Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS)

Independent Completion Report

July 2010

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AID ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Aid Activity Name	Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS)		
AidWorks initiative number	INF817		
Commencement date	January 2005	**Completion date**	June 2010
Total Australian $	$33,494,464		
Total other $	$0		
Delivery organisation(s)	Cardno Emerging Markets Pty Ltd		
Implementing Partner(s)	Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), Directorate of Madrasah Education)		
Country/Region	Indonesia		
Primary Sector	Education		

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Declaration: the evaluator was hosted at interview locations by program stakeholders and in several instances accepted refreshments. LAPIS-ELTIS presented the visiting team with t-shirts and brochures.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is an independent completion report (ICR) for the Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS)—a program of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the Government of Indonesia (GoI) through the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), Directorate of Madrasah Education. In Indonesia, the Islamic education subsector is a recognised part of the national education system. LAPIS supported Islamic schools that provide general education with an Islamic character—primary education (*Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*) and junior secondary education (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah*).

The LAPIS concept design document (CDD) was prepared in May 2004 following an instruction by Australia's then Minster for Foreign Affairs for AusAID to engage in the Islamic education subsector in the wake of the Bali bombings. LAPIS was set up to be a 'flexible mechanism' to enable progressive engagement and learning within the subsector. The LAPIS goal was: '*To contribute to the improved quality of basic education in Islamic schools in Indonesia'*. The program was implemented over sixty-six months ($33.494 million) and, in retrospect, may be seen as evolving through three phases: i) Engagement; ii) Consolidation; iii) Integration. The first of these phases involved the provision of 105 'innovation' grants to madrasah and Islamic education institutions in twenty-two provinces. The second phase involved three standalone multi-year 'consolidation' projects (English Language Training for Islamic Schools (ELTIS), Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (PGMI), Equality of Learning Outcomes in Islamic Schools (ELOIS)). The third phase, 'Integration Activities', assimilated lessons learned to assist madrasah to attain national accreditation.

Relevance (rating 5/6: 'good quality')
LAPIS contributed to AusAID's broader bilateral support for the Indonesian education sector and also the Australian Government's aspiration to engage in Islamic education subsector. The program was aligned with MoRA's strategy to improve the quality of education in private madrasah, and as such, addressed a widely recognised need among under-resourced madrasah. LAPIS activities were generally perceived as valuable and responsive to subsector demand. However, there was ambiguity in the fundamental purpose of the program—in particular whether the program was to develop stakeholder relationships as an end, or whether these were a means to improving educational quality. The implicit rationale of the program was questionable—'mitigating extremism' by strengthening moderate Islamic institutions. Improving the qualifications of teachers is likely to lead to demand for higher pay, thereby increasing the cost of education; a trend that is in conflict with the pro-poor goal of the program.

Effectiveness (rating 4/6: 'adequate quality')
LAPIS' emergent/flexible design was appropriate given the contextual uncertainty and the ambiguous purpose. Individual activities achieved their objectives. The program's products were generally considered to be high quality (e.g. curriculum modules) and a comprehensive approach to capacity building was used (more than 'just training'). The program achieved the Australian Government's implicit aim of establishing credibility in the subsector. The evolving foci and approach within the program created challenges for performance measurement. Some aspects of the design logic were ambiguous with long causal linkages. The diverse nature of the various projects and their beneficiary foci rendered a fragmented portfolio of activities. A persistent issue commonly raised by stakeholders was the weak school management capacity within the subsector; an area acknowledged to have received only minimal support from LAPIS amid the other diverse priorities.

Efficiency (rating 4/6: 'adequate quality')
LAPIS projects were generally implemented on time and with a modest surplus. The program was professionally managed by individuals that were respected within the subsector. Program management was responsive and flexible to AusAID's changing priorities and requirements. The program outsourced key components—an approach that was internally contested. Overall the program generated value-for-money for the Australian Government; especially in terms of the range of relationships developed within the subsector and in terms of key deliverables that should provide enduring benefit (e.g. training curriculum). LAPIS' early management structure involved an AusAID-appointed Director having oversight; but this proved problematic and reverted to a conventional contractor-managed structure following an

operational review.   Multiple project-specific M&E and gender advisers was a source of inefficiency and ineffectiveness.

Impact (rating 3/6: 'less than adequate quality')
The program's contribution was very small relative to the magnitude of the challenges faced. LAPIS's M&E arrangements compiled some preliminary evidence of impact in terms of student learning outcomes.   Projects fostered a range of short, medium and long-term benefits. The Australian Government's credibility within the subsector was enhanced which created opportunities for further partnership. ELTIS and PGMI could be scalable (although input-dependent). ELOIS, Integration and Innovation were unlikely to be scalable; and in fact could be less effective on a larger scale owing to the intensive nature of engagement. The program design delivered benefits to a diverse range of ultimate beneficiaries, which in turn generated diffuse impact.   There was limited direct impact on students and madrasah networks and communities. The beneficiary targeting criteria was broad rather than specific which weakened the poverty reduction ambition of the design.

Sustainability (rating 3/6: 'less than adequate quality')
The high quality resources (e.g. subject modules) should provide enduring value to stakeholders. There was significant investment in human capital (e.g. Master Trainers) who should persist as an institutional resource. Where possible/appropriate the program used and strengthened existing structures and capacity, which in turn fostered local ownership and on-going commitment.   The program was positioned outside institutional structures which avoided bureaucratic hurdles and enabled early success but could erode the sustainability of some benefits. There were no mechanisms of mutual accountability to ensure maintenance, use and development of products and processes.

Gender Equality (rating 6/6: 'very high quality')
LAPIS adopted a pragmatic approach in addressing what emerged as a sensitive policy issue—gender equity was predominantly viewed as an AusAID policy-driven initiative. The program addressed gender equity both as a dedicated project (ELOIS) and as a crosscutting theme. Program deliverables/materials were assessed from by gender specialists to ensure that the principles of gender equality were reflected. ELOIS built on decade of foundational work by a key partner (UIN Sunan Kalijaga) which was arguably a key success factor. The cascade training model was convoluted and so may be challenging for partners to maintain beyond the life of the program.

Monitoring & Evaluation (rating 4/6: 'adequate quality')
LAPIS invested significant resources in the development of M&E arrangements (approximately 4% of budget).   An 'evaluability assessment' was helpful in improving coherence and performance measurement from the program-wide perspective. Considerable performance data was collected and used to serve reporting needs. Several processes of external review were carried out to ensure accountability and inform planning.   Multiple project-specific M&E advisers were inefficient and contributed to 'evaluability' concerns. There was no systematic capture of risks, although tacit processes captured risks. The rigor of some of the M&E methods could be criticised from a methodological perspective but were nonetheless pragmatic and captured salient information.

Analysis & Learning (rating 5/6: 'good quality')
The whole approach and structure of LAPIS was oriented to learning-by-doing.   The progression of the program through 'phases' was reflective of progressive learning. The M&E processes informed learning and decision-making.   The LAPIS Advisory Board (LAB) provided relevant context analysis and insights. AusAID's flexibility in oversight enabled responsiveness and learning within the implementing team. AusAID was considered by some program stakeholders to have not fully benefited from the potential to engage directly with partners through LAPIS—effectively delegating relationships to the contractor (which was in contradiction of AusAID's original intent to develop relationships and credibility within the subsector).   As a consequence, learning was predominantly within individuals with only limited institutionalisation of lessons by AusAID.

