Australia Awards

Australia Awards

Vietnam

Lessons Learnt in the Scholarships
Program in Vietnam –
Final Report

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1 Study Objective

This study identifies lessons learnt in the Australia Awards in Vietnam (AAV) scholarships program in the past 10 years. These lessons are seen as being relevant to the development of AusAID's HRD Delivery Strategy in Vietnam. Over the period, the scholarships program has made important changes to its approaches and strategies. The report summarizes these changes and lessons, identifies what has worked, and offers recommendations for further changes to consider. It contains these sections:

- Conceptual framework for the analysis of findings and lessons in the program

- Summary of findings, lessons and recommendations for the scholarships program

- Lessons learnt and recommendations for the HRD delivery strategy

- Findings on the scholarships program

- Conclusion and recommendations

The study was prepared by the Managing Contractor (MC) of the AAV program. See Annex 1 for the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the study, which describes the methodology used and sources consulted.

2 Conceptual Framework for the analysis of Findings and Lessons in the Program

The analysis of lessons learnt examines the interactions among three elements: (1) what the program was expected to achieve; (2) what it has done to achieve expectations; and (3) what it has known about its achievements. An overriding lesson of results-based management (RBM) is that the expected program outcomes will give shape to the strategies, processes and activities in program implementation.[1] This is the lesson of cause-and-effect underpinning the logical approach in AusAID programming. The types of outcomes that stakeholders expect will also determine the purpose and scope of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approach. The study identifies the main lessons learnt in the following areas:

Program Rationale and Design	Results-based Management	Targeting
• Investment in the Program • Australia-Vietnam Cooperation • Vietnamese HRD Priorities • Program Purpose & Objectives	• Use of M&E Framework • Risk Management • Program Oversight • Impact of the Program • Sustainability	• Scholarship Categories • Levels of Study • Sectors or Fields of Study • Targeted Institutions • Targeted Groups (Beneficiaries)
Operational Policy and Procedures	Alumni Support and Engagement	Management Framework
• Promotion • Application • Selection • Pre-departure Support	• Reintegration • Professional Development • Small Grants Activities • Alumni Networks	• Program Structure • Management Arrangements • Partnership Arrangements

See Annex 2 for a summary of the evolution of the scholarships program in Vietnam in these areas.

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[1] For example, the program would examine its eligibility criteria, promotion activities, targeting, application and selection processes in order to improve access to scholarships for individuals from disadvantaged groups. It would examine its strategies for reintegration, professional development, and providing small grants activities and networking opportunities in order to improve the performance of alumni when they return to the work place, including the performance of their employers.

3 Summary of Findings, Lessons and Recommendations for the Scholarships Program

Findings on the Scholarships Program	Lessons	Recommendations
Program Rationale and Design		
AusAID makes a substantial investment in HRD in Vietnam through tertiary-level scholarships for Vietnamese scholars. The investment has increased opportunities for all alumni through skills development. The Government of Australia has created a relatively low-risk, high-return brand for its scholarships program. The scholarships program has responded to Vietnam's evolving development priorities in a timely fashion. It has responded to a wide-range of sector and thematic priorities in the AusAID country program. Since 2003, AusAID has pursued 'fundamental changes' to make the program 'more strategic and focused' on priorities and measurable outcomes by: • Aligning its objectives with country program priorities; • Improving its strategies for targeting and providing alumni support; • Extending the expected impact of the program beyond individuals to the organisations they work for; and • Developing a robust M&E system to measure the achievement of objectives and expected results.	The effectiveness of the scholarships program in addressing development priorities even as they evolve and development takes place. The necessity of aligning expectations for results with the direct investment made to achieve expected results. The challenge for the scholarships program to support HRD for organisations not just skills and knowledge building for individuals. The challenges faced in making the scholarships program more strategic and focused while also wanting it to remain responsive to changing local needs and agency priorities.	That expectations for achievable results in the Australia Awards program be clarified. Specifically, the expectations for the program to result in changes and improvements for organisations as set out in the theory of change should be clarified. Specifically, the degree to which the program is expected to result in substantive development impacts should be determined.

Findings on the Scholarships Program	Lessons	Recommendations
Results-based Management		
The scholarships program has developed a theory of change and robust M&E system to monitor the outcomes of the investment in tertiary scholarships. The program is faced with relatively few risks, especially in critical areas, even though the Risk Management Matrix contains a very large number of risks. The program oversight function has performed well. Sustainability of results is linked to alumni being in the 'right' jobs with the 'right' conditions existing in their organisations. The program has tried various ways to create the 'right' conditions for alumni to improve their organisations, but creating these conditions is a challenge.	The sizeable investment that is required to maintain quality in an M&E system. The value of utilising performance information in program management. The importance of alumni being in the right jobs and organisations having the right conditions for them to make improvements. The challenge of ensuring the transfer and use of new knowledge and skills by individuals and organisations.	The program should consider either revising its theory of change to bring it in line with the design of the scholarships program, or revising the current design so that the program can be expected to achieve its theory of change. That changes be considered to further integrate the risk management approach into the M&E approach.
Targeting		
In 2002, the program review introduced the principle of strategic targeting in the scholarships program. Since then, targeting was used to make the program 'more strategic and focused.' In the 10-year period, the program has: • Proactively targeted some sectors, such as education and rural development, while remaining flexible and responsive to emerging or changing priorities in other sectors; • Awarded scholarships in 14 fields of study, but with 80 percent of awards being in six areas corresponding to development priorities;	The use of targeting mechanisms and criteria to improve the achievement of outcomes for individuals, organisations and sectors through the provision of scholarships. The difficulty of 'impact targeting' of scholarships. The use of 'special conditions' to reduce barriers and increase the number of	That the program focuses the provision of scholarships on a narrower set of well-defined priority development impacts. That the program develops and pilot tests the use of preferential selection criteria for applications for scholarships to help achieve priority development impacts.

Findings on the Scholarships Program	Lessons	Recommendations
• Provided increasing numbers of scholarships to candidates in public sector institutions and universities, and fewer to those in the private sector; • Included a category of scholarship candidates from 'educationally disadvantaged areas' from its outset; • Sought to provide equal opportunity for candidates from disadvantaged groups to compete for scholarships by introducing 'special conditions' for the selection of candidates from disadvantaged groups; and • Re-defined the categories of awards to focus on post-graduate awards, with an increasing number of awards going to PhD candidates. With notable exceptions in the education sector and gender equality, the program hasn't targeted the *development impacts* in the country program when allocating awards. The program has successfully involved key government institutions, but it has not been able to achieve a 'critical mass' of alumni in any one institution.	candidates and awardees from disadvantaged groups. The difficulty of achieving a 'critical mass' of alumni in a large public sector organisation.	
Operational Policy and Procedures		
The scholarships program has introduced targeted and innovative promotion approaches which have increased competition in the award process. These approaches have resulted in more applications, better applications, and more applications from disadvantaged provinces and other targeted groups. The use of the 'online application facility' in the program has	The use of targeted promotion to increase the quantity and quality of applications for scholarships. The role of the 'applicant profile' approach to selection categories in facilitating effective promotion. The value of interviews as an additional	

Findings on the Scholarships Program	Lessons	Recommendations
reportedly increased efficiency and standardization in the application process, but it has also reduced the role played by central government agencies in the same. The program has attracted more candidates from rural areas and the university sector through the use of eligibility criteria better suited to these groups. The program has increased the likelihood of selecting the 'right' candidates for awards by interviewing all short-listed candidates in the selection process.	check on quality in the selection process.	
Alumni Support and Engagement		
The program has introduced or piloted different approaches to reintegration to support the use and transfer of skills and knowledge by alumni for the benefit of their organisations and Vietnam's development. Action planning for reintegration done prior to study is based on some assumptions that have not always held true in the scholarships program. They are that: (1) alumni will return to Vietnam; (2) alumni can predict what their organisations will need in two years hence; (3) alumni do not change jobs or employers; (4) alumni are senior enough to enable the transfer of knowledge and skills to colleagues; (5) alumni can predict how they will make the transfer to colleagues; (6) alumni are skilled in making the transfer; and (7) the 'right' conditions exist in the organisation for the transfer to occur. Professional development of alumni has strengthened knowledge and skills, networks and linkages among alumni	The importance of providing support to alumni reintegration at the right point in the scholarship cycle. The impact of the workplace context on the effectiveness of the reintegration strategy for alumni. The value of professional development activities for alumni to enhance their soft skills. The risk involved in not finding a good balance among ease of grant administration and oversight and financial reporting requirements, including grant appraisal, in the provision of small grants. The value of using alumni and alumni	That the HRD delivery strategy considers the possible inclusion of initiatives or interventions intended to make an impact on development priorities by complementing and reinforcing the scholarships program. That the HRD delivery strategy considers how best to involve alumni in the initiatives or interventions intended to make an impact on development priorities. That consideration is given to a review of the small grants scheme to find ways of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the scheme.

