



Australian Government
AusAID

Consolidated Quality at Entry Report for Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program 2012-16

A: AidWorks details

Initiative Name:	Australia-China Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program		
Initiative No:	INK514	Total Amount:	\$10,140,000
Start Date:	1 July 2012	End Date:	30 June 2016

B: Appraisal Peer Review meeting details

Initial ratings prepared by:	Jesse Twomey, North Asia Section, Asia Strategies and Partnerships Branch
Meeting date:	3 May 2012
Chair:	– Bronwyn Robbins (Chair), Acting ADG, Asia Strategies & Partnerships Branch
Peer reviewers providing formal comment & ratings:	– Gina de Pretto, Performance & Quality Adviser, South Asia Branch – Greer Meehan, Human Rights, Governance & Social Development Branch
Independent Appraiser:	– Sara Webb, Duniya (Independent Contractor)
Other peer review participants:	– Paul Nichols, ADG, South Asia Branch & AusAID Design Specialist (Design Team Leader) – Geoff Bowan, A/g Counsellor, Beijing – Sun Weiqing, Senior Policy Officer (Governance), AusAID Beijing – Armaity Bradley, Second Secretary (Political), DFAT Beijing – David Robinson, Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) – Natasha De Silva, AHRC – Sarah Dyer, Independent Design Consultant – Clare Doube, Independent Design Consultant – Melanie Townson, Mekong, Philippines, Burma & Regional Branch – Byron Singline, Agreements & Value for Money Branch – Katie Whitting North Asia Section, Asia Strategies & Partnerships Branch – Raha Roggero, North Asia Section, Asia Strategies & Partnerships Branch

C: Safeguards and Commitments

<i>Answer the following questions relevant to potential impacts of the activity.</i>		
1. Environment	Have the environmental marker questions been answered and adequately addressed by the design document in line with legal requirements under the <i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> ?	Yes
2. Child Protection	Does the design meet the requirements of AusAID's Child Protection Policy?	Yes

D: Initiative/Activity description	
3. Description of the Initiative/Activity	<p>What is it?</p> <p>The initiative will involve the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) engaging Chinese partner agencies progressively and at different levels, building networks and coalitions of leaders, and advocating for human rights.</p> <p>The AHRC's activities will include exchanges, study tours and workshops to facilitate dialogue on human rights practice between Chinese and Australian individuals and organisations.</p>
4. Objectives Summary	<p>What are we doing?</p> <p>The goal is to build commitment of the Chinese Government to apply human rights principles and practices.</p> <p>The objective is that Australian and Chinese agencies will collaborate on key Chinese-identified priorities for human rights reform; developing relationships, trust and influence over time.</p>

E: Quality Assessment and Rating

Criteria	Assessment	Rating (1-6) *	Required Action (if needed) ‡
1. Relevance	<p>Why are we doing this?</p> <p>The relevance of the program to Australia's priorities in its cooperation with China is the strongest aspect of the design. The de-linking of the program from the formal Human Rights Dialogue (HRD) is clearly and simply described with a clear rationale.</p> <p>The HRTC is aligned to the People's Republic of China (PRC) government priorities through its strong ownership features. Criteria for guidelines for selecting HRTC activities includes strategies that address areas of high priority for Chinese partners and demonstrate clear links to relevant PRC reform initiatives.</p> <p>The choice of the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) as a partner is relevant and well justified. AHRC works directly with the Chinese government and has the required expertise and experience. As a status A institution and as a member of international networks, the AHRC brings stature and is informed by international good practice and advancements in human rights. The AHRC can also draw on a similar program in Vietnam.</p> <p>The modality and approach of HRTC is relevant to the sensitive and changing context of human rights in China. Increasing commitment to human rights is achieved through an approach focusing on supply and demand. The program provides a responsive, flexible, incremental and non-confrontational platform for engagement that focuses on information and experience transfer.</p>	5	<p>Clearly state the HRTC's complementary relationship with the HRD</p> <p>Clarify whether the three thematic priorities from the original design: legal reform; women and children's rights; and ethnic minority rights, remain or not</p> <p>Include analysis of what other donors are doing and Australia's approach to donor cooperation in human rights</p> <p>Include an explanation of 'China's changing environment'</p>
2. Effectiveness	<p>Will it work?</p> <p>The goal and objective for the initiative have been redefined as part of the redesign and on recommendations of the independent review. The goal and objective are broad in order to be flexible and responsive. The draft monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system identifies indicators for measuring success against the stated goal and objective.</p> <p>The objective for this activity is achievable. The design recognises that advancing the human rights agenda in</p>	5	<p>Provide more detail on the four program strategies and three levels of engagement</p> <p>Expand the explanation of the 'theory of change' and how the program strategies link to the outcomes</p>

