



Health Resource Facility

Review of AusAID support to the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) Establishment Support Program

Independent Progress Report

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December 2011

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Aid Activity Summary

< To be completed by the AusAID evaluation manager before template is provided to evaluation team. >

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| Aid Activity Name | Review of AusAID support to the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN Establishment Support Program) | | |
| AidWorks initiative number | | | |
| Commencement date | | Completion date | |
| Total Australian \$ | < AusAID and other Australian government contribution > | | |
| Total other \$ | < eg, including amount contributed by other partner donors, partner governments, etc > | | |
| Delivery organisation(s) | | | |
| Implementing Partner(s) | | | |
| Country/Region | | | |
| Primary Sector | | | |

Acknowledgments

The reviewer would like to thank AusAID, country partner and partner institution representatives and UQ for their time and input into the review. In addition thanks are offered to UQ and the AusAID Health Resource Facility for their facilitation and logistical support to the review process.

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Acronyms

| | |
|----------------|---|
| APMEN | Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network |
| AusAID | Australian Agency for International Development |
| BMGF | Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation |
| GHG | Global Health Group, University of San Francisco |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| <i>P.vivax</i> | <i>Plasmodium vivax</i> |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UQ | School of Population Health, University of Queensland |
| VFM | Value for Money |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

Executive Summary

The Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) was formally established at an inaugural meeting of partner governments and institutions in February 2009, at which the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) agreed to become a foundation donor. AusAID and University of Queensland (UQ) signed an initial two-year funding agreement (A\$3 million) in November 2009 for the APMEN Establishment Support Program (the 'Program'). The Program provides funding to UQ, as part of the Joint Secretariat. In April 2011, the funding agreement was extended at no-cost to December 2011 and AusAID and UQ are currently negotiating a further costed extension to the Funding Agreement (to June 2012).

The goal of APMEN is to develop and sustain a network of Country Partners and Partner Institutions to work collaboratively to address the challenges of malaria elimination in the Asia Pacific Region, with particular focus on the unique challenges for the Region, such as *Plasmodium vivax* (*P.vivax*). APMEN's strategic objectives are to: share information and develop expert consensus on issues relating to malaria elimination; support country decision making through building of the evidence base for malaria elimination; increase expertise and capacity to carry out elimination activities; provide leadership and advocacy; facilitate support for emerging priorities; and develop a governance structure suitable for the network and provide Secretariat support to enable the efficient work of APMEN.

An Independent Progress Report of the Program was undertaken by an Independent Consultant in October – November 2011. The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- assess UQ's performance in providing secretariat functions under the Program against AusAID's eight evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender equality, monitoring and evaluation and analysis and learning);
- assess the effectiveness of the existing funding mechanism for the Program; and
- provide a list of key issues and recommendations to be addressed for any future program

The focus of the evaluation is on the performance of UQ, its management and operations, and the extent to which it meets the quality standards established by AusAID. The evaluation does not examine APMEN activities nor address technical malaria issues.

The Program's partner-led design supports the aid-effectiveness principles of partnership and collaboration, promoting ownership and sustainability and it is firmly based on previous learning and the analysis of global, regional and institutional malaria elimination experiences. AusAID support for the Program is consistent with Australian Government strategic goals, anticipated future engagement of the Australian Government with the global and regional malaria agendas and its commitment to supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Overall, the Program contract is very well managed by UQ and UQ meets its contractual obligations. The Secretariat is fulfilling its responsibility for managing the Networks secretarial, clerical and administrative affairs and is playing a critical role in driving the Network and supporting it to achieve its expected outcomes. Robust Program and financial management systems are in place and the Secretariat shares information about its activity budget with the Network to promote transparency and inform Network planning and decision-making. The Secretariat has been proactive in emphasising the critical role of the country partners within APMEN and the

arrangements that have been put in place by the Secretariat provide the mechanism for Country Partners to report and provide feedback to APMEN. However a review of the extent to which the country partners are active or proactive participants in the Network is outside the scope of this evaluation. At this point in the implementation period, it is evident that the Secretariat plays a critical role in driving the APMEN agenda. Without a strong Secretariat it is unlikely that the Network would be sustained.

As well as providing the Secretariat function, UQ are also an implementing partner with responsibility for the implementation of specific APMEN activities within the contract and it is important to acknowledge that this obviously has an impact on issues such as workload. There is overwhelming feedback that the staffing levels at UQ are inadequate to meet the current workload demands of APMEN and that they will be totally inadequate as the work undertaken by APMEN expands.

APMEN is responsible for identifying funding sources to sustain the outcomes of the Program and so far some 'in-kind' contributions have been made but progress to date suggests that it is highly unlikely that sufficient funds will have been identified to sustain APMEN on conclusion of the AusAID program of support.

The Program does not have its own specific objectives and instead shares APMEN's goal and objectives which were developed by APMEN during the participatory design process. The challenge identified for AusAID is how it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of partner performance to ensure the quality of outputs and determine the impact of the investment made. A lesson for similar programs in the future is that a monitoring and evaluation framework must be in place that allows AusAID to demonstrate the value for money and impact of its investment, whilst at the same time allowing its partner to determine its own goals and objectives.

A number of recommendations for future programs are made but the key ones relate to the sustainability and monitoring and evaluation criteria, namely:

- *The Program should have its own objectives against progress which can be monitored and evaluated and these should be made explicit in the next funding agreement.*
- *The Secretariat should encourage APMEN to identify specific activities to secure future funding during the next annual planning cycle.*
- *The GHG financial contribution to APMEN should be made explicit and the country partner and partner institutions 'in-kind' contributions should be quantified to enable APMEN to identify true operating costs.*
- *A comprehensive review of APMEN should include an evaluation of the level of stakeholder ownership as this is critical for determining the likely sustainability of Program outcomes.*
- *APMEN's strategy for gradually decreasing its dependence on AusAID support should be agreed and clearly described in the design of future Programs.*
- *The arrangements for evaluating the Program on conclusion of the current contract should be agreed by APMEN and AusAID and arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of future Programs should be explicitly stated in the relevant documentation*
- *Consideration should be given to agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding between APMEN and AusAID as a mechanism for establishing monitoring and evaluation arrangements.*

Evaluation Criteria Ratings

| Evaluation Criteria | Rating (1-6) | Explanation |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| Relevance | 5 | The Program is strongly relevant to AusAID's strategic goals and program design is underpinned by aid-effectiveness principles. |
| Effectiveness | 5 | The Secretariat is critical in driving the APMEN agenda and supporting the achievement of its outcomes. |
| Efficiency | 5 | The Secretariat delivers good value for money. Robust Program management systems are in place and contractual obligations are met. |
| Sustainability | 3 | It is unlikely that sufficient funds will have been identified to sustain APMEN on conclusion of the AusAID program of support. |
| Gender Equality | 6 | Sound effort has been made to mainstream gender equality and all contractual obligations are met. |
| Monitoring & Evaluation | 3 | The Program shares APMEN's objectives and this presents a challenge for AusAID to ensure the quality of the outcomes that it funds and for APMEN to demonstrate that the resources provided are used efficiently and effectively in accordance with its objectives, that the outputs meet agreed quality standards and ultimately that the investment made is having an impact. |
| Analysis & Learning | 6 | Program design is firmly based on previous learning and analysis. |

Rating scale: 6 = very high quality; 1 = very low quality. Below 4 is less than satisfactory.

1. Introduction

Activity Background

The Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) is a network of partner governments, donor organisations and public health, academic and private sector institutions in the Asia Pacific region. It was formally established at an inaugural meeting of partner governments and institutions in February 2009, at which the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) agreed to become a foundation donor. The University of Queensland (UQ) was commissioned by AusAID to support APMEN in designing a program of support. Following a number of design and quality assurance processes, including an appraisal peer review, AusAID and UQ signed an initial two-year funding agreement (A\$3 million) in November 2009 for the APMEN Establishment Support Program (the 'Program'). The Program provides funding to UQ, as part of the Joint Secretariat. The Joint Secretariat comprises UQ School of Population Health and the University of California Global Health Group (GHG). In this report 'Joint Secretariat' refers to UQ and GHG, 'Secretariat' refers to UQ alone. GHG receives funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). The Program also provides funding for a significant number of APMEN activities. In April 2011, the funding agreement was extended at no-cost to December 2011 and AusAID and UQ are currently negotiating a further costed extension to June 2012.