Findings on the Scholarships Program	Lessons	Recommendations
and with Australian organisations. The small grants scheme improves alumni participation in the post-award phase, but the results of these activities are unclear. The results should include fostering linkages and goodwill among alumni, but the effort required in the current design has reportedly undermined this intention. The program changed its strategy for supporting locally-based alumni networks in Vietnam. After supporting sector-based networks in the previous phase, it now supports regionally-based networks. More alumni are involved in the networks now, and delivering support to the networks is easier. The program supports the development of a formal national network of alumni, which aims to be autonomous, self-governing and able to collaborate with the Australia Awards Alumni Network (AAAN).	networks in the delivery of the scholarships program, including in promotion, pre-departure, reintegration and mentoring activities as well as acting as ambassadors of the scholarships program.	

4 Lessons Learnt and Recommendations for the HRD Delivery Strategy

Conditions for Achieving Result	Use of Scholarship Program	Use of Other HRD Modalities	Recommendations
Type of Result: Equality of opportunity for skills development			
This is providing opportunities for individuals to learn and develop new knowledge and skills. The Country Program (CP) needs to be clear about why it provides scholarships and to whom it wants to provide them.	Scholarships are a very effective HRD modality for providing equality of opportunity for skills development. A Scholarships Program (SP) can use targeting mechanisms to ensure the 'right' people get awarded scholarships.	Other modalities can create equality of opportunity, but scholarships are unique and particularly effective.	That the SP address both thematic (equity) and development priorities through the provision of scholarships.
Type of Result: Development of knowledge and skills			
This is knowledge building and skills development for individuals. Knowledge providers (universities) need to be effective. Participants (awardees) need to be good learners and embrace the study experience. They need English language.	Scholarships can build specialized knowledge and skills, including soft skills, of awardees. Scholarships are effective for creating specialists in targeted fields. Scholarships are transformational.	Other modalities such as short-term training, study tours, distance learning, technical assistance, action learning, and research can strengthen skills and knowledge. However, their ability to create specialists or develop soft skills may be limited compared to scholarships.	That the SP develop specialized knowledge that focuses on fewer priorities and development impacts. That other HRD modalities be used to address the needs of individuals in the CP that cannot participate in the SP.

Conditions for Achieving Result	Use of Scholarship Program	Use of Other HRD Modalities	Recommendations
Type of Result: Application of knowledge and skills			
This is the use of knowledge and skills in the workplace. For this to happen, alumni need to work in jobs and for organisations that allow them to use their new knowledge and skills while performing their work duties. They need to take the initiative.	Scholarships are an effective HRD modality for developing skills needed in the workplace, especially soft skills, and for building confidence. SP can strengthen the use of alumni knowledge and skills through effective targeting, reintegration action planning, professional development, small grants, and support to alumni networks.	Other modalities such as short-term training, technical assistance (TA), action learning, coaching, mentoring can support the individual's use of skills and knowledge in the workplace. Other modalities can strengthen organizations' use of alumni's new knowledge through TA to strengthen HRD planning, HRM systems, etc.	That the SP continue to support the application of alumni new knowledge and skills though reintegration activities and alumni support. That other modalities be used to support HRD planning and HRM systems in organizations to facilitate use of alumni knowledge and skills.
Type of Result: Transfer and use of new knowledge and skills to workplace colleagues			
This is the transfer of knowledge and skills from one individual to other individuals in the work place. Alumni have the skills and are in a position to transfer their knowledge. The workplace context facilitates the transfer through the way work is assigned, the way it is organized, the way people are managed and supervised, etc.	SP can target individuals with this transfer and use in mind. SP can help alumni improve their skills in mentoring, supervision, presentations, team work, etc., through PD activities. SP can support the transfer of skills from alumni to the colleagues through reintegration action planning and small grants activities.	Other HRD modalities can target individuals with use in mind. Short-term training, study tours, distance learning, TA, action learning, and research can strengthen skills and knowledge among workplace colleagues. Other modalities can create the right conditions in organizations if they don't already exist, whereas scholarships cannot do so alone.	That the SP be used to improve alumni's skills in mentoring, supervision, presentations, team work, etc., through PD activities. That other modalities be used to support HRD planning and HRM systems in organizations to facilitate use of alumni knowledge and skills.

Conditions for Achieving Result	Use of Scholarship Program	Use of Other HRD Modalities	Recommendations
Type of Result: Organizational development, change and improvement of services			
Organizational development is a long-term process aimed at improving an organization's leadership, knowledge, tools, policies, norms, management systems, processes, resource use, culture, behaviours, etc. Organizational change and improvement needs a demand-driven, top-down approach. Organizations need sufficient readiness, capacity, ownership, competency, engagement, etc., for improved service delivery.	SP can target individuals and organizations (PPI) with this change and improvement in mind. Scholarships alone are not enough to achieve this result. The SP was unable to achieve a 'critical mass' of alumni in PPIs to enable change. HRD planning in organizations can make use of alumni in this process. SP would need an OD component to contribute to this result. SP post-return activities are not sufficient to achieve this result.	Other HRD modalities are more effective at strengthening organizational systems. They usually begin with organizational assessment and planning. OD requires multi-activity initiatives (projects) involving inter alia short-term training, long-term training, study tours, distance learning, TA, action learning, coaching and research. Scholarships are one type of complementary intervention.	That other HRD modalities be used to support OD in selected organizations to help them to fulfil their mandates. That the SP complement these other HRD initiatives but not be expected to achieve this result alone.
Type of Result: Capacity development for development Impact			
This is capacity development of a system of institutions and organizations to address system-wide issues or 'wicked' (complex) problems. Capacity development (CD) is a long-term process that involves many stakeholders working together, each with a mandated role in the system. 'Wicked' problems by their nature continue to change even as CD takes place.	A scholarships program is not an effective modality for system-wide capacity development unless it is designed as one part of a large set of interventions for that purpose.	CD requires multi-activity initiatives (projects) involving inter alia assessment, planning, consensus building, awareness raising, advocacy, organizational assessment, short-term training, long-term training, study tours, distance learning, TA, action learning, coaching and research. Scholarships are one type of complementary intervention.	That projects be designed involving a range of initiatives that together can address system-wide issues for the purpose of achieving development impact in priority areas.

5 Findings on the Scholarships Program

Overall – In the past 10 years, the scholarships program in Vietnam has performed well in terms of results achievement. In aggregate terms, almost all scholarship awardees were placed in study programs in Australia relevant to their areas of work; about 97 percent of them were successful in their studies. After graduating, almost 90 percent of alumni returned to live and work in Vietnam. Of the overseas alumni, about 50 percent had continued their studies and will likely return to Vietnam in the future.[2]

More than 90 percent of returning alumni went to work in areas relevant to their studies.[3] Almost two-thirds returned to their previous employer. About 80 percent of returning alumni were able to use their new skills in the workplace; 62 percent transferred some of what they learnt to their colleagues; and 72 percent reported having helped to improve their organisation. About 80 percent of alumni have maintained links with Australians or other alumni since returning to Vietnam.

In the past 10 years, the program has adjusted and improved in its profiling and targeting strategies and post-return support for achieving these outcomes. It has increased opportunities for all alumni through skills development. It has developed a robust measurement framework for tracking progress and results achieved that are attributable to the program. This summary is testament to the effectiveness and value of the program as well as its ability to utilise performance information in program management.

5.1 Program Rationale and Design

Investment – Since 1992, AusAID has made a substantial investment in human resources development (HRD) in Vietnam through tertiary-level scholarships for Vietnamese scholars. In some years, the investment accounted for upwards of 25 percent of the annual budget for the country program. The scholarships program is considered a good investment in HRD in Vietnam and in other countries as well. The Government of Australia (GOA) has created a relatively low-risk, high-return brand for its scholarships program and has wisely invested in brand-wide efficiencies.

Vietnamese HRD Priorities – The program has responded to Vietnam's development priorities in a timely fashion. It has transformed alumni into more capable leaders, managers, researchers and teachers in the tertiary system. It has given them more confidence and more ability to think and work independently. The program has improved English language skills in government ministries and agencies requiring this competency. About 90 percent of alumni use English to some degree in the workplace. The program has made an impact on the overall quality of human resources in the country, which is central to the GOV's long-term development plan.

