

**CAMBODIA**

**REVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIA AWARDS PROGRAM**

**January 2012**

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>AAA-C</b>	<b>Australia Alumni Association – Cambodia</b>
<b>ACE</b>	<b>Australian Centre for Education</b>
<b>ADS</b>	<b>Australian Development Scholarships</b>
<b>ALAS</b>	<b>Australian Leadership Awards - Scholarships</b>
<b>ALAF</b>	<b>Australian Leadership Awards - Fellowships</b>
<b>ANAO</b>	<b>Australian National Audit Office</b>
<b>AusAID</b>	<b>Australian Agency for International Development</b>
<b>CDC</b>	<b>Council for the Development of Cambodia</b>
<b>DEEWR</b>	<b>Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</b>
<b>ELT</b>	<b>English Language Training</b>
<b>IELTS</b>	<b>International English Language Testing System</b>
<b>RGC</b>	<b>Royal Government of Cambodia</b>

## SUMMARY

The objectives of the review were to: (i) assess the overall performance of the current phase (2008-12) of the Australia Awards (development) program in Cambodia; (ii) identify factors that will strengthen the long term impact of the program, and (iii) provide the basis for refining and developing the next phase design of the program in ways that increase its effectiveness. The review addresses the Australia Awards program in totality, but has a particular focus on Australian Development Scholarships (ADS).

The report is structured to consider the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact and sustainability of the scholarship program. It also identifies lessons learned and recommendations for the development of the next phase of assistance. The review is based on assessment of key reference documents and consultation with program stakeholders in Australia and Cambodia.

The Cambodia Country Program has considerable autonomy and flexibility in designing the key elements of the scholarship program. The program has a high degree of relevance in terms of recipient priorities and AusAID policies and objectives. All Australia Awards seek to support Country Strategy priorities and targeting has improved in recent years. The focus on postgraduate study primarily at Masters level (ADS) and PhD level (ALAS) is appropriate and consistent with other DAC donors; and the recent introduction of an ADS 'open' category is recognition of the strong role played by the private sector and civil society in the development of Cambodia.

Australia is one of only two DAC donors that specifically target the public sector in the provision of postgraduate awards. However, given the strong preference of CDC to retain a public category, no immediate change is proposed. But any future increase in awards, as in recent years, should be in the 'open' category and greater efforts should be made to identify and target quality candidates in the public sector.

In Cambodia, operational responsibility for ADS rests with AusAID, although most management tasks have been contracted out. This remains the preferred option for the future. Post maintains close oversight of the process, ensuring 'brand' recognition and coordination with CDC. In general program management and delivery of the Australia Awards program is efficient, albeit labour intensive and time consuming. The Post and contractor have responded well to an increased number of ADS places available in recent years.

There is widespread awareness of the Australia Awards program, particular in priority sectors and while short-listing processes generally work well, they are in places perhaps over complicated, with some scope for simplification.

In the 'open' category, the weighting process has tended to favour candidates from NGOs. The system should be refined to more explicitly encourage other private sector applications eg important development sub-sectors in commerce, finance, engineering, manufacturing, etc consistent with AusAID's Country Strategy.

RGC ownership has been encouraged through the participation of CDC staff on the ADS interview panel. Similarly, Australian branding of awards is enhanced by AusAID management and participation on the interview panel. However, CDC has indicated a preference for the 'load' to be shared.

Consideration could be given to recruitment of independent (probably academic) professionals, based in Cambodia or Australia, with a broad understanding of the development context in Cambodia, well briefed by AusAID/RGC, to participate in ADS panel interviews. There is a precedent for this in other AusAID country programs; and an independent advisor has participated in the past on interview panels for ALAS in Cambodia.

Most other donor programs require entry level English prior to submission of scholarship applications and there is little justification for Australia to continue a pre-departure ELT option for 'open' category candidates. However, there is a smaller pool of potential candidates from the public sector that meet English language entry requirements and in the immediate term pre-departure ELT will probably need to be retained to ensure the target number of awards for the public sector is achieved.

A Ministry ELT program conducted on a part time basis annually for 60 women has been effective in increasing award opportunities for women. Women now represent 40% of ADS awards, higher than their representation in applications. Part-time English language pathways could be expanded to cover other target groups, including the disability sector and provincial public sector staff. Screening and preference for ELT would need to be given to participants with a capacity/interest in ultimately applying for an ADS scholarship.

The Australian Alumni Association – Cambodia (AAA-C) was established in 1998 and AusAID has provided financial support since 2002. The current alumni membership register of around 300 accounts for virtually all successfully completed and returned ADS awardees, although few ALA, short course, Endeavour or privately funded students are so far included.

Alumni have been effective in promoting the ADS/ALAS program and networking. Support for the AAA-C should be maintained and opportunities to further raise the profile of the Association and strengthen linkages with Australia considered, including encouraging alumni participation in short course training; engaging with alumni in developing the Country Strategy; and establishing a competitive small grants scheme that offers alumni the opportunity to address global issues on a local, national, regional or international level, perhaps in association with Australian institutions.

The Australia Awards program in Cambodia, particularly ADS/ALAS appears well regarded and effective, including in comparison with other donor programs. Cambodian ADS students, average around a 94% completion and return rate which is higher than the AusAID-wide average.

M&E based on student sample surveys undertaken by the contractor and an independent Tracer Study (2009) suggest ADS objectives as specified in the Design Document have been achieved to a varying degree, although it has proven more difficult to assess the extent to which ADS graduates contribute to the human resource needs of Cambodian institutions and continuing alumni linkages with Australia are not overly strong.

Re-integration into the work-place and the opportunity to utilize new skills and capacity effectively is the key issue for most returning (public sector) graduates. Few agencies have effective HRD plans, particularly plans with a long term focus on the need or positioning of postgraduate training. Most agencies are preoccupied with current needs and tend to focus on short course training.

It is not proposed that formal re-integration plans be introduced in Cambodia as this is likely to be more bureaucratic than of practical value. Recently introduced measures to increase agency awareness about returning awardees, including higher level contact, 'welcome back' programs and a Graduate Development Workshop to engage with supervisors and other alumni to facilitate reintegration are expected to be more effective.

Recommendations for the next phase of the Australia Awards program draw on key lessons learned, including the need to maintain effective promotion and targeting to ensure a continuing supply of quality candidates; expansion of private sector opportunities in the ADS 'open' category and removal of English pre-departure training; adoption of multiple year ELT pathways for people with disability and provincial candidates; continuance of support to alumni as an important resource for networking and promoting the scholarship program; simplification of application and selection approaches and minimizing administrative complexity; and improvement in the monitoring and evaluation framework across the Australia Awards program to enable more effective assessment of performance.

## 1. BACKGROUND

### *Introduction*

- 1.1 This review<sup>1</sup> of the scholarship program in Cambodia was undertaken at the commencement of the final year of the current five year design phase (2008-12) of the program. The objectives of the review were to: (i) assess the overall performance of the current phase of the Australia Awards program in Cambodia; (ii) identify factors that will strengthen the long term impact of the program, and (iii) provide the basis for refining and developing the next phase design of the scholarship program in ways that increase its effectiveness. The review addresses the Australia Awards program in totality, but has a particular focus on Australian Development Scholarships (ADS), the largest component of the Australia Awards. Additionally, delivery of these awards is contracted out.
- 1.2 The Review Report is structured to consider the **relevance** of the scholarship program in terms of appropriateness of the objectives and strategy; the **efficiency** of the program in terms of the quality of program management and delivery; the **effectiveness** of the program in terms of the extent to which outputs and objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved; and **impact and sustainability** in terms of the extent to which the program made a difference to the development effort in Cambodia. The review also identifies lessons learned and recommendations for the development of the next phase of assistance. The Terms of Reference identify specific issues to be considered in the review. The Terms of Reference is attached (**Annex A**).
- 1.3 The review report is based on assessment of AusAID and contractor key reference documents (**Annex B**) and consultation with program stakeholders in Australia and Cambodia, including Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) ministries, NGOs, UN organizations, the Australia Alumni Association-Cambodia (AAA-C), the Australian Business Association to Cambodia, current students and students undertaking pre-departure English language training, the scholarship program managing contractor (IDP) and AusAID program staff and sector managers in Canberra and Phnom Penh. Fieldwork was undertaken during the period 12-22 December 2011 and an Aide Memoire (**Annex C**) presented prior to departure. The schedule of stakeholder consultations is attached (**Annex D**).

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<sup>1</sup> The Review Team comprised David Barber, Team Leader (Independent Consultant) and Sothea Roth Hel (Scholarships Program Manager, AusAID, Cambodia).

### ***Country Context***

- 1.4 Cambodia has a population in excess of 14 million, with the majority (more than 80%) living in rural areas. It is a fast growing<sup>2</sup>, but relatively poor, aid dependent country, susceptible to internal and external shocks.
- 1.5 The Mid Term Review of The National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) - Update 2009-2013, outlines Cambodia's development priorities and progress. The Rectangular Strategy (implementation plan) linked to the NSDP identifies four priority sectoral components:
  - Agriculture development
  - Infrastructure development
  - Human capital and human development
  - Private sector development
- 1.6 Cambodia's progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been uneven. Strong progress has been made in poverty reduction, although this has been unevenly distributed in favour of urban areas. Good progress has also been made in primary education, child mortality and HIV/AIDS. However, progress has lagged in other areas, including maternal mortality and environmental sustainability (World Bank Indicators, 2011).

### ***AusAID Country Strategy***

- 1.7 The current AusAID Country Strategy for Cambodia is outlined in the document Australia's Strategic Approach to Aid in Cambodia 2010-2015 (December 2010)<sup>3</sup>. The strategy analyses critical development and donor challenges in Cambodia and consistent with Cambodia's own development plans and priorities, proposes a strategic focus for Australia's aid program on:
  - Reducing rural poverty;
  - Improving health services;
  - Improving infrastructure quality, quantity and access; and
  - Promoting access to justice.
- 1.8 The strategy also identifies governance, civil society, donor partnerships, gender and disability and impact assessment as other key themes.

### ***Australia Awards***

- 1.9 The Australia Awards initiative was announced by the Australian Government in November 2009. It was designed to consolidate the international

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<sup>2</sup> Annual GDP growth rates of almost 10% in the decade to 2008 were interrupted by the global financial crisis, but recovered strongly to an estimated 6.7% in 2010-11. Income per capita over the decade doubled (The World Bank, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> The document remains current, although it was noted that a final strategy would be released in 2011.



scholarships offered by AusAID (Development Awards) and DEEWR (Endeavour Awards) into a single recognizable brand.

- 1.10 Development awards for study in Australia comprise<sup>4</sup>
- Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) - which aim to contribute to the long-term development needs of partner countries (up to 4 years at TAFE or University);
  - Australian Leadership Award Scholarships (ALAS) – which aim to enhance leadership and build partnerships and linkages with developing countries (up to 4 years at Masters or PhD level);
  - Australian Leadership Awards Fellowships (ALAF) – which aim to promote linkages through research and professional development (up to 1 year);
  - Short course awards – which are designed to develop skills and capacity through specific training and study in priority areas (up to 5 months).
- 1.11 Development awards are an important component of Australia’s overseas aid program. ADS (and its predecessor, the Australian Sponsored Training Assistance Scheme) have been provided in Cambodia since 1994. ALAS and ALAF were introduced in 2006 and short course training was piloted in 2011. The overarching goal of Australia’s development awards are to:
- develop capacity and leadership skills to enable individuals to contribute to development in their home country; and
  - build people-to-people linkages at the individual, institutional and country levels.
- 1.12 Endeavour Awards are administered by DEEWR. At a country level, the main issue appears to be to ensure coordination between AusAID/Embassy and DEEWR to enhance the Australia Awards ‘brand’ as a whole.
- 1.13 A further aim of the Australia Awards is to support national alumni associations to strengthen individual and institutional links and networks with Australia and the region.
- 1.14 Australia awards account for about 6% of the Cambodia country program expenditure which is similar to the global average; but less than neighbouring countries of Vietnam (28%) and Laos (27%).

## **2. RELEVANCE**

- 2.1 Relevance relates to the appropriateness of the scholarship program design and objectives in terms of recipient priorities and AusAID policies and objectives.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from AusAID Scholarship Handbook, 2011 and Australia Awards Update, 2010. Additional categories of Australia Awards – Prime Minister’s Pacific Australia Awards and Australian Regional Development Scholarships – are available to scholars from the Pacific.

- 2.2 The Australian Government recognises the value of education in contributing to sustainable economic and social development and is committed to the provision of scholarships through the aid program to promote leadership skills, capacity building and people-to-people linkages. The rationale and objectives of the Australia Awards program are also clear and consistent with the human resource development priorities of the NSDP rectangular strategy.
- 2.3 Consistent with Development Awards policy objectives, the Cambodia Country Program has considerable autonomy and flexibility in designing the key elements of the scholarship program (number and level of awards, country level objectives, field of study, selection processes, public/open allocation, etc) appropriate to the local context and strategic needs of the country.
- 2.4 The ADS Program Design Document dates from 2007 and covers the five year period October 2008 - September 2012. Implementation practice has evolved, particularly in relation to alignment with the country strategy and the number and category of awards.