Significant Achievements
- Students in 105 private madrasah benefiting from better learning environment
- Significant human resource developed in 3 provinces

- Junior secondary students in 650 schools directly benefiting from better quality English training
- 7 accredited primary teacher training institutions are using the 25 subjects
- 1,009 lecturers from 7 institutions now using better teacher training methods and resources (potential for additional 60)
- Approx. 1,344 student teachers (so far) have benefited from improved teaching and learning methods
- Principals in 259 private madrasah empowered to support more constructive classroom practices
- 18 accredited madrasah (official, to date)
- 57/60 madrasah ready for accreditation (informal assessment)

Lessons Concerning Madrasah Accreditation
- The limited number of capable local trainers and local NGOs (Integration Local Partners, ILP) to facilitate the LAPIS integration process was a limiting factor, and is likely to pose a major challenge for scalability in the future.
- Integration activities typically involved three trainers working with five schools; but ILPs recommend that a higher intensity of engagement (1:1) would produce more effective results.
- The time and/or scope of integration activities was considered problematic As a consequence either the number of topics included in the training program should be reduced, or amount of time allocated should be increased, or stakeholders should accept a lower standard of accreditation.
- Strategies should be developed to foster the intrinsic motivation of madrasah stakeholders in relation to madrasah quality in order to mitigate a regression to old practices following accreditation.
- Equipping the ILPs to deliver the accreditation training directly (rather than having them engaging sector specialists) may improve overall efficiency of the integration activities.
- Training in relation to the eight national standards was delivered over ten sessions, but these topics could potentially be compressed into four sessions.
- Future assistance to accreditation may be made more efficient by stratifying madrasah based on a rapid assessment of their alignment with the national standards. A program of assistance would then be delivered commensurate with the needs of madrasah falling within defined thresholds of quality (with more capable/better-resourced madrasah receiving only minimal assistance).
- It may be appropriate to work with MoRA to re-examine the national accreditation standards with a view to rationalising them and making accreditation more accessible.
- It may be appropriate to examine the nature, structure, membership and governance of the accreditation panel with a view to expanding its reach and improving the scalability of the accreditation process.
- It may be possible to develop a peer-support system whereby 'graduating madrasah' can assist weaker madrasah to achieve minimum accreditation standards, or interim accreditation.

Conclusions & Recommendations
LAPIS was conceived within a complex geopolitical context and was established to be a flexible and responsive program. It pursued a development agenda of improving education quality in madrasah, while also serving a need for AusAID to establish a constructive and credible presence within the Islamic education subsector. The program deployed a range of modalities to implement five component projects that addressed recognised needs within the subsector. The value of each of these projects was affirmed by key stakeholders.

- Any future engagement should explicitly seek direct partnership with MoRA rather than operating outside of an institutional framework.
- A partnership arrangement should explicitly set out the mutual obligations of the partners, not just in relation to the implementation arrangements, but also the fate of deliverables beyond formal assistance.
- The wider social and economic impact of accreditation on communities should be studied; including how this affects affordability for poor households.

- LAPIS should supply MoRA with a database of all English teachers trained by the program.
- LAPIS should supply MoRA with all school mapping data, including for example the extent of disability support required.
- AusAID should plan an expost evaluation to ascertain the contribution of the program to changes in student academic performance and employability.
- LAPIS should carry out an endline analysis to ascertain the extent of changes in key dimensions since baseline school mapping was carried out.
- AusAID's future assistance should include school management capacity development as a component of any future assistance; this should include entrepreneurship training to foster independence.

CONSOLIDATED LESSONS LEARNED

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADS	Australian Development Scholarships
AUD	Australian Dollars
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVI	Australian Volunteers International
CDD	Concept Design Document
CPS	Country Program Strategy
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ELOIS	Equality of Learning Outcomes in Islamic Schools
ELTIS	English Language Training for Islamic Schools
ESSP	Education Sector Support Program
GoI	Government of Indonesia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IALF	Indonesia Australia Language Foundation
IASTP	Indonesia Australia Specialised Training Program
ICR	Independent Completion Report
IDR	Indonesian Rupiah
IESS	Islamic Education Subsector
ILP	Integration Local Partner
LAB	LAPIS Advisory Board
LAPIS	Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDC	Madrasah Development Centre
MEF	M&E Framework
MI	*Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MoRA	Ministry of Religious Affairs
MT	*Madrasah Tsanawiyah*
MTR	Midterm Review
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework
PGMI	*Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (Teacher Upgrading for Primary Schools)
PSW	*Pusat Studi Wanita/Gender (*Womens or Gender Study Unit*)*
QAG	Quality Assurance Group
QAI	Quality at Implementation
RA	*Raudatul Athfal* (early childhood)
RPJM	*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah*
SES	Self Evaluation Studies
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Document Purpose

This is an independent completion report (ICR) for the Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS)—a program of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the Government of Indonesia (GoI) through the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), Directorate of Madrasah Education.

1.2 Activity Background

In Indonesia, the Islamic education subsector is a recognised part of the national education system, regulated by Law No. 20 Year 2003 and Government Regulation No. 47 Year 2008 concerning compulsory education. Islamic education is under the jurisdiction of the Directorate General of Islamic Education within MoRA. MoRA has prepared a strategic plan for the development of Islamic education which supports a national education strategic plan prepared by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE); both of which comprise the Medium Term Development Plan (RPJM[1]) for national education.

Islamic education is provided in three forms: i) dedicated Islamic religious teaching; ii) general education with an Islamic character provided at Islamic institutions; iii) Islamic teachings offered at general education institutions. LAPIS contributed to the second of these forms of Islamic education which is provided by madrasah—Islamic schools that provide general education with an Islamic character[2].

Madrasah operate at four levels:

- *Raudatul Athfal* **(RA)**: early years education
- *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* **(MI):** primary education
- *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* **(MT):** junior secondary education
- *Madrasah Aliyah* **(MA):** secondary education

LAPIS investments were focussed on MI and MT.

According to a design team member, the LAPIS concept design document (CDD) was prepared in May 2004 following an instruction by Australia's then Minster for Foreign Affairs for AusAID to engage in the Islamic education subsector in the wake of the Bali bombings. The design team encountered a range of significant challenges including the sheer magnitude of the subsector, the fragmented structure of the subsector, AusAID's limited prior experience/exposure in the subsector, and limited knowledge of Islamic education within the donor community.

The magnitude of the Islamic education subsector posed a major challenge. An estimated 85.2% of Indonesians are Muslim, making Indonesia the largest Islamic nation in the world. Madrasah education is believed to involve around 58,000 institutions of which an estimated 94% are private[3]. These institutions engage 650,754 teachers providing education for 6,874,503 students[4], which represents 13% of the country's students[5].

Compounding the issue of magnitude is the fragmented structure of the Islamic education subsector in particular, and the contested nature of Islam in Indonesia more broadly. No single organisation or body speaks for Muslims, and many large Islamic institutions lack comprehensive knowledge of their own activities, let alone the wider sector. The fact that MoRA does not have a complete list of all Islamic schools in Indonesia is indicative of the magnitude and fragmentation of the subsector.

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[1] *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah*
[2] 70% of the curriculum must be general studies drawn from the national curriculum.
[3] MoRA (2010) *The 2010 – 2014 Islamic Education Development Strategic Plan*, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Jakarta
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Propenas 2000 – 2004.

Prior to the LAPIS concept design, a small number of donor-supported studies of the subsector were conducted[6]. While these provided introductory insights they did not offer comprehensive analysis of key issues and entry points. AusAID had some previous exposure to the subsector through support for Australian Volunteer International (AVI) teachers and also some training provided in Islamic institutions facilitated by the Indonesia Australia Specialised Training Project (IASTP)[7]. However, the agency did not have extensive knowledge of, or relationships with, key institutions or individuals within the subsector. Further, there were obvious sensitivities on both the Australian and Indonesian sides concerning the role and purpose of bilateral assistance to the subsector. The CDD (p 7) stated that:

> "*There is thus a deep-seated suspicion of Western involvement in Islamic activities that is common among most Indonesian stakeholders in the Islamic Education Sub-Sector (IESS).*"

The Director of Islamic Schools (MoRA) also noted some early suspicion:

> "*Initially there was some suspicion; but after we had several meetings we could see that LAPIS could help with some programs*".