The goal of APMEN is to develop and sustain a network of Country Partners and Partner Institutions to work collaboratively to address the challenges of malaria elimination in the Asia Pacific Region, with particular focus on the unique challenges for the Region, such as *Plasmodium vivax* (*P.vivax*). The Network has identified the following strategic objectives:

1. Share information and develop expert consensus on issues relating to malaria elimination, in order to support policy and decision making at the country level.
2. Support country decision making through building of the evidence base for malaria elimination, with a particular focus on *Plasmodium vivax*.
3. Increase expertise and capacity to carry out elimination activities through guidance, training, and sharing of experiences.
4. Provide leadership and advocacy for malaria elimination in the region by expanding international and domestic awareness, funding and support.
5. Facilitate support for emerging priorities for malaria elimination especially in the Asia Pacific Regions.
6. Develop a governance structure suitable for the network and provide Secretariat support of governance infrastructure and smooth coordination and to enable efficient work of Network.

AusAID's objectives in funding the Program are to support a country-led forum for exchange of lessons and ideas on malaria elimination, and to strengthen AusAID's links with partner governments and health research agencies in the Asia Pacific region.

Evaluation Objectives and Questions

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- assess UQ's performance in providing secretariat functions under the Program against AusAID's eight evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender equality, monitoring and evaluation and analysis and learning);
- assess the effectiveness of the existing funding mechanism for the Program; and
- provide a list of key issues and recommendations to be addressed for any future program.

The evaluation provides ratings against each evaluation criterion according to the following table:

| Satisfactory | | Less than satisfactory | |
|--------------|---|------------------------|---|
| 6 | Very high quality; needs ongoing management and monitoring only | 3 | Less than adequate quality; needs work to improve in core areas |
| 5 | Good quality; needs minor work to improve in some areas | 2 | Poor quality; needs major work to improve |
| 4 | Adequate quality; needs some work to improve | 1 | Very poor quality; needs major overhaul |

Evaluation Scope and Methods

In addition to its contribution to the Joint Secretariat function UQ also provides technical inputs into a number of Program activities. However the focus of this evaluation is on the performance of UQ in regard to the management and operations of the Secretariat function only, and the extent to which it meets the quality standards established by AusAID. The evaluation does not examine APMEN activities nor address technical malaria issues. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation are attached at Annex 1. The timetable for the evaluation is as follows:

| Date | Action |
|----------|---|
| 17/10/11 | Review key documents and AusAID briefing |
| 19/10/11 | Develop brief evaluation plan and agree with AusAID |
| 24/10/11 | Implementation of the evaluation plan |
| 1/11/11 | Present and discuss initial findings with AusAID and UQ |
| 14/11/11 | Submit draft Independent Progress Review report |
| 21/11/11 | Participate in Peer Review Process |
| 1/12/11 | Submit final Independent Progress Review report |

The evaluation has included the review of a comprehensive set of Program documents identified in the ToR for the evaluation, which fed into the development of an evaluation plan and guided the selection of interview topics. The list of documents reviewed is attached at Annex 2. The collection of data from key respondents provides an opportunity to triangulate information provided in Program documents, and solicit the views of a wide range of stakeholders. Respondents were invited to participate, selected purposefully in consultation with AusAID and UQ to provide a range of perspectives, while taking into consideration geographic location and their availability during the timeframe of the evaluation. Details of the stakeholders interviewed are attached at Annex 3. The major limitation was the availability of stakeholders during the evaluation period however every effort was made to ensure that respondents for all key stakeholders groups were included in interviews.

In depth semi-structured interviews were undertaken and interview topics were tailored for each stakeholder in order to ensure breadth of feedback and make the process less onerous for interviewees, whilst ensuring sufficient data was obtained to answer the key questions presented in the ToR. Most interviews were conducted by phone. Notes were taken during interviews and subsequently analysed to enable conclusions to be drawn. Supplementary documentation was collected during the review as evidence of data reported by stakeholders. The data collected provides the framework for the evaluation report.

2. Evaluation Findings

Relevance

AusAID support for the Program is consistent with Australian Government strategic goals articulated in 'An Effective Aid Program for Australia – Making a real difference – Delivering real results' (2011), specifically the core strategic goal of 'Saving Lives'. It is relevant to anticipated future engagement of the Australian Government with the global and regional malaria agendas. It also remains highly relevant to the commitment of the Australian Government to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, specifically Goal 6 which aims to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The Program design is underpinned by the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, results and mutual accountability.

APMEN focuses on malaria elimination which is one of three components of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Malaria Action Plan and is promoted by the Roll Back Malaria Partnership. Elimination is included as one of the overall goals of the WHO Western Pacific Regional Organisation and the South East Asian Regional Organisation malaria strategies. The Program is relevant in that it provides funding to address the challenges of malaria elimination in the region with a specific focus on *Plasmodium vivax* (*P.vivax*) which is a defining feature of malaria in the region compared to any other region in the world. *P.vivax* is less vulnerable to elimination efforts and tools to diagnose and manage infections are less well developed, requiring more targeted research and development. This is a focal area for the Program and around one third of the overall Program budget is directed towards this issue.

APMEN is linked to the Malaria Elimination Group's advocacy for countries working towards elimination but focuses on specific regional issues and goals. It spans two WHO regions (Western Pacific Regional Office and South East Asia Regional Office) and aims to assist and complement WHO's collaboration and sharing across the regions.

The Program does not have its own specific goals or objectives and instead it shares APMEN's objectives and it collects data and reports progress against these six APMEN objectives in Program reports. The ToR for this evaluation identify that AusAID's objectives in funding the Program are to support a country-led forum for exchange of lessons and ideas on malaria elimination, and to strengthen AusAID's links with partner governments and health research agencies in the Asia Pacific region. This is not clearly articulated anywhere else in Program documentation but, given the partner-led design, the Program does give AusAID a vehicle to achieve these objectives. A clearer statement of AusAID's objectives in supporting the Program would assist monitoring and evaluation.

Rating: 5

Recommendation 1: *The next phase of the Program should have its own objectives against which progress can be monitored and evaluated and these should be made explicit in the next funding agreement.*

Effectiveness

The Program aims to provide support to Country Partners in implementing their malaria strategies and the review of APMEN documents suggests that the Program does provide either direct or indirect support to Country Partner elimination

strategies, but the extent to which this has been achieved has not been investigated in accordance with the scope of the evaluation.

It is evident that the Secretariat is playing a critical role in driving the Network and supporting it to achieve its expected outcomes. The Program provides APMEN with an effective Secretariat which is fulfilling its responsibility for managing the Networks secretarial, clerical and administrative affairs. All stakeholders interviewed expressed a very high level of satisfaction with the support provided by the Secretariat and state that the Network would not function without it.

The responsibilities of the Joint Secretariat and the roles and functions of the two Secretariat agencies are clearly articulated in the both the Activity Design Document and the Governance Document. There is consensus amongst the stakeholders interviewed that the roles are very clear and there is no confusion about responsibilities. UQ acts as the main point of contact for all stakeholders and then GHG inputs are sought as required. There is a good working relationship and both parties report that communication arrangements work well.

The Secretariat has facilitated the agreement and establishment of governance structures, and has had an important role in establishing and strengthening communication mechanisms and in facilitating almost all Network activities. Governance arrangements are appropriately operationalized and agreed. Communication, consultation, decision-making and approval processes are adhered to.

UQ takes responsibility for planning and execution of APMEN meetings and stakeholders report that the meetings are efficient, effective, productive and very well managed. The Secretariat evaluates each meeting and incorporates any changes necessary in response to the feedback received. For example, the structure of the annual meeting has been changed in response to feedback to include a separate meeting specifically for Country Partners in advance of the business meeting to ensure that they have the opportunity to consider whether or not the proposed work plan sufficiently addresses issues at country level.

The Network has requested more 'face-to-face' interaction than just the annual meeting and so the Secretariat has endeavoured to support additional APMEN meetings as the opportunity arises, for example arranging additional meetings when Partners are at other malaria events. This has increased the level of interaction whilst keeping meeting costs as low as possible.

There is evidence that the Secretariat has been proactive in emphasising the critical role of the Country Partners within APMEN, for example strengthening mechanisms for communication, facilitating their engagement and contribution to APMEN meetings, ensuring their representation in APMEN governance structures and their involvement in planning and decision making activities. The arrangements provide the mechanism for Country Partners to report and provide feedback to APMEN. However, although these arrangements are in place, it is not possible to determine the extent to which the country partners are active or proactive participants in the Network within the scope of this evaluation.