#### *Number and Category of Awards*

- 2.5 The number of ADS awards has increased significantly over the past 4 years, driven by the introduction of open category awards in 2009<sup>5</sup>:
- 2008: 20 - all public category
  - 2009: 25 - 20 public category; 5 open category
  - 2010: 40 – 20 public category; 20 open category
  - 2011: 50 – 20 public category; 30 open category
- 2.6 The introduction of an open category is recognition of the strong role played by the private sector and civil society in the development of Cambodia. Australia and Japan are the only DAC donors that specifically target the public sector in the provision of postgraduate awards. Most donors have maintained or changed to fully merit based open category awards only, most recently New Zealand, although CDC has resisted this trend.
- 2.7 While there is a strong need to develop capacity in government administration, there are many factors that preclude graduates in the public category fulfilling their potential (see Section 4) and there are typically stronger candidates in the open category. Nevertheless, there is now a significant cohort of Australian graduates across the public sector in key ministries including Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Economy and

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<sup>5</sup> In the 2010-11 Budget Statement the Australian Government announced a doubling of scholarships globally, to around 3,800 places annually by 2014. The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade committed to a doubling of Australia Awards in Cambodia from 25 in 2009 to 50 by 2013-14. This has already been achieved.

Finance, Council of Ministers, Industry, Mines and Energy, Health and the National Bank of Cambodia as well as in the university sector.

- 2.8 Given the strong preference of CDC to retain a public category, no immediate change is proposed. However, any future increase in awards, as in recent years, should be in the open category and greater efforts should be made to identify and target quality candidates in the public sector. Over time a move to a single merit based open category (backed by affirmative action programs) is appropriate (see Section 4).
- 2.9 The number of ALAS awards, which are globally competitive, has remained steady at around 6 annually over the past few years. The number of ALAF awards, which are identified and hosted by Australian institutions (government, business, NGOs), have steadily increased over the past four years, peaking at 73 in 2011. Approval is centralised in Canberra. ALAF awards have mainly involved placements at university short course training programs. Efforts should be made to increase awareness of this program in the non-university sector and to undertake a more rigorous assessment of benefits (see Section 4).
- 2.10 Short course training was piloted as part of the Australia Awards in 2011. Selection is centralised in Canberra and competitive. Effective targeting and administration of short course training is resource intensive. Although not yet significant in the Australian program, short course training appears to be in high demand, and is the most prolific form of training provided by donors in Cambodia. In-country and third country training is also common but this may not fit within Australia Award guidelines.

### *Sector focus*

- 2.11 The 2009 Tracer Study, quoting IDP estimates, suggests that only about 60% of ADS awards in the survey group<sup>6</sup> were aligned with the country strategy sector priorities<sup>7</sup>. Since that time renewed efforts have been made through selection processes to more closely align awards to sector priorities and cross cutting issues, including identification of target institutions and organisations.
- 2.12 Some 35 institutions have been identified by AusAID and the contractor as priority workplaces for the public category (20 awards available) and a further 60 (mostly NGOs) as suitable in the open category (30 awards available). Further, the eligible fields of study are broad and relevant across multiple sectors. Over the current contract phase, the most common field of study is in the category Economics, Law, Political Science, Development Studies and International Relations; and the second most common, Management and

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<sup>6</sup> The 2009 Tracer Study covered 78% of the more than 260 alumni at that time.

<sup>7</sup> At commencement of the current ADS phase the country strategy was in transition and one of the four sector priorities has changed since preparation of the 2007 Design Document.

Commerce. Awards now are more aligned with the country strategy but the institutional focus is quite broad and the majority of graduate courses of general application.

- 2.13 Both ALAF and short course awards also seek to support Country Strategy priorities. This is enhanced through the close involvement of AusAID Post sector managers in developing short course proposals and in providing comments and recommendations on ALAF proposals.

### *Level of award*

- 2.14 The ADS usually offers a two year Masters program by coursework<sup>8</sup>. This has proven an appropriate focus and is consistent with the level of award typically provided by most other DAC donors. ALAS offers opportunity for Masters or more often PhD study for high quality leadership candidates.
- 2.15 Consideration was given in the Review to expanding the scope of ADS awards to include undergraduate Bachelor courses, particularly in relation to nursing (**Annex E**). For a number of reasons, including duration, issues related to return, difficulty in assessing high school qualifications and cost, scholarships for undergraduate training in Australia is not considered an effective use of limited resources.

## **3. EFFICIENCY**

- 3.1 Efficiency relates to the quality of program management and delivery.
- 3.2 A recent ANAO performance audit report (2010-11) of AusAID's management of tertiary training assistance programs concluded that 'this has been broadly effective'. But the report also noted a number of areas of potential improvements, particularly in the case of devolved management models:
- Streamlining and reducing the administrative complexity of scholarship programs;
  - Greater certainty and strategic clarity through up-to date country strategies and longer term financing commitments to priority sectors aligned to recipient needs;
  - Consistent and improved approaches to monitoring and evaluation.
- 3.3 In Cambodia, operational responsibility for ADS rests with AusAID. Most management tasks have been contracted out, including promotion, processing of applications, management of the selection process, pre-departure training, placement and mobilization of awardees and alumni support. Post maintains close oversight of the process, ensuring 'brand' recognition and coordination

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<sup>8</sup> ADS PhD awards account for only a very small percentage of total awards. The 2009 tracer study indicated 3% of that survey cohort.

with CDC. The increase in awards in recent years has increased demands on existing Post resources.

- 3.4 Short-listing of ALAS Cambodian candidates is also contracted out. Awards are regionally competitive and selection is centralised in Canberra. ALAF awards are identified and hosted by Australian institutions (government, business, NGOs), with funding decisions centralized, based on Post recommendations. AusAID Post is responsible for development of short course training proposals, although selection is competitive and centralized in Canberra.
- 3.5 In general program management and delivery of the Australia Awards scholarship program is efficient, although labour intensive and time consuming. The contractor has responded well to the management of an increased number of ADS places available and to the introduction and change in the number of open category awards. Simplification of processes could provide some scope for improving efficiency.
- 3.6 The annual cost of administering the scholarship program in Cambodia varies depending on the number and composition of awards. For 2011-12, the final year of the current design phase, the estimated outsourced management cost (ADS/ALAS), including pre-departure ELT, but excluding scholarship payments, is just over \$1.4million.
- 3.7 Given the large amount of process work in administering the scholarship program, outsourcing remains the preferred option. However, the costs are relatively high and many process tasks would be common to AusAID funded scholarship programs in the region. This suggests there may be scope for centralised management to maximise economies of scale among programs in neighbouring countries, although the implications of any country specific circumstances would need to be addressed. Such an assessment would need to be undertaken by AusAID and is not considered further in this report.

### ***Promotion***

- 3.8 An ADS/ALAS promotion plan is approved annually by AusAID and implemented by the contractor. The plan has been progressively improved and typically now involves newspaper, radio and TV advertisements, meetings and distribution of information material to ministries, targeted NGOs and UN organisations; provincial outreach utilising alumni; affirmative action programs promoting access for women and people with disabilities; and access to IDP's Australia Resource Centre and counsellors. Greater involvement of AusAID/Embassy in 2011 also improved efficiency (and effectiveness) of promotional activities. Consequently, there appears to be widespread awareness of the Australia Awards program, particular in priority sectors.

- 3.9 Promotion of ALAS is undertaken in conjunction with ADS and provides opportunities for cross referral between the two awards. ALAF promotion is the responsibility of the relevant Australian institution. Provision of short course training was piloted in 2011 with the main responsibility residing with AusAID Post sector managers. This required sector managers to identify and develop proposals. This is resource intensive with no guarantee of success.
- 3.10 Contracting out responsibility for promotion, design and processing of short courses with oversight from AusAID sector managers may improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3.11 Promotion of Endeavour Awards has been carried out separately by visiting DEEWR staff from the Vietnam Post. Endeavour Awards are viewed by DEEWR as targeting different candidates to ADS/ALAS, with different eligibility criteria and different selection timetables. The DEEWR strategy is to talk with small pre-selected focus groups. Where sectorally relevant, applicants unlikely to be competitive in the Endeavour selection process (usually because of low English language capability), may be referred to AusAID's development awards. Conversely, DEEWR seeks referrals from AusAID (eg post-doctoral researchers and Executive placements), where appropriate.
- 3.12 DEEWR is of the view that Development Awards are currently the "best fit" in Cambodia (and Laos), but will continue to targeted promotion of Endeavour Awards in both countries as recent efforts have been productive<sup>9</sup>.
- 3.13 There is probably scope for greater whole-of-government coordination in Cambodia and cooperation on ensuring Endeavour Awards alumni are integrated into the AAA-C register and activities. This can be managed best by coordination at the working level.

### ***Application Process***

- 3.14 In the past three years, with the introduction of an open category for ADS, an increase in the number of awards, an increased awareness campaign (involving AusAID/Embassy), and in 2011 the consolidation of ADS/ALAS application procedures intended to streamline processes together with the easing of application requirements for ALAS, the number of applicants (and the person hours involved in administration and short listing candidates) has increased exponentially (Table 1). Applications are increasingly moving towards on-line submission, but paper based applications were still accepted for the 2012 intake, mostly to assist rural/provincial candidates.

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<sup>9</sup> There were two long-term and one short term Endeavour scholarships awarded to Cambodian applicants in 2010.

**Table 1: Number of ADS and ALAS Applications and Awards by Gender**

Year	ADS				ALAS	
	Applications		Awards		Application	Awards
	Public	Open	Public	Open		
<b>2009</b>	181 (F=49)	92 (F=33)	21 (F=9)	6 (F=2)	13 (F=8)	6 (F=5)
<b>2010</b>	186 (F=56)	90 (F=39)	21 (F=8)	22 (F=10)	16 (F=5)	6 (F=1)
<b>2011</b>	301 (F=95)	483 (F=189)	19 (F=6)	31 (F=15)	380 (F=109)	5 (F=2)

NB. 287 applicants applied for both ADS and ALAS in 2011

- 3.15 The Country Strategy provides guidance on eligible sectors and cross cutting issues and rigorous short-listing, priority weighting and selection processes have been developed by AusAID and the contractor seeking to address these requirements<sup>10</sup>. In 2011, the short-listing of ADS/ALAS candidates for interview, including data entry, assessment, moderating assessor grades and documenting decisions consumed in excess of 50 contractor person weeks.
- 3.16 While short-listing processes generally work well, they are perhaps over complicated, with some scope for simplification. Further, in the open category, the weighting process has tended to favour candidates from NGOs. Open category eligibility should be clarified to more explicitly encourage applications from the non-NGO private sector eg important development sub-sectors in commerce, finance, engineering, manufacturing, etc consistent with AusAID's Country Strategy. Most other DAC donor scholarship programs are 'open' category only and most have few restrictions on sector eligibility.
- 3.17 Further, reverting to a requirement for ALAF applicants to pre-qualify in terms of entry level English and an offer from an Australian university should improve efficiency and reduce the number of 'leadership' applicants to more manageable levels.

### ***Selection Process***

- 3.18 The interview process for ADS/ALAS is transparent and beyond reproach, but with the increasing number of awards on offer (and perhaps increasing in the future) it remains an intensive and time consuming task, making it difficult to ensure availability and consistency of panel members. Interviews of more than 100 short-listed candidates in 2011 required fulltime panel participation for two weeks.

<sup>10</sup> This includes, inter alia, affirmative action weightings for disability, women, provincial applications, priority sector/relevance of the workplace, academic preparedness, potential impact on return. Lists of target ministries/public sector agencies, NGOs and UN organizations provide further 'guidance'.

- 3.19 RGC ownership has been encouraged through the participation of CDC staff on the ADS interview panel. Similarly, Australian branding of awards is enhanced by AusAID management and participation on the interview panel. However, CDC has indicated a preference for the ‘load’ to be shared.
- 3.20 Secondly, given typical interview questions are (and should be) more general than technical, there would seem to be no strong argument for requiring AusAID Post sector advisers to be involved in interview panels –sector weightings have already influenced the interview shortlist<sup>11</sup>.
- 3.21 Consideration could be given to recruitment of independent (probably academic) professionals, based in Cambodia or Australia, with a broad understanding of the development context in Cambodia, well briefed by AusAID/RGC, to participate in ADS panel interviews<sup>12</sup>. There is a precedent for this in other AusAID country programs; and an independent advisor has participated in the past on interview panels for ALAS.
- 3.22 It would be necessary to ensure any panel members identified in this way were independent and acceptable to donor and recipient and that the Australian ‘branding’ of the interview process is retained. As a minimum this should probably require an AusAID chairperson of the interview panel (and the contractor providing secretariat services).
- 3.23 There seem to be less alternatives to CDC participation. It is not considered appropriate for line ministry staff to be represented on interview panels. The Ministry of Education (suggested by CDC) may be an option, although their interest and capacity is untested.