Australia-Vietnam Cooperation – The scholarships program is the flagship component of AusAID's HRD strategy in Vietnam. Over the years, it has responded effectively to evolving sector and thematic priorities in the country program. This is especially true when priorities

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[2] The figures in this paragraph are found in the 2011 Vietnam Tracer Study of Australian Scholarships Alumni. The tracer study found that almost 89 percent of 796 respondents were living in Vietnam. About 97 percent of in-Vietnam alumni were working. About 51 percent of overseas alumni were continuing their studies.
[3] The figures in this paragraph are derived from the 2013 impact study of alumni in education management and environmental sustainability. In 2013, 94.5 percent of 55 respondents to the educational management survey said that their course was relevant to their work duties upon return to either *a great extent* or *a medium extent*. About 91 percent of 98 respondents to the environmental sustainability survey said the same.

were directly linked to beneficiary groups such as women, ethnic minorities or disadvantaged rural populations. Generally, the program has focused on who it wants to apply for awards (whether as individuals, groups or institutions) more than what impact it wants to achieve. Focusing on development impact would be challenging in a scholarships program, but the theory of change raises expectations for this, even though the program was not designed as part of a suite of AusAID initiatives for that purpose.

Program Purpose and Objectives – In 2002, external evaluators recommended that the scholarships program undergo 'fundamental changes' to make it 'more strategic and focused.' Since then, the program has pursued improvements in four areas:

- aligning its objectives with country program priorities;

- improving its strategies for targeting and providing alumni support;

- extending the impact of the program beyond individuals to the organisations they work for; and

- developing a robust M&E system to measure the achievement of objectives and expected results.

If the scholarships program has become more strategic and focused after making improvements in these areas, it has also remained wide-reaching and responsive to changing local needs and agency priorities. The program is able to contribute to HRD priorities in diverse sectors such as tertiary education, climate change, governance reform, health, rural development, infrastructure, communications, business and commerce, science and technology, environmental sustainability and disaster response.

5.2   Results-based Management

Use of M&E Framework – The scholarships program has built a robust M&E system to monitor the impact of the investment in tertiary scholarships. In response to recommendations in the program review in 2002, the program began to develop 'a framework for the continuous monitoring of returned students from targeted institutions to assess outcomes and impact.' In 2012, the *M&E Strategy and Plan* included a 'theory of change' for the program. In addition, the M&E system has two complementary features that enable it to function effectively: the program maintains an 'alumni database' dating back more than 20 years; and it implements a collection of survey and interview activities to gather 'performance data' on outcomes for individuals, organisations and Vietnam's development. Currently, the program makes good use of the 'alumni database' for administrative, management and monitoring purposes. However, it requires considerable effort for the MC to maintain quality of the data.

In terms of outcomes, the core logic of the theory of change has been as follows:

1)   that awardees will develop valuable new knowledge and skills during their studies in Australia;

2)   that alumni will use their new knowledge and skills (including soft skills) in the work place in Vietnam when they return;

3)   that alumni will transfer their new knowledge and skills to their colleagues and organisations;

4)   that the performance of organisations will improve through the transfer; and

5) that alumni and their organisations will make contributions to Vietnam's development which will support poverty reduction and economic growth in the country. [4]

The scholarships program delivers support activities that are designed to achieve outcomes (1) to (3) in the results model. However, the program does not invest directly in outcomes (4) and (5). These outcomes are beyond what is reasonable to expect. The program could consider either revising the theory of change in Figure 1 of the *M&E Strategy and Plan* (2012) to bring it in line with the design of the scholarships program, or revising the current design so that the program can be expected to achieve the theory of change.

Risk Management – The 2008 *Program Design Document* (PDD) provided a comprehensive Risk Management Matrix (RMM) for the program. The RMM identified 36 risks to various processes and components of the program. These risks were similar to other risks identified in earlier phases of the scholarships program, and were consistent with the risks to ADS in other country programs. The RMM was incorporated into the 2012 *M&E Strategy and Plan*, which reduced the number of risks from 36 to 32. Despite the large number of risks identified in the PDD and M&E document, the program is faced with relatively few uncertainties, especially in the most critical areas. The MC has focused on only the high-level risks in its annual plans and reports.

The program could consider three changes to further integrate risk management into its M&E approach. First, it could reduce the number of risks in the framework significantly. Second, it could rate *residual risk* not just *initial risk* so that AusAID and other parties responsible for risk management understand the level of risk they still face after the implementation of the risk response actions. Third, it could identify the particular outputs and outcomes in the theory of change that are affected by each risk identified in the RMM.

Program Oversight – The program oversight function has performed well over the period under review. It has consisted of oversight committees, internal reporting, and external performance review. The MC has been able to provide AusAID and MOET with good quality information on program outputs and outcomes for decision-making. In 2010, AusAID introduced its *Quality at Implementation* tool, which has strengthened oversight by agency stakeholders. In the same year, the GOA announced the Australia Awards program, managed by the Australia Awards Office in Canberra, which has also strengthened program oversight.

Impact of the Program – The impact of the program is predicted in the theory of change in the *M&E Strategy and Plan (*2012). As mentioned, alumni are expected to "help improve the performance of their respective organisations" and "make contributions to Vietnamese development." A lesson learnt in the scholarships program is that alumni are able to impact their organisations under the 'right' conditions. For example, alumni need to be in senior positions to help improve their organisations. As seen in recent surveys, the longer alumni were back in Vietnam, the more likely they were to hold senior positions in their organisations, and the more likely they were to report making improvements in organisations. This is also true of promoting gender equality: alumni who held seniors positions were more likely to report promoting gender equality in their organisations than alumni who held junior positions.

Since 2002, the program has adopted various approaches to creating the 'right' conditions for alumni to help improve their organisations. For example, it has tried targeting selected organisations for a 'critical mass' of scholarship awardees, involving nominating organisations in pre-award processes, supporting alumni in reintegrating into their

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[4] The scholarships program also expects alumni to "establish links with Australians and other alumni." The program invests directly in this outcome through its support to alumni networks.

organisations, and providing small grants for research and knowledge sharing. However, as seen in the recent revision to guidance on preparing reintegration plans, the issue of how to ensure the transfer and use of new knowledge and skills by individuals and organisations is not completely resolved.

Sustainability – Sustainability refers to the continued use of new skills and knowledge by the alumni for the benefit of their organisations and/or Vietnam's development. Years after returning to Vietnam, most alumni report continuing to use the skills and knowledge they acquired in their studies. Most often they report continuing to use the soft skills they acquired, such as work planning skills, time management, working independently, problem solving. Alumni report being able to use their soft skills immediately upon their return and in virtually all work contexts. Soft skills are durable and transferable when alumni change jobs. In terms of their professional knowledge time may increase the likelihood of sustainable results: the further alumni advance in their careers, the more they are able to apply what they have learnt. As a group, scholarships alumni are highly mobile in the employment sector. Significant numbers either change employers or get promoted to new jobs with existing employers within a few years of returning to Vietnam. The program has tried different approaches for targeting the 'right' persons for awards, but sustainability is also linked to alumni being in the 'right' jobs with the 'right' conditions existing in their organisations.

5.3   Targeting

Overview – The scholarships program has relied on the targeting of awards to improve downstream outcomes for individuals, organisations and sectors. It has targeted awards to applicants from certain types of organisations and groups for university courses in particular fields of study and levels of study. It has not targeted candidates for particular development impacts, with notable exception of outcomes in the education sector and gender equality.

Scholarship Categories – Since the 1990s, the scholarships program has re-defined the categories of awards more than a few times in order to make the program more strategic and focused. The key trend has been providing more scholarships to candidates in public sector institutions and universities, and fewer to the private sector.[5] Currently, the program takes an 'applicant profile' approach to allocating scholarships to awardees in three profiles. AusAID and MOET determine the percentage of awards to each profile, and the program tailors its pre-award and post-return activities accordingly. However, in the approach AusAID doesn't target the *development impacts* in the country program when allocating awards, perhaps because the 'impact targeting' of scholarships would be difficult to promote and implement for the desired effect.[6]

Levels of Study – Since the 1990s, the scholarships program has made two significant changes in providing awards for particular levels of study. First, the program gradually phased out providing awards for under-graduate studies. Pre-2003, about 65 percent of scholarships were awarded for post-graduate studies, while 35 percent were awarded for undergraduate studies. Now, the program provides 100 percent of its awards for post-graduate studies. The second significant change is the increased number of awards for PhD candidates. It currently awards 20 percent of its scholarships to PhD candidates and 80 percent to Master candidates. These changes started after the 2002 program review team recommended the gradual phasing out of undergraduate awards in the program. They

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[5] See Annex 3 for a summary of the evolution of selection categories of ADS awards in Vietnam.
[6] An example of an *impact* in the country program is *'a* reduction in negative impacts of climate change.' An *input* would be scholarships to study climate change.

were made possible by the steadily improving qualifications of human resources in the education sector.

Fields of Study – The scholarships program has awarded scholarships in 14 fields of study. About 78 percent of all scholarships were awarded in six areas, including business/commerce.[7] This field of study was particularly popular in the first phase of the program, when scholarships were open to candidates from the private sector. Since then, the program has proactively targeted some sectors, such as education and rural development, while remaining flexible and responsive to emerging or changing priorities. In recent years, for example, the program has started providing awards to scholars studying gender equality, human rights and disability issues. By aligning fields of study with GOA and GOV priorities, scholarships were expected to make an effective contribution to development.