These contextual factors laid the foundation for a 'flexible mechanism' of engagement with the subsector, as ultimately reflected in the LAPIS design concept submitted in May 2004. A presentation about the program in May 2005 stated that:

> "*Some form of experimentation and flexibility is required in order to identify the most appropriate means ('a flexible mechanism') for Australia to influence changes across the IESS, based on trialling of various relationship, networking and decision-making processes*"

It was anticipated that this 'flexible mechanism' would enable progressive engagement and learning within the subsector, such that the nature and focus of the program would evolve rather than being pre-designed. It was also envisaged that AusAID would play a more operational role in the management of the program than was possible under regular contracting arrangements.

1.3   Program Overview

The LAPIS goal was[8]:

> *To contribute to the improved quality of basic education in Islamic schools in Indonesia.*

The LAPIS purpose was:

> *To create strengthened systems, institutions and groups impacting on and benefiting the school children in the Islamic basic education sub-sector.*

This purpose was to be achieved through three objectives:

- To enhance the capacities of support agencies to provide quality education services in the Islamic basic education sub-sector;
- To enhance the capacities of madrasah communities to manage and provide quality; and
- To enhance the capacities of local networks to improve their madrasah communities.

Following an 'Evaluability Assessment' finalised in December 2008, the objectives of all LAPIS activities were subsumed under five Outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Improved performance of school students.

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[6] E.g. ADB's MESA and World Bank's ESR.
[7] The Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) program was also considered relevant with alumni represented throughout the senior ranks of the UIN/IAIN network and in other Islamic organisations.
[8] N.B. the design logic differed significantly from that presented in the original CDD. Goal: *To contribute to poverty reduction in Indonesia by improving the quality of basic education in Islamic schools.* Purpose: *To formulate and implement a Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS) in support of mainstream education in the Islamic Education Sub-Sector.*

- ▪ **Outcome 2:** Improved performance of school teachers.
- ▪ **Outcome 3:** Improved performance of school personnel.
- ▪ **Outcome 4:** Improved performance and involvement of support agency personnel.
- ▪ **Outcome 5:** Improved performance and involvement of community members.

The program was implemented over sixty-six months ($33.494 million) and, in retrospect, may be seen as evolving through three phases:

- ▪ **Engagement:** establishing key relationships, conceiving of and experimenting with various entry points, and clarifying relevant needs/opportunities;
- ▪ **Consolidation:** clarifying objectives, formalising priority engagements, and delivering significant outcomes;
- ▪ **Integration:** testing a model of integrated capacity development aimed at positioning private madrasah for accreditation with MoRA.

The first of these phases was embodied in the first of five LAPIS component projects—'Innovation Activities'. This involved the provision of 105 small grants (average AUD65,000; maximum AUD80,000) to madrasah and Islamic education institutions in twenty-two provinces. Many of these grants were considered experimental, and provided a rapid and flexible vehicle for donor engagement.

The second phase involved three standalone multi-year 'consolidation' projects:

- ▪ **English Language Training for Islamic Schools (ELTIS):** a basic English language training project for junior secondary teachers.
- ▪ *Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* **(PGMI):** a project to improve the capacity of support agencies to deliver teacher training programs for primary school teachers.
- ▪ **Equality of Learning Outcomes in Islamic Schools (ELOIS):** a project to promote the equality of learning outcomes for girls and boys in primary and junior secondary Islamic schools.

The third phase, 'Integration Activities', aimed to assimilate lessons learned from across the LAPIS portfolio. It involved developing and testing a model to assist madrasah to meet the educational standards required for national accreditation. This final phase was implemented during the last year of the program and was a key factor in the progressive engagement with MoRA.

These component projects were expected to generate a range of short, medium and long-term impacts through a hybrid of modalities: project, program and facility.

The following table[9] summarises in very simple terms what was delivered by each of the five component projects, and what resulted.

Component Project	Deliverables	Results
Innovation	• Small grants to 105 schools • Training, curriculum development, facility development/refurbishment projects	• Students in 105 private madrasah benefiting from better learning environment
ELTIS	• 61 accredited English Master Trainers (6 months intensive) • 64 District Trainers • 773 Junior Secondary English Teachers (4 levels of English)	• Significant human resource developed in 3 provinces • Junior secondary students in 650 schools directly benefiting from better quality English training
PGMI	• Subject modules developed for	• 7 accredited primary teacher

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[9] The contents of the table were assimilated from Activity Completion Reports (ACR) for each component project and from Key Informant Interviews. The Table was reviewed and endorsed by LAPIS management as a reasonable representation of the program.

Component Project	Deliverables	Results
	25 general studies at international standard • 179 Master Trainers developed to facilitate dissemination	training institutions are using the 25 subjects • 1,009 lecturers from 7 institutions now using better teacher training methods and resources (potential for additional 60) • Approx. 1,344 student teachers (so far) have benefited from improved teaching and learning methods
ELOIS	• 7 Master Trainers developed • 6 subject modules developed to promote inclusion practices in schools (PAKEM: 'active, creative, joyful & effective learning') • 206 school-based activities (training, KKG formation, school development training)	• Principals in 259 private madrasah empowered to support more constructive classroom practices
Integration	• 11 Integration Local Partners engaged • 125 local trainers delivered 10 training module • 61 block grants administered	• 18 accredited madrasah (official, to date) • 57/60 madrasah ready (informal assessment

Figure 1: Summary of program deliverables and results

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Evaluation Objectives

This ICR conformed with the standard AusAID practice of commissioning independent evaluations of concluding initiatives. The objectives of the ICR were to[10]:

- Assess the extent to which program objectives had been achieved
- Identify lessons to assist with the planning and implementation of the madrasah accreditation component of the upcoming Education Sector Support Program (ESSP).

These objectives were achieved by reviewing key documents and triangulating the perspectives of relevant stakeholders concerning the program's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), gender equality, and analysis and learning[11].

2.2 Evaluation Scope and Methods

The evaluation was conducted by an independent M&E specialist, assisted by an AusAID Program Officer and a member of the AusAID Performance and Quality Unit.

Six broad classes of actor were interviewed concerning the performance of LAPIS:

- **AusAID:** program management staff.
- **MoRA:** GoI counterparts.
- **Contractor:** program management and implementation staff.
- **Implementing partners:** subcontracted implementation staff.

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[10] See Appendix A for ICR Terms of Reference (ToR).
[11] These dimensions of performance were drawn from AusAID's ICR criteria, which are based on the standard Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria.

- ▪ **Direct beneficiaries[12]:** individuals and groups involved with, and benefiting from, various aspects of program implementation.

Fieldwork was conducted over seven days (17 – 25 May 2010) to assimilate the perspectives of around forty-five LAPIS stakeholders derived from twenty-two stakeholders. A list of consultations is provided in Appendix B.

In line with the requirement for a rapid evaluation, the M&E specialist used qualitative methods; specifically key informant interviews, focus group discussions, field observations and document reviews. Documents were provided by AusAID and the contractor as requested. Interviews were arranged by AusAID and were conducted at locations convenient for the interviewees. A question guide (Appendix C) assisted semi-structured dialogue with interviewees. The M&E specialist typed more than 16,000 words of notes during interviews and later analysed these against the evaluation criteria.

Preliminary findings (see Appendix D for Aide Memoire) were presented on the final day of the mission (27 May, 2010 at MoRA, Jakarta) to relevant GoI and AusAID stakeholders for verification and feedback.

2.3 Limitations Encountered

The M&E specialist encountered the pervasive challenges of deciphering complex and ambiguous causal linkages, balancing multiple perspectives and appreciating his own outsider biases and limitations.

Beyond these recognised and pervasive evaluation challenges, the depth and breadth of consultations was affected by the time and resources invested in the evaluation. Allocation of more time would have allowed more meaningful engagement with a wider sample of stakeholders[13]. More resources would have allowed a team with diverse skills and experience to conduct the evaluation. This would have introduced broader experience and contestability in the process.

Although beyond the scope of this evaluation, more time and resources could have allowed opportunities to engage with the program's ultimate beneficiaries (i.e. students) to explore and validate claims about program impact. During debriefing at AusAID it emerged that this was an area of particular interest to AusAID management.