### ***Pre-departure Training***

- 3.24 The single greatest constraint in successfully obtaining an ADS/ALAS scholarship award is English language capability. An award is ultimately subject to a IELTS test score of 6.5, regardless of priority candidates/sectors or affirmative action weightings.
- 3.25 Provisional award students undertake up to 12 months ELT<sup>13</sup> at the Australian Centre for Education (ACE). ACE is widely recognised as a premium provider of English language training in Cambodia. With a few exceptions, pre-departure training is mostly well regarded by current and past students. However, it can be stressful for students as an award is not guaranteed<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Further, anecdotal evidence suggests detailed technical questions from the panel based on an individual’s specialist interests can derail the interview process.

<sup>12</sup> Given the nature of ALAS awards and the smaller number of candidates, interview panels should predominately remain AusAID/Embassy representatives.

<sup>13</sup> Only Australia and New Zealand offer such a pre-departure ELT program.

<sup>14</sup> By comparison, while some language training is offered by Japan if ‘required’, confirmation of awards is not subject to a subsequent language test.



While the success rate is most often above 85%, failure to achieve the required standard can be problematic in terms of family, community and work-place perceptions for unsuccessful provisional awardees.

- 3.26 Most other donor programs require entry level English prior to submission of applications (ie no pre-departure ELT). English capability in Cambodia is expanding, particularly among younger graduates.
- 3.27 While award application eligibility criteria (IELTS 5.5 for men and 5.0 for women) are slightly higher for the ADS open category than the public category, there appears little justification for Australia to continue a pre-departure ELT option for 'open' category candidates. There is a sufficient pool of qualified 'open' category candidates with the required English entry level score and/or motivated candidates will make an effort to upgrade their English capability to meet entry level requirements prior to application<sup>15</sup>.
- 3.28 There is clearly a smaller pool of potential candidates from the public sector that would meet English language entry requirements without further ELT, although again, refinement of sector weightings and more targeted promotion (see Section 4), may increase numbers of applicants and short-listed candidates. In 2009 there were 22 of 181 public sector applicants with an IELTS score of 6.0 or above. In 2010 the numbers were 14 of 186 applicants and in 2011 there were 27 of 301 applicants with a pre-qualified standard of English. However, English capability is not weighted in the short-listing process beyond the initial standard required for submission of applications.
- 3.29 Over time in it would be appropriate to move towards pre-qualification of English language capability for the public sector in addition to that (proposed) for the open category. In the immediate term up to 12 months pre-departure ELT will probably need to be retained to ensure the target number of awards for the public sector is achieved (if that remains an objective).
- 3.30 A Ministry ELT program is conducted on a part time basis annually for 60 women. The Tracer Study (2009) and subsequent surveys by the Managing Contractor indicate this has been effective in increasing award opportunities and successful applications from women. Women now represent 40% of ADS awards, higher than their representation in applications.
- 3.31 Part-time English language pathways could be expanded to cover other target groups, including the disability sector and provincial public sector staff. Preference for ELT would need to be given to participants with a capacity/interest in ultimately applying for an ADS scholarship. This requires further consideration of eligibility criteria for entering the 'pathway'.

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<sup>15</sup> This is particularly so if the bias towards NGO applicants in the open category is removed.

### ***Placement and Mobilisation***

- 3.32 Placement and mobilisation is undertaken efficiently by the contractor and supported by orientation and information sessions on study conditions in Australia including full day sessions with alumni.
- 3.33 The contractor has a number of in-house counsellors familiar with university course offerings in Australia and also hosts an annual ADS Scholarship Information Day which is well regarded by higher education institutions attending from Australia.

### ***Post Study Support***

- 3.34 Post study support includes tracer studies and reintegration activities (see Section 4) and support for an active alumni association. The Australian Alumni Association – Cambodia (AAA-C) was established in 1998 with support of IDP, who continue to provide assistance including organising major events, key speakers and management of the database. AusAID has provided financial support to the Secretariat since 2002, including for a website and newsletter, high profile functions, including the annual launch of the Australia Awards program, ‘welcome back’ functions and facilitating alumni networking, all of which adds to the status of AAC-C membership.
- 3.35 Opportunities for people to people linkages and broad based networks are likely to be further enhanced by an increased number of ‘open’ category (private sector) alumni.
- 3.36 The current alumni membership register of around 300 accounts for virtually all successfully completed and returned postgraduate scholarship awardees, although few fellowship, short course or Endeavour awardees are so far included. Nor is the large number of (mostly undergraduate) privately funded students.
- 3.37 AusAID (and the Managing Contractor) should continue to support the maintenance of the Alumni register; engage with the Association to facilitate the ADS/ALAS program and promote networking; further develop the alumni website, including profiles of alumni in senior/ strategic positions in the public and private sectors; and consider other support for Alumni activities to strengthen and further raise the profile of the AAA-C and strengthen linkages with Australia. This could include encouraging alumni participation in accessing short course training opportunities; engaging with alumni in developing the Country Strategy; and a competitive (centralised) small grants scheme for social development activities<sup>16</sup>, perhaps in association with Australian institutions. For example, the US State Department manages an

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<sup>16</sup> The AAA-C recently undertook a fund raising program and provided material support to rural victims of the 2011 floods in Cambodia.

Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund that offers alumni the opportunity to address global issues on a local, national, regional or international level<sup>17</sup>. The AAA-C has indicated a strong interest in follow-up on these potential initiatives.

- 3.38 Care needs to be taken to ensure that the alumni database is an AusAID resource, particularly if the contract for administration of the scholarship program should in the future change from the current contractor.

### *Harmonisation*

- 3.39 There are a large number of donor programs offering postgraduate scholarships to Cambodians for overseas study, including Japan, US, UK, France, EU and New Zealand. Most impose few sector restrictions on awards. Only Australia has a specific public sector allocation<sup>18</sup>, although Japan targets scholarships closely aligned to project activities and counterpart staff. In terms of scale, the Australian postgraduate study program is second only to France, closely followed by New Zealand and Japan. Only Australia and New Zealand offer formal pre-departure language training, although Japan offers some English training, but no IELTS entry standard is required (or tested)<sup>19</sup>. Most donors also offer short course training – in the case of Japan this is on a substantial scale. Donors tend to manage their own programs in terms of selection and placement.
- 3.40 Tertiary and short course training is also offered on a large scale by non-DAC countries of ASEAN and the Eastern European bloc as well as Cuba and China. Selection is typically managed by the Scholarship Department of the Ministry of Education.
- 3.41 There appears to be very little sharing of experiences or donor meetings on postgraduate scholarship programs; and little prospect of harmonisation occurring. This reflects different entrance requirements and timing; often the prominence of home education institutions in the selection process; the mostly open nature of application eligibility; and except in the case of (DAC donors) Australia, New Zealand, Japan and France, the relatively small number of postgraduate awards available<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Proposals are currently accepted in the fields of Democracy and human rights; Economic opportunity and prosperity; Women's empowerment; Promoting a better environment; Food security; Global health; and Outreach to marginalized communities.

<sup>18</sup> All 30 scholarships now offered by New Zealand are open category, although this change was initially opposed by CDC.

<sup>19</sup> Most French awardees are selected from students attending the French Language School.

<sup>20</sup> Annually, the US offers around 4-12 Fulbright awards; the EU around 3-7 postgraduate awards and member countries in some years may offer additional awards; the UK offers 1-2 postgraduate awards annually and France around 60 awards. Most awards are at Masters level, although France, US also allow PhD awards.

- 3.42 There would appear to be greater harmonisation opportunities and value in relation to public sector short course programs, although the major DAC donor programs tend to be linked to individual project/program activities.
- 3.43 The ADS/ALAS contractor (IDP) recently commissioned an independent assessment of its delivery performance against contractual requirements. The report suggested the contractor performed efficiently and to a high standard. A summary is attached (**Annex F**).
- 3.44 A summary of student comments on the scholarship program provided to the review are attached (**Annex G**). Some of the key points include the broad awareness of and the prestigious nature and recognition of Australian tertiary scholarships; the transparency of selection processes; the limited contact with home ministries during award absences; a high regard for the Ministry ELT program for women; and suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the AAA-C; as well as some suggested administrative improvements.
- 3.45 AusAID may wish to consider occasional independent surveys of students following completion of pre-departure training to assess this component of contractor performance and scope for improvements. Care would be needed to ensure the comments are just not reflective of disaffected students.

### ***Reporting***

- 3.46 The contractor is required to prepare a number of reports including an Annual Plan, annual scholarship Promotion Plan, monitoring reports (graduate surveys) and quarterly reports. These are generally informative, useful and have a clear purpose, although the quarterly reports less so. The quarterly reports could be adequately replaced by 'exception' reporting – advising AusAID only when there are important and immediate issues to be addressed.

## **4. EFFECTIVENESS**

- 4.1 Effectiveness relates to the extent to which program outputs and objectives were achieved.
- 4.2 The Australia Awards program in Cambodia, particularly ADS/ALAS appears well regarded and effective, including in comparison with other donor programs. Cambodian ADS students, average around a 94% completion and return rate which is higher than the AusAID-wide average. The key factors in the successful delivery of the program include close oversight by AusAID Post, sound contractor management of the selection through mobilisation process and the dedication of students.

### ***Monitoring and Evaluation***

- 4.3 A detailed M&E plan was prepared by the Managing Contractor in early 2009. This was designed to address the goal and objectives of the ADS scholarship program detailed in the Scholarship Program Design Document (2007).
- 4.4 The ADS program goal was “to improve the human resource and leadership capacity in Cambodia consistent with the sectoral, regional, trans-boundary, and emerging priorities of the Cambodia Australia Development Cooperation Program and the broader bilateral relationship.
- 4.5 The ADS program objectives were:
- Objective 1: to provide individuals with competencies and capabilities that will enable them to contribute to Cambodia’s development using their new knowledge effectively;
  - Objective 2: to help address the human resource needs of Cambodian institutions;
  - Objective 3: to enhance mutual understanding and contribute to linkages between individuals in Australia and Cambodia and within the region
- 4.6 The M&E plan is based on four student sample surveys – two each of two separate cohorts. Preliminary data is available for three surveys and a full report is scheduled to be prepared by the contractor during 2012:
- a 6-months post return conducted in September 2009 and a 24 months post return conducted in February 2011 (17 students); and
  - a pre-departure training survey conducted between January-May 2010 and a 6 months post return survey to be conducted in January 2012 (35 students).
- 4.7 The surveys seek student views on changes attributable to the ADS program, as indicators of whether objectives have been achieved. These include:
- changes in attitudes to work;
  - changes in technical work skills, including communication and planning;
  - effectiveness of re-integration into the workplace and resulting effects on skills transfer and management style;
  - perceived effect on future careers, including promotions and salary.
- 4.8 Additionally, in 2009, AusAID commissioned an independent Tracer Study<sup>21</sup> to evaluate the impact of the scholarship program in Cambodia. This survey covered 206 (78%) of alumni at the time as well as a number of follow-up in-depth interviews. The tracer study questionnaire was similar in theme to the contractor surveys, but also included questions on linkages with Australia.

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<sup>21</sup> Australian Scholarships In Cambodia, Tracer Study and Evaluation, S. Webb, 2007. Previous tracer studies were undertaken in 1999 (40 graduates) and 2004 (43 graduates). A review in 2005 conducted workshops with current and recently completed ADS scholars.

- 4.9 The key findings from the contractor surveys and the tracer study include:
- pre-departure training and mobilization is generally effective;
  - there is a high rate of return to the workplace (public sector);<sup>22</sup>
  - there is a significant increase in skills base – technical, analytical, planning and particularly interpersonal and communication skills;
  - there is a significant increase in cross cultural understanding;
  - there is a strong expectation that professional career opportunities (and income levels) will be increased;
  - there is strong personal development, including an increase in motivation and ambition; and in particular self confidence;
  - there is stronger motivation than satisfaction in the workplace (perhaps related to success in promotion);
  - there are positive experiences from study abroad, despite the stresses involved, including exposure to more egalitarian practices, all of which are likely to influence graduates perspectives in the workplace in Cambodia;
  - only a minority of graduates retained links with Australia institutions or individuals on return, but a majority remained connected with alumni colleagues;
  - there are strong expectations/experience of being able to transfer knowledge and skills to colleagues and bring about change in the workplace
  - there has been an improvement in reintegration experiences of more recent scholarship awardees.
- 4.10 Between 6 months and 24 months post return surveys, although the sample size (17) is small to draw definitive conclusions, graduates reported an increase in interest and satisfaction of their work, but their motivation had declined. This may reflect a more realistic assessment (lower expectations) of what an Australian graduate degree will translate to in the workplace as well as the impact of continuing low salary on motivation levels. However, over time graduates were more likely to be working in relevant areas and utilising the skills obtained in Australia. This was reflected also in more positive responses to reintegration into the workplace. There had also been an increase in the transfer of skills to colleagues, most notably outside their own organisation. This is reflective of many graduates in the public sector securing second jobs, often in the university sector. Over time perceptions of the career opportunities offered by an Australian scholarship remained strong, with the greatest opportunities perceived as being within their own organisations. In general, over time the experience of this small group is of increased confidence and skills, recognition for their achievement and being sought after for advice in the workplace; further there is an awareness of the changes to their individual personal development as well as awareness of opportunities to make a difference in their work environment.