Criteria	Assessment	Rating (1-6) *	Required Action (if needed) ‡
	<p>China is a highly sensitive campaign. The design relies on building relationships and facilitating exchanges; study tours and workshops (which could be considered 'soft' engagements) to promote dialogue on human rights practices. This approach exemplifies a good understanding of the cultural and political sensitivities in China.</p> <p>The program is built on partnerships, primarily between AHRC and up to twelve partners in China, including China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and between AusAID and AHRC and MFA. Principles for engagement with and selection of Chinese partners are clearly defined and contribute to achieving objectives. These focus on strategic dialogue, a progressive and relationship based approach, supply and demand strategies, being partner-led, and supporting leaders.</p>		
3. Efficiency	<p>How will we do it?</p> <p>The activities implemented with partners are grouped into three categories which support each other. Activities will be planned each year and outlined in the annual plan. Draft guidelines for HRTC activity selection are clear. The implementation cycle is clearly defined, flexible and takes into consideration all partners' corporate requirements.</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities, including governance and management arrangements between development partners including AHRC, AusAID, MFA, HRD and Chinese implementing partners are clearly defined.</p> <p>An indicative budget is provided and a detailed budget will be included in the schedules of the ROU</p> <p>The design document outlines basic timing and responsibility for financial reporting and acquittal and states that these need to be explicitly outlined in schedules to the Head ROU between AusAID and the AHRC. The 2011 QAI states that improved financial management and reporting needs to be improved by establishing clearer procedures for budget development and for acquittal of funds from the implementing partners to the AHRC and from AHRC to AusAID.</p> <p>For similar annual funding to the existing HRTC the new design will continue building on the partnerships and reforms that have been achieved so far, while providing improved monitoring and evaluation and opportunities for more strategic engagement.</p>	4	<p>Clearly explain the AHRC's accountabilities for delivery</p> <p>Include a list of the AHRC's key management and technical functions in delivering the program</p> <p>Include requirements on the AHRC's financial reporting to AusAID</p> <p>Provide more detail on AHRC budget and resources required to deliver the program</p> <p>Include template of annual plan</p> <p>Explain how AusAID will work with AHRC on improving financial reporting and procedures (including how exchange rate risks and indexation will be managed)</p> <p>Define the roles and responsibilities of Chinese counterpart (MoFA) and Chinese partner agencies (implementing agencies)</p> <p>Include the tabling of the annual synthesis report at the HRD as a reporting requirement</p> <p>Include a risk matrix and expand on the approach to risk management</p>
4. Monitoring & Evaluation	<p>How will we know?</p> <p>A flexible and opportunistic program such as this, which prioritises remaining engaged and building influence rather than the achievement of pre-determined outputs or outcomes, cannot be monitored through narrow quantitative measures. Thus the starting point for the M&E approach is sound. However the design provides insufficient detail on the M&E approach or its practical implementation.</p> <p>The proposed activity level reporting for partners is not</p>	4	<p>Include an M&E framework quality assurance step 6-8 months into the program and identify a steering committee that will complete this step</p> <p>Identify how the final M&E framework will be assessed and approved</p> <p>Include terms of reference</p>