3. FINDINGS

In this section the findings are presented in relation to the five Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) and AusAID's additional three criteria (gender equality, M&E, analysis & learning). Ratings against these criteria using AusAID's six-point ordinal quality scale are provided below, followed by discussion of the findings in subsequent sections.

3.1 Evaluation Criteria Ratings

Overall LAPIS was found to be a relevant program that addressed an acknowledged need by building the capacity of key stakeholders and developing necessary resources; much of which should provide enduring benefits beyond the program. The program was managed on time and budget and was generally considered good quality. There was evidence of a commitment to gender equality, M&E and other crosscutting themes. All stakeholders interviewed were positive about the program, suggesting the establishment of a sound and respected foundation in the subsector. Many challenges arising from the operating context were noted and lessons for future engagement were documented.

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[12] There was also one brief discussion with a group of ultimate beneficiaries (student teachers benefiting from PGMI-related work).
[13] Indicative of the compressed timeframe was that stakeholder interviews on one day concluded at 2300 hours.

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1 – 6)[14]
Relevance	5
Effectiveness	4
Efficiency	4
Impact	3
Sustainability	3
Gender Equality	6
Monitoring & Evaluation	4
Analysis & Learning	5

3.2   Relevance

'Relevance' is concerned with how the program objectives aligned with the priorities of the GoI and AusAID, and the extent to which the objectives addressed a recognised need. LAPIS relevance was assessed as 'good quality' (5/6).

Relative strengths:

☑ Contributed to AusAID's support for the Indonesian education sector

☑ Supported Australian Government's aspiration to engage in Islamic education subsector

☑ Aligned with MoRA's strategy to improve the quality of education in private madrasah

☑ Addressed a widely recognised need among under-resourced madrasah

☑ LAPIS activities generally perceived as valuable and demand-driven

Relative weaknesses:

☒ Some ambiguity of purpose—relationships or educational quality?

☒ Questionable rationale of 'mitigating extremism'

☒ Increasing qualifications of teachers may have negative impact on affordability of education for poor households

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LAPIS was assessed as a relevant program owing to its alignment with the broader objectives of the GoI and AusAID and its contribution to a recognised development need. The following paragraphs elaborate this claim.

Alignment with AusAID strategy

At the time that LAPIS was conceived, AusAID's overarching objective in Indonesia was to contribute to reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. The theoretical underpinnings of the LAPIS concept were based on the hypothesis that achieving this objective required pro-poor economic growth, improved access to quality basic services and strengthened governance; and that these three pillars of poverty reduction were premised on an educated population[15]. AusAID's Country Program Strategy (CPS) specifically referenced "*working closely with the GoI and donors to assist MoNE and MoRA to define their roles in a newly decentralised system and to develop a national strategic framework for achieving universal nine-year basic education*".

LAPIS subsequently contributed to Pillar 2 of AusAID's revised country strategy ('*Australia Indonesia Partnership 2008 – 2013*'); especially through support for basic education and poverty reduction. It also reported against AusAID Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators for health promotion, HIV prevention, and gender equality.

Beyond this formal 'strategic alignment', the program was also expected to support an emerging imperative within the Australian political economy for AusAID to become

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[14] 1=very poor quality; 2=poor quality; 3=less than adequate quality; 4=adequate quality; 5=good quality; 6=very high quality.
[15] AusAID (2004) *LAPIS Concept Design Document*, Jakarta, May 2004, p 3.

visible in the Islamic education subsector. One LAPIS team member reported, *"the Minister's view at the time was that extremism was a function of ignorance, and so he saw a role for formal education to mitigate extremism"*. GoI shared the Australian Government's implicit agenda of supporting moderate Islam. A LAPIS interviewee stated "*at the time neither the Australian nor the Indonesian political agendas were written in reports, but both governments were eager to promote a moderate Islamic agenda"*. Hence, it was considered desirable and non-threatening for LAPIS to engage broadly within the 'mainstream' part of the subsector. A LAPIS Advisory Board (LAB) member stated "*the program's work tried to promote tolerant and moderate Islam".* Ironically, since the moderate/mainstream part of the subsector is disconnected from extreme elements[16], the efficacy of a program such as LAPIS in relation to the original tenet of 'mitigating extremism' is questionable[17].

Lessons

1. There was a disjunct between the Australian Government's ambition to 'mitigate extremism' and LAPIS' work in strengthening moderate/mainstream Islamic institutions. AusAID should have more rigorously challenged the underlying assumptions of the Australian Government's proposition.

2. The underlying development rationale for LAPIS (improving educational quality) was defensible in its own right. AusAID should have unambiguously asserted this rationale for the program rather than seeking to also accommodate the foreign policy agenda.

The CDD respected that the Australian Government had limited prior engagement in the Islamic sector in Indonesia, and hence only had a basic appreciation for the drivers of change. A consequence of this situation was that LAPIS was established to engage widely within the Islamic education subsector as a means to establishing Australia's credibility. Some interviewees suggested that establishing working relationships within the subsector was in fact an end in itself[18]. An AusAID program manager noted "*in the last two years there has been a push to make LAPIS more of a development program and less about relationships"*. However, this tenet of LAPIS was refuted by the LAPIS Technical Advisor[19] who considered that the relationships were always a means to a developmental end: "*the relationships were the way to explore if Australia had a role to play in improving Islamic education quality".*

Alignment with GoI strategy

Both MoNE and MoRA were explicitly concerned with improving the quality of madrasah education. As noted in Section 1.2, the Islamic education sub-sector is an integral part of the national education system in Indonesia, with MoRA's strategic plan for Islamic education being a key element of the RPJM for national education. At the time that LAPIS was conceived, the program was aligned with the 2004 – 2008 Islamic Education Strategic Plan, and at completion it remained aligned with the recently released 2010 – 2014 Strategic Plan[20]. This current strategy specifically identifies the critical role to be played by MI and MT in developing democratic and responsible citizens who are able to pursue the next level of education—an ambition that is explicitly contingent on improved education quality:

> "*To achieve this, the direction of MI and MTs development for the next five years is focussed on the efforts to improve education quality, to increase access in areas not yet served with basic level of education, and to improve*

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[16] N.B. Australian Government policy precluded aid funding being directed to suspected extremist organisations.
[17] Notwithstanding the questionable foreign policy agenda, the program's development rationale was defensible, as discussed later in this section.
[18] AusAID's Minister Counsellor at the time is reported to have referred to LAPIS as "*AusAID's UNESCO*" with reference to it's role in building relationships and preserving cultural values as an end in itself.
[19] Robert Kingham was also on the original concept design mission.
[20] MoRA (2010) *The 2010 – 2014 Islamic Education Development Strategic Plan*, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Jakarta

service professionalism and management self-sufficiency" (MoRA 2010, p 58).

Central to MoNE and MoRA's quality improvement agenda is the national accreditation process. According to the LAPIS Technical Adviser, MoRA rejected an earlier (2009) plan by MoNE to pursue madrasah accreditation, but the recently released strategy by the Directorate General of Islamic Education committed to accrediting 20,000 private madrasah by 2014. MoRA was originally established as a ministry of religion but has acknowledged challenges arising from its increasingly technical role in education administration and in leading quality improvements. Arguably, MoRA's engagement with LAPIS on the Integration Activities[21] during the final phase of the program was indicative of the relevance of that project to GoI.