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<sup>22</sup> AusAID requires public category awardees to agree to return to their workplace for a minimum of two years. Many Ministries require a longer 'contract' up to 4-5 years, but admit it is not enforceable.

- 4.11 The findings from the contractor surveys (more strongly) and the Tracer Study suggest the ADS objectives as specified in the Design Document have been achieved in relation to Objective 1 and to a lesser degree in relation to Objectives 2 and 3. The Tracer Study suggests that linkages and networking between alumni are stronger than alumni linkages with Australia and that it is more difficult to assess the extent to which ADS graduates contribute to the human resource needs of Cambodian institutions.
- 4.12 ALAF proponents/proposals are required to demonstrate country strategy sector linkages and identify the benefits of fellowships as well as prepare short completion reports. While AusAID sector advisers provide comments on proposals there has been no rigorous assessment of the effectiveness of ALAF in Cambodia. Short courses have only been piloted and to date only one course approved.
- 4.13 The ADS/ALAS survey findings in Cambodia are consistent with the ANAO analysis which indicated evaluations of in-Australia scholarship programs typically judge individuals as benefiting most from postgraduate training, but there is also some evidence to suggest that training has had institutional capacity benefits and contributed to reform efforts in some countries.
- 4.14 The ADS Design Document (2007) goal and objectives reflect but are not fully consistent with the updated Australia Awards objectives. M&E should be revamped in the next phase of the scholarship program including simplifying and clarifying country level objectives and logic, taking account of the increasing number of private sector awardees, and aligning the monitoring framework with the overall objectives of the Australia Awards program. It is noted that AusAID has recently developed useful guidelines for M&E of scholarship programs.

### ***Re-integration***

- 4.15 Graduate surveys and interviews typically identify difficulties of re-integration of returning students into the work-place – essentially the opportunity to ensure new skills and capacity are utilized effectively - as the key issue for awardees<sup>23</sup>. Constraints faced by returning graduates usually include the loss of networks from an extended absence overseas, a lack of planning for the return of graduates, low public sector salaries which encourage second and third jobs, supervisors/other staff feeling ‘threatened’, and weak institutions or funding shortages that negatively impact on the potential to implement reforms, etc.
- 4.16 Few agencies have effective HRD plans, particularly plans with a long term focus on the need or positioning of postgraduate training. Most agencies are

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<sup>23</sup> Most open category awardees do not expect jobs to be held for them. Re-integration issues relate essentially to public sector awardees.

preoccupied with current needs and tend to focus on short course training. Students interviewed indicated any agency HRD plans that did exist were generally not implemented or well known to staff.

- 4.17 Some other country programs (eg Philippines) have introduced formal re-integration plans signed off by awardees and supervisors. It is not proposed that formal written plans be introduced in Cambodia as the public sector is less developed in HRD planning than in some other countries and the number of awardees is relatively small. It is considered that this requirement would be more bureaucratic than of practical value.
- 4.18 Rather, other approaches are likely to be more effective. AusAID and the Managing Contractor, have recently introduced measures to increase agency awareness about returning awardees, including higher level contact, 'welcome back' programs and a Graduate Development Workshop to engage with supervisors and other alumni to facilitate reintegration. It may be possible to further enhance this approach by facilitating more contact between awardees and ministries during the final year of study.

#### ***Targeting Awardees***

- 4.19 There is scope for improving targeting of potential students in both the public and open categories. Although target agencies have been identified, potentially more could be done to encourage prospective quality students from the public sector to apply for awards through more focussed and targeted information sessions in key ministries (eg MAFF), perhaps with the support of alumni; and through the proposed (though not yet implemented) engagement with project team leaders to raise awareness and encourage interest from appropriate counterpart staff and other suitable agency personnel.
- 4.20 For the private sector there is a need to finesse the selection criteria and weightings to provide greater opportunities for non-NGO candidates. This should also involve engaging with the Australian Business Association to Cambodia to promote opportunities and information sessions in priority sectors with their membership.

#### ***Affirmative Action***

- 4.21 Explicit efforts have been made by AusAID and the Managing Contractor to promote opportunities for women, for people with disability (or working in the disability sector) and for rural or provincial based candidates. This has mainly involved direct targeting and affirmative action advertising programs.
- 4.22 There has been limited success largely because of English language constraints. The most effective affirmative action program has been the



Ministry ELT program for women<sup>24</sup>. The Tracer Study, contractor surveys and award statistics indicate this program has provided increased opportunity and success for women in accessing scholarships.

- 4.23 If broader affirmative action objectives are to be achieved, longer term strategies are required. In particular, the viability of part-time ELT programs should be considered for potential candidates with disability (or working in the disability sector) and for potential candidates from provinces. However, screening would be required to ensure a focus on candidates for entering English language 'pathways' with a capacity and intention for future postgraduate study, rather than simply an interest in ELT.

### ***Risk Management***

- 4.24 The contractor has developed a detailed risk management plan covering all stages of the in-country scholarship process. The key risks in terms of probability and impact and the key risk management responses are:
- the continuing supply of adequate quality candidates particularly from the public sector. This is addressed through the annual promotion plan, including measures noted above;
  - ensuring success of pre-departure training and access to quality teaching staff. This addressed through close monitoring of provisional awardees and remedial approaches as necessary; and extensive advertising measures adopted to recruit capable teaching staff;
  - gender equity targets. This is addressed through the Ministry ELT program for women acting as a feeder program for ADS and weighting given to women applicants up until the interview process;
  - scholarship outcomes (reintegration). This is addressed through various measures adopted or planned, as noted above, to promote improved public sector workplace outcomes.

## **5. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- 5.1 Impact and sustainability relates to the extent which the Australia Awards program has made a difference in terms of the overall development goal.
- 5.2 The country performance assessment framework is attached (**Annex H**). There is no reference in the performance assessment framework to the Australia Awards program. This is a significant omission which is also noted in the Quality at Implementation (QAI) report ,2010.
- 5.3 While it can be inferred that the scholarship program contributes to the objectives matrix it would be appropriate for this to be explicitly recognised when next updating the performance assessment framework.

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<sup>24</sup> Introduction of the open category of awards has also had a positive effect on increasing the number of women awardees – many capable women work in the NGO and private sectors.

- 5.4 The tracer study (2007) notes that longer term impacts of the scholarship program, particularly the impact on institutions is the most difficult to assess. Many factors affect institutional change and institutional implementation capacity and it is difficult to attribute the individual contribution of (a relatively small number) of awardees. The difficulties are further compounded by a lack of HRD plans in most public sector institutions, multiple workplaces of many alumni as well as the lack of clarity in the objective matrix.
- 5.5 However, the surveys indicate that most returnees are aware of the opportunity they have been given and are committed to contributing to the development of Cambodia. Profiles that have been prepared on alumni indicate many have attained important positions in the bureaucracy. However, it will be necessary to undertake surveys over a number of years to obtain more realistic data on impact and sustainability.
- 5.6 No assessment has been undertaken of the impact of ALAF; and short course training has only recently been piloted.

## **6. LESSONS LEARNED**

- 6.1 The key lessons learned from the current phase of the scholarships program include:
- The Australia Awards program is well regarded and compares favourably with other donor scholarship programs in Cambodia. It is substantial in terms of number of awards; it is transparent in application and selection processes; and successful in terms of returning students and award recognition. However, there is a need to maintain effective promotion and targeting to ensure a continuing supply of quality candidates;
  - The move to an open category has been successful and beneficial; and justified in terms of the important role played by the non-government sector in development;
  - The current level of awards is appropriate and there is little justification to introduce undergraduate programs in health or other sectors;
  - Affirmative action programs for women, people with disability and provincial candidates require multiple year strategies. The main constraint is English language capability. The part time ELT program for Ministry women has been a successful ‘pathway’ for increasing opportunities for women to access scholarships;
  - Alumni can be an important resource for promoting and supporting the scholarship program; as well as offering a broader role in providing linkages and networks into both the public and private sectors;
  - Management of the scholarship program is resource intensive and opportunities to simplify approaches and minimize complexity should be considered;
  - Reintegration into the workplace (public sector) is the major issue confronting returnees;

- The monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be enhanced across the Australia Awards program to enable more effective assessment of performance.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 In preparing the design for the next five year phase of the Australia Awards it is recommended that:
- a) an integrated approach to the delivery of the Australia Awards (development) scholarship program and to performance assessment should be adopted. Out-sourcing of ADS and ALAS administrative and management tasks, as is the case for the current phase, should be retained. Additional out-sourcing could include responsibility for development of short course training proposals (in consultation with Post) and monitoring and evaluation of all Australia Award (development) programs;
  - b) a HRD adviser should be included in the scholarship design . The role would focus on:
    - promotion: working with target ministries/HRD departments (public sector), project staff and the private sector to encourage suitable ADS, ALAS candidates to apply for awards; and to raise awareness of short course training and ALAF opportunities;
    - targeted programs: provide practical support in the targeting/screening of suitable applicants and development of multi year ELT pathways for particular target groups (women, people with disability, provincial candidates);
    - re-integration (public sector): provide support through engagement and planning with ministries and immediate supervisors to facilitate returning graduates to re-integrate into the workplace;
    - short course training: work with the Post (sectoral advisors) and target ministries to develop appropriate training proposals;
  - c) the application and selection process should be refined, in particular to:
    - clarify the scope of the ADS ‘open’ sector eligibility to more explicitly encourage applications from the non-NGO private sector;
    - similarly, seek to broaden the awareness and applications for ALAF beyond short training courses offered by universities;
    - re-establish (in 2012) the requirement for ALAS PhD applicants to pre-qualify in terms of entry level English and an offer from an Australian university prior to submission of scholarship applications;
    - consider recruitment of an independent panel of professional people with a broad understanding of the development context in Cambodia to assist conduct interviews (could be trialled in 2012);
    - require ADS ‘open’ category candidates to have entry level standard (usually IELTS 6.5) prior to submission of applications;

- d) support for the AAA-C should be maintained and opportunities to further raise the profile of the Association, engage with alumni in promoting the Australia Awards and strengthen linkages with Australia considered. This could include encouraging alumni participation in short course training; engaging with alumni in developing the Country Strategy; and establishing a competitive small grants scheme that offers alumni the opportunity to address global issues on a local, national, regional or international level, perhaps in association with Australian institutions. The accessibility of the alumni database should be ensured, particularly if there is a change in contractor in the next phase.
- e) the monitoring and evaluation framework, including objectives, should be updated, refined and simplified to encompass all development awards;

## **REVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IN CAMBODIA**

### **ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Since 1994, Australia Awards has provided scholarship opportunities internationally to people from many developing countries to study in Australia. Awardees are high achieving individuals and potential leaders who look forward to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise from Australia and thereby support the long term development of their country.
- 1.2 The Australian Government is also aware that through these scholarships strong bonds of friendship are formed creating positive government to government links as well as between people and it is these relationships that will help to build the business, academic and social links that will support both local and regional interests.
- 1.3 Between 1994 and 2008, twenty Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) were available annually to those employed in government. In 2009, five (5) additional scholarships were added annually for non-government sectors. In 2010 and 2011, the scholarships were increased to forty (40) and fifty (50) places respectively, opening for candidates from government, civil society and private sector.
- 1.4 From 2006, the Australian Scholarships program has included the Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) to enable Cambodians with leadership potential to undertake post-graduate studies up to PhD level. This scholarship is offered competitively on a regional rather than a country basis. Including five (5) Awardees this year, there are now thirty-six (36) Cambodians who have been awarded under ALA.
- 1.5 The Awardees now join over 400 Cambodians who have been awarded Australian scholarships since 1994.

#### **Objective**

- 1.6 The objective of the review is to:
  - (a) Provide an assessment of the overall performance of the Australia Award program 2007-12 in Cambodia
  - (b) Identify factors that will strengthen the long term impact of the Program; and

- (c) Provide the basis for refining and developing a new design of the Australia Awards Program in ways that increase its effectiveness in terms of AusAID's strategic objective in Cambodia.