Targeted Institutions – The key change in this area has been providing more scholarships to candidates from 'targeted' or 'priority' institutions and fewer to candidates in 'open' categories. In 2002, the program review introduced the principle of strategic targeting, which lead to the creation of the Targeted Public Institutions (TPI) program. The objective was creating a 'critical mass' of alumni in a small number of key government institutions. In 2006, the TPI program became the Priority Public Institutions (PPI) program with the same objective. In 2011, the 'open' category for scholarships was phased out and applicants from a larger number of CGAs became eligible for scholarships. With so many CGAs eligible for scholarships, there was less chance of creating a 'critical mass' in any one of them.[8] In 2011, the mid-term program review determined that the program was not achieving a 'critical mass' in targeted institutions.

The program currently provides less pre-award support to institutions and more post-return support to individuals through the reintegration strategy.

Targeted Groups – The program has sought to provide equal opportunity for candidates from disadvantaged groups to compete for scholarships to study in Australia. From its outset, the program has included a category of scholarship candidates from 'educationally disadvantaged areas.' It has developed strategies for targeting rural poor, ethnic minority and disability candidates. In 2010, the program stepped up its efforts by introducing 'special conditions' for their selection. It lowered eligibility requirements linked to English language proficiency and Grade Point Average (GPA) for ethnic minority and rural disadvantaged candidates. This has reduced barriers at the application stage and resulted in more candidates and awardees from these targeted groups. Similarly, the program has given emphasis to people with disabilities (PWDs). There has been a sharp increase in the number of PWD applicants and awardees. The program will introduce its Equity of Access fund for targeted groups in 2013.

5.4 Operational Policy and Procedures

Promotion – The key trend in the promotion of the scholarships program has been the introduction of targeted and innovative promotion approaches. Generally, the program has moved from using methods such as advertising in newspapers, radio, television and

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[7] The most popular fields of study with 3,618 alumni in the program database were: business/commerce (23.3%), education (19.6%), science and technology (15.6%), economics (7.8%), agriculture and rural development (6.8%), and the environment (5.2%). Business/commerce was particularly popular as an area of study in the early years of the scholarships program.

[8] At least three reviews or studies have questioned the efficacy of creating a 'critical mass' of alumni in targeted institutions. The 2008 PDD, the 2011 mid-term program review, and the 2012 impact study on central government agencies all questioned this approach.

internet to speak to a mass audience, to using more innovative and targeted methods to speak to particular profiles of candidates. The targeted methods include the use of social media sites, associations and alumni; advertising on commercial and non-commercial news websites; and delivering targeted information sessions in provinces and universities.

This shift was made possible by adopting the 'applicant profile' approach to selection categories, and by advances in information technology. The change has resulted in more competition in the award process: more applications, better applications, and more applications from disadvantaged provinces and other targeted groups.

Application – The application process has changed for individuals and organisations. In the previous phase, applicants applied for awards under the PPI program through the PPIs. They submitted applications aligned with institutional HRD plans and individual Action Plans to their employers, who then screened applications and submitted nomination forms to AusAID and MOET on the Joint Selection Committee. (Applicants under the Open category submitted their applications directly to the MC.) In 2011, the Vietnam program adopted the use of the 'online application facility' which AusAID had introduced. This has reportedly increased efficiency and standardization in the application process, but it has also reduced the role played by CGAs and their HRD units.

Selection – The selection of candidates has also changed to make the process more transparent and effective. In the previous phase, the program introduced a 3-stage selection process, involving eligibility, short-listing, and final selection. It increased transparency by introducing criteria for each of these stages. Eligibility criteria were different for the two sub-categories. For institutions, eligibility was largely determined by how candidates fit in the HRD plans of institutions. For the Open category, eligibility was based on academic performance. In 2010, the program started providing more flexibility to attract more candidates from rural areas and the university sector. In 2011, the program streamlined selection and consolidated in-country ADS/ALA events to shorten the mobilization period for awardees to 6-12 months to compete with other donors' scholarships.

Under the current phase, the program began to interview all short-listed candidates in the selection process. In the previous phase, only short-listed candidates for PhDs were interviewed. The interview has increased the chances of selecting the 'right' candidates by providing an additional check on quality.

5.5   Alumni Support and Engagement

Reintegration – From its outset, the scholarships program has wanted to support the use and transfer of skills and knowledge by alumni for the benefit of their organisations and Vietnam's development. It has introduced or piloted different approaches to reintegration for this purpose. In the previous phase, the concept of Action Planning was introduced for reintegration of alumni selected under the PPI program. This would help a government employer to utilise a graduate as a technical expert, training provider and/or change agent. Beginning in 2010, the program provided HRD advisers to strengthen its support to the PPIs, but this lasted only one year until it was discontinued in 2011 with the introduction of online applications.

In 2011, AusAID produced a guide for supporting the reintegration of alumni. In the guide, the objectives for reintegration support related to all points in the scholarship management cycle and all outcomes in the theory of change. In the guide, Action Planning was to be

done prior to study and it would assist pre-selection processes, not just post-return.[9] However, this approach to reintegration support was based on a number of assumptions that have not always held true in the scholarships program.[10] The assumptions include that:

1) alumni will return to Vietnam;

2) alumni can predict what their organisations will need in two years hence;

3) alumni do not change their employers or jobs;

4) alumni are senior enough to enable the transfer of knowledge and skills to colleagues;

5) alumni can predict how they will make the transfer to colleagues;

6) alumni are skilled in making the transfer; and

7) the 'right' conditions exist in the organisation for the transfer to occur.

In 2012, the program developed its current reintegration support strategy, which is now in its pilot phase. The program helps alumni to develop Re-integration Action Plans (REAPs) as they are preparing to return to Vietnam, and not prior to their departure. The program will assess this strategy in 2013.

Professional Development – The scholarships program has supported professional development (PD) of alumni for purposes of strengthening knowledge and skills, networks and linkages among alumni and with Australian organisations. In the previous phase, Action Planning was a mechanism for supporting PD among PPI alumni. In the current phase, the program has continued organizing thematic workshops, including a gender workshop, which have been well-attended by alumni. They report learning or honing skills that are useful to them in the workplace.

Small Grants Activities – From 2010, the scholarships program piloted a small grants scheme to improve alumni participation in the post-award phase. The scheme provides funding to alumni for small research projects, training workshops, and presentations at conferences. It is a responsive scheme that is intended to increase alumni knowledge and skills, ownership, and linkages with Australia. However, as currently designed and managed, receiving a small grant requires a large effort. There is duplication in the grant appraisal and selection process, and excessive financial reporting requirements. Some alumni have expressed frustration with these aspects, which could have a negative effect on the program's brand and reputation. Although grant management and oversight have been labour intensive, the results of activities are unclear.

Alumni Networks – The support provided by the scholarship program to alumni networks in Vietnam has made two important changes in the review period. First, the alumni networks in the previous phase were sector-based or group-based, whereas in the current phase they are regionally-based. Sector-based networks are exclusive of alumni who are not part of the sector, including alumni in recently emerging thematic priority areas such as gender equality, human rights, ethnic minorities or alumni from disadvantaged provinces. Regionally-based networks are inclusive of all alumni and they have proven easier to manage and support.

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[9] This guide has recently been revised.

[10] In the scholarships program, reintegration planning would seem better suited to candidates from profiles 2 and 3, than those from profile 1.

Second, the program is supporting the development of a formal national network of AusAID alumni. This bottom-up exercise has involved an alumni working group formed of and elected by members of the regional alumni networks. For sustainability purposes, the national network aims to be autonomous and self-governing.

In 2012, the GOA launched its Australia Awards Alumni Network (AAAN) Strategy. The AAAN would strengthen links between Australia and alumni in developing and developed countries throughout the world; increase the prestige associated with the Australia Awards brand; act as a clearinghouse for best practice; and support the achievement of development outcomes by alumni. The AAAN will operate collaboratively with the national alumni network in Vietnam and provide a type of top-down strengthening to it from Canberra.

5.6   Program Management Framework

Program Structure – Since 2006, the scholarships program has consisted of three types of awards: (1) Australian Development Scholarships (ADS); (2) Australian Leadership Awards Scholarships (ALAS); and (3) Australia Leadership Awards Fellowships (ALAF). In 2009, the Australian government announced the Australia Awards program. This brought together under one banner awards from three implementing agencies: ACIAR, AusAID and DIISRTE.[11] In 2013, ADS were renamed Australia Awards Scholarships, ALAS became the Australia Awards Leadership Program, and ALAF became the Australia Awards Fellowships.