Recommendation 2: *The contribution of APMEN to supporting country partner strategies should be evaluated by the Network as part of its monitoring and evaluation framework.*

A web site has been established as a tool for sharing information collated by APMEN and the number of 'hits' on the site are reported to be increasing. All APMEN documentation such as draft reports, policies, work plans etc. are shared with Country Partners in order to solicit their inputs. Extensive briefing notes and background documents are prepared by the Secretariat in advance of the APMEN

meetings so that Country Partners are able to make informed decisions at the meeting. Almost all stakeholders commented on the volume of documentation provided by the Secretariat for their consideration, but acknowledge that this is necessary to give them the opportunity to participate fully in the meetings, and that this is important given the limited opportunity for APMEN to bring the Partners together.

According to the Activity Design Document a specific objective of the Network relevant to this review is to 'develop a governance structure suitable for the network and provide Secretariat support of governance infrastructure and smooth coordination and to enable efficient work of the network'. The Program uses the APMEN annual work plan to direct the activities of the Secretariat, but the process objectives and indicators/deliverables identified in the annual work plan do not entirely reflect the Network intended outcomes presented in the Activity Design document, for example the 2011 work plan does not identify an objective or activity to secure funds to support APMEN activities.

Recommendation 3: The Secretariat should encourage APMEN to identify specific activities to secure future funding during the next annual planning cycle.

An objective of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the existing funding mechanism for the Program and recommend alternative options for future support if appropriate. Evaluation findings suggest that the existing funding mechanism is both appropriate and effective in respect of the Secretariat, but it is not possible to determine whether or not it is effective across the wider Program given the limited scope of this evaluation.

Rating: 5

Efficiency

Utilisation of time and resources

Although this review focuses only on UQ's performance in respect of its Secretariat function it is important to acknowledge UQ responsibilities for a much wider range of activities and this obviously has an impact on issues such as workload.

The Program provides funding for:

- APMEN's governance structures and the Secretariat through its support of UQ as part of the APMEN Joint-Secretariat
- Specific APMEN activities identified in the APMEN annual work plan including the award of research grants and fellowships, training; the Vivax Working Groups and its activities, the Vector Working Group and its activities, study tours, communication and information sharing etc.
- An Emerging Priorities Fund to respond to emerging or urgent issues.

UQ have responsibility for the delivery of outcomes in all three areas. As well as providing the Secretariat function they are also an implementing partner with responsibility for the implementation of specific APMEN activities within the contract. It is not clear whether or not it was a deliberate decision to combine the two roles when the Program was designed or whether other models were considered, for example having a technical agency for the activities and another agency to provide Secretariat support. The combining of the two roles has the potential to create a situation where the boundaries between providing technical and Secretariat inputs becomes blurred, but UQ are very aware of this and are proactive in ensuring their 'neutrality' in respect of the Secretariat function. The Program Manager and Program Officer are not malaria technical experts.

Program management

Overall, the Program contract is very well managed by UQ. Robust management systems and processes are in place and the Secretariat has facilitated the development of a number of key policies and guidelines as stipulated in the contract. These are listed at Annex 4. The Secretariat produces high quality Program documents. Financial reporting is undertaken in accordance with contractual requirements. The contract only requires independent financial audit to be undertaken on conclusion of the Program but, because UQ systems are audited annually, there can be confidence in the financial management systems that are in place. Program funding is managed under an individual UQ grant number meaning that Program funds can easily be accounted for.

The Secretariat has invested heavily in ensuring efficient communication within APMEN, both formally and informally. Although this has had implications for the Secretariat's workload this investment has been critical in ensuring implementation of the work plan and in building relationships to help the Network become established.

Whilst the Joint Secretariat arrangement could be potentially complex, as noted in the AusAID Quality at Entry document, there have been no significant problems in implementation.

Sub-contracting arrangements

As envisaged at design stage, Menzies School of Health are sub-contracted by UQ to run all the Vivax related activities in the APMEN work plan. This covers around one-third of the total Program budget. The Menzies contract is effectively managed by UQ and both contract parties and stakeholders interviewed express satisfaction with the arrangements. However there are no performance indicators for the contract other than to perform the work set out in the Activity Design Document and the APMEN annual work plan. This makes monitoring and evaluation difficult. Future sub-contracts should include performance indicators and some articulation of quality standards.

Budget management

GHG receives funding for its activities from BMGF and GHG. Activities within APMEN are part of a wider program of activities being implemented by GHG with funding from BMGF. GHG takes responsibility for funds made available from BMGF and UQ takes responsibility for funds made available from AusAID. The extent of the funding available for GHG led activities is not known by AusAID, UQ or the Network and is therefore not reflected in the overall APMEN budget. This means that APMEN does not have full access to information about the costs associated with the implementation of activities. UQ does share its budget information regarding activities with APMEN allowing the Network to make informed decisions about the allocation of resources; however the lack of information from GHG means that overall funding arrangements are not completely transparent.

Recommendation 4: *The GHG financial contribution to APMEN should be made explicit and the country partner and partner institutions 'in-kind' contributions should be quantified to enable APMEN to identify true operating costs.*

By the end of the current extension period (December 2011) UQ forecasts a \$700,000 underspend. It has been agreed with AusAID this will be carried forward and an additional \$429,000 made available for a costed extension (total \$1.129 million) to cover the period from January 2012-June 2012. The extension period provides for activities already agreed in the current work plan. In order to meet the timescales of the APMEN annual planning cycle AusAID will need to have notified

the APMEN Board about further funding arrangements by December 2011 if gaps in the implementation of activities are to be avoided after July 2012.

Recommendation 5: *In order to meet the timescales of the APMEN annual planning cycle AusAID will need to have notified the APMEN Board about further funding arrangements by December 2011 if gaps in implementation are to be avoided after July 2012.*

Staffing resources

The roles of the Joint Secretariat are outlined in the Activity Design Document and responsibilities between the two organisations are described in the APMEN Governance Document. Although this review has not looked at the Secretariat support provided by GHG it is noted that, according to the Activity Design Document and the Governance Document, the majority of responsibility, and therefore workload, rests with UQ. UQ inputs into managing activities have exceeded those envisaged at design stage when it was anticipated that most activities would need little management inputs. This has not proved to be the case.

The UQ part of the Secretariat comprises two full time staff (a Program Manager and a Program Officer) and a Program Director who has 20% inputs and is part of the 'in-kind' contribution from UQ. Other inputs, for example human resource, finance and legal expertise, are covered by the UQ overhead. These inputs are likely to have exceeded those anticipated at the design stage but given that they were associated with the initial setting up of Secretariat systems and regulations at the beginning of the Program it is not anticipated that the same level of inputs will be needed with future programs.

There is overwhelming feedback from the Country Partner and Partner Institutions representatives interviewed that the staffing levels at UQ are inadequate to meet the demands of APMEN now and that they will be totally inadequate as the work undertaken by APMEN and its membership expands. At design stage it was envisaged that the UQ role would be to provide Secretariat support to APMEN rather than the individual activities, other than the Vivax Working Group, and that planned activities would be self-supporting. This has not been the case and UQ inputs into supporting and driving forward implementation has been, and remains, significant. It is noted that the Program funds three full-time equivalent staff for the Vivax component in comparison to the two staff funded at UQ. Menzies provides the Secretariat function for most - but not all - Vivax activities.

APMEN has already requested that funding is identified from within the available budget to increase the UQ Secretariat staffing by 0.5 full-time equivalents, although this has not been agreed given that AusAID set parameters for Secretariat costs when the funding was originally identified. It is evident that the demands of the current workload are only being met through the personal commitment of Secretariat staff. This is not sustainable in the long term and does not reflect the true operating costs for the provision of an effective Secretariat or management of APMEN activities.

The fact that Partners contribute to APMEN on a voluntary basis means that the current level of demand on the Secretariat workload is not likely to change in the future. As more countries and partner institutions join APMEN the Secretariat workload will increase and as APMEN matures it is likely to want to take on a wider range of activities – all of which have implications for the workload and staffing requirements of the Secretariat. This was not adequately assessed or addressed at design stage but will need to be given full consideration for the next Program.