Contribution to a recognised development need

Irrespective of the program's alignment with the official agendas of AusAID and MoRA, all stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation affirmed the relevance of LAPIS in relation to development needs. An estimated 90% of the approximately 50,000 private madrasah in Indonesia are located outside the ambit of MoRA and are widely recognised to be under-resourced. Many of these schools are in remote/poor areas servicing predominantly poor households with no alternative education services. One LAB member reported that "*the majority of private madrasah don't even have toilets and a similar proportion don't have any libraries or basic teaching equipment*". The CDD noted (p 13) that:

> "*the typical profile of a madrasah pupil is that of a child of poor parents, living in a rural or remote area, disadvantaged by virtue of the quality of their education, and—in the case of Junior High pupils—female[22].*"

At the heart of the issue of poor quality education in private madrasah is the qualification and remuneration of teachers. The CDD articulated the nexus (p 10 – 11):

> "*there are many (mostly part-time) 'volunteer' teachers who are, in the Western sense, completely unqualified. The causal chain for most private madrasah is as follows: parents can't afford to pay more than minimal tuition fees (and in many madrasah, the very poor are educated completely without charge). This means that the madrasah can't afford to pay the salaries of fully qualified teachers, and hence preferentially employ under-qualified or unqualified teachers, whose wages are lower. (To complete the circle, this means that where there is choice, parents who can afford to do so may well opt to send their children to State schools, leaving the madrasah educating the children of those who can't afford to pay.)*"

Central to MoRA and MoNE's quality improvement strategy is an intensive process of accrediting private madrasah[23]. However, aside from the operational and resource implications of implementing the current accreditation process across such a vast number of madrasah, this move could in fact be counterintuitive as a pro-poor initiative since improving the quality of schools and the qualifications of teachers will inevitably lead to upward pressure on the cost of education, further disadvantaging poor households. The CDD foresaw this issue (p 12):

> "*most private madrasah will not be able to afford to employ fully qualified teachers in the foreseeable future. This means that to insist that all teachers going into madrasah be accredited as fully qualified would be counter-productive. The most important issue is to ensure that teachers entering madrasah, and those already teaching there, are provided with retraining and support (both HRD and materials) to enable them to become more effective in the jobs they do and the subjects they are required to teach".*

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[21] Sixty private madrasah were assisted to meet national accreditation standards.
[22] 50% of elementary, 51% of junior secondary, and 55% of senior secondary madrasah pupils are female.
[23] Accreditation is widely considered desirable since it a) standardises the overall quality of education in Indonesia; b) makes government resources available to madrasah; c) enables certificates issued by madrasah to be recognised; d) tends to improve the status of the madrasah, leading to increased enrolments and improved revenue.

This issue is not raised here to minimise LAPIS' significant contribution, rather to highlight the complexity of issues facing the subsector moving forward. It also highlights ambiguity in LAPIS' original *raison d'être*. Did LAPIS exist to foster strategic relationships within the subsector? Did LAPIS exist to contribute to poverty reduction? Did LAPIS exist to improve education quality in the short-term by addressing classroom resource/process factors? Did LAPIS exist to improve education quality in the long-term by addressing systemic teaching methods and attitudes? It seems that each of these questions can be answered in the affirmative, and yet if they are all correct, there are inherent contradictions.

> Lessons
>
> 3.   AusAID's ambiguous *raison d'être* for LAPIS fostered both operational and strategic incoherence. The program's portfolio appeared fragmented and there was a diversity of perspectives concerning whether subsector relationships were a means or end in themselves.
>
> 4.   The strategy of improving the standard of teacher qualifications may be in conflict with the poverty reduction ambition of the program since better qualified teachers will demand higher pay, thereby increasing the cost of education to poor households.

A function of addressing relevant needs was that the program was generally perceived to be demand-led. A possible exception to this perception was ELOIS, which was seen to be predominantly driven by AusAID's gender policy (see Section 3.7).

3.3   Effectiveness

'Effectiveness' is concerned with the extent to which objectives were achieved, and the wider merit of these objectives. The effectiveness of LAPIS was assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6).

Relative strengths:

☑ Emergent/flexible design appropriate given uncertainty of context and purpose

☑ High quality products

☑ Achieved implicit aim of establishing Australian credibility in the subsector

☑ Individual activities considered to have achieved their objectives

☑ Comprehensive approach to capacity building (more than 'just training')

Relative weaknesses:

☒ Evolving foci and approach rendered 'effectiveness' difficult to assess

☒ Design logic ambiguous with long causal linkages

☒ Fragmented portfolio of activities for much of program; coherence evolving towards end

☒ Minimalist investment in some key areas such as school management capacity

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LAPIS effectiveness was challenging to assess owing in part to the emergent/evolutionary nature of the program design and implementation. The adage '*if you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there*' holds some truth. A presentation on the MEF in May 2005 stated that

> "*the LAPIS design is predicated on the view that it is inappropriate to pre-determine the most effective ways to bring about strengthened capacity or to contribute to change until considerable ground work is undertaken and trust established among all the stakeholders*"

On one hand the emergent/flexible design was an appropriate approach given the contextual uncertainties and the ambiguity of purpose within AusAID. But on the

other hand, a pragmatic reality is that as a program concludes stakeholders ask questions about whether the program delivered what was intended, and scrutinise the original rationale.

Lesson	
5.	AusAID embraced LAPIS' emergent/flexible design, which my definition rendered performance assessment more amorphous, but then expected the same level of clarity and accountability as conventional project designs.

Subsequent revisions of the design logic were much improved from that presented in the CDD, but were still ambiguous; relying on terms that required elaboration, such as "*improved quality"* and "*strengthened systems, institutions and groups".* Further, the articulation of a goal, purpose, three objectives and five outcomes created a degree of redundancy and circularity in the design logic. To illustrate this point the following line of logic is isolated:

- LAPIS was to 'improve the performance of support agency personnel (Outcome 4), *in order to...*
- 'Enhance the capacities of support agencies' (Objective 1), *in order to...*
- 'Strengthen institutions' (Purpose), *to contribute to...*
- 'Improved quality of basic education' (Goal).

Notwithstanding this technical design/M&E critique, there was evidence that the program made significant progress against the three broad objectives, and stakeholders were supportive if not enthusiastic about the program's contribution overall. A LAB member asserted that "*all five of the major elements of LAPIS were quite successful".* (See the matrix provided in Section 1.3 for a summary of program deliverables and corresponding results for each of the five component projects).

The first of the three objectives—concerned with improving the capacity of 'support agencies'—was firmly within the scope of PGMI and ELOIS. The second objective— concerned with enhancing the capacity of madrasah communities—was the focus of ELOIS. The third objective—concerned with strengthening local school networks and management committees—was a focus of the Innovation Grants and Integration Activities. However, the following matrix presented in the final (2008) version of the LAPIS MEF shows that there was disproportionate emphasis on some areas; while other areas were overlooked or attracted limited support. This was especially the case with Objective 3/Outcome 5 which was broadly concerned with strengthening school committees and school management capacity. Arguably, this issue is at the heart of education quality in madrasah but was commonly cited by interviewees as an ongoing concern. A LAB member acknowledged this shortcoming: "*I don't think the school committees were fully involved*". This view was also affirmed by the PGMI Coordinator who acknowledged that "*we hardly scratched the surface".* This situation was likely a function of competing priorities within a diverse program.

Focus of LAPIS Activities					
LAPIS Objective	2	2	2	1	3
LAPIS Outcomes[24]	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
LAPIS Overall	Core	Core	Core	Core	Core
Innovation	Core	Core	Core		Core

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[24] **Outcome 1:** Improved performance of school students; **Outcome 2:** Improved performance of school teachers; **Outcome 3:** Improved performance of school personnel; **Outcome 4:** Improved performance and involvement of support agency personnel; **Outcome 5:** Improved performance and involvement of community members.

Focus of LAPIS Activities					
LAPIS Objective	2	2	2	1	3
LAPIS Outcomes[24]	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
ELOIS		Core	Core	Core	
ELTIS		Core		Core	
PGMI		Core	Core	Core	
Integration	Core	Core	Core	Core	Core

Figure 2: A matrix drawn from the LAPIS MEF showing the emphasis of the program

> Lesson
>
> 6.   LAPIS could have focussed more on strengthening school management capacity, which remains a recognised weakness across the subsector. Any future assistance should more comprehensively address this issue.

