.

Implications

An important element of the review is that it establishes baseline arrangements for the regular review and approval of future advisor positions funded under the Australian development cooperation program. The following future adviser reporting and approval processes are proposed:

- Inclusion on the Cambodia ODA database (maintained by the Council for the Development of Cambodia) of all adviser positions funded by the Australian development cooperation program; and the involvement of AusAID's main counterpart, the Council for Development of Cambodia in future reviews
- Jointly conducted annual reviews of adviser positions by representatives of the Australian development cooperation program and relevant line ministry counterparts from the Royal Government
- Endorsement of annual adviser reviews by the Council for the Development of Cambodia with particular reference to adherence towards the Guideline on the Provision and Management of Technical Cooperation;
- (for new adviser position terms of reference and contracts) specific mandated references to the Guideline on the Provision and Management of Technical Cooperation and the establishment of specific accountabilities to Cambodian Government counterparts

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

Australia's aid program focuses on building capacity in developing countries – the capacity of people, of organisations, of systems. Capacity – to participate in and contribute to economic growth, to perform the functions of government, to deliver services, to provide stable and secure communities – touches on virtually every aspect of development.

Capacity is built through transferring knowledge and skills. This can be done in many ways – through educational scholarships; through providing training courses and study tours for officials from developing countries; through research activities; and by using experts to advise and to work with counterparts in developing countries.

Historically, a large part of Australia's aid program has been delivered through technical assistance. This is primarily because Australia's aid program is concentrated in the fragile and conflict-affected countries of our region where government systems and capacity are weak and relevant expertise is not available locally. Thirty (30) of the countries that currently receive Australian aid are considered to be fragile. This financial year (2009-10), these countries are expected to receive over 57 per cent of our regional and bilateral aid program. However advisers are only one part of a broader mix of the responses available to strengthen partner country capacity.

Decisions about what the Australian aid program supports are made jointly with partner governments. This Review, to be conducted jointly with partner governments, will confirm that each adviser is the most effective, value-for-money response to meeting agreed needs and priorities.

Objectives and Scope

The review will examine the role that advisers play within each country program, and will focus on the contribution that those positions² make in meeting program objectives and outcomes. On the basis of this examination, the continued funding of adviser positions will be jointly considered with partner governments.

Informed decisions around the opportunity cost of, and therefore the priority attached to each position, will take into account a range of considerations including:

- value for money
- a clear articulation of the intended outcomes of the position (results)
- whether there are alternative or more cost-effective ways of achieving these intended outcomes, and
- an assessment of the relative importance of the position to the broader country program and bilateral relationship.

The review will also result in an agreed process for regularly reviewing the use of advisers and new requests for adviser positions.

² The review will be of the *position*, not the individual in the position – it will be important to be able to separate the position from the individual and to ensure that privacy considerations are taken into account.

The review will provide a baseline for the aid program on adviser usage and provide information along the following lines: in which countries is the use of advisers predominant? Which sectors rely heavily on advisers? What types of advisers is Australia using – independent consultants, whole-of-government deployees? What role are advisers playing – in-line, advisory? What types of organisations are advisers assisting – government, non-government, civil society, private sector?

The review will also contribute to more substantive changes to the way aid is delivered, increasing effectiveness and reducing reliance on long-term advisers.

Methodology and Timing

The review will be led by the senior AusAID officer in (each) country and involve representatives of partner government central and line agencies. Where possible existing program processes will provide a framework for the review (e.g. the Pacific Partnerships for Development in Pacific countries).

The review will cover all adviser positions³ which will be in place during the 2010/11 financial year (and beyond, if known).

PNG, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and East Timor have the highest proportion of advisers in their development assistance programs – they will be reviewed first.

The review will be completed by the end of the calendar year (2010). The initial four priority countries will be reviewed over the next 3 – 4 months.

Outputs / Actions

1. A report for each country, identifying key outcomes of the review discussions and agreed next steps. This will cover:
 - Decisions regarding the continuance or phasing out of positions
 - Implications for the redesign of any programs in which advisory positions have been agreed to be of a lower priority
 - An initial consideration of the contractual implications of these decisions⁴
 - Any suggested – or agreed – alternatives to advisory positions where these positions have been agreed to be of lower priority/cost-effectiveness
 - Agreed timeframes for the above actions
 - An agreed process for assessing future requests for advisers, including a nominated counterpart coordinating agency (to act as primary point of contact/dialogue in this regard).
2. A consolidated review report which:
 - Outlines the key findings of the review exercise, at a whole-of-aid-program level

³ A definition of “adviser” is provided at Annex A

⁴ A final position on the contractual and/or legal implications of these decisions will require detailed examination of contracts by specialist procurement/legal officers.

- Provides a set of recommendations for ensuring that, when requested and utilised, advisers are the most effective, value-for-money response to meeting agreed needs and priorities.

ANNEX 2: DEFINITION OF ADVISERS

The following definition should be used to identify advisory positions to be considered by the review.

Adviser: An adviser provides advice – to one or more interlocutors – on the strategic direction and/or implementation of Australian aid. This includes personnel that perform one or more the following functions:			
(1) <u>Based in-country</u> , provide technical expertise and advice to counterpart governments and/or other in-country development partners such as NGOs, churches	(2) <u>Based in-country</u> , provide technical expertise and advice to AusAID	(3) <u>Based in-country</u> , is engaged to provide leadership and oversight and/or technical inputs for the delivery of an AusAID activity	(4) <u>Based in Australia, a partner country or a third country</u> , provide short term technical inputs to counterpart governments, other development partners or AusAID
Methods of engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly by AusAID - Through a managing contractor - Whole of Government (WofG) deployee - Contracted by WofG agency using ODA funds 	Methods of engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly by AusAID on a commercial contract or a non-ongoing employment contract - Through a managing contractor 	Methods of engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through a managing contractor - Directly by AusAID 	Methods of engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Period offer/panels - Through a managing contractor - Directly by AusAID
Eg: Technical project/ program staff based in a counterpart office	Eg: Thematic adviser based in a Post	Eg: Team Leaders	Eg: Members of design or evaluation teams; short term project personnel.
Advisers are not: permanent/ongoing employees of AusAID; volunteers; administrative and logistical staff engaged under an AusAID program; or company representatives/head office staff of managing contractors or other implementing agencies.			