Recommendation 6: *The Secretariat workload should be reviewed by APMEN and funding for additional staff identified from other sources. Alternatively the review should determine how the existing workload can be better distributed across the Network.*

Responsiveness to changing need

During the Program design AusAID stipulated the allocation of specific funds in three areas of the Program namely: the Secretariat, the Vivax Working Group and the annual meetings. These three areas have ring-fenced funds and expenditure ceilings but UQ is authorised to adjust funds allocated across other budget lines in order to be responsive and flexible to the needs of the Network in line with the agreed work plan. This arrangement has been implemented efficiently and stakeholders report that this has enabled the Secretariat to be responsive to APMEN needs, for example increasing the allocation of funding for emerging priorities from an underspend on the Vector Working Group and the research grants. Some planned expenditure has been less than anticipated because of the strong dollar, whilst others have been greater because of higher than anticipated in-country costs (for example activities in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea).

Delays in implementation

There have been some minor delays in implementation thus far. There was some delay in signing the original Program contract which resulted in a 6-month delay in commencing a number of activities within the timeframe presented in the Activity Design Document and the merging of the inception phase into the planned Year 1 timeframe. UQ experienced some delays in appointing staff to the Secretariat in order to comply with the University's human resource processes but during this time the Program Director used resources from her own office to start some of the planned activities and arrange the annual meeting pending staff in post.

The agreement of the contract with Menzies School of Health was delayed because of issues of intellectual property rights, but this is now resolved with the agreement of a Deed of Amendment and work is progressing. The contracting delays were not detrimental to the APMEN work plan as Menzies commenced work pending the contract being finalised.

Despite these delays all planned activities are now underway and it has been agreed that completion of any outstanding activities from the 2011 work plan will be carried forward to the January – June 2012 extension period.

Risk management

The Activity Design Document presents a risk management matrix however a number of critical risks identified in the text of the document are not incorporated into the matrix, in particular the strategic risks. The matrix is reviewed as part of the annual planning process but this is undertaken by the Secretariat rather than the Network. There is no evidence that it has been updated since Program design as it is not included in Program report. However, it is noted that the matrix presented in the Activity Design Document identifies risks for APMEN rather than the Program and does not identify any risks for AusAID.

Recommendation 7: *The Secretariat should encourage APMEN to review its risk management matrix as part of the annual planning cycle*

Recommendation 8: *A risk management matrix specific to the Program, rather than to APMEN itself, should be developed as part of the next Funding Agreement.*

Value for Money

The resources available to the Secretariat are efficiently managed and every effort is made to ensure cost-efficiency. Combining UQ's Secretariat and technical roles has reduced management costs and ensured effective coordination and, given that this was not raised as an issue by stakeholders interviewed, the arrangement seems to be working well. From an operational perspective there are no indications that this arrangement needs to be changed in the next funding round although it does produce significant challenges for monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the Secretariat role in isolation from the performance of APMEN itself.

The AusAID investment in the Secretariat in terms of human resource inputs offers Value for Money (VFM) but it is not possible to determine the VFM of activities which are implemented by the Secretariat, for example the research grants, fellowships, study tours, training etc. as these are not reviewed within the scope of this evaluation.

Rating: 5

Impact

At this stage in the implementation period it is difficult to determine the impact of the Program and an evaluation of the impact of the Network itself so far is beyond the scope of this review. However, the Secretariat has clearly had a critical role in driving the APMEN agenda and facilitating its achievements to date, and is the 'glue' holding the Network together at this point in time. The Network is now established and operating within an agreed governance framework. An annual planning cycle is in place and work plans agreed. The Network is meeting regularly, its scope of work is increasing and the Network is growing. This would not have been possible without support from the Program.

It will be difficult for APMEN to evaluate impact within the current monitoring and evaluation framework and therefore, because the Program uses the same framework, this will also provide a challenge in evaluating the contribution that the Program has made towards that impact. There are no goal level indicators to help determine the extent to which achieving the strategic objectives has contributed to the overall goal. This is considered further under the Monitoring and Evaluation criteria.

Recommendations: See recommendations against Monitoring and Evaluation criteria.

Rating: Not evaluated

Sustainability

The participatory approach used during the Program design stage is an important mechanism for promoting ownership and sustainability. Stakeholders interviewed showed varying degrees of engagement with APMEN but an evaluation of the extent to which there is true ownership of APMEN is beyond the scope of this review. This should be evaluated more comprehensively by APMEN as this is a critical factor for ensuring sustainability of the outcomes of the Program and APMEN itself.

Recommendation 9: *A comprehensive review of APMEN should include an evaluation of the level of stakeholder ownership as this is critical for determining the likely sustainability of Program outcomes.*

A specific APMEN objective is to increase expertise and capacity to carry out elimination activities but the Activity Design Document does not include an

assessment of capacity building needs. Activities to achieve the objective are identified in the annual work plan and are reported in annual Program reports but the emphasis is on building APMEN technical capacity rather than Program management capacity, which is an important aspect of sustainability for the Network. Relevant Program management skills might include issues such as business planning, performance management and monitoring and evaluation for example. This should be addressed as part of future Program design.

Recommendation 10: *The role of the Secretariat in building Network Program management capacity should be assessed and articulated in the design of future programs.*

The Activity Design Document considers financial sustainability and states that the sustainability of APMEN will depend on its ability to attract funding beyond the five-year foundation period. The contract gives responsibility for seeking on-going donor funding to the Joint Secretariat along with the Advisory Board and Network members, but the Governance Document and the Activity Design Document more specifically identifies this as a responsibility of GHG.

The Secretariat has now established management systems, for example business planning processes, policies and guidelines, that are sustainable and can be used by APMEN and its Secretariat in the future with only minor contextual adjustments. A group session focusing on sustainability called 'Advocacy and Resourcing the Network' was held at the most recent annual meeting and both the Network and the Secretariat are very aware of the need to explore and secure other funding sources and are monitoring opportunities to secure funding from Country Partners as well as other regional opportunities. In particular discussions have taken place with a number of countries who may be able to provide financial support to APMEN, including Brunei, Malaysia and Democratic People's Republic of Korea but to date contributions are limited, and they are contributions towards supporting APMEN activities rather than contributions towards supporting the Secretariat. UQ are aware of the demands that additional activities will place on its workload and are exploring ways in which the planning for future activities can include a component of support for the secretariat function for those activities, but as yet a mechanism for this has not been identified.

Recommendation 11: *A mechanism for including Secretariat support in the design of new activities should be identified.*

Some 'in kind' contributions are being provided by some Country Partners and Partner Institutions but they are inadequate for supporting activities without the inputs from the Program. Almost all APMEN activities are directly funded from the Program. Support for activities from other agencies is reported to be growing, but as yet contributions – particularly financial contributions – are minimal.

APMEN does not yet have sufficient capacity or resources to sustain any of the activities or functions currently supported by the Program. Some individual APMEN activities could be partially sustained by the Network with some financial and 'in-kind' contributions but governance arrangements cannot currently be sustained without Program support. The stakeholders interviewed do recognise that AusAID support is not indefinite, and that the remainder of the current 5 year program will be a critical time for ensuring sustainability.

AusAID and BMGF via GHG fund all activities in the APMEN work plan but it is now apparent that the level of funding made available from GHG to support APMEN activities will be less than anticipated. Whilst GHG remain committed to delivering planned inputs, their capacity to support expanded activities as the Country Partner

demand increases will be challenged. This demonstrates the level of APMEN's dependency on AusAID funding.

The Activity Design Document does not describe the strategy whereby APMEN will gradually transition from its current high level of dependency on AusAID support to a situation where less support is needed. This should be addressed in future programs, ensuring that this process is integrated into the APMEN planning cycle and annual work plan, rather than it being a stand-alone activity in the final few months of the 5-year Program. The process of agreeing such a strategy will help to emphasise that AusAID support is not indefinite and it will also provide a framework for discussions about future programs of support.

Recommendation 12: *APMEN's strategy for gradually decreasing its dependence on AusAID support, and the specific activities it will undertake to achieve this, should be agreed and clearly described in the design of future Programs.*

Rating: 3

Gender Equality

The Activity Design Document considers the wider gender equality issues for APMEN and how these can best be addressed through Network activities but an evaluation of progress in this respect is beyond the scope of this review.