Management Arrangements – In 2002, AusAID introduced the MC model to the scholarships program. The MC for ADS Support managed the selection, placement and post-return activities in Vietnam, while the Australian government managed the in-Australia component of the award. A separate contractor was hired to manage and deliver the in-country English Language Training (ELT) program. In 2011, the mid-term review recommended that AusAID continue using two MCs, but discontinue using the MC for ADS support to monitor the ELT contractor.

Partnership Arrangements – Under the Vietnam program's Umbrella MOU, the GOA and GOV developed a Subsidiary Arrangement (SA) for the ADS program. The SA defined the objectives of the program; set out the financial and in-kind contributions of both governments; and described monitoring responsibilities. In the TPI (Priority) program phase 2, each TPI signed a Formal ADS Agreement with AusAID. This practice was phased out in 2011 after the PPI program ended.

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[11] The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE).

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

According to its theory of change, the scholarships program will achieve these outcomes:

1) Alumni[12] succeed in study, return to Vietnam, and either return to their organisations or find other relevant employment;

2) Alumni return with and maintain positive perceptions of Australia;

3) Alumni establish links with Australians and other alumni;

4) Alumni are able to apply skills and knowledge (including soft skills) in their work and daily life;

5) Alumni help to improve the performance of their respective organisations;

6) Alumni make contributions to Vietnamese development in their respective areas of expertise; and

7) Selected alumni contributions and improved organisational performance support poverty reduction and economic growth in Vietnam[13]

It may not be reasonable to expect the scholarships program to achieve all of these outcomes. In its current design, the program invests directly in outcomes (1) to (3) but only indirectly in the others. That the alumni are able to achieve outcomes (4) and (5) ultimately depends on their initiative and the 'right' conditions existing in their organisations. To achieve an impact on development, the scholarships program would need to integrate with other elements of the HRD delivery strategy or country program. It would have to focus its resources on fewer fields of study, provide comprehensive post-alumni support, and coordinate its efforts with other initiatives or interventions in the strategy.

The 2011 *Mid-term Review of the ASDIV Program* made recommendations along these lines. For example, under section 3 of their report, the evaluators recommended that the program:

1.1 Reintroduce…priority organisations that will receive intensive HRD assistance at all stages of the scholarship process. This will include assistance with HRD planning, integrated packages of HRD assistance, and support for effective reintegration and building on scholars' learning to effect organisational change and contribute to development outcomes.

1.4 Reintroduce the expectation that scholarship applications will be linked proactively to HRD plans and ASDiV priorities…and encourage organisations to play an active role in soliciting applications from appropriate sections (if not people) in their organisations.

1.8 Reintroduce support specific to particular scholars and for their organisation for the implementation of reintegration plans in priority organisations.

This study of lessons learnt suggests that the program take a more strategic and focused approach. It can work in selected sectors on priority development issues with lead institutions and other key stakeholder organisations working on the issues. It can provide scholarships to appropriate candidates and support to impact-focused initiatives. But it

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[12] The outcomes achieved by alumni should be disaggregated by gender.
[13] This outcome is similar to outcomes (5) and (6).

needs to be part of a broader package of HRD interventions to achieve its predicted development impact.

While the scholarships program has achieved valuable results through its investment in HRD in Vietnam, it has also been proved capable of making adjustments to achieve even better results. The following considerations are made in the spirit of continuous learning and improvement. The study of lessons learnt recommends:

Rationale and Design

1) That the expectations for achievable results in the Australia Awards program be clarified.

2) Specifically, that the expectations for the program to result in changes and improvements to organisations as set out in the theory of change be re-considered and clarified.

3) Specifically, that the degree to which the program is expected to result in substantive development impacts be determined.

Results-based Management

4) That the program consider either revising its theory of change to bring it in line with the design of the scholarships program, or revising the current design so that the program can be expected to achieve its theory of change.

5) That the program consider changes to further integrate the risk management approach into the M&E approach. That it considers focusing on fewer risks in the Risk Management Matrix; that it rates residual risk, assuming the effectiveness of its risk response; and that it identifies which risks will impact which outputs and outcomes in the theory of change.

Targeting

6) That the program focus the provision of scholarships on a narrower set of well-defined priority development impacts.

7) That the program develop and pilot test the use of preferential selection criteria for applications for scholarships to help achieve priority development impacts.

Alumni Support and Engagement

8) That the HRD delivery strategy consider the possible inclusion of initiatives or interventions intended to make an impact on development priorities by complementing and reinforcing the scholarships program.

9) That the HRD delivery strategy consider how best to involve alumni in the initiatives or interventions intended to make an impact on development priorities.

10) That consideration is given to a review of the small grants scheme to find ways of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of it.

As noted, the study found that the scholarships program can achieve most but not all types of results reflected in its theory of change. Other HRD modalities need to complement the provision of scholarships for the AusAID program to help improve organisational performance and development conditions in the country. To help identify the best use of the different modalities in its HRD delivery strategy, the study of lessons learnt recommends:

If the HRD delivery strategy intends to achieve equality of opportunity for skills development

11) That the program address both thematic (equity) and development priorities through the provision of scholarships.

For the development of knowledge and skills

12) That the scholarships program develop specialized knowledge that focuses on fewer priorities and development impacts.

13) That other HRD modalities be used to address the needs of individuals in the Country Program that cannot participate in the scholarships program.

For the application of knowledge and skills

14) That the scholarships program continue to support the application of alumni's new knowledge and skills though reintegration activities.

15) That other modalities be used to support HRD planning and HRM systems in organizations to facilitate the use of alumni's knowledge and skills.

For the transfer and use of new knowledge and skills to workplace colleagues

16) That the scholarships program be used to improve alumni's skills in mentoring, supervision, presentations, communication, team work, etc., through professional development activities and the small grants scheme.

17) That other modalities be used to support HRD planning and HRM systems in organizations to facilitate use of alumni's knowledge and skills.

For organizational development, change and improvement of services

18) That other HRD modalities be used to support organisational development in selected organizations to help them to fulfill their mandates.

19) That the scholarships program complement these other HRD initiatives but not be expected to achieve this result alone.

For capacity development for development Impact

20) That projects be designed involving a range of initiatives that together can address system-wide issues for the purpose of achieving development impact in priority areas.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference

Background

1) Since 1992, Australia's development cooperation program with Vietnam has made a priority of supporting human resources development (HRD). In the *Australia – Vietnam Joint Aid Program Strategy 2010-2015*, HRD is a core area for Australian development assistance along with economic integration and environmental sustainability. AusAID expects the focus on HRD to continue in the next country strategy period for Australian assistance (2016-2020). It has started a process of developing an HRD Delivery Strategy to identify its priorities and optimal support modalities for this next period of assistance.

2) The centrepiece of AusAID support to HRD is the provision of scholarships for tertiary education. Since 1974, Australia has been a leading bilateral scholarship provider to Vietnam. It has focused most of its HRD support on service provision via scholarships and training, rather than policy development or system strengthening.

3) HRD is a challenging area of programming because it is both a targeted priority area and a modality for achieving development outcomes in multiple sectors. Human resources are a factor in a range of development challenges currently facing Vietnam, including declining productivity, low competitiveness, weak research and development capacity, fragmented development and rising inequality. For AusAID, there is a need to focus its HRD investment, making it more strategic and outcome-oriented, while improving synergies and linkages between programming in HRD and other priority sectors.

4) With over 20 years of experience in HRD programming, future support to HRD needs to build on a track record of strengths. Understanding AusAID's experience with its scholarships program is essential to the development of the HRD Delivery Strategy. Lessons learnt in scholarships programming are necessary for the Agency to identify the objectives of its HRD assistance, and clarify how this assistance could be best delivered.

Objective

5) AusAID would like to identify lessons learnt in its scholarships program that are relevant to the development of its Vietnam HRD Delivery Strategy. Under its Annual Plan for 2013-2014, the Australia Awards Vietnam program will conduct a study of lessons learnt in the last ten years of the scholarships program with reference if possible to the training program from 1997.

Scope of the Study

6) The study of lessons learnt in the scholarships program since 2003 will identify lessons related to the program design, profiling and targeting, results management, resource use, operations, and engagement of key stakeholders. The study will identify lessons on the effectiveness and efficiency of the targeted approach of using profiles in the selection of scholarship candidates; the Priority Public Institutions (PPI) approach and arrangements; and the promotion, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and alumni management strategies.

7) The study will identify lessons learnt from its targeting approaches and management strategies in relation to its ability to address and achieve outcomes linked to AusAID country program priorities, Vietnamese development priorities, and crosscutting thematic priorities such as gender equality, social inclusion and other equity concerns.

8) The study will outline how the program has prioritised and supported disadvantaged minority groups and consider the relevance and effectiveness of prioritisation and support to these people, including English language training support.

9) The study of lessons learnt will help AusAID to understand the type of HRD priorities and programming modalities besides scholarships that could be considered in the HRD Delivery Strategy. Other modalities would include, for example, short-term training for government institutions based on HRD training needs assessments.