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	<p>complicated or overly burdensome.</p> <p>The participation of AusAID and AHRC staff in the Annual Meeting ensures the relevance of results to program objectives.</p> <p>The design indicates that the first annual synthesis report will form the baseline. However it may be more useful to prepare a stand-alone baseline document that draws more fully on AHRC's long-term experience and engagement.</p> <p>The inclusion of a technical adviser to lead on M&E is a reasonable approach. However the level of inputs is likely to be insufficient.</p> <p>It is noted that the M&E Framework is to be developed further. Ensuring the inclusion of AHRC during this process will enable a better understanding of requirements and respond to the reviews recommendations suggesting the same.</p> <p>The use of simple activity level reporting will allow participating organisations to respond in a timely and efficient manner. It is important not to place a large reporting burden on participating organisations.</p>		<p>(ToRs) for the annual meeting</p> <p>Expand the ToRs of the technical adviser to include their accountabilities, reporting arrangements and competency as an M&E facilitator</p> <p>Ensure that the M&E framework aligns with the Vietnam HRTC, where appropriate</p> <p>Include an independent review and recommended timing</p> <p>Include the scoping of a baseline document in the M&E framework</p> <p>Clearly articulate the M&E budget</p>
5. Sustainability	<p><i>Will benefits last?</i></p> <p>As with the previous design, sustainability of development benefits is of a lesser priority than remaining engaged with human rights organisations in China, and with the broader discussion of human rights there. Thus the expectations of the design with regards to sustainability are relatively limited compared to more usual programs.</p> <p>Ownership and capacity building are key features of the HRTC. Activities are identified, led and implemented by committed individual leaders and agencies in China. Working on both supply and demand i.e. with national and provincial government s as well as civil society helps to build ownership and sustainability. Engaging with agencies that have less understanding and commitment to human rights also assists to build gradual and sustainable reform.</p> <p>The inclusion of longer-term activities in the redesign of HRTC will enhance sustainability. The focus on establishing ongoing relationships and coalitions between human rights agencies in China and Australia will also assist to create lasting benefits of the program.</p> <p>Long term HRTC activities are used to pilot activities rather than fund them on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Risks identified in the design document i.e political environment, implementing partner capacity, breakdown in relationships are all constraints to sustainability and need to be monitored and managed.</p>	5	<p>Explain and consider whether environmental impacts are likely and if so, how they will be addressed</p> <p>Monitor risks to sustainability in the M&E framework</p>

6. Gender Equality	<p>How will we achieve gender equality?</p> <p>The approach in the design document is limited and relies on the development of a Gender and Inclusion Strategy by AHRC for the program, as well as limited gender disaggregation in the M&E framework. The development of a comprehensive Gender and Inclusion Strategy is a sound approach and is supported. It will be able to provide much more detailed consideration of the issues and strategies than the design document. However the design could still include some expanded consideration of gender issues in human rights in China, including in the analytical section.</p>	5	<p>If a gender and inclusive development strategy cannot be included, add detail on how and when it will be developed and monitoring requirements</p> <p>Expand consideration of Gender issues in human rights</p>
7. Analysis and Learning	<p>Have well have we thought this through?</p> <p>The new design takes into account learning from the past 14 years' experience of the program and builds on its successes. Lessons learned have been summarised in a separate document based on discussion with the program team.</p> <p>Appendix A outlines how the design responds to the independent review of the HRTC. Most recommendations appear to have been adopted or a reason given for why they will not be implemented.</p> <p>The design document could benefit from further information on the current situation of human rights in China, including detailed analysis of contextual factors likely to support or inhibit achievement of objectives. However, given that the technical adviser will be preparing strategic and policy analysis of the human rights context in China, this might suffice.</p>	5	<p>Describe how the program implementers, across the diverse activities supported by the program as well as program management, will be involved in continuous learning and improvement.</p> <p>Ensure AusAID's child protection policy is included in design and implementation</p>

* Definitions of the Rating Scale:			
Satisfactory (4, 5 and 6)		Less than satisfactory (1, 2 and 3)	
6	Very high quality; needs ongoing management & monitoring only	3	Less than adequate quality; needs to be improved 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

‡ **Required actions (if needed):** These boxes should be used wherever the rating is less than 5, to identify actions needed to raise the rating to the next level, and to fully satisfactory (5). The text can note recommended or ongoing actions.

F: Next Steps <i>completed by Activity Manager after agreement at the Appraisal Peer Review meeting</i>		
Provide information on all steps required to finalise the design based on <i>Required Actions</i> in "E" above, and additional actions identified in the peer review meeting	Who is responsible	Date to be done
1. The design team will address the required actions outlined above	The Design Team	July 2012
2.		
3.		

G: Other comments or issues <i>completed by Activity Manager after agreement at the APR meeting</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	

H: Approval *completed by ADG or Minister-Counsellor who chaired the peer review meeting*

On the basis of the final agreed Quality Rating assessment (C) and Next Steps (D) above:

- ☐ **QAE REPORT IS APPROVED**, and authorization given to proceed to:
- ☐ **FINALISE** the design incorporating actions above, and proceed to implementation
- or: ☐ **REDESIGN** and resubmit for appraisal peer review

- ☐ **NOT APPROVED** for the following reason(s):

Bronwyn Robbins	signed:	
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When complete:

- Copy and paste the approved ratings, narrative assessment and required actions into AidWorks and attach the report.
- The original signed report must be placed on a registered file