APMEN itself does not have a specific gender equality policy, but the Secretariat has appropriately facilitated the mainstreaming of gender within all activities supported by the Program. It is part of the Network Governance framework and relevant APMEN policies and guidelines. The Secretariat collects gender disaggregated Program data, for example on training participants, recipients of fellowships, and attendance at meetings although this is not routinely reported in the APMEN annual report.

Recommendation 13: *Annual reports should present gender disaggregated data where appropriate.*

Network representatives are predominantly male but given that they are nominated by their relevant organisations or countries the gender balance of the APMEN membership cannot be directly influenced by the Secretariat. However, the Secretariat is able to provide a number of examples where it has taken steps to strengthen the engagement of women members for example identifying female facilitators at meetings and training events, encouraging young women as members of the various research teams and encouraging female representatives to chair sessions at the annual meetings. Where women have undertaken the role of Chair the Secretariat has informally provided additional support to help build individual capacity where necessary. The Secretariat advocates for the Network to emphasise gender needs for example when supporting the development of country strategic plans, as a mechanism for helping to develop Country Partner understanding of gender issues and promote gender equality. The Secretariat believes that the new APMEN activities related to community participation will provide the greatest opportunity for strengthening a gender based approach to implementation.

The recruitment and selection of Secretariat staff was undertaken in accordance with UQ human resource policies which fully conform to the Australian legislative framework. UQ staff interviewed demonstrate a high level of awareness about gender issues and are proactive in advocating gender equality where appropriate.

The Program meets all its contractual obligations for gender equality.

Rating: 6

Monitoring and Evaluation

During the participatory planning processes that supported the establishment of APMEN and the design of the Program a set of objectives were developed and adopted by the Network. These are the objectives presented in APMEN documents and they form the basis of the annual work plan. Both APMEN and the Program collect data and the Secretariat reports to the Board and to AusAID against these objectives. However, the objectives agreed by APMEN are predominantly process objectives and there are no indicators identified at goal level. This means that it will be difficult for APMEN to demonstrate impact or the Program to demonstrate what its contribution has been. Given that APMEN is a partner led initiative it is not appropriate for AusAID to impose a monitoring and evaluation framework on the Network but AusAID does need to know whether or not there has been any impact as a result of its investment. As a pragmatic solution, in the absence of an independent external review, this could comprise a desk-based rapid assessment and evaluation undertaken by a small team of APMEN representatives which is coordinated by the Secretariat. In addition it may also be a useful tool to help APMEN to secure other sources of funding. UQ has the necessary skills to support APMEN in designing and implementing the activity and therefore external support will not be required. The assessment method could be included in the 2012 APMEN work plan, pending approval at the next annual meeting. The report on the findings will assist AusAID in evaluating the Program on conclusion of the next funding round.

Recommendation 14: *AusAID and the Secretariat propose to APMEN that it undertakes an impact assessment that will provide critical data to allow both APMEN and AusAID to evaluate impact.*

During the peer review of the Activity Design Document AusAID added a number of expected outcomes at Program level for APMEN and the Secretariat but these were not accepted by APMEN and therefore the Secretariat currently only reports against the original APMEN objectives. Contractually, the Program is still required to report on the additional Program level outcomes even though they are not accepted by APMEN, a number of them are not under the control of APMEN per se, and reporting against these outcomes will duplicate existing country level reporting to WHO.

Recommendation 15: *The contractual monitoring and evaluation requirements need to be clarified and the contract amended accordingly. This should be addressed when the new contract amendment (for the costed extension) is prepared.*

As previously stated, the Program does not have its own specific goals or objectives and instead it shares APMEN's objectives - it collects data and reports progress against these six objectives in Program reports. This is appropriate in terms of the partner-led design but it does present challenges for AusAID in monitoring and evaluating the Program specifically. In the absence of specific Program objectives it is not possible to look at all the Program documents and determine whether or not the Program is achieving its objectives, only whether or not APMEN is achieving them.

The contractual requirements for monitoring and evaluation are not clear. The Activity Design Document identifies that a Mid Term Review would be undertaken during 2011. The contract states that the Joint Secretariat roles and the hosting of the Secretariat will be independently appraised and evaluated by APMEN during, (interpreted by stakeholders as Mid Term) and at the end of the initial 5-year term. It also states that AusAID will undertake an Independent Progress Review (proposed for November 2010) but it is not clear if this was intended to be a review of the whole

Program or a review of the Secretariat only. The contract does not specify if AusAID will evaluate the Program on conclusion of the current contract. The contract states that this and other monitoring and evaluation activities or reviews will be undertaken at AusAID's cost.

The options for reviewing the Program were presented to the Network by an AusAID representative at the 2011 annual meeting for their consideration. The decision was taken to undertake a limited evaluation only of the Secretariat function. Because APMEN were presented with options by AusAID this evaluation is being interpreted by APMEN stakeholders as both the Independent Progress Review and Mid Term Review, with the two terms being used interchangeably.

The critical issues are that APMEN does not currently have any specific monitoring and evaluation arrangements in place, nor are there currently any arrangements for APMEN to evaluate the wider Network beyond this AusAID review of the Secretariat function. In addition it is not clear whether APMEN or AusAID – or both – will take responsibility for evaluating the Program on conclusion of the current contract.

Recommendation 16: *The arrangements for evaluating the Program on conclusion of the current contract should be agreed by APMEN and AusAID*

Recommendation 17: *Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of future Programs should be explicitly stated in the relevant documentation using consistent terminology*

Recommendation 18: *APMEN should determine a mechanism for evaluating the performance of the Network itself*

AusAID faces a challenge in ensuring the quality of the outcomes that it funds. It is not appropriate given the partnership arrangement of the Program that AusAID monitors the performance of APMEN, but as the majority funder it is appropriate to assume that APMEN will take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating its own performance. This would ensure that it is able to demonstrate to its funding agencies that the resources being provided are being used efficiently and effectively in accordance with its objectives, that the outputs meet agreed quality standards and ultimately that the investment made is having an impact.

These challenges could be effectively addressed with the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which could articulate both APMEN and AusAID Program objectives, include detail of how APMEN will monitor and evaluate its own performance and describe how AusAID will support that process. This would provide a framework for AusAID to use to determine the extent to which the Program has contributed to achieving the Network goal. AusAID would then be able to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the MoU to determine the extent to which both AusAID and APMEN have met their objectives.

The Program contract would then only need to specify the performance monitoring framework for UQ as an implementing agent, rather than trying to use the contract as a mechanism for monitoring the Network itself. The agreement of a MoU would further illustrate the partnership nature of AusAID's support for APMEN.

Recommendation 19: *Consideration should be given to agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding between APMEN and AusAID as a mechanism for establishing monitoring and evaluation arrangements.*

Although UQ is the implementer for a large number of activities identified in the APMEN work plan against all of the APMEN objectives, Objective 6 is most relevant in respect of this review, namely: *Provide develop a governance structure suitable for the network and provide Secretariat support of governance infrastructure and smooth coordination and to enable efficient work of Network.*

The work plans identify a number of 'Priority Areas and Objectives' against APMEN Objective 6 (although these are poorly articulated as objectives); the current 2011 work plan identifies:

- Coordination and management of APMEN governance and activities
- Plan and coordinate annual meetings
- Ensure and manage funds
- Linking with global and other regional malaria efforts. Liaise, interact and coordinate strategies and work of APMEN with those of other elimination efforts worldwide and with the greater malaria community.
- Develop Secretariat capacity to manage the program of work
- Planning
- Reporting

Achievement and progress against each of these priority areas are reported in the APMEN annual report and the most recent report (2010) indicate that these objectives are being achieved. The narrative of the annual report describes how UQ has demonstrated results achieved through its Secretariat role.

Contractually UQ is required to report to AusAID on 'the attainment of Activity performance indicators and Secretariat Management performance indicators detailed in the work plan' on a six monthly basis, however there are no specific Secretariat Management objectives other than APMEN Objective 6. APMEN monitors performance against the annual work plan once a year and this is reported in the annual report prepared by the Joint Secretariat and approved by APMEN prior to submission to AusAID. There is only one reporting mechanism and the same report is submitted to by APMEN to BMGF via GHG. A supplementary five page summary report is also submitted to AusAID as stated in the contract. This comprises one of the required reports and the report of the annual meeting comprises the other. Financial reports are submitted every six months as stipulated in the contract. UQ therefore meets its contractual reporting requirements.