10) Based on its findings, the study will include recommendations to AusAID for HRD programming that are relevant to the preparation of the HRD Delivery Strategy.

Sources

11) The study of lessons learnt in the scholarships program will draw lessons from key stakeholder groups. The stakeholders include: (1) Senior personnel and Project Coordinating Committee members from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET); (2) Program officers and PCC members from AusAID; (3) Senior personnel from the Managing Contractor; (4) Selected AAS alumni and their supervisors; and (5) HRD specialists and experts in Vietnam. The program is not expected to interview other international donor programs in Vietnam as part of this study of lessons learnt.

12) A preliminary list of documents to review is included in Annex 1 to this tasking note. The program will expand this list to include documents identified by stakeholders during the study process. The program will include in the data collection plan a list of stakeholders to interview and/or involve in the group discussions.

Methodology

13) The program will follow these steps in conducting the study:

1) Review key documentation from the current and previous phases of the scholarships program beginning in 1998 with an emphasis on the past 10 years;

2) Develop a conceptual framework for identifying and assessing lessons learnt;

3) Outline the evolution of the program over the review period in terms of its priorities, objectives, modalities and methods, targeting approaches and management strategies, and key results achieved;

4) Interview selected personnel involved in the program from AusAID, MOET, the Managing Contractor and among senior alumni;

5) Analyse the data collected on lessons learnt using AusAID's Quality at Implementation guideline for Australia Awards;

6) Facilitate group discussions for key stakeholders to explain, enrich and endorse the findings on lessons learnt in the document review and interviews; and

7) Prepare and present a report on lessons learnt in the scholarships program, including some recommendations on future HRD programming, for AusAID.

Deliverables and Timeframe

14) The program will produce the following deliverables related to the study of lessons learnt: (1) a data collection plan and tools for the study, including a framework for identifying and assessing lessons learnt; (2) a draft report for comment by AusAID; and (3) a final report incorporating feedback from AusAID on the draft report.

15) The program will deliver the draft report on the study to AusAID by September 30, 2013.

Documentation for Review

AusAID (1998). Program Design Document for VAT

AusAID (2002). Report on ADS Review

AusAID (2004). Project Design Document for ADS Support Phase II

ADS Support (Dec 2004). ADS Targeted Public Institution Program: Selection of Institutions for Participation in Phase II (2005)

AusAID (2007). Evaluation Report on ADS Support Phase II

AusAID (2008). Project Design Document for ASDiV Program

ADS Support (2008). Vietnam ADS Post Award Monitoring Report

AusAID (2009). Australia – Vietnam Joint Aid Program Strategy 2010-2015

ADS Support (2009). 2008 Vietnam Tracer Study of Alumni Scholarships Alumni

ASDiV (Feb 2010). 1st Annual Report

ASDiV (May 2010). Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and Plan

ASDiV (Dec 2010). 2nd Annual Report

ASDiV (2010). Longitudinal Case Histories

ASDiV (2011). Cluster Study on Education Quality

ASDiV (2011). Cluster Study on Public Relations and Advertising

ASDiV (Mar 2011). Monitoring & Evaluation Report

AusAID (June 2011). Report on ASDiV Mid-term Review

AusAID (2011). Quality at Implementation Report for Viet Nam Australia Awards Program

ASDiV (Dec 2011). 3rd Annual Report

ASDiV (Dec 2011). Longitudinal Case Histories

AusAID (2012). Managing Contractor Head Contract updated Scope of Services (SOS) for ASDiV Phase II

ASDiV (Jan 2012). Flexible Modes of Study Proposal Phase 1: Stocktake of Institutions

ASDiV (Mar 2012). 2011 Vietnam Tracer Study of Alumni Scholarships Alumni

AusAID (2012). Quality at Implementation Report for Viet Nam Australia Awards Program.

ASDiV (Oct 2012). Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy and Plan

ASDiV (Oct 2012). 3rd Monitoring & Evaluation Report

ASDiV (Oct 2012). Cluster Study on ADS Alumni Contribution to Promoting English Language Training in Vietnam

ASDiV (Oct 2012). Cluster Study on ADS Alumni Contribution to Gender Equality

ASDiV (Oct 2012). Impact Study of Scholarship Program on Central Government Agencies

ASDiV (Nov 2012). Longitudinal Case Histories

AusAID (2013). Quality at Implementation Report for Viet Nam Australia Awards Program

AusAID (July 2013). TORs for Vietnam Human Resources Development Delivery Strategy

Annex 2

Summary of Evolution of the Scholarships Program in Vietnam

1992 – 2002 ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	2003 – 2009 Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	2010 – 2016 New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
PROGRAM RATIONAL AND DESIGN		
Australia-Vietnam Cooperation – The goal of the Country Strategy 1998-2002 was working with the GOV to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. A key country program (CP) strategy was improving capacity for medium- to long-term development through HRD. ADS emerged as AusAID's main vehicle to support the HRD strategy. *Vietnamese HRD Priorities* – GOV priorities for HRD included upgrading university research and teaching skills, increased English language teaching capacity, and improving overall quality of human resources. *Program Design, Purpose and Objectives –* The objective of the ADS scheme was to strengthen human resource capacity in priority sectors of partner countries consistent with CP strategies and Australia's national interests. *Investment* – ADS program disbursed about $15 million annually. This was about 25% of the total CP budget. Program delivered about 150 ADS awards annually since the late 1990s.	*Australia-Vietnam Cooperation* – AusAID's Education and Training Sector Strategic Framework (2000) laid the groundwork for its involvement in the sector. The CP 2002-2006 provided a rationale for continued implementation of the ADS program. The ADS program aligned with CP priorities through the PPI program and through applicants' fields of study. *Vietnamese HRD Priorities* – GOV priorities for HRD included improving the overall level of education and the workforce with essential knowledge; and building a mass of skilled workers and scientific specialists with high levels of expertise. *Program Design, Purpose and Objectives* – The goal of the ADS program was to contribute to HRD in areas of agreed focus in the CP. The Target Priority Institutions (TPI) program guaranteed TPIs a percentage of ADS awards. This would strengthen focus of organisational support through the TPI (later PPI) program for organisational change. *Investment* – ADS program spent about $## million annually. This was about ##% of the CP budget. The program delivered about 150 ADS awards annually.	*Australia-Vietnam Cooperation* – AusAID's 2010-2015 Country Strategy identified HRD as one of three pillars. The ADS program fit under the HRD pillar. Applicants' profiles and fields of study supported a range of AusAID priority areas. *Vietnamese HRD Priorities* – GOV priorities for HRD identified as improving labour quality, which was a constraint to Vietnam achieving its goal of becoming an industrialised country by 2020. *Program Design, Purpose and Objectives* – New design of ADS program had four objectives. Two new objectives would improve the alignment of ADS program with CSP and Vietnam's HR needs. GOV institutions and agencies (CGAs) responsible for CP priority sectors were guaranteed 40% of ADS awards. *Investment* – ADS program spent about $## million annually. This represented about ##% of the total country program budget. The program delivered about 250 scholarships annually, including ADS and ALAS.

| 1992 – 2002 | 2003 – 2009 | 2010 – 2016 |
ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT		

Use of M&E Framework – The ADS program did not use any of the key elements of an M&E framework such as a logic model, performance indicators, a performance measurement plan, or standardized surveys for measuring impact. The *Impact Study* in 2002 defined "success" in the ADS.

Risk Management – Not clear.

Program Oversight – The Program established a Program Coordination Committee (PCC) for oversight and as a forum for stakeholders to address particular ADS program issues. It established a Joint Selection Committee (JSC) comprised of representatives from AusAID and MOET which conducts selection. External program review conducted in 2002.

Impact – In 2002, *Impact Study* found that post-graduate programs were more effective than under-graduate programs in achieving 'success.'

Sustainability – In 2000, the *Strategic Framework for ADS Implementation* defined

Use of M&E Framework – In 2007, the ADS program drafted an M&E Strategy in its attempt to capture information on alumni's development impact. The framework sought to answer questions about graduates' reintegration and use of skills, impact on organisations, contributions to development, and linkages with Australia. However, the program lacked capacity for ongoing analysis of alumni impact.

Risk Management – The main risk is that GOV cannot retain graduates from overseas in the Vietnam labour force. This comes from free migration of labour (WTO). Response is a remuneration policy and creating conditions for research and development.

Program Oversight – The program continued to use a PCC and JSC. AusAID used Quality Reporting System for corporate reporting on program. AusAID commissioned external program review in 2006.

Impact – In 2008, AusAID commissioned the *ADS Vietnam Impact Study on ADS Students* (1998-2010). It found that: 80% of alumni returned to Vietnam, mostly to Hanoi or HCMC; 90% of those

Use of M&E Framework – In 2010, MC started to develop a more robust M&E Framework and plan to measure outcomes. It updated M&E Framework in 2012 to include a theory of change. It included all elements needed for monitoring the program. It included activities such as tracer surveys, analysis of database, impact studies and longitudinal case histories.