Beyond the progress against the formal objectives, and the contribution to improved educational quality, the program also achieved good results in relation to the 'implicit objective' of establishing AusAID in a credible position with the subsector, and cementing constructive working relationships.

LAPIS effectiveness was also reflected in the high quality of work done. This was most visible in relation to the professional standard of resources and printed materials produced (e.g. the twenty five general studies subject modules produced by PGMI), but also related to broader issues such as the standard of deliverables. For example all English language certificates issued under ELTIS can be converted to the equivalent of three semesters at university. Also, the general approach to capacity building approach was frequently cited, with people noting a strong commitment to going beyond 'just training'.

Figure 3: PGMI subject modules

> "*The program was very good compared to other organisations that provide training with no other benefits. There was support at all levels after training. There were one or two iterations of each training. There were also block grants of up to three million IDR to help implement the results of training*" (ELOIS stakeholder).

In a similar spirit, an ELTIS stakeholder reported:

> "*The methodology was very good. Teachers in the national education system reported being jealous that they haven't had such good training. The main difference with ELTIS was that the training was more alive and fun*".

All three 'consolidation activities' (ELTIS, PGMI and ELOIS) adopted cascade training models, and these were generally considered successful/valuable; although the sustainability and scalability of these models is an area for further examination.

> ### ELTIS Cascade Training Model
>
> A cascade model of training was adopted. ELTIS advertised for Master Trainers among three tertiary institutions. Sixty winning applicants passed through a six-month intensive training that included assignments and practical teaching in local madrasah. Master Trainers then taught classes of up to 24 junior secondary English teachers. Teachers progressed through four levels of English. Each level involved a ten-day intensive training with homework after which they returned to their schools for eight weeks to complete home study units. At completion of the English language upgrading, teachers were invited back for teacher training. This involved five modules each involving five days of intensive training with theory and practice. At the completion of each module, teachers returned to their schools where their work was supervised by Master Trainers. At completion each teacher received a comprehensive resource pack.

Broadly speaking stakeholders interviewed during this evaluation perceived the program in a positive light. The following selection of quotations of a range of program stakeholders illustrates the positive view of program effectiveness:

> *"There is change in socio-political processes. Madrasah are changing in the context of ever-changing democracy in Indonesia. I think there is a lot of potential" (*LAB member).

> *"In general, the program has done very well to improve the quality of learning. Through the national exams it is obvious that the quality is improving"* (MoRA official).

> *"We feel that our human resources in madrasah were empowered by LAPIS"* (PSW member)*.*

> *"In my opinion the strategy of trust-building was quite amazing. I learned a lot from LAPIS from how they approached institutions, and key individuals within institutions, and discussed ideas, and then expanded these ideas".* (LAB member)

> *"Teachers from other subject areas are now using the methods and materials as well—things such as the games and activities. It has had a broader impact on teaching quality than just English language"* (ELTIS trainer).

> *"We felt an improvement in teaching capability. Students reported greater interest arising from the increased capacity of their teachers"* (PGMI stakeholder).

The governance arrangements for the program were considered by some stakeholders to be challenging. As discussed in Section 3.4, the original management structure was considered problematic since the lines of accountability between AusAID and the contractor were blurred with AusAID initially appointing a Program Director. In practice, this structure variously exposed AusAID directly to implementation risks, and concentrated responsibility for success/failure in a single individual. An operational review later recommended changing to a more conventional outsourced management model. There was also some ambiguity concerning the role of the LAB. While LAB members were all highly esteemed individuals within the subsector, the contribution to LAPIS was limited to technical advice and advocacy since they carried few of program governance/oversight responsibilities normally attributed to a board.

3.4   Efficiency

'Efficiency' is concerned with implementation performance against time and budget parameters, value-for-money, and the quality and professionalism of deliverables. LAPIS was assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6) in relation to these factors.

Relative s0rengths:

☑ Implemented on time and within budget

☑ Responsive and flexible to AusAID's changing priorities and requirements

☑ Professionally managed by respected key individuals

☑ Program outsourced risk with key components/activities

☑ Value-for-money; especially in terms of the range of relationships developed

Relative weaknesses:

☒ Efficiency difficult to assess with emergent/flexible program; i.e. efficient relative to what?

☒ Contested value of outsourcing/sub-contracting model

☒ Initial 'LAPIS management model' (AusAID-appointed Program Director) was problematic

☒ Intensive engagement with partners; good for relationship-building but limited breadth of impact or scalability

☒ Multiple M&E and gender advisers

☒ ELTIS most expensive activity (but strongly demand driven)

LAPIS was reportedly managed on time and within budget[25]. Exchange rate fluctuations presented the perennial challenges but final expenditure was expected to fall within AUD50,000 of budget. According to AusAID program officers, LAPIS was accommodating and responsive to changing requirements. Efficiency of the program implementation was difficult to assess owing to the emergent/rolling nature of the program design and approach; in other words '*efficient relative to what*'? Nevertheless, at the individual activity level where a more conventional approach to project management was applied, progress was considered timely.

The LAPIS General Manager reported that PGMI and ELTIS, which were outsourced to Coffey International and the Indonesia Australia Language Foundation (IALF) respectively, consistently produced deliverables on time and to a professional standard. The Integration Local Partners (ILP) engaged for the Integration Activities were also considered professional, although on occasions produced deliverables up to two weeks behind schedule. This may have been a function of the overly ambitious schedule and scope imposed on the integration component, since ILP representatives all reported unreasonable time pressures and workload. The following quote by an ILP representative was representative: "*the project was too intensive. There were too many topics to get through in just one year. We felt rushed*". It seems that future interventions of this kind should either allocate more time for implementation or reduce the scope of activities; which in practice would mean investing less training/mentoring (and therefore accepting a lower standard of accreditation).

> Lesson
>
> 7.   The integration activities were either allocated insufficient time or involved an overly ambitious scope. Future assistance for accreditation should examine ways of alleviating the time pressure and/or accepting a lower standard of accreditation than was achieved by LAPIS.

The most challenging project component from a management perspective was the innovation activities which were implemented by individual madrasah with oversight by LAPIS Activity Managers. In many cases the innovation grants were the first significant funding administered by partner madrasah, and hence the program had to contend with a range of capacity limitations. In some instances the innovation activities ran up to 2.5 months behind schedule.

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[25] LAPIS (2010) *Activity Completion Report,* April 2010, p 1.

Most interviewees affirmed that the program was managed professionally and without obvious areas of waste. A senior bureaucrat in MoRA stated "*they have been very stingy I think; very strict. I've learnt a lot from them about how to manage money in an accountable way. There's been no opportunity for corruption".* Another volunteered "*it's been an effective model and very efficient in terms of time and budget with very little bureaucracy. Coordination has been really great, with LAPIS working well at provincial and district levels".*

A contributor to the overall perception of professionalism was the respect engendered among program stakeholders by key LAPIS team members. One senior stakeholder specifically acknowledged the contribution of the LAPIS Technical Advisor in helping to reduce suspicion of the program and to engender stakeholder support by drawing on long-term relationships within the subsector. Highly regarded individuals on the LAB were also important in this regard. The respect and sense of professionalism also seemed to extend to internal relationships between subcontractors and 'LAPIS Central'. One subcontractor coordinator stated "*I never felt that LAPIS was 'just in Jakarata' and that we couldn't touch them".*

For AusAID, value-for-money is a key issue. Value generated from the investment relative to alternative investment possibilities, or alternative approaches generating the same value is a key consideration. In response to this issue the Director for Islamic Schools in MoRA stated "*the investment wasn't very big but it was useful".* From the program-wide perspective, while the portfolio can be criticised for seeming fragmented, each discrete element nonetheless addressed a key issue within the subsector. The stakeholders associated with each of the five component projects reported notable benefits and value. The range of activities supported by the program was defensible in the context of the overwhelming need to improve educational quality and to establish Australia's credibility as a donor in the subsector. This latter point perhaps justifies the fragmentation, since a program engaging with multiple stakeholders through various mechanisms is likely to benefit from greater exposure and a broad base of support.