Rating: 3

Analysis and Learning

The Program design is firmly based on previous learning and analysis of global, regional and institutional experiences of supporting and implementing malaria elimination activities as well as learning from the experiences of other networks. A participatory approach was used at design stage enabling partners to share their own experiences and lessons learned, and the Joint Secretariat arrangements clearly made an important contribution in this respect.

Characteristics identified from this analysis include flexibility to respond to emerging priorities, country ownership of programs with responsibility and authority placed at national level rather than with funding agencies, research and development as a critical component of the elimination agenda and the need to address border issues by facilitating a regional response. These characteristics are clearly reflected in the design of this Program and provide the framework for implementation. The establishment of a strong Secretariat is also identified as being critical and therefore it has been specifically addressed in the Program design. Stakeholders interviewed state that one of the strengths of the Program is that it has learned from the experiences of elsewhere, and as a result it has become an 'established' network in a relatively short period of time.

The Secretariat has put in place mechanisms to evaluate Program activities for example training questionnaires, study tour reports, evaluations of meetings, and there are numerous examples of implementation being modified in response to lessons learned. These include changes to the implementation of study tours, the introduction of an additional Country Partner meeting at the annual event, maximising opportunities for more face-to-face interaction and adjustments to the annual planning cycle.

Although no major changes were advocated by stakeholders interviewed a number of lessons were identified in respect of the Secretariat that can be applied to further implementation of the current Program and also the design of any future programs. These included:

- Recognition of the investment needed to ensure good governance and transparency, support effective communication between all parties to ensure collaboration and duplication, and the impact that this has on the workload of the Secretariat;
- The need to maximise opportunities for face-to-face interaction to build relationships and aid effective communication;
- That Country Partners have to be central to the Network with Partner Institutions playing a supporting role. This needs to be underpinned by the Governance framework and operationalized by the Secretariat;
- Timescales for the implementation of activities need to be realistic and achievable;
- The flexibility built in to the AusAID funding is essential to allow responsiveness;
- Some adjustment is needed to the budget lines for example for fellowships, Secretariat communication costs and funding for APMEN representatives to attend meetings when required to do so.

Recommendation 20: *The lessons learned identified by Stakeholders during the review should be reflected in the design of the future Program.*

Rating: 6

3. Evaluation Criteria Ratings

| Evaluation Criteria | Rating (1-6) | Explanation |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| Relevance | 5 | The Program is strongly relevant to with Australian Government strategic goals and the anticipated future engagement of the Australian Government with the global and regional malaria agendas. The program design is underpinned by aid-effectiveness principles. |
| Effectiveness | 5 | The Secretariat is critical in driving the APMEN agenda and supporting the achievement of its outcomes. UQ is fulfilling its Secretariat responsibilities and has facilitated the agreement and establishment of governance structures and the implementation of almost all Network activities. Governance arrangements are appropriately operationalized. |
| Efficiency | 5 | The Secretariat delivers good value for money. Robust Program and financial management systems are in place and the Secretariat has been proactive in emphasising the critical role of the country partners within APMEN. The Program contract and the Menzies sub-contract is well managed and contractual obligations are met. |
| Sustainability | 3 | APMEN is responsible for identifying funding sources to sustain the outcomes of the Program and although some 'in-kind' and other small financial contributions are being made it is highly unlikely that sufficient funds will have been identified to sustain APMEN on conclusion of the AusAID program of support. |
| Gender Equality | 6 | Sound effort has been made to mainstream gender equality and the Secretariat meets all contractual obligations in this respect. |
| Monitoring & Evaluation | 3 | The Program shares APMEN's objectives and this presents a challenge for AusAID to ensure the quality of the outcomes that it funds and for APMEN to demonstrate that the resources provided are used efficiently and effectively in accordance with its objectives, that the outputs meet agreed quality standards and ultimately that the investment made is having an impact. |
| Analysis & Learning | 6 | There is sound evidence that Program design is firmly based on previous learning and analysis. Implementation is modified in response to lessons learned. |

Rating scale:

| Satisfactory | | Less than satisfactory | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 6 | Very high quality | 3 | Less than adequate quality |
| 5 | Good quality | 2 | Poor quality |
| 4 | Adequate quality | 1 | Very poor quality |

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The focus of this evaluation is on the performance of UQ, its management and operations, and does not examine APMEN activities nor technical malaria issues. However, it has been necessary to consider some wider issues relating to APMEN itself where they are integral to the performance of the Secretariat.

The Program is a partner-led design which supports the aid-effectiveness principles of partnership and collaboration, promoting ownership and sustainability. The Program design is firmly based on previous learning and the analysis of global, regional and institutional malaria elimination experiences. AusAID support for the Program is consistent with Australian Government strategic goals, anticipated future engagement of the Australian Government with the global and regional malaria agendas and its commitment to supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Program provides funding to address aspects of malaria elimination that are specific to the region.

UQ is both the Secretariat and an implementing partner with responsibility for the delivery of specific APMEN activities within the contract and from an operational perspective there are no indications that this arrangement needs to be changed in the next funding round, as long as performance monitoring and management arrangements for the Program are clarified. As Secretariat, UQ cannot be held accountable for the implementation of activities and the delivery of outcomes that are the responsibility of the Network itself.

The Secretariat is fulfilling its responsibility for managing the Network's secretarial, clerical and administrative affairs and is playing a critical role in driving the Network and supporting it to achieve its expected outcomes. Robust Program and financial management systems are in place and the Secretariat shares information about its activity budget with the Network to promote transparency and inform Network planning and decision-making. However the budget information shared with APMEN is only in respect of the AusAID funding. The Secretariat has been proactive in emphasising the critical role of the Country Partners within APMEN and, at this point in the implementation period, it is evidently the 'glue' holding the Network together. Without a strong Secretariat it is unlikely that the Network would be sustained.

Overall, the Program contract is very well managed by UQ and UQ meets its contractual obligations. However, APMEN arrangements for ensuring sustainability and monitoring and evaluating performance are weak.

APMEN is responsible for identifying funding sources to sustain the outcomes of the Program and so far some 'in-kind' and other small financial contributions are being made but these are limited. Progress to date suggests that it is highly unlikely that sufficient funds will have been identified to sustain APMEN on conclusion of the AusAID program of support.

The Program shares APMEN's goal and objectives which were developed by APMEN during the participatory Program design and planning process. This is appropriate in terms of AusAID supporting a Program which is partner-led but it does present challenges for AusAID in ensuring the quality of the outcomes that it funds and for APMEN to demonstrate to its funding agencies that the resources being provided are being used efficiently and effectively in accordance with its objectives, that the outputs meet agreed quality standards and ultimately that the investment made is having an impact.

These issues could be addressed with the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding which could be used to identify a framework that determines how

APMEN will monitor and evaluate its own performance and how AusAID will support that process. It could also provide a mechanism for establishing each party's contribution to achieving APMEN's goal and setting quality standards. Such an agreement would further illustrate the partnership nature of the AusAID program of support to APMEN.

There are currently no plans for APMEN to undertake a review of its own performance. Although the Network is still relatively new, consideration of some important issues now would help inform the Network about how it needs to work in the future to maximise impact. It would also inform the nature of AusAID engagement during the remainder of the five year period of support. As a credible institution APMEN should want to demonstrate that it is evaluating its own performance and be able to demonstrate where it adds value. The review would also be a tool for APMEN to use to solicit funding. The Program contract provides APMEN with financial resources to support this process but the review should be commissioned by the Network itself rather than AusAID.

The lessons and challenges identified for future AusAID engagement with this and other similar programs include:

- How it engages with programs that are designed by partners and where partners are responsible for implementation and the delivery of outcomes; and
- How it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of partner performance to ensure the quality of outputs and determine the impact of the investment made.

A lesson for similar programs in the future is that a monitoring and evaluation framework must be in place that allows AusAID to demonstrate VFM and impact from its investment, whilst at the same time allowing its partner to determine its own goals and objectives. This should be agreed at the program design stage and the subsequent contractual Program monitoring and evaluation obligations should be based on this agreement.

As APMEN matures and expands it will undoubtedly want to increase its activities and this will obviously have Secretariat staffing implications. This was not addressed at Program design stage. A further lesson is that scale-up implications should be given due consideration at design stage and this will need to be addressed by both AusAID and APMEN when agreeing future programs.