## **2. SERVICES**

- 2.1 The Contractor, will review the current Cambodia Scholarships Program (2007-12). The outcome of the review will form the basis for designing a new and improved scholarship program.
- 2.2 The Contractor will perform the following Services in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Contract:

### **Pre-departure**

- 2.3 Review relevant documentation, including AusAID's Draft Cambodia Country Strategy; The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) National Poverty Reduction Strategy, the recent ANAO Review, AusAID's Gender and Development Policy, report and documents of the Cambodia ADS Australian Managing Contractor, IDP, AusAID's ADS Operation Guidelines; student survey reports and the recent tracer study 2009;
- 2.4 consult and liaise with the Cambodia Desk in Canberra, student Management Section in AusAID, IDP Canberra, student liaison officers and other relevant stakeholders;
- 2.5 prepare 2-3 page issue paper for discussion with AusAID Phnom Penh at the commencement of fieldwork;

### **In-Country**

- 2.6 consult with key in-country stakeholders including AusAID Post, Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), MAFF, other relevant agencies, IDP and a cohort of returned ADS MAFF awardees as a case study in constraints and opportunities to improve reintegration;
- 2.7 review the rationale and strengths and weaknesses of the Australia Awards program;
- 2.8 review the contribution that the Australia Awards program has had so far on capacity building for development of Cambodia, with reference to the 2009 Tracer Study and actions taken to implement the follow-up of the recommendations;
- 2.9 review the expansion of the program to include non-government and private sector participants;

- 2.10 review the needs and possibilities of offering an undergraduate degree for nursing, public administration, human resource management or other sector priorities, under ADS program in the next selection round;
- 2.11 review the current reintegration process of the scholarships program and recommend measures to improve effectiveness, and promote stronger relationship with target ministries and stakeholders, with particular focus on the Agriculture sector;
- 2.12 review the effectiveness of Gender and Disability mainstreaming channelled within the scholarships program and recommend appropriate affirmative action strategies to make women and people with disabilities competitive in the selection process;
- 2.13 review the contribution of the Australian Alumni Association of Cambodia (AAAC) and consider the rationale for financial support to enable implementation of the Alumni Committee work-plan;
- 2.14 investigate other key scholarship schemes operating in Cambodia – the level of award, selection criteria, conditions, support for alumni and target students – in order to gauge how ADS compares;
- 2.15 consider whether priority Ministries require further support to enhance the competitiveness of their candidates for ADS;
- 2.16 consider whether there should be any changes to the level of study being offered in order to better meet Cambodia's needs and make relevant recommendations;
- 2.17 consider the rational and scope for efforts to improve harmonisation between different donor scholarship schemes;
- 2.18 Review the management of ADS/ALA by post/desk and the MC. The Review will determine whether the:
  - (a) Australia Awards marketing approach leads to a sufficiently high calibre and quality of applicants, reducing the need for post-selection adjustment;
  - (b) selection process is robust, transparent and accountable; and
  - (c) support upon return is effective in the reintegration of Awardees and likely to maximise the impact of their experience.
- 2.19 review the Australia Awards Program Risk management Strategy;
- 2.20 review the Australia Awards Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, including program performance indicators for both the public and private sectors;

- 2.21 prepare an Aide Memoire (of no more than 5-7 pages) on findings and recommendations as a basis for a half day workshop with Post and presentation to Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC). The Post workshop will provide input to a concept paper to be prepared by the adviser on return to Australia and included as an attachment to the draft review report; and

### **In-Australia**

- 2.22 prepare Draft Review Report, including a Concept Paper and methodology to support the design of a new program as Annexes to the report.

### **Outputs**

- 2.23 The outputs shall be:
- (a) an issues paper of submitted to the Post for discussion at the commencement of fieldwork;
  - (b) an Aide Memoire at the end of the in-Country mission;
  - (c) a Draft Review Report and Annexed Concept Paper;
  - (d) a final Review Report; and
  - (e) the design methodology and TORs for the design of the New Australia Awards Program.



## **ANNEX B - KEY DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

1. Cambodia National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013, Mid Term Review, RGC, 2011.
2. An Effective Aid Program for Australia, AusAID
3. Australia's Strategic Approach to Aid in Cambodia 2010-15, AusAID (2010).
4. Cambodia Scholarships Design Document (2007).
5. Quality at Implementation Reports, AusAID
6. AusAID's Management of Tertiary Training Assistance – Performance Audit Report No.44, ANAO, 2010-11.
7. Development for All – Towards a Disability Inclusive Australian Aid Program 2009-2014, AusAID, 2009.
8. IDP (Managing Contractor)
  - a. Annual Plan, 2012.
  - b. Quarterly Reports, 2011.
  - c. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, 2009.
  - d. Australian Awards Outcome Surveys (3), May 2010, November 2010, September 2011.
  - e. ADS, ALAS Application Forms, 2011.
9. AusAID Scholarship Guidance and Templates, 2011
  - a. Design Guidance, 2011.
  - b. Definition of Success, 2011
  - c. Desired Applicant Profiles, 2010
  - d. Scholarships, A Flexible Tool for Building Capacity, 2011.
  - e. ScholarshipsM&E Guidance, 2011.
  - f. Reintegration Guidelines, 2011.
  - g. Guidelines for Including Disability in Development Awards, Updated October 2011.
10. AusAID Scholarship Policy
  - a. Scholarships Handbook, 2011.
  - b. Australia Awards Update, 2010
11. Australian Scholarships in Cambodia - Tracer Study and Evaluation, S. Webb, November 2009.
12. Scholarships PNG 2010-14, Design Document, September, 2009.
13. Australian Development Scholarships Indonesia, Phase IIIB (2012-2014), Design Document, July 2011.
14. Mid Term Review of Health Workforce Development Plan, 2006-2015, Ministry Of Health, 2011.

## **ANNEX C: AIDE MEMOIRE**

### **Review of the Cambodia Australia Scholarship Program**

This Aide Memoire outlines the findings and recommendations of a Review Mission<sup>25</sup> to Cambodia from 12-22 December, 2011, with the objectives of: (i) assessing the overall performance of the current phase of the Australia Awards program in Cambodia; (ii) identifying factors that will strengthen the long term impact of the program, and (iii) providing the basis for refining and developing the next phase design of the Australian Awards program in ways that increase its effectiveness. The TOR is attached (Annex A).

In Phnom Penh, the Mission met with stakeholders in key government ministries, including CDC, Council of Ministers, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, Ministry of Health; as well as NGOs including Medicam, the Cambodia Disabled Persons Organization (CDPO) and UN organizations including UNDP and WHO. The Mission also met with Committee members of the Australia Alumni Association-Cambodia (AAA-C), the Australian Business Association to Cambodia, students undertaking pre-departure training, the scholarships managing contractor (IDP), and AusAID sector managers.

The Mission program is attached (Annex B). The Mission would like to thank all people met and record its appreciation of assistance provided by all concerned.

This Aide Memoire reflects the main findings and recommendations of the Mission. It is subject to confirmation by the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Australian Government. A detailed Review Report will be prepared and made available in late January 2012.

### **Key Issues**

#### **a) Overview**

- The Australia Awards program in Cambodia appears well regarded, including in comparison with other donor programs – it is substantial in terms of number of awards (including public sector quota), it is transparent in application and selection processes and successful in terms of returning students and award recognition.
- For design of the next phase, there is scope for refinement of the scholarship program to increase effectiveness and efficiency, particularly in the areas of:
  - Application and selection, including pre-departure ELT
  - Re-integration planning
  - Monitoring and Evaluation

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<sup>25</sup> The Mission was led by David Barber (independent consultant) and included Sothea Roth Hel, Scholarships Program Manager, AusAID Phnom Penh.

### **b) Policy Context**

- The Australia Awards initiative was announced by the Australian Government in November 2009<sup>26</sup> with the broad objectives of (i) developing capacity and leadership skills in recipient countries, and (ii) promoting people to people linkages at individual, institutional and country level.
- Consistent with these objectives, the Cambodia Country Program has considerable autonomy and flexibility in designing the key elements of the scholarship program (country level objectives, level of award, field of study, selection processes, public/private allocation, etc) appropriate to the local context and strategic needs of the country.

### **c) Overall Performance (2008-2011)**

- The number of ADS awards has increased significantly over the past 4 years:
  - 2008: 20 - all public sector
  - 2009: 25 - 20 public; 5 open
  - 2010: 40 – 20 public; 20 open
  - 2011: 50 – 20 public; 30 open
- The number of ALAS awards, which are globally competitive, has remained at around 6 annually over the past few years
- The number of ALAF awards, which are identified and hosted by Australian institutions (government, business, NGOs), have steadily increased over the past four years, peaking at 73 in 2011 (mainly university short course training programs)<sup>27</sup>.
- Short course training has been piloted as part of the Australia Awards in 2011. Selection is centralised in Canberra and competitive. A Cambodian proposal for training in Water Resources Management was successful<sup>28</sup>.
- Australia awards account for about 6% of the Cambodia country program expenditure which is similar to the global average; but less than neighbouring countries Vietnam (28%) and Laos (27%).
- The successful completion rate of Cambodian students is high – around 94% - which compares favourably with other country programs.
- RGC ownership is enhanced through endorsement of the selection process and increasing alignment of awards with the country strategy.

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<sup>26</sup> Australia Awards comprise Development Awards (AusAID) and Endeavour Awards (DEEWR). Development awards comprise Australian Development Scholarships (ADS), Australian Leadership Awards - Scholarships (ALAS), Australian Leadership Awards – Fellowships (ALAF) and short courses.

<sup>27</sup> Efforts should be made to increase awareness of this program in the non-university sector.

<sup>28</sup> A proposal for health sector training was unsuccessful. A suitable provider could not be identified in Australia.

#### **d) Emerging Trends**

- Most other industrialised country donor programs are ‘open’ category only
- Most other donor programs require entry level English prior to submission of applications (ie no pre-departure ELT)
- Most other donor programs have broad thematic areas of eligibility, particularly in relation to the private sector.
- Most donors have specific university entry requirements - there is little harmonisation of donor scholarship programs and there appears little prospect of this occurring

#### **e) Application and Selection Processes**

- The Country Strategy provides guidance on eligible sectors and ministries, and rigorous short-listing, priority weighting and selection processes seek to address these requirements. These generally work well, but a majority of ‘open’ category candidates are from NGOs
  - there is scope to clarify ‘open’ sector eligibility to more explicitly encourage applications from the non-NGO private sector eg important development sub-sectors in commerce, finance, engineering, manufacturing, etc consistent with the Country Strategy; and
  - there is scope to simplify processes to increase efficiency.
- Following the consolidation and change in application procedures intended to streamline processes, together with an increased awareness campaign by the Embassy, the number of award applications, particularly for ALAS, increased almost threefold between 2010 and 2011, with a commensurate increase in administration
  - The requirement for PHD applicants (ALAS) to pre-qualify in terms of entry level English and an offer from an Australian university should be re-introduced
- The interview process for ADS/ALAS must remain transparent and beyond reproach, but it is intensive and time consuming<sup>29</sup>. This makes it difficult to ensure availability and consistency of panel members.
  - There is a need to ensure RGC/GOA ownership as well as Australian branding of awards, but consideration could be given to recruitment of independent professionals with a broad understanding of the development context in Cambodia and well briefed by AusAID/RGC, to participate in panel interviews
- The single greatest constraint in successfully obtaining a scholarship award is English language capability. An award is subject to an IELTS test score of 6.5, regardless of priority candidates or affirmative action weightings.

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<sup>29</sup> A return to previous application procedures is expected to reduce the number of applications and interview time requirements in following years

- Provisional award students undertake up to 12 months ELT<sup>30</sup>. This is administratively intensive as well as stressful for students. Failure to achieve the required standard can be problematic in terms of family, community and work-place perceptions.
- English capability in Cambodia is expanding particularly among younger graduates
- There appears little justification to continue a pre-departure ELT option for ‘open’ category candidates.
  - There is a sufficient pool of qualified ‘open’ category candidates with the required English entry level score; and/or
  - Motivated candidates will make an effort to upgrade their English capability to meet entry level requirements
- There is clearly a smaller pool of potential candidates from the public sector that would meet the English entry requirement of 6.5 without further ELT. In terms of current ADS objectives it is appropriate that (part-time) ELT pathways for potential public sector candidates (particularly women) be continued, but the English standard for ADS applications could be increased.

#### **f) Level of Awards**

- With few exceptions, ADS offers a two year Masters program by coursework - over many years of experience, this has proven an appropriate focus. ALAS offers opportunity for PHD as well as a Masters program for high quality candidates.
- Consideration was given in the Review to expanding the scope of ADS awards to include Undergraduate Bachelor courses, particularly in relation to nursing
  - For a number of reasons, including duration, issues related to return, difficulty in assessing high school qualifications and cost, scholarships for Undergraduate training in Australia is not considered an effective use of limited resources
- Other training options include short course training in Australia, Cambodia and/or third countries. There appears to be some demand for this type of training, although further investigation is warranted
  - To date only short course training in Australia has been piloted – effective targeting and administration of this model requires further evaluation
  - In-country or third country training may be an appropriate option, but further consideration is required as to whether this fits within Australia Award guidelines

#### **g) Affirmative Action**

- Women, candidates from the provinces and candidates with disabilities are all strongly encouraged to apply for awards. In support of this

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<sup>30</sup> Only Australia and New Zealand offer such a pre-departure ELT program.