Risk Management – PDD (2008) included Risk Management Matrix identifying 36 risks to program. MC updated RMM identified Strategy as part of M&E Framework. Beginning in 2013, the RMS was monitored and reported on separately in Annual Plans and Reports.

Program Oversight – The program continued to use a PCC and JSC. In 2010, AusAID started using QAI assessment for oversight purposes. AusAID carried out a mid-term review of program in 2011.

Impact – The program carried out tracer study in 2011 to capture more stories of alumni success and impacts. Tracer study data indicated that 90% of alumni have returned to Vietnam. 45% of

1992 – 2002 ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	2003 – 2009 Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	2010 – 2016 New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
sustainability principles for the program. The principles emphasized interventions that: (1) have a multiplier effect; (2) are part of a planned sequence of activities to realise long term goals; (3) use participatory processes; (4) promote partnership and ownership; (5) enhance capacity building, transfer technology, and responsibility to the counterpart; (6) incorporate financial sustainability; and (7) do not overload counterpart capacity.	reported they had the ability to effect positive change in their organisation; 66% reported they had made a contribution to Vietnam's development; a retention rate of nearly 100% of PPI returnees; and the most common study area was Business Services. *Sustainability* – In 2004, program introduced the TPI/PPI program as means to increase alumni's ability to use new knowledge and skills on return for the benefit of their organisations. PPIs were engaged in all stages of the pre-award and post-return cycle to help ensure the sustainability of results for participating PPIs.	alumni reported introducing system changes in their work. Alumni database was updated and now includes over 3,500 alumni since 1977. About 24% were in senior positions including Vice Ministers, Directors General, Rectors and Heads of research Institutes. *Sustainability* – The program introduced new measures to increase alumni's ability to use new knowledge and skills on return. It improved its interviewing of candidates, and its support to course selection, HRD planning, and reintegration. It began to facilitate alumni-ownership and management of alumni support activities.
TARGETING		
Scholarship Categories – The ADS program had three selection categories: (1) *Public,* for civil servants working in public institutions or first year students at registered universities; (2) *Private, for employees of* private or foreign owned companies, joint ventures and NGOs; and (3) *Targeted*, for postgraduate applicants currently working in educationally	*Scholarship Categories* – In 2004, the program introduced the *Targeted Public Institution* (TPI) program as a category of scholarships. TPI program had two sub-categories: (1) *TPI (Priority)*, for selected key government institutions; and (2) *TPI (Partnership)*, for other public sector institutions. In 2006, the structure was simplified into (1) *Public Priority Institutions (PPI)* Program and (2) an *Open*	*Scholarship Categories* – In 2010, ADS adopted 'profile' approach to awarding scholarships in five profiles. In 2012, the program streamlined the five profiles into three profiles with same coverage: (1) *Profile 1*, for local government officials and development workers; (2) *Profile 2*, for central government officials; and (3) *Profile 3,* for tertiary lecturers, TESOL and researchers.

1992 – 2002 ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	2003 – 2009 Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	2010 – 2016 New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
disadvantaged areas or first year students at registered universities, having graduated from secondary schools in disadvantaged areas. *Levels of Study* – ADS program awarded scholarships at three levels: Postgraduate (62%), Undergraduate (35%) and Vocational Training (3%). Postgraduate included both Masters and Doctoral candidates. *Sectors or Fields of Study* – Fields of study covered the four priority areas of the CP at the time: (1) education and training; (2) rural development; (3) health and governance, and (4) infrastructure, science and technology. *Targeted Institutions* – ADS program began providing scholarships to individuals in targeted selected institutions in the public sector. These institutions undertook work of relevance to the AusAID country strategy. *Targeted Groups* – ADS program targeted applicants from educationally disadvantaged areas through one of the selection categories.	*Program.* The PPI comprised the two sub-categories of the *TPI (Priority)* program. *Levels of Study* – ADS program offered scholarships for Masters and PhD candidates. It phased out scholarships for undergraduate and technical-vocational studies, although vocational training for teachers was provided in the *Targeted – Key Development Projects* category. *Sectors or Fields of Study* – Starting in 2003, the areas of study in ADS were more closely aligned with key areas in the CP, namely, governance and rural development. ADS awards were also provided in fields of study beyond the CP priorities to address existing and emerging GOV priorities and issues. *Targeted Institutions* – In 2004, AusAID introduced an approach to selecting awardees working in targeted, strategically-relevant public institutions. The approach linked proposed studies to institutional and development program objectives. In 2006, the TPI program was simplified as the (1) *Public Priority Institutions (PPI)* program and (2) an *Open* program. By 2009, there were 13 participating PPIs. *Targeted Groups* – In 2007, the ADS program made access a 'fundamental theme not an add-on.' It developed an 'Access Strategy' to target appropriate, highly talented individuals who face obstacles to accessing scholarships.	The PCC confirmed targets for 30% of scholarships for Profile 1 candidates, 40% for Profile 2 and 30% for Profile 3. *Levels of Study* – Scholarships awarded at two levels: Masters (80%) and PhD (20%). All PhD and most TESOL awards were provided under Profile 3. *Sectors or Fields of Study* – ADS theorised that by aligning applicant profiles and fields of study with the objectives of the CP, scholarships would make an effective contribution to development. ADS provided awards to applicants in three profiles and up to 24 suggested fields of study relevant to Vietnam's development. *Targeted Institutions* –The ADS program provided more scholarships to candidates from targeted or priority institutions and fewer to candidates from open categories. In 2011, the program expanded coverage to all GOV central agencies. It increased number of eligible institutions from 16 PPIs to 30 CGAs. At the same time, it focused its organisational support on only a few CGAs and improved its targeting of CGAs involved in gender equality. *Targeted Groups* – In 2010, ADS program introduced 'special conditions' for selection of

1992 – 2002	2003 – 2009	2010 – 2016
ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
		disadvantaged applicants. These included disability, ethnic minority and rural disadvantaged candidates. It targeted women to meet its objectives for women's inclusion in the program. In 2013 it will introduce its Equity of Access fund for targeted groups.

OPERATIONAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Promotion – AusAID provided information on the scholarships through advertisements and application forms. The 2002 review identified the need to employ a wider range of initiatives to provide information to potential applicants and to promote the program more effectively. *Application* – Individuals submitted applications directly to the Joint Selection Committee. *Selection* – The selection process resulted in low numbers of awards to people from provinces outside of Hanoi. In 2002, the *Selection Issues Study (SIS)* recommended improvements to the ADS application and selection process.	*Promotion* – ADS program used various promotion methods to speak to a mass audience. It implemented a newspaper advertising campaign; TPI/PPI awareness campaign; ADS brochure; ADS newsletter; ADS information sessions; ADS website; radio advertising; television advertising; and internet advertising. Except for PPIs, the promotion was not directly targeted to groups. *Application* – Application for ADS under PPI program was done through PPIs. Applicants submitted applications aligned with institutional HRD plans and individual Action Plans. Institutions reviewed applications and submitted report on list of nominees to the Joint Selection Committee consisting of AusAID and MOET. Applicants submitted applications directly to the MC for ADS under the Open Category.	*Promotion* – ADS program introduced targeted, innovative promotion to speak to particular profiles of candidates. It used explicit application criteria and diverse information sharing tools. In 2010, this resulted in more applications and eligible applications, more geographic spread of applications, more competitive selection, and more effective nominations and selection managed by PPIs. *Application* – In 2011, AusAID introduced 'online application facility' for use in all scholarships programs, including in Vietnam. This increased efficiency and standardization, but reduced the role of PPIs and HRD units in application process *Selection* – In 2010, the program started providing more flexibility to attract more

1992 – 2002 ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	2003 – 2009 Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	2010 – 2016 New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
	Selection – ADS program brought more transparency and communication in selection process. It introduced a 3-stage process, involving eligibility, short-listing, and final selection, with criteria for each of these stages. It introduced particular eligibility criteria for different sub-categories. For institutions, eligibility was largely determined by how candidates fit in HRD plans of the institution. For Open category, eligibility was based on academic performance.	candidates from rural areas. In 2011, the program streamlined selection and consolidated in-country ADS/ALA events to shorten the mobilization period for awardees to 6-12 months to compete with other donors' scholarships. It began to interview all short-listed candidates in the selection process, not just PhD candidates.
ALUMNI SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT		
Reintegration – The ADS program did not have a formal support program to assist returning ADS graduates with reintegration. *Professional Development* – Not clear what professional development activities were provided. *Small Grants Activities* – The ADS program did not implement activities to provide an incentive to attract more alumni participation in post-award phase. *Alumni Networks* – There was no national network of AusAID alumni in Vietnam.	*Reintegration* – Reintegration in the TPI program was based on concept of 'Action Planning.' This was intended to assist an organisation to utilise a graduate as a technical expert, a training provider and a change agent. Work place supervisors were encouraged to manage the reintegration process. The ADS program provided support to develop and monitor the plans. *Professional Development* – Action Planning was a key mechanism for supporting professional development. *Small Grants Activities* – Commencing in 2005, the program began to implement graduate support	*Reintegration* – In 2010, reintegration support focused on PPI alumni with inputs from HRD advisors to help them understand their role as 'change agents.' This approach lasted one year. In 2012, the program developed a reintegration support strategy that covered a more complete range of alumni. This was expected to strengthen the outcomes of the program. *Professional Development* – ADS program continued organizing thematic PD workshops to facilitate individual and institutional linkages among alumni and with Australian organisations. It began to explore how other alumni activities