In accordance with the ToR for the evaluation a number of recommendations for future programs are made:

Recommendation 1: *The next phase of the Program should have its own objectives against which progress can be monitored and evaluated and these should be made explicit in the next funding agreement.*

Recommendation 2: *The contribution of APMEN to supporting country partner strategies should be evaluated by the Network as part of its monitoring and evaluation framework. AusAID may wish to support this activity with funds in the current Program budget that are identified for APMEN review.*

Recommendation 3: *The Secretariat should encourage APMEN to identify specific activities to secure future funding during the next annual planning cycle.*

Recommendation 4: *The GHG financial contribution to APMEN should be made explicit and the country partner and partner institutions 'in-kind' contributions should be quantified to enable APMEN to identify true operating costs.*

Recommendation 5: *In order to meet the timescales of the APMEN annual planning cycle AusAID will need to have notified the APMEN Board about further funding arrangements by December 2011 if gaps in implementation are to be avoided after July 2012.*

Recommendation 6: *The Secretariat workload should be reviewed by APMEN and funding for additional staff identified from other sources. Alternatively the review should determine how the existing workload can be better distributed across the Network.*

Recommendation 7: *The Secretariat should encourage APMEN to review its risk management matrix as part of the annual planning cycle.*

Recommendation 8: *A risk management matrix specific to the Program, rather than to APMEN itself, should be developed as part of the next Funding Agreement.*

Recommendation 9: *A comprehensive review of APMEN should include an evaluation of the level of stakeholder ownership as this is critical for determining the likely sustainability of Program outcomes.*

Recommendation 10: *The role of the Secretariat in building Network Program management capacity should be assessed and articulated in the design of future programs.*

Recommendation 11: *A mechanism for including Secretariat support in the design of new activities should be identified.*

Recommendation 12: *APMEN's strategy for gradually decreasing its dependence on AusAID support, and the specific activities it will undertake to achieve this, should be agreed and clearly described in the design of future Programs.*

Recommendation 13: *Annual reports should present gender disaggregated data where appropriate.*

Recommendation 14: *AusAID and the Secretariat propose to APMEN that it undertakes an impact assessment that will provide critical data to allow both APMEN and AusAID to evaluate impact.*

Recommendation 15: *The contractual monitoring and evaluation requirements need to be clarified and the contract amended accordingly. This should be addressed when the new contract amendment (for the costed extension) is prepared.*

Recommendation 16: *The arrangements for evaluating the Program on conclusion of the current contract should be agreed by APMEN and AusAID*

Recommendation 17: *Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of future Programs should be explicitly stated in the relevant documentation using consistent terminology*

Recommendation 18: *APMEN should determine a mechanism for evaluating the performance of the Network itself*

Recommendation 19: *Consideration should be given to agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding between APMEN and AusAID as a mechanism for establishing monitoring and evaluation arrangements.*

Recommendation 20: *The lessons learned identified by Stakeholders during the review should be reflected in the design of the future Program.*

Annex 1 Terms of Reference

Independent Progress Review of the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) Establishment Support Program

October 2011

1. Context and purpose of the Independent Progress Review

The Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) is a network of partner governments, donor organisations and public health, academic and private sector institutions in the Asia Pacific region. APMEN aims to work collaboratively to address the challenges of malaria elimination in the region.

APMEN was formally established at an inaugural meeting of partner governments and institutions in February 2009, at which AusAID agreed to become a foundation donor. This meeting was sponsored by the Australian Government, following a commitment by then Prime Minister Rudd in September 2008.

The overall aim of APMEN is to develop and sustain a network of country partners and partner institutions to work collaboratively to address the challenges of malaria elimination in the Asia Pacific, with particular focus on the unique challenges for the region (such as *Plasmodium vivax*).

- The APMEN governance structure is composed of three bodies:
- the APMEN Network (comprising participating countries, partner institutions and observers);
- the independent APMEN Advisory Board; and
- the joint secretariat, operated by the University of Queensland (UQ) and the Global Health Group, University of California, San Francisco.

AusAID is represented on the APMEN Advisory Board and attends annual APMEN meetings, including the APMEN Business and Technical Meeting.

Following a number of design and quality assurance processes, including an appraisal peer review, AusAID and UQ signed an initial two-year funding agreement (A\$3 million) in November 2009 for the APMEN Establishment Support Program (the 'Program'). The Program provides funding to UQ, as part of the joint secretariat. In April 2011, the funding agreement was extended at no-cost to December 2011.

UQ and AusAID agreed to undertake an Independent Progress Review of the Program (the 'Review') as specified in the APMEN Establishment Support Program Activity Proposal and Activity Design Document.

AusAID's objectives in funding the Program are to support a country-led forum for exchange of lessons and ideas on malaria elimination, and to strengthen AusAID's links with partner governments and health research agencies in the Asia Pacific region.

The Review will assess the performance of UQ's secretariat support against the Program's objectives, and will inform decision-making on AusAID's future commitments to the Program.

2. Objectives and scope

The objectives of the Review are to:

- assess UQ's performance in providing secretariat functions under the Program against AusAID's eight evaluation criteria (set out in Attachment A);
- assess the effectiveness of the existing funding mechanism for the Program; and
- provide a list of key issues and recommendations to be addressed for any future program.

The Review will provide ratings against each evaluation criterion set out in Attachment A. The rating scale used will be one to six, according to the following table:

| Satisfactory | | Less than satisfactory | |
|--------------|---|------------------------|---|
| 6 | Very high quality; needs ongoing management and monitoring only | 3 | Less than adequate quality; needs work to improve in core areas |
| 5 | Good quality; needs minor work to improve in some areas | 2 | Poor quality; needs major work to improve |
| 4 | Adequate quality; needs some work to improve | 1 | Very poor quality; needs major overhaul |

3. Method

The Review will be undertaken by one consultant, selected in accordance with the specifications in section 5 of these terms of reference.

The consultant will:

- review key documents related to the Program (set out at Attachment B);
- develop a brief evaluation plan (including processes for gathering, analysing and verifying information and target dates for deliverables), to be agreed with AusAID;
- implement the evaluation plan, including undertaking field visit(s) to the APMEN joint secretariat office at UQ and consultations with country representatives, partner institutions, technical and multilateral partners (including the World Health Organization);
- present and discuss initial findings with AusAID and UQ;
- submit a draft Independent Progress Review report, in accordance with the specifications in section 6 of these terms of reference, and participate in the peer review process; and
- submit the final Independent Progress Review report, in accordance with the specifications in section 6 of these terms of reference.

The consultant will be engaged for a total of 18 days work. For the purposes of AusAID's Adviser Remuneration Framework, the consultants will be classified under Professional Discipline Category C and at Job Level 3 to 4 (as appropriate).

4. Consultant specifications

The consultant will possess a comprehensive understanding of and experience in:

- monitoring, review and evaluation processes;
- organisational planning and management, including governance arrangements;
- global health and development issues, including current international efforts to control and eliminate malaria and the role of the various stakeholders/multilateral partners;
- the Australian aid program, including AusAID's approach to bilateral engagement; and
- high level analytical, research and report writing skills.

5. Reporting and timing requirements

The main body of the final Independent Progress Review report should be a maximum of 25 pages and should be completed using the Independent Progress Report template provided by the AusAID evaluation manager.

Key contents of the report should include an executive summary, a brief background of APMEN and the APMEN Establishment Support Program, an outline of the evaluation objectives and methods, findings against the evaluation questions, evaluation criteria ratings, conclusions and recommendations.

An indicative timeframe is set out below:

| Date | Action | Number of Days |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 17/10/11 | Review key documents and AusAID briefing | 2 |
| 19/10/11 | Develop brief evaluation plan and agree with AusAID | 1 |
| 24/10/11 | Implementation of the evaluation plan (including any field visits) | 6 |
| 1/11/11 | Present and discuss initial findings with AusAID and UQ | 1 |
| 14/11/11 | Submit draft Independent Progress Review report (on 14 November 2011) | 5 |
| 21/11/11 | Participate in Peer Review Process | 1 |
| 1/12/11 | Submit final Independent Progress Review report (on 1 December 2011) | 2 |
| Total days of work | | 18 |
| Travel | | 3 |
| Total days for Services Order | | 21 |

Attachment A

Evaluation criteria

1. Relevance

- What are the objectives of the APMEN Establishment Support Program?
- Are these objectives relevant to Australian Government priorities?
- If not, what changes need to be made to the Program or its objectives to ensure continued relevance?