- a Ministry ELT program is conducted annually for 60 women – the Tracer Study (2009) and subsequent surveys by the Managing Contractor indicate this has been effective in increasing award opportunities for women
- provinces are targeted through promotion activities, including alumni visits, although remoteness remains a constraint
- opportunities and support programs for candidates with disabilities (or candidates within the disabilities sector) are widely promoted
- award application eligibility criteria (IELTS) are lower for the public category than the open category
- Nevertheless, all applicants must ultimately meet university entry requirements. The greatest constraint is language capacity. Multi year strategies are needed to address this
  - English language pathways could be developed for target groups – similar to the Ministry ELT program for women. This should be de-linked from the provisional award of ADS scholarships
  - Preference should be given to participants with a capacity/interest in ultimately applying for an ADS scholarship – this requires further consideration of eligibility criteria for entering the ‘pathway’

#### **h) Re-integration**

- Various graduate surveys have identified the need to assist re-integration of returning students into the work-place, particularly within the public sector, to ensure skills and capacity is utilized effectively. A number of programs have been introduced by AusAID and the Managing Contractor, including engaging with supervisors, to facilitate this.
- Few agencies have effective HRD plans, particularly with a long term focus on the need for postgraduate training
  - Most agencies are preoccupied with current needs and tend to focus on short course training (this also represents the bulk of donor training awards)
  - Most students interviewed indicated any agency plans that did exist were often not implemented or well known to staff
- There is scope for doing more to
  - identify and encourage suitable candidates from the public (and private) sector to apply for awards
  - prepare graduates and the workplace in planning for the return of awardees
  - however, it is unlikely a formal return to work plan, prepared prior to departure would be realistic or effective in the Cambodian context
- Consideration should be given in the design of the next phase scholarship program to the inclusion of an HRD adviser to provide practical support in the development and support of pathways for suitable applicants and in supporting re-integration

### **i) Alumni**

- The Australian Alumni Association – Cambodia (AAA-C) is quite active and has a current membership register of around 300 which accounts for virtually all successfully completed and returned postgraduate awardees (few fellowship, short course or Endeavour awardees are so far included)
  - The AAA-C has played a role in assisting the dissemination of information about ADS/ALAS, particularly in provinces and in information sessions for departing scholarship awardees
  - The Association has also been helpful in supporting returning graduates and networking amongst members
- AusAID (and the Managing Contractor) should continue to support the maintenance of the Alumni register; engage with the Association to facilitate the ADS/ALAS program; and consider other support for Alumni activities
  - This could include a competitive (centralised) small grants scheme for social development activities
  - Encouraging alumni participation in accessing short course training opportunities
  - Engaging with alumni in developing the Country Strategy
- Opportunities for people to people linkages may be enhanced by an increased number of ‘open’ category (private sector) alumni

### **j) Monitoring and Evaluation**

- A detailed M&E plan was prepared by the Managing Contractor in 2009 and a large amount of data is collected, including student surveys, which is designed to provide performance information on achievement of outputs and outcomes<sup>31</sup>. There is scope for
  - Clarifying country specific objectives
  - Presenting data in a more user friendly way
  - Improving the M&E framework<sup>32</sup>

## **Recommendations**

- 1) Clarify the scope of the ADS ‘open’ sector eligibility to more explicitly encourage applications from the non-NGO private sector;
- 2) Re-establish (in 2012) the requirement for PHD applicants (ALAS) to pre-qualify in terms of entry level English and an offer from an Australian university prior to submission of scholarship applications;

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<sup>31</sup> It is noted AusAID country strategy priorities have changed over the course of the current contract cycle and the country strategy does not include a detailed performance assessment framework.

<sup>32</sup> AusAID has recently developed useful guidelines for M&E of scholarship programs.

- 3) Consider recruitment of an independent panel of professional people with a broad understanding of the development context in Cambodia to assist conduct interviews (could be trialled in 2012);
- 4) Increase the English language pre-requisite for submission of applications for ADS scholarships
  - a) Require ADS 'open' category candidates to have entry level standard (usually IELTS 6.5) prior to submission of applications;
  - b) Require 'public' sector candidates to similarly have entry level standard (usually IELTS 6.5); or
  - c) Alternatively set a minimum requirement of IELTS 6 for public sector candidates which would imply pre-departure ELT of at least 3 months
- 5) Introduce English language pathways (similar to the Ministry ELT program for women) for additional target groups, with capacity/interest in applying for ADS scholarships at some future date;

Phnom Penh  
21 December 2011



# **ANNEX D: SCHEDULE OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS**

ANNEX D: SCHEDULE OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Date/Time	Details	Names	Positions	Venue	
1-10/12/2011	Review documents. Meeting with Mekong Section, AusAID. Meeting with Scholarships Section, AusAID. Meeting with IDP, Canberra. Meeting with Cambodian students, ANU. Meeting with student liaison officers, ANU.			Canberra	
Monday 12/12					
	08:30 – 09:30	Meeting with Post	Jennifer Lean, Sothearoth Hel	First Secretary Scholarships manager	Australian Embassy
	09:30 – 10:30	Meeting with Embassy Heads of Agency	Lewis COYLE	Defence Attache	Australian Embassy
	14:00 – 17:00	Meeting with IDP	Sreng Mao Sharon Wilkinson Piseth Pum	Office Manager Program Manager Scholarships Manager	IDP Office – Toul Kork
Tuesday 13/12					
	08:30 – 10:00	Meeting with other donors	Michelle Bennett Mr Prum Virak	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, US Embassy Public Affairs Specialist, US Embassy	Australian Embassy
			Mr Soun Veasna Nhean Tola Pich Thyda	Program Officer, JICA Senior Program Officer, JICA Program Officer, JICA	
			Ms Pok Poun	Press and Information Officer, the Delegation of the European Union	
			Ms Viphou Phuong	Senior Program Manager, British Embassy	
			Ms Stephany Hillenbrand	Charge de Mission Coop. Uni. French Embassy	

Date/Time		Details	Names	Positions	Venue
	2:00pm – 3:00pm	Meeting with Ministry of Agriculture	Mr Oum Savy Kos Chhino	Deputy Director, Department of Personnel and HRD Department of Personnel and HRD	Min. of Agriculture
	3:30pm – 4:30pm	Meeting with CDC	Mdm Heng Sokun	Director General & Director Bilateral Aid Coordination Department	CDC – Wat Phnom
Wednesday 14/12					
	10:30am – 11:30am	Ministry of Education	Mr Chap Sophorn Mr Keo Sakal	Director, Culture & Scholarships Department Deputy Director, Culture & Scholarships Department	Bueng Keng Kang
	3:00pm – 3:45pm	Ministry of Public Works	Mr Soeung Bunly	Deputy Director, Human Resource Department	MPW
	4:00pm – 5:00pm	Ministry of Justice	Mr Sim Rithysen	Director, Personnel Department	
	6:00pm – 8:30pm	Alumni Committee members  Scholarships Farewell Function	Kieng Rotana, Dean, Sovann Pisey Thland, et.al.		Ambassador's Residence

Date/Time		Details	Names	Positions	Venue
Thursday 15/12					
	08:00am – 09:00am	Ministry of Women's Affairs	Ms Pich Pitou Ratha	Director of Administration Department	MoWA
	09:15am – 10:15am	Ministry of Water Resources	Mr Chhea Bunrith	Director of Administration and Human Resource Department	MoWRAM
	10:30am – 11:30am	Ministry of Social Affairs	Mr Ouk Sok Ms Chan Thearith	Deputy Director, Administration and Personnel Department Administration and Personnel Department	MoSAVY
	3:30pm – 4:30pm	Council of Ministers	HE Chhuon Chhan Neang Lyna	Deputy Secretary General – Council of Administration Reform Deputy Secretary General	Council of Ministers
Friday 16/12					
	09:30am – 10:30am	WHO	Ann Robins	Human Resources for Health Advisor	WHO
	1:00pm – 1:45pm	Medicam	Dr Sin Somuny	Executive Director	Toul Kork
	3:30pm – 5:00pm		Pre-departure ADS students		ACE
Monday 19/12					
	09:00am – 10:00am	Ministry of Interior	HE Prum Sokha	Secretary of State	Ministry of Interior
	10:30am – 11:30am	Ministry of Health	Prof. Thea Kruey	Secretary of State	Ministry of Health
	1:30pm – 2:45pm	CDPO	Mr Ngin Saorath	Executive Director	Wat Than

Date/Time		Details	Names	Positions	Venue
	3:00pm – 4:00pm	Minister of Public Works and Transport	Mr Pheng Sovicheano	Deputy General Director of Public Works	Ministry of Public Works
	4:15pm – 5:00pm	UNDP	Mr Seng Sam Yith	HR Manager	UNDP
Tuesday 20/12					
	08:45am – 10:30am	IDP	Sharon Wilkinson Gil Sutherland Piseth Pum	Program manager Special Projects Scholarships manager	IDP
	11:00am – 12:00pm	Australian Business Association to Cambodia (ABAC)	David Carter	CEO, Infinity Insurance	Infinity Insurance
	1:30pm – 3:30pm	AusAID Program staff and Sectoral Managers			AusAID Australian Embassy
Wednesday 21/12					
	10:30am – 12:00pm	Aide Memoire presentation	Jennifer Lean Sothearoth Hel		Australian Embassy

## ANNEX E: UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS IN NURSING STUDIES

AusAID has raised the possibility of allocating 5 of the existing ADS scholarships to nursing studies at undergraduate level. This briefing paper, prepared by IDP, reviews existing in-country nursing training and identifies constraints and gaps in the training environment and makes recommendations to AusAID.

We note the key barriers to undergraduate acceptance in Australian nurse training facilities, including the need to demonstrate high levels of English language skills as well as mathematical and scientific knowledge and the possibility that Cambodian High School Diploma not being seen as equivalent for entry purposes. We also note that the provision of undergraduate clinical training, in Australia, would lead to both qualifications and skills that are both highly valued and highly transferable. The outcome potential may be an overall loss to nursing in Cambodia; as such training could become a springboard to higher earning potential outside of the country.

The nursing sector in Cambodia is in the process of professionalization and through this process is actively trying to close the theory-practice gap. In this context the targeted development of nursing personnel can effectively support those change agents who are supporting this process. IDP recommends the targeting of this support at preceptor and clinical manager levels.

Specifically we recommend support to nurse training through post graduate training in clinical education or nursing leadership and recommend that AusAID work with the key sector partners to identify suitable candidates. Our recommendations are:

1. Given the need for national leadership and the need to increase the number of providers of clinical education, IDP recommends competitive access to post-graduate qualifications through a targeting of scholarships for candidates meeting entry requirements to undertake a **Masters of Nursing Leadership**. This course focuses on leadership development as well as offering students the opportunity to study theory and research, issues, challenges and strategies relevant to contemporary nursing and nursing leadership. An alternative course would be a **Masters of Nursing in Clinical Education**, which aims to prepare graduates for an advanced role in clinical and health education.
2. Scholarships need to be provided as part of **AusAID's longer-term investment and institutional development programme in the health sector**, as part of a clear strategy for expanding training in health care. This can be achieved through improving effectiveness and efficiency in public training and through planned expansion of access to training albeit nationally or externally through training in the region including Thailand or Australia.

The following sections provide background, context and justification for the above recommendation.

### **Background**

It is recognized that the level of competence of a country's skilled workers and technicians is centrally important to the advancement of its labor and professional work force.

It is also recognized that Cambodia needs to improve capacity and productivity, throughout each of its key systems, if it is to compete successfully in an era of rapid economic and technological change. This requires not only capital investment, but also a workforce that has the flexibility to acquire new skills for new jobs as the structures of society, economies and occupations such as health care practice, change.

Skilled health workers and technicians enhance both the quality and efficiency of health care as well as providing supervision and training to the next generation of care givers. Following years of under-resourcing Cambodia has a shortfall in the numbers and quality of health care professionals in the areas of general nursing, midwifery as well as the specialist areas of psychiatry, pediatrics and geriatrics.

Efforts to address this shortfall require a strategic approach that builds on existing programmes, which are aiming to professionalize the nursing cadre in Cambodia. Within this context IDP notes that, through the development of skilled health workers, AusAID can continue to deepen its support to national policies and strategies which are clearly articulated in Cambodia's Millennium Development Goals; the National Strategic Development Plan (2006-10); the Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSP11) and MOH Health Workforce Strategic Plan 2006-2015.

In each of the above papers Cambodia prioritizes access to basic health care training and continuing education in order to strengthen the capacity of health personnel.

The following aid-supported activities are key steps towards this aim:

- Support to training, at both national and regional training centers; to ensure the capacity to increase student intakes, improve curriculum and establish training standards; upgraded equipment and learning materials and improved technical capacity of teachers.
- Support to links between training centers and practical training sites. This complements the clinical preceptor training programme.
- Multiple actions to increase community awareness and utilization of key child care, infectious disease control, reproductive health, family planning and maternal health services

There are a number of approaches to scholarships that will allow AusAID's technical assistance to continue this support, including facilitating access to external (Australia based) training institutions and opportunities.