The initial management structure adopted for LAPIS became known as the 'LAPIS model' and involved an AusAID-appointed Program Director. This approach was considered novel within AusAID and was adopted due to the sensitivities at the time that LAPIS was conceived, and the lack of detailed knowledge of the sector. Administrative support was provided to the Program Director by a managing contractor. These management arrangements aimed to give AusAID a higher degree of influence over the program and subsector relationships than conventional outsourced management structures, but came to be seen as problematic. An Operational Review in early 2008[26] recommended that the structure be changed with a clearer delineation of responsibilities more consistent with conventional contracting models. At this point the managing contractor was given full responsibility for program implementation, a LAPIS General Manager was appointed and the Program Director was re-appointed as the Senior Technical Adviser.

Several interviewees mentioned difficulties arising from conflicts and uncertainty surrounding the management changes. A team member reported "*I think the facility model basically worked but it would have worked better if there was consistency in the management arrangements. The goal posts moved with each change in management and this consumed resources and created stress".* Another team member contended "*the original arrangements didn't work with the particular personalities involved".* However, despite evidence of frustration, further probing on this subject clarified that the management changes did not substantively impact on implementation in the field.

A contested aspect of the management arrangements was the outsourcing/subcontracting of program components. LAPIS subcontracted the implementation of two of the 'consolidation activities' (PGMI and ELTIS) and the innovation activities. LAPIS management was of the view that this was a source of inefficiency and reduced the flexibility and responsiveness of these components

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[26] The Operational Review was conducted by AusAID between February and April 2008, led by Gudrun Forsberg.

compared with the components managed directly by LAPIS (innovation grants, integration activities and ELOIS). The subcontractors tended to hold the alternate perspective—that outsourcing generated value by introducing a degree of internal accountability within the program and enabling dedicated expertise to focus on implementation. Notwithstanding the additional cost of outsourcing, the value 0generated probably depended on the nature of the project deliverables. For example, a specialised field such as English language training lent itself to being outsourced to a specialist provider such as IALF. Whereas PGMI could probably have been managed directly by LAPIS Central with similar effects.

Of the various component projects, ELTIS was the most expensive at around 20% of program expenditure. Management overhead was comparable for both PGMI and ELTIS, but the training model for ELTIS was much more intensive involving several weeks of intensive training of Master Trainers in Denpasar; which increased the cost per trainee significantly. Nevertheless, ELTIS was required to tackle unique technical issues related to English language training and it responded to very clear demand.

One source of inefficiency that was inherent in the sub-contracting structure was the engagement of multiple gender advisers and M&E advisers (see Section 3.8).

> Lessons
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> 8. Engaging project-specific advisers in M&E and gender for each of the component projects was less efficient and probably less effective than engaging program-wide advisers to guide an overall approach to these crosscutting themes.

3.5   Impact

Impact is concerned with significant and lasting changes (both intended and unintended) fostered by the program. This dimension of LAPIS' performance was rated 'less than adequate' (3/6) at this time. The program's full impact will be realised in coming years.

Relative strengths:

☑ Some preliminary evidence of impact compiled

☑ Activities will foster a range of short, medium and long-term benefits

☑ Credibility of Australian government established; opportunity for further development

☑ ELTIS and PGMI potentially scalable (although input-dependent)

Relative weaknesses:

☒ The contribution was very small relative to the magnitude of the challenges faced

☒ Fragmented program design (diverse ultimate beneficiaries) generated diffuse impact

☒ Limited direct impact on students

☒ Broad rather than specific targeting criteria; tenuous linkage with poverty reduction goal

☒ ELOIS, Integration and Innovation unlikely to be scalable

Impact, as defined in the LAPIS goal[27], was implicitly concerned with the quality of learning outcomes experienced by children in Indonesian Islamic schools[28]. Consequently, a grounded way to approach impact evaluation is from the perspective of children involved with the program, or plausibly influenced by program outcomes. An independent evaluation of impact in these terms was beyond the scope of this

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[27] Goal: "*to contribute to the improved quality of basic education in Islamic schools in Indonesia".*
[28] N.B. the goal originally defined in the Concept Design Document was: *"To contribute to poverty reduction in Indonesia by improving the quality of basic education in Islamic schools*".

ICR[29], but some secondary evidence was drawn from the perspectives of informed individuals, and from program reports.

From a program-wide perspective, LAPIS targeted 1,861 schools (MI 883, MTs 1,028) with student enrolments of approximately 193,646 students (M 98,189, F 95,457). A series of Self Evaluation Studies (SES) conducted in 2009/10 found that the students—according to both principals and teachers—had improved their achievement in learning. For example, the SES of Innovation Cycles 3/4 found that 94% of the seventy-four principals and teachers reported that student results had improved. Improvement could be seen in daily quiz results, semester results, and their grade promotion examination. For the SES of Integration Activities, 82% of 240 principals and teachers surveyed reported improvement in student results. The 2009 ELTIS SES 2 survey of 158 teachers (98%) and 29 District Trainers (96%) reported substantial improvement in student English ability.

In terms of gender equality impacts, results of SES studies (ELOIS, IA) revealed that the majority of principals, teachers and students identified improved equality of participation by boys and girls. There was evidence of improving gender parity in student achievement, particularly in terms of female students becoming more active in classroom participation, pursuing a wider choice of subjects, showing a willingness and confidence to ask questions, engaging in discussions, playing sport, and successfully standing for student representative forums/committees. It is too early to expect definitive evidence of improved gender parity in Year 6 results or progression rates between grades. However, the ELOIS SES showed that several Madrasah had improved their overall performance in national exams; which was largely attributed to an increased engagement by female students.

Notwithstanding the preliminary evidence of impact, AusAID's contribution to the subsector through LAPIS was relatively small; and so expectations of significant impact must be moderated in this light:

> *"It is only a tiny proportion of schools that have been trained" (*UIN Sunan Kalijaga Rector).

> *"There are still so many madrasah that need assistance. We were restricted to around 200"* (PSW stakeholder).

> *"The program is good; it just needs to be expanded across a larger audience"* (MoRA official).

Given the diverse and emergent nature of LAPIS, it is not possible to talk about a single 'program impact'. LAPIS supported an array of activities targeting various classes of human actor within the Islamic education subsystem in disparate locations. Arguably, the fragmented nature of the program design eroded its potential impact. In design and M&E convention, impact is maximised when the various components or activities of a program are integrated such that the resources invested consolidate results around a single focus. This integration of resources and effort to foster an explicit change is sometimes referred to as a unifying 'theory of change'. The practical embodiment of a coherent theory of change is that all program activities foster changes in a single class of human actor—the 'ultimate beneficiaries'. By contrast, a fragmented theory of change disperses resources and influence across an array of ultimate beneficiaries.

One working definition of 'ultimate beneficiaries' is: the stakeholders that are two degrees of separation from the deliverables of the implementing team[30]. As reflected in Appendix E ('Actors and Factors Matrix'), the ultimate beneficiaries of LAPIS ranged across several classes:

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[29] The fieldwork schedule only provided for one brief interaction with student teachers in a classroom.

[30] The International Development & Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada helpfully distinguishes between the roles of: i) Implementing Team; ii) 'Boundary Partners' ("*those individuals, groups, or organizations with whom the program interacts directly and with whom the program can anticipate some opportunities for influence*"); and iii) Ultimate Beneficiaries. (Earl, S., Carden, F. & Smutylo, T. (2002). *Outcome Mapping: building learning and reflection into development programs.* Ottawa, IDRC).

- ▪ **Primary school student teachers** currently studying in seven partner tertiary institutions.
- ▪ **Junior secondary school students** currently studying English in 650 target schools whose teachers have benefited from English language training.
- ▪ **School principals and school committees** in 259 madrasah that have benefited from training and mentoring to improve policy and practice in inclusion and gender responsiveness.
- ▪ **School committees and school owners** (60 and 105 schools for integration and innovation activities respectively) that have been supported with grants and training to improve the standard of their schools.