2. Effectiveness

- To what extent has UQ's secretariat role under the APMEN Establishment Support Program contributed to achievement of broader APMEN objectives?
- Is UQ's place within APMEN's governance structure clearly defined? Are the roles and functions of the Joint Secretariat, and UQ's role within that secretariat, clearly defined, appropriate and effective?
 - Is UQ providing secretariat functions and supporting governance arrangements as planned?
 - How does UQ support the functioning of APMEN meetings? Is the structure of APMEN meetings functioning well? Are the frequency and functions of the meetings appropriate and effective?
- What systems are in place for UQ, as a secretariat, to facilitate partner country engagement in the APMEN agenda?
 - Has UQ, as a secretariat, put in place any arrangements for partner countries to access information and resources collated by APMEN? Are these arrangements meeting the needs of partner countries?
 - Has UQ, as a secretariat, put in place any arrangements for partner countries to report and provide feedback to APMEN?

3. Efficiency and value for money

- Has the implementation of the APMEN Establishment Support Program made effective use of time and resources to achieve the outcomes?
- Do the outcomes of the APMEN Establishment Support program represent value for money? If so, how?
- Have subcontracting arrangements, including with the Menzies School of Health Research, proved to be efficient and effective?
- Has management of the APMEN Establishment Support Program been responsive to changing needs? If not, why not?
- Have UQ's activities as a secretariat under the APMEN Establishment Support Program suffered from delays in implementation? If so, why and what was done about it?
- Has the APMEN Establishment Support Program had sufficient and appropriate staffing resources?
- Was a risk management approach applied to management of the APMEN Establishment Support Program (including anti-corruption, adherence to research ethics, etc)?

- What are the risks to achievement of the APMEN Establishment Support Program's objectives? Have the risks been managed appropriately?

4. Impact (if feasible)

- What have been the impacts of UQ's role as a secretariat on the functioning of APMEN?

5. Sustainability

- What actions has UQ, as part of the APMEN Joint Secretariat, taken to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of APMEN?
- Are there any areas of UQ's activities, as part of the APMEN Joint Secretariat, that are clearly not sustainable? What actions should be taken to address this?

6. Gender Equality

- Has UQ, as a secretariat, facilitated and/or implemented relevant gender policies for the administration of APMEN?

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Is UQ able to demonstrate results achieved through its secretariat role?
- Is there an appropriate and adequate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to assess the APMEN Establishment Support Program? Does evidence exist to show that objectives of the APMEN Establishment Support Program are on track to being achieved?
- If there are M&E systems for the APMEN Establishment Support Program in place, are these systems collecting the right information to allow a judgement to be made about meeting objectives and sustainability at the next evaluation point?
- Has UQ reported to AusAID adequately and in accordance with requirements under the Funding Agreement?

8. Analysis & Learning

- How well was the design of the APMEN Establishment Support Program based on previous learning and analysis?
- How well has learning from implementation been integrated into the APMEN Establishment Support Program?
- What lessons from the APMEN Establishment Support Program to date can be applied to further implementation of the APMEN Establishment Support Program?

Attachment B

Key documents for the Review

- Funding Agreement Deed for the APMEN Establishment Support Program (November 2009)
- APMEN Establishment Support Program Activity Design Document (September 2009)
- APMEN Governance Document (June 2010)
- APMEN Annual Report 2010 (February 2011)
- APMEN Five-year Work Plan (February 2009)
- APMEN Inception Work Plan 2009
- APMEN Work Plan 2010
- APMEN Work Plan 2011
- APMEN Advocacy Plan (September 2010)
- Minutes and papers for the first, second and third APMEN Annual Meetings (including Business and Technical Meetings, Advisory Board Meetings and meetings of the Vivax and Vector Control Working Groups)
- Relevant APMEN policies and protocols (for example, the conflict of interest protocol and the fraud and corruption management policy)
- APMEN Quality at Entry Report (September 2009)

Annex 2 Documents Reviewed

- An Effective Aid Program for Australia – Making a real difference – Delivering real results (2011)
- Funding Agreement Deed for the APMEN Establishment Support Program (November 2009)
- Deed of Amendment for APMEN Establishment Support Program (September 2010)
- Agent Agreement (Menzies Contract) December 2010
- Deed of Amendment to Agent Agreement (Menzies Contract) December 2010
- APMEN Establishment Support Program Activity Design Document (September 2009)
- APMEN Quality at Entry Report (September 2009)
- G-AA Quality Requirements for Partner Led Designs 2009-2011
- APMEN Annual Report 2010 (February 2011)
- APMEN Five-year Work Plan (February 2009)
- APMEN Inception Work Plan 2009
- APMEN Work Plan 2010
- APMEN Work Plan 2011
- APMEN Governance Document (June 2010)
- APMEN Advocacy Plan (draft September 2010)
- APMEN Advocacy Work Plan (July 2010)
- Notes of APMEN Inaugural Meeting 2009
- APMEN II Business Meeting Minutes
- APMEN III Business Meeting Minutes
- APMEN III Meeting Summary Notes May 2011
- APMEN Advisory Board Agenda and Minutes May 2011
- Vivax Working Group Annual Report November 2010
- Vivax Working Group Funding Acquittal December 2010
- APMEN Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- APMEN III Meeting Evaluation Questionnaire
- APMEN III Study Tour Evaluation Questionnaire
- APMEN III Communications Evaluation
- Fellowship evaluation report 2011
- Relevant APMEN policies and protocols (for example, the conflict of interest protocol and the fraud and corruption management policy)

Annex 3 Stakeholders consulted

| Name | Organisation and Position |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Jenny Da Rin | Assistant Director General, AusAID |
| Mika Kontiainen | Director, Health Thematic Group, AusAID |
| Beth Slatyer | Health Adviser, AusAID |
| Lucy Philips | Former Program Manager, AusAID |
| Sue Elliott | Director, Health Thematic Group, AusAID |
| Andrew Sutton | Program Officer, AusAID |
| Prof Maxine Whittaker | Director, Australian Centre of International and tropical Health UQ and APMEN Coordinator |
| Arna Chancellor | Program Manager, UQ |
| Sir Richard Feacham (by email) | Executive Director, GHG, UCSF and APMEN Co-chair |
| Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe | Former Sri Lanka Country Partner representative (and out-going Chair) |
| Dr Roly Gosling | Associate Professor Lead, Malaria Elimination Initiative GHG, UCSF, APMEN Co-ordinator |
| Ms Cara Smith Gueye | GHG, UCSF Program Analyst APMEN |
| Dr Leonard Ortega | Regional Adviser Malaria, WHO SEARO |
| Dr Rita Kusriastuti | Director of Vector Borne Disease Control, Office of Communicable Diseases, Ministry of Health, <u>Indonesia</u> and Advisory Board Member |
| Dr Mario Baquilod | Infectious Diseases Office, Ministry of Health, Philippines and Advisory Board Member |
| Dr Ric Price | <u>Menzies School of Health Research</u> and Chair of Vivax Working Group |
| Dr Effie Espino | Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) |
| Ms Cecil Hugo | Partner institute representative, ACT Malaria |

Stakeholders contacted but unavailable during the review period

| Name | Organisation and Position |
|------------------------|--|
| Benedict David | Principal Health Adviser, AusAID |
| Dr Robert Newman | Global Malaria Program |
| Dr Gawrie Galappaththy | National Malaria Control Program, <u>Sri Lanka</u> |

| Name | Organisation and Position |
|----------------------|--|
| Prof Graham Brown | Nossal Institute for Global Health |
| Karmini Mendis | Former WHO representative |
| Lasse Vestergard | Malaria program officer, WPRO, Vanuatu |
| Dr Alongkot Ponlawat | Vector Working Group |
| Dr Wichai Satimai | Country partner representative, Thailand |
| Prof Dennis Shanks | Partner Institute, Australian Army Institute |

Annex 4 APMEN Policies and Guidelines

- Governance Document
- Dispute Resolution Protocols
- Equity and Diversity Policy
- Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Conflict of Interest Protocol
- Environmental Management Protocol
- New Participant Protocol
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Communications Framework
- Terms of Reference Vivax Working Group
- Terms of Reference Vector Working Group
- Vector Working Group Objectives and Governance
- Vivax Working Group Objectives and Governance
- Fellowship Program Guidelines
- Code of Conduct (draft)

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