### **Cambodia's nurse training environment**

Presently, entry to nurse training in Cambodia requires high school diploma as a basis for the 3 year Associate Degree in Nursing Science or Midwifery.<sup>33</sup> This is comparable with entry into other undergraduate courses in both Cambodia and Australia although the high school diploma itself is not considered comparable between the two countries.

International aid is supporting a number of training initiatives, including support to National and Regional Training Centers (RTC) for both nursing and midwifery. Through this support, clinical instructors are accessing on the job training and are being identified to be further trained as clinical instructors in Thailand (1 year course). A new initiative is the establishment of a “preceptor” forum through which preceptors (clinical instructors) discuss training techniques as well as up-to-date clinical information. The first of these forums was held in Siem Reap in June this year. The forum gives solid recognition to the concept of clinical preceptorship<sup>34</sup>.

Globally, the content of nursing curricula is changing and it those students who have received a broad education and who are trained against internationally agreed competency criterion, who are both better placed to move up the occupational ladder as well as able to make a greater impact on the sector as a whole.

Potential candidates from the field of nursing in Cambodia already face a number of challenges amongst which lack of competency in English language remains a key barrier to training. Presently a number of students are being supported to undertake English language training to strengthen their ability to fully participate in the RTC's training programme. It is noted that this language training is insufficient to gain an International English Language Test System (IELTS) score commensurate with access to Australian training institutes.

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<sup>33</sup> In 2005 the private sector initiated training in midwifery / nursing at the International University in Phnom Penh. The University produces xxx graduates per year. The first batch graduated (1 year post-basic nursing) in midwifery in 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Knowledge transfer is one aspect of knowledge management and a core component of experiential learning. Nurses receive all kinds of information on a daily basis, such as input from patients, supervisors, ancillary staff, and the environment itself. The nurse must decide what knowledge to internalize, based on training and education, and apply that knowledge to practice. An experienced nurse may provide training, or “precepting” to a new nurse to help him or her adjust to the new role. The “preceptor” is the knowledge transfer expert in the nursing arena.

The clinical preceptor is of critical importance in the education and socialization process of the advanced nursing student. It is within the context of the student's preceptorship experience and practicum that the student learns to apply an expanded knowledge base and to function in the advanced practice nursing roles of clinician, consultant, educator, leader, and researcher.

There is clear evidence that skilled health personnel have a unique and important role in reducing morbidity and mortality. However, in the context in which we cannot anticipate an increase in future earning power for Cambodian based health care staff we have to be aware that provision of such training may not result in a positive outcome for Cambodia. Nurses trained abroad will gain highly valued transferable skills and may use such training as a springboard to higher earning potential outside of Cambodia thus reducing the potential impact of external training.

### **Identification of candidates**

Nursing professionals use a wide range of general and specific skills. As the complexity and responsibilities of health care delivery increases, specific manual skills have become less important than higher-order conceptual skills and theoretical knowledge. The level of general education required for successful training also increases with the level of skills being taught and the selection of candidates and curriculum content of nurse training at undergraduate level in Australia reflects this understanding.

The challenge here is to identify candidates for undergraduate scholarships in an arena which is increasingly influenced by technological change as well as being open to international competition.

Offering these scholarships at undergraduate level has a number of challenges – specifically identification of students able to benefit from an empirically based training programme that traditionally builds on the students’ ability to communicate clearly, in written English, as well as demonstrating competency in the use mathematics and science skills to diagnose and problem solve.

Australian based nurse training courses provide both an education and training necessary to achieve competency in the wide range of skills required for the role of a nurse. A large component of the training is supervised clinical practice in hospitals, nursing homes and healthcare agencies. Students must pass the theory components, including essential skills in language, literacy, numeracy, communication, and interpersonal skills before undertaking a practical placement.

Australian training institutions require the equivalent of Australia Year 12 with passes in Science and Mathematics. For direct entry, into a diploma course, students require an IELTS score of 6.5 in all bands or equivalent. Students who enroll in the pathway programs, appended below, either through the Certificate III in Aged Care or the Certificate IV in Preparation for Enrolled Nursing require an IELTS of 6.0 in all bands or equivalent.

However, based on IDPs experience a Cambodian High School Diploma is not considered to be equivalent to an Australia High School Diploma and placement into an undergraduate course in Australia may not prove to be a possibility.

### **Employment opportunities available to graduates**



Appropriate nurse training courses, at undergraduate level, are being provided within Cambodia and the potential impact of offering such training in Australia remains unclear. The effectiveness of providing external (Australia based) undergraduate training in nursing requires that training be linked to demonstrated employment availability or be integrated with efforts to professionalize and thereby expand the competencies needed within the sector.

Clearly, and as noted above, in the absence of any increases in public salaries, and indeed in low remuneration in the private sector, there is a high risk of losing graduates with highly transferable skills to the international market.

### **Recommendations:**

1. That nurse training at undergraduate level will prove difficult due to individual competencies in math, English etc, the possibility that Australia will not accept a Cambodian High School Diploma as equivalent and the possibility of graduates from Australia nurse training programmes becoming eligible for higher paying positions outside of Cambodia. For these reasons the possibility of undergraduate training should be cautiously re-considered.
2. Given the need for national leadership and the need to increase the number of providers of clinical education, IDP recommends competitive access to post-graduate qualifications through a targeting of scholarships for candidates meeting entry requirements to undertake a **Masters of Nursing Leadership**. **This course** focuses on leadership development as well as offering students the opportunity to study theory and research, issues, challenges and strategies relevant to contemporary nursing and nursing leadership. An alternative course would be a **Masters of Nursing in Clinical Education**, which aims to prepare graduates for an advanced role in clinical and health education.
3. Scholarships can be provided as part of **AusAID's longer-term investment and institutional development programme in the health sector**, but this should be part of a clear strategy for expanding training in health care. This can be achieved through improving effectiveness and efficiency in public training and through planned expansion of access to training.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Study Pathways in Australia (not exhaustive)**

A number of courses recognize prior training and allow advanced training credits.

**Basic entry** is Year 12 high school completion. Candidates with an IELTS 6.0 can undertake certificate IV in preparation for entry into Enrolled Nursing (6 months) followed by 1.5 years to acquire the Diploma of Nursing – Enrolled Division 2 in Nursing.

### **Diploma of Nursing (Pre-enrolment)**

Duration 1.5 Years Note: one year of study is equivalent to not less than 36 weeks of instruction.

Course Type: Accredited Course

### **Entry Requirements**

Satisfactory completion of Year 12 or completion of Certificate II or Certificate III studies in an area related to nursing. English proficiency demonstrated by an IELTS score of 5.5 is essential. The ability to meet the physical demands of nursing work and particularly the requirements of manual handling.

Nursing (Diploma & Advanced Diploma): BACHELOR OF NURSING / BACHELOR OF NURSING (Overseas Qualified Nurses)

Duration 3 years full-time

### **International students**

To be eligible to enter the 90 credit point program, applicants must have completed a three year post-secondary professional nurse education program and must be eligible for registration as a nurse in the country in which they qualified.

Applicants who have completed other nurse education programs will be assessed on an individual basis according to their education and experience, in order to determine an appropriate program of study within the Bachelor of Nursing course.

The minimum English language proficiency requirements for entry to undergraduate Nursing courses are

- -IELTS (International English Language Testing System) with an overall score of 6.5, including an individual score of 6.0 for all tests; or
- -TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 575 and TWE 5.0, or a computer-based score of 230 with an essay rating of 5.0

### **Professional Recognition**

Upon successful completion of the Bachelor of Nursing course graduates are eligible to seek registration as Registered Nurses with the relevant State Nurse's Registration Authority.

### **MASTER OF NURSING (Management / Practice)**

Duration 1 year full-time

The Master of Nursing course will provide a focus on professional development as well as offering students the opportunity to major in their area of interest, specifically Nursing

Management or Nursing Practice. The aims of the course are to prepare graduates who are educationally prepared for management or advanced clinical practice in nursing and health care.

### **MASTER OF NURSING (Clinical Education)**

Duration 1 year full-time study

The course aims to prepare graduates for an advanced role in clinical and health education. The course will encourage graduates to reflect on their clinical experience and further prepare them to design, implement and evaluate clinical education programs. The course will enhance the graduate's ability to use the clinical context as a focus for their teaching.

### **MASTER OF CLINICAL NURSING**

Duration 1.5 Years full-time

Students who complete the Master's level course will have opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of issues that affect their selected nursing specialty. The course enables graduates to develop skills to structure practice environments that facilitate quality, innovation and leadership in advanced nursing specialty practice. The Master of Clinical Nursing course has multiple entry and exit points at the Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Master levels.

### **MASTER OF NURSING LEADERSHIP**

Duration 1 year full-time

The course focuses on leadership development as well as offering students the opportunity to study theory and research, issues, challenges and strategies relevant to contemporary nursing and nursing leadership.

The course will stimulate and enhance students' inquiry into critical issues, trends, and innovations in nursing and health care, including ethical, moral and social justice dimensions, and prepare graduates for nursing leadership in varied community and institutional health care contexts.

## **ANNEX F: INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

For full Sub/COMPONENT  
definition see  
Contract Schedule 1

**SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM DELIVERY  
COMPONENT PERFORMANCE MATRIX**

For Subcomponent Details see Consultancy Report

No.	COMPONENT & Subcomponent Outputs	A-E	NOTES Performance Gaps Constraints	IMPROVEMENTS both Implemented and Potential
<b>1</b>	<b>PROMOTION</b>	<b>B</b>	<i>The 2 major subcomponents (1.1 &amp; 1.2) both enriched by adjusting to rapid changes with meticulous attention to all detail</i>	Try:
1.1	Scholarships Promotional Plan Prepared	<b>B</b>	Plan comprehensive & thorough based on 16 years experience. Current strategic focus (applications candidate driven, followed by Ministry approval) is more effective than previous process.	Try advertising via social networking sites to attract more and better applications at lower cost. Press advertisement 2 weeks in advance of application deadline to minimize misses
1.2	Approved Promotional Plan Implemented	<b>B</b>	Slight increase (278 applicants) an achievement given increases in both competing scholarship offers, emulating long term AusAID model, & in needs to upgrade staffing & to localize consultancies	Strengthen Ministry ownership of scholarship planning by annual workshops using returnee reports to promote HRD career path effectiveness planning both before & after awards
1.3	Annual Review of Information Strategy	<b>B</b>	Done but 2010 Annual Plan, due Oct 31 2009, incl. 2009 Report, delivered Feb. 2010. Contract requirement to include Report on previous year in Plan for next clearly unrealistic. Deadlines revised.	Report (deadline now Jan. 1) separated from Plan (deadline still Oct. 31). Jan 1. still too early for Report. Contract amendment required.
1.4	Cambodia Alumni Webpage	<b>D</b>	New Camb. site, migrating from IDP site, still lacks some contract requirements: e.g. forms such as ALA, registrations (so far only membership), web counter, chat room, j	Contract Output 1.4 - application forms on webpage - hardly requires inclusion on Cambodia site of ADS application form for alumni who have already completed their scholarships.
1.5	Australian Tertiary Inst. Resource Collection Updated	<b>A</b>	IDP's Study in Australia Resource Centre is staffed by a team of well trained national consultants, advising both scholarship & private applicants, who access Inst. sites at a dedicated monitor.	Consider how to enable more staff (including IDP) & external students to use ACE's excellent Guided Individual Learning Centre (high speed computers with user friendly guidelines)
1.6	Annual Information Session w. Aust. Institutional reps	<b>A</b>	Only affordable for institutions in combination with "Study in Australia Day", a streamlined information exchange informing private students to Aust, annually improved by feedback from reps.	Recognize the value for Australia's Education industry of the private self-funded study in Aust. facilitated by IDP. This would call for rewording of objectives & process of Output 1.6
<b>2</b>	<b>APPLICATION MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>B</b>	<i>ADS process innovative, ALA process crippled by difficult challenges needing to be addressed, CPS policy still not clear</i>	Try:
2.1	ADS Processed	<b>A</b>	Processing complies with contract & improvements added: matrix focused directly on course relevance to CPS workplaces, criteria weighting refined, applicant exploitation by-passed, open category quadrupled, processing restructured to realize vision of new policy	Early publicity campaign to attract 2011 applications for expanded open category (policy change too late for this year's applications). Stabilize Selection Panel membership. Reword requirement 2.1 (g) to avoid data overload on Panel
2.2	ALA Processed	<b>D</b>	Online applications to Australia smoothly incorporated into IDP processes for all applications. But numbers of satisfactory applications still dropping, some redirected to ADS. Yet quality doctoral graduates essential to capacity building in Cambodia	Poster campaign to identify potential applicants for doctoral degrees to meet highest priority needs (eg effective auditors) Earlier adverts in Cambodia & IDP personal assistance with difficult requirement of prior acceptance by an Aust. Institution

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For full Sub/COMPONENT  
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# SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM DELIVERY COMPONENT PERFORMANCE MATRIX