1992 – 2002 ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	2003 – 2009 Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	2010 – 2016 New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
	activities for graduates to better utilize the skills and knowledge gained overseas. This support did not take the same form as under the small grants scheme which emerged in 2010. *Alumni Networks* – The ADS program introduced the Vietnam ADS Newsletter in 2004 'to provide a forum through which Vietnamese ADS candidates, awardees and graduates can keep in contact.' It provided support for graduate activities coordinated through an ADS Graduate Network. The networks were primarily sector-based or group-based.	could improve sustainability and facilitate linkages. *Small Grants Activities* – From 2010, ADS program piloted a small grants scheme to improve alumni participation in post-award phase. The scheme funded small research projects, presentations and workshops. The responsive scheme required resource-intensive management efforts for grants of about $5,000 each. *Alumni Networks* – ADS program supported networks that were regionally-based. These networks were inclusive of all alumni and were easier to manage and support. The program facilitated the process to establish a formal national AusAID alumni network in Vietnam in 2013 in response to recommendations from the 2012 alumni consultations.
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK		
Program Structure – The ADS Program was established in 1998, replacing the two previous scholarship programs: ADCOS and ASTAS. ADS comprised two separate initiatives: (1) INA956 covering in-Australia	*Program Structure* – In 2006, the Australian government increased its support for scholars from developing countries to study in Australia with the introduction of the Australian Leadership Awards – Scholarships (ALAS) program. This complemented	*Program Structure* – In 2009, the Australian government announced the Australia Awards program. This brought together under one banner awards from three implementing agencies: ACIAR, AusAID and DIISRTE. In in in

1992 – 2002 ADS Scheme/Program (Initial Phase)	2003 – 2009 Enhanced ADS Program (Previous Phase)	2010 – 2016 New Design ADS Program (Current Phase)
activities since 1992; (2) INF523 covering pre-departure and post-return in-Vietnam activities. In addition to the ADS, AusAID implemented the Vietnam-Australia English Language, Technical Training and Resources program (VAT).

Management Arrangements – AusAID administered ADS in Vietnam and in other country programs. Each ADS program had its own particular features.

Partnership Arrangements – While the GOA and GOV had an Umbrella MOU for the CP, they did not have any partnership arrangement for the ADS program. | its support to Australian Development Scholarships (ADS).

Management Arrangements – AusAID introduced managing contractor (MC) model in 2002. The MC for ADS Support managed the selection, placement and post-return activities in Vietnam. The Australian government managed the in-Australia component of the award.

Partnership Arrangements – Under the Viet Nam program's Umbrella MOU, the GOA and GOV developed a Subsidiary Arrangement for the ADS program. The SA defined the objectives of the program; set out the contributions of both governments (financial and in-kind); and described monitoring responsibilities. In the TPI (Priority) program phase 2, each TPI signed a Formal ADS Agreement with AusAID. | In 2013, ADS were renamed Australia Awards Scholarships, ALAS because the Australia Awards Leadership Program, and ALAF became the Australia Awards Fellowships.

Management Arrangements – At start of new design in 2009, AusAID hired Coffey as managing contractor for pre-departure and post-return activities in Vietnam. It hired ACET for English Language Training. In 2011, AusAID discontinued using the MC for ADS Support to monitor the work of the MC for the ELT. AusAID acknowledged that quality evaluation was challenging when using two initiatives with different contractors in different phases over many years.

Partnership Arrangements – AusAID no longer required an SA for the program or formal agreements with participating institutions. |

Annex 3

Evolution of Selection Categories of ADS Awards

Prior to 2002, ADS awards were offered in three categories: (1) *Public,* for civil servants working in government offices, state-owned enterprises, universities, and research institutes and for first year students in universities; (2) *Private,* for candidates from private companies, foreign-owned or joint-venture enterprises, and non-government organisations, and (3) *Targeted,* for postgraduates who work and undergraduates who come from high schools in defined educationally disadvantaged areas. For the 2003 intake, these categories received 62%, 20% and 18% respectively of the scholarships awarded.

In 2002, the ADS Program Review introduced the principle of strategic targeting. It recommended two selection categories: (1) a new *Targeted,* for up to 70% of scholarships; and (2) *Open,* for not fewer than 30% of scholarships. The *Targeted* category had three sub-categories as indicated in the table:

Category	Sub Category	Description
Targeted 70%	Public – Institutional	Candidates worked in Targeted Institutions. This sub-category received up to 50% of awards.
	Educationally Disadvantaged Areas	Candidates came from educationally disadvantaged areas. This was the same as the Targeted category in previous approach.
	Key Development Projects	Candidates worked in development initiatives, NGOs or development agencies.
Open 30%		Candidates worked in domestic and joint venture firms in the private sector, or in public sector agencies that are not Targeted Institutions.

In 2004, AusAID introduced the *Targeted Public Institution (TPI) program* as a category of scholarships. The TPI program had two sub-categories: (1) *TPI (Priority)*, for selected key government institutions; and (2) *TPI (Partnership)*, for other public sector institutions. The *TPI (Priority)* institutions were eligible for an agreed number of scholarships and training for key staff to create a 'critical mass' of graduates with them. *TPI (Priority)* institutions were selected based on an assessment against criteria. The number of organisations in both sub-categories was flexible and institutions could 'graduate' from *TPI (Partnership)* to *TPI (Priority).* In the *TPI program* phase 1 (2004) there were four *TPI (Priority)* institutions and 19 TPI (Partnership) institutions. In the *TPI program* phase 2 (2005), there were six *TPI (Priority)* institutions.

In 2006, the White Paper Implementation Review (WPIR) recommended that ADS be provided through two programs: (1) the *Priority Public Institutions (PPI) program,* and (2) the *Open program,* for non-PPI organisations. The *PPI program* comprised the two sub-categories of the *TPI program.* The goal of the *PPI program* was the same as the *TPI program*: To achieve a critical mass of trained scholars in key public institutions undertaking work relevant to the Country Program Strategy. By 2008, 12 PPIs were participating in the

program. Forty percent of scholarships were awarded to applicants from PPIs, while 60 percent were awarded to applicants from the *Open* category.

In 2008, the Design Document for the AusAID Scholarships for Development in Vietnam (ASDIV) program recommended "a more targeted approach to fit with the Australia-Vietnam Development Cooperation Strategy." The targeted approach would apply to both the PPI and Open programs. Starting in 2010, AusAID used an 'applicant profiles' approach. This was a means of attracting applications from individuals in targeted groups and institutions which worked in priority areas of the DCS. There were five 'applicant profiles,' namely: *Profile 1 – Provincial government staff* who could facilitate rural development; *Profile 2 – Persons working at the local level in public institutions or semi-public organisations, private enterprise and NGO organisations* focused on poverty reduction who could influence change in rural regions and ethnic minority communities; *Profile 3 – Central government* policy and administration staff in central policy ministries who could influence economic reforms; *Profile 4 – Teaching academics and researchers* in public universities; and *Profile 5 – TESOL teaching academics and TESOL faculty management* in public universities who need to upgrade qualifications to teach English or manage TESOL programs.

In 2011, the ADS program streamlined the five profiles into three profiles for applicants: (1) *Profile 1 – Local government officials and development workers,* comprising the former profiles 1 and 2; (2) *Profile 2 – Central government officials*, which was the former profile 3; and (3) *Profile 3 – Tertiary lecturers, TESOL and researchers*, comprising the former profiles 4 and 5. In terms of targeting, 30 percent of scholarships were allocated to *Profile 1* candidates, 40 percent to *Profile 2* candidates; and 30 percent to *Profile 3* candidates. Ten percent of scholarships were reserved for TESOL applicants in Profile 1 and Profile 2, mostly the latter.

The coverage of the *Profile 2* category for officials in central government agencies (CGAs) expanded considerably from the coverage of the former PPI program. The AAS program added 16 new CGAs to the 15 PPIs, while removing the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics & Public Administration (HCMNPAPA) to Profile 3. This resulted in officials from 30 CGAs being eligible for awards as compared to officials from 15 PPIs at the end of the previous phase. At the same time, research institutes affiliated to ministries were transferred to Profile 3.