For Subcomponent Details see Consultancy Report

No.	COMPONENT & Subcomponent Outputs	A-E	NOTES Performance Gaps Constraints	IMPROVEMENTS both Implemented and Potential
3	SELECTION	B	Mainly superior, except ALA recruitment, also some minor shortfalls, calling for review of the wording of the contract requirement	Recommended requirement reviews by subcomponent below
3.1	ADS Selection Panel Support	B	All requirements met but only continuous panel member is IDP. Rotating members, including AusAID staff & program experts, valued but assessment quality at risk. Improve interview questions	Require RGC & AusAID members to commit to full interview process, enable rotating participants to assist as observers. Get employer advice on questions; see NZAID Interview model
3.2	ADS IELTS tests	C	Implemented efficiently. Perhaps as many as 60 out of 80 pre-selected 2010 candidates will be tested post-interview and their IELTS results reported to panel before finalizing selections	Process now uses IDP expertise to free applicants of costs of pre-selection document verification & IELTS testing, possible deterrents to applying. IELTS test free to selected applicants.
3.3	ADS Applicant Information	D	Very smoothly managed, mainly by phone and e-mail. Shortlist is provided to Australian Embassy and displayed at IDP office but not yet on the Alumni website, either in Cambodia or on the IDP site.	Question whether there is any advantage in publishing the shortlist on a website used by scholarship returnees. Consider amending the subcomponent requirement
3.4	ALA Interview Panel Support	B	Different ALA procedures (e.g. Online application direct to Australia) smoothly incorporated into IDP Camb. processes & all required technical advisory & servicing provided to Interview panel	Process effectiveness low. Problem is need to attract & identify suitable candidates early, then assist them through the long & difficult pre-application process. See Output 2.2
3.5	Other AusAID scholarships	C	Previously well supported. Currently none.	
4	PRE-DEPT TRG.	A	Creative innovations go well beyond contract requirements	Scope for further improvements
4.1	ADS Pre-Departure Training.	A	Superior facilities, courses, skills training & IELTS test preparation provided. Guided Individual Learning (GIL) centre is state of the art level. Thorough Pastoral Care program of student guidance.	High demand for access to GIL centre limits access by other potential users e.g. ACE/IDP staff, other students. Consider Sunday opening & funding a replica centre at new campus.
4.2	Other Pre-Departure Training	B	ACE inclusion of direct entry students in EAP courses in Term 4 2009 anticipated demand later expressed by returning graduates who did not have this preparation opportunity in previous years	All Pre-departure students, including "Direct Entry" students, will now have 3, 6 or 12 months Pre-D training depending on need. Dvlpt. of private EAP classes provides scope needed
4.3	Training Support	A	Support provided goes beyond contract specifications. Students can access Aust. Inst. websites at both ACE & IDP centres. Staff facilitate searches. For Pastoral Care see App. 3 to 2010 Plan	Support strategies continuously evolving in response to lessons learned. For example see App. C to Report on post 6 months graduate return survey
4.4	ELT for Ministry Women	A	Started late 2006. 3 years later 50% of shortlisted ADS applicants were women. Student motivation enhanced by insertion into private classes. Research need now is faster tracking of more awardees	Excellent monitoring database provides detailed data term by term on each student's progress. Data provides opportunity to identify & support those experiencing some difficulty.

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**SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM DELIVERY  
COMPONENT PERFORMANCE MATRIX**

For Subcomponent Details see Consultancy Report

No.	COMPONENT & Subcomponent Outputs	A-E	NOTES Performance Gaps Constraints	IMPROVEMENTS both Implemented and Potential
5	<b>PLACEMENT &amp; MOBILISATION</b>	<b>B</b>	<i>Thorough documentation of all placement activities brings to light opportunities for improvements in planning for the future</i>	<i>Possibilities for further improvements will require careful consultation, research and review before action</i>
5.1	Placement in Australian Courses	<b>B</b>	Placement requirements met & documented with meticulous care. Many students captured by institutions which accept at IELTS 6.0. Some course placements deviate from award selection basis.	Consider means of avoiding concentration of awardees in institutions which accept at a lower IELTS level & so attract more Cambodians - not positive for promoting quality English
5.2	Mobilisation & Pre- Departure Briefings	<b>A</b>	Mobilisation arrangements already well established pre-contract - see highly positive Survey report responses on post 6 months returned graduates 2009 - who were mobilized before 2008	See post 6m return survey report Table 9. Most returnees rated the 4 mobilization tasks Good or Excellent. Suggested improvements were revealing and some have been adopted
5.3	Monitoring of Mobilisation Arrangements	<b>B</b>	Overlaps with pre-departure & return surveys. IDP Camb. cannot carry out a survey & response analysis of awardees in Australia 1 year after arrival. Need to rationalize outputs 5.3 (a) and 6.2(a).	Focus now shifted to a combination of Pre-departure and Post-return surveys concentrated on two cohorts over the period 2008-13. See Survey Schedule graphic Output 6.2
5.4	Variations Managed	<b>B</b>	Variations, most cost free, successfully managed as evidenced by total costs reduced. See 2009 report in 2010 Plan p. 2 High costs arise when children taken to Aust. get serious illnesses	It may be more cost and study effective to provide awardees with children an annual return fare home to visit their families
6	<b>POST-STUDY SUPPORT, M &amp; E</b>	<b>B</b>	<i>Support mechanisms thoughtfully developed, alumni website in transition, surveys show potential for further improvements</i>	<i>Proposed improvements need further research but have the potential for considerable benefits to program &amp; graduates</i>
6.1	Alumni Support Mechanisms Developed	<b>B</b>	Pioneer alumni association hosts several high-profile functions per year, usually centered on departure & return of awardees w. senior Ministry & Australian speakers clarifying scholarship developments	Association could support development of alumnis' specialist professional expertise by introducing them to superior library & online access at Hun Sen library, Pannasastra U. & CDRI
6.2	Post-Award M&E Surveys Conducted	<b>B</b>	Report on first survey of post 6 month returnees has led to a number of process reforms. IDP has now scheduled surveys of two departure cohorts each staged over intervals of growing experience	Comparative analysis of responses over time, starting with the Tracer Study & 2009 Predeparture Survey, tracks the evolving system & graduate perceptions of the purpose of awards.

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No.	COMPONENT & Subcomponent Outputs	A-E	NOTES Performance Gaps Constraints	IMPROVEMENTS both Implemented and Potential
7	<b>PROGRAM MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>A</b>	<i>Program exceptionally well managed in respect of the effective Cambodianization of the staffing of what commenced as a foreign</i>	<i>Build on achievements to date &amp; adjust to rapid changes both in applicant populations &amp; Australian support policies</i>
7.1	Training Facility & Office Established & Staffed	<b>A</b>	ACE training facility still heavily dependent on foreign staff (so giving it a competitive edge) while IDP Program Office is largely managed by well trained & highly skilled Cambodian staff	The youth of IDP' s staff limits their breadth of experience, but their potential is being rapidly developed with the assistance of a few senior foreign staff, generally part time
7.2	Monitoring & Reporting Program Implementation	<b>A</b>	The M & E Plan is being progressively implemented (see Plan App. 7 & 8 for remaining tasks) requiring some contract amendments in response to rapidly changing demands	Use of excellent databases being facilitated by installing a common ID code. Reports are frequent, providing ample info. on outputs, trends & strategic needs to be addressed.
7.3	Program Risks Managed Effectively	<b>A</b>	Thorough 10 page Risk Management Plan (see Appendix to 2010 Annual Plan). Australian Immigration proposal to raise IELTS study entry level to 7 a strategic opportunity to prepare for.	Minimum IELTS Level 7 for University entry an opportunity for strengthening preparation both in-country and in Australia (NZ Model) best arranged using Australian host families.
7.4	QA Systems & Continuous Improvement	<b>A</b>	Student performance reporting is well documented & used - see reports on student achievement improvement in both ELT for female Ministry Officials 2006-10 & in Pre-departure programs	Research into individual student rates of progress in ELT for Female Ministry Officials, supported by a simple pastoral care plan, could lead to improved throughput and outputs.
7.5	Other Emerging Tasks as directed by AusAID	<b>A</b>	IDP has responded well to the sudden 60% increase in ADS places during 2010 but the selection process has brought to light some problems in quality control for a different applicant population	Preparation for 2011 will require major re-design of processes (e.g. priority workplaces) to cope with the quadrupling or more of Open places for a rapidly changing applicant population

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## **ANNEX G: SUMMARY OF STUDENT COMMENTS**

(Based on interviews with current students in Australia and students undertaking pre-departure training in Cambodia)

- Australian awards are prestigious and compare favourably with other country awards, but stressful compared with Japanese approach because award is provisional until ELT completed satisfactorily;
- There is good awareness of the availability of scholarships;
- Support the transparent application processes;
- Should continue stipend during pre-departure if genuine reason for absence eg sickness/hospitalization;
- Should provide greater notice of IELTS examine during selection process – currently 2 days – stressful, no preparation time;
- Provide greater notice to employer – currently one week – some employers require one month notice;
- Clarify ‘private sector’ – one student changed employers;
- Need greater availability of application forms in province;
- Focus on IELTS – bring first test forward – if fail first exam currently only 3 months to improve before final test;
- Some NGOs don’t provide recommendation letter – don’t want to lose staff – government sector OK;
- Ministry ELT for women well regarded;
- In terms of interview, the panel composition is good;
- The AAA-C could do more to build linkages with prospective members – that is, current AusAID Cambodian scholarship awardees in Australia;
- AAA-C could do more to promote the value of education within Cambodia, particularly to improve the quality of basic education;
- Lack of a competitive process in selecting a ELT institute (ACE) leads to some complacency in provision of pre-departure training;
- The use of graduates at pre departure briefing of awardees is a good innovation;
- Selecting a supportive university in terms of orientation and settling in programs, good academic support systems, lecturers, tutors and other staff supportive of students is crucial. This also helps to make friends and develop new networks that are mutually beneficial. Not all universities have these strengths;
- Students that leave mid year or return home mid year do not receive the same formal functions and feel less regarded;
- Differences in country by country guidelines (selection criteria, pre-departure training, stipend, conditions, etc) causes confusion among new students eg some programs allow a combined degree. Differences between country specific conditions should be detailed at pre-departure briefings;
- Should be more flexibility in reunion fare budget eg to use the money for internship, family visit;
- More information should be provided at the application stage outlining the type of questions to be asked at interview – may encourage more people to apply;
- There is little if any contact with home ministries/supervisors during award absences.

**ANNEX H: CAMBODIA - AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE  
OBJECTIVES MATRIX (Performance Assessment Framework)**

<b>Cambodian development goal</b>	<b>Strategy objective</b>	<b>Strategy objective targets 2015</b>
<b>A.) Reduce rural poverty</b>		
Accelerated growth in the value of national agricultural production	<b>1.a Increased value of agricultural production and smallholder income in targeted provinces</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased value of rice and fruit and vegetables produced in targeted provinces leading to increased incomes.</li> <li>2. Increased role of women in decision making about agriculture activities.</li> </ol>
Poor and vulnerable Cambodians will be increasingly protected against chronic poverty and hunger, shocks, destitution and social exclusion and benefit from investments in their human capital	<b>1.b Increased food and livelihood security for the rural poor through social protection and landmine clearance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social protection systems strengthened through improved targeting and social protection support for the poor.</li> <li>2. Increased food security of vulnerable households through targeted food assistance and livelihood interventions.</li> <li>3. Substantial progress on clearance of land mines/unexploded ordnance in priority areas, releasing land to poor communities for livelihood purposes.</li> </ol>
<b>B.) Improve health services</b>		
Progress towards the health MDGs with a focus on maternal and child health	<b>2. Increased access to quality health services for the poor, women and children through improved health management</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased use of annual operating plans.</li> <li>2. Greater use of performance-based management in health service delivery.</li> <li>3. Increase in births attended by trained health staff and coverage of midwives and services.</li> <li>4. Increased access to health services by the poor through increased coverage of Health Equity Funds and Community Health Insurance.</li> </ol>
<b>C.) Improve infrastructure quality, quantity and access</b>		
Increase economic activity in targeted areas	<b>3. Improved transport and energy infrastructure</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete rehabilitation of Cambodian national rail network (600 km).</li> <li>2. Higher traffic volume, lower operating costs and travel time on targeted transport corridors.</li> <li>3. Increased rural households benefiting from electricity (proportion from renewable energy).</li> </ol>
<b>D.) Promote access to justice</b>		
Increased individual rights and responsibilities in the justice system for juveniles and vulnerable groups	<b>4. Improved management of courts, prisons, police, and crime prevention activities (particularly for vulnerable groups)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved management in justice ministry, courts, police and prisons.</li> <li>2. Increased use of the corrections management system for secure and humane treatment of prisoners.</li> <li>3. Increased confidence in the justice system and community involvement in reducing crime.</li> <li>4. Increased prosecutions in instances of violence against women.</li> </ol>