The selection of ultimate beneficiaries is a function of the target criteria used, and hence the underlying *raison d'être* of the program. In most documentation the explicit target of the program was 'the poor'. However, in practice the targeting was broad rather than narrowly defined. That is, 'the poor' benefited from the program by its broad focus on madrasah—which are generally known to be under-resourced and attended by poorer students—rather than by a transparent process to identify the most impoverished schools. A LAPIS manager stated:

> *"There are twenty-four madrasah in central Jakarta alone, of which approximately eight would pass accreditation. So it's not hard to pursue a poverty agenda from a broad perspective"*

In fact, there may have been a subtle incentive for the program to *not* target the 'poorest of the poor'. There was a discernable concern from AusAID that the program should be seen to be successful—both in support of the pragmatic desire to establish credibility with counterparts and in response to the Australian political economy. "*The downside is that we didn't get to target the* [weakest] *cases. We picked the winners*" (LAPIS manager). This was confirmed by a LAB member who stated *"LAPIS has tended to select partners likely to be successful. Selection should be systematic. We should work with the facts".*

This situation did not necessarily change the nature of the work done, or ultimately the value of the program. But it does highlight the complex intersection of agendas that faced LAPIS and the importance of aligning the fundamental purpose of a program and its processes and structures.

Lessons

9.   AusAID's expectations of impact seemed to exceed the level of investment and the time required for systemic changes to be borne out within complex development environments such as the Islamic education subsector.

10.   By not consolidating investment and effort on a single (or limited) set of ultimate beneficiaries LAPIS fostered diffuse impact.

11.   Expectations within AusAID for simple, 'reportable' and immediate impacts may not have appreciated the challenges associated with implementing an evolving program design within a complex operating environment.

Notwithstanding the issue of targeting and the diversity of LAPIS' ultimate beneficiaries, the various component projects of LAPIS should foster a range of short, medium and long-term impacts:

- ▪ **Short-term impacts:** the innovation grants and integration activities were generally targeted at immediate madrasah needs, such as facility development (e.g. latrines) and refurbishment (e.g. painting) or short-term training in school management or curriculum development. These

interventions were reported to have an immediate positive impact (i.e. at activity completion or at least within the life of LAPIS) on students' learning environments. The integration activities generated discrete and measurable impact in terms of the 'accredibility' of schools against the eight national quality standards.

- **Medium-term impacts:** ELTIS, ELOIS and the Integration activities addressed deeper systemic needs such as human resource capacity. ELTIS improved the capability of English language teachers and ELOIS improved the capacity of madrasah principals and committees to ensure an inclusive and gender-responsive learning environment. The integration activities modelled a way for madrasah to draw on the expertise of local NGOs (ILP) to support their accreditation.

- **Long-term impacts:** PGMI, and to a lesser extent ELOIS were structured to foster long-term impacts by influencing systemic issues within the Islamic education system. PGMI addressed 'upstream' determinants of the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms; namely the quality of primary teacher training provided in key tertiary institutions. ELOIS worked through existing structures (PSW) to influence fundamental attitudes and culture among principals and school committees toward issues of gender and inclusion. It is universally recognised that these kinds of changes take time to manifest, and hence there is only limited preliminary evidence of impact at this time. Even more time will be required for these changes to then expand and achieve a critical mass and be sustainable. This view was reflected by a LAB member: "*we need time for a diffusion of these innovations to take place*".

Lessons

12.   LAPIS' investment in material needs fostered short-term visible impacts, but these are likely to erode with time.

13.   LAPIS' investment in 'upstream' systemic factors fostered significant and lasting change, but these changes will take longer to become evident.

When assessed against the Australian Government's original intention of establishing constructive working relationships within the Islamic education subsector and building a knowledge base, the program could be argued to have produced significant results. Engagement with MoRA and key educational institutions positioned AusAID well for future partnerships.

The concept of 'scalability' is of interest to AusAID. Scalability concerns the potential for interventions to be extended across a wider geographic area or demographic target at a scale that is disproportionate to the original investment. The point is that some interventions could be structured such that with minimal additional investment they could achieve significantly greater impact. However, other interventions tend to become decreasingly effective at larger scales.

In the case of LAPIS, there is a case that ELTIS and perhaps PGMI could be implemented on a larger scale to achieve more impact. An ELTIS team member stated "*you could just copy and paste this program across new areas depending on the level of funding and the commitment of counterparts*". In support of this, several interviewees affirmed the efficacy of the 'cascade' training model adopted for ELTIS. In contrast, the Innovation Activities, Integration Activities and ELOIS seemed less scalable. By definition, Innovation Activities are small grants targeted at particular situations, and hence scalability is nonsensical. ELOIS applied a similar cascade training model to that of ELTIS, but the nature of the material and the well documented challenges associated with effecting culture change give caution to any claims of scalability. The Integration Activities are an area of particular interest given

MoRA's objective of accrediting private madrasah by 2014 which in effect demands that the accreditation process be scaled. There are valuable lessons from the Integration Activities, but it is clear that the model, as applied in this phase, is not scalable owing to the intensive nature of engagement. The *modus operandi* for the Integration Activities was for intensive engagement by ILPs with target madrasah for up to one year in order to progress through a comprehensive analysis and training program. Scalability of the model is limited by: i) the availability of competent ILPs; ii) the absorptive capacity of the madrasah staff and committee; iii) the deep/qualitative nature of engagement that was the basis for success. In this regard a senior MoRA official stated that "*in the case of LAPIS' Integration Activities, 'small is beautiful'".* The implications for AusAID's planned support for madrasah accreditation through ESSP are discussed in Section 3.9.

> Lesson
>
> 14.   The concept of 'scalability' may be relevant for ELTIS and PGMI, but is unlikely for ELOIS, the Innovation Activities or the Integration Activities owing to the intensive nature of these engagements.

3.6   Sustainability

'Sustainability' concerns the likelihood that benefits will endure and is considered a function of local ownership, resources and capacity. LAPIS' sustainability was assessed as 'less than adequate quality' (3/6).

> **Relative strengths:**
>
> ☑ High quality resources (modules) should provide enduring value
>
> ☑ Significant investment in human capital; should persist as an institutional resource
>
> ☑ Program used and strengthened existing structures and capacity
>
> ☑ Some evidence of local ownership and on-going commitment
>
> **Relative weaknesses:**
>
> ☒ Program positioned outside institutional structures; an 'orphan'?
>
> ☒ No mechanisms of mutual accountability to ensure maintenance, use and development of products and processes
>
> ☒ Activities likely to require additional support for changes to endure

LAPIS different component projects each adopted a different approach, with different levels of stakeholder engagement and resourcing. The consequence was that LAPIS stakeholders held diverse views about the likelihood of enduring benefits. The diversity of perspectives is reflected in the following quotations:

> "*I'm concerned about sustainability. Often when projects end, things return to normal. There should be an interim period of support but there is no such arrangement beyond this phase*" (LAB member).

> "*I think sustainability has already been achieved...The institutional development* [provided by the program] *was foundational to sustainability*" (ELOIS stakeholder).

An overall hopefulness balanced by pragmatism was reflected in the statement by one team member: "*I hope LAPIS has a 'chusnul khotimah'—a good end"* (Arabic, usually used with reference to a respectable death).

Most stakeholders agreed that the program left a legacy of high quality resources—both human and capital—which should generate enduring value. This included the considerable investment in a cadre of Master Trainers that remain within their respective institutional structures. It also included the delivery of a large volume of

training modules, curricula, teaching resources and minor facility refurbishments[31]. The appreciation for this investment was summarised by an ELOIS stakeholder:

> "*The most enduring contribution will be the training modules. These will push stakeholders to move on by themselves. There are over twelve kilograms of paper; over 3,000 pages*".

Nevertheless, there was recognition that sustainability was contingent on more than high quality program deliverables:

> "*The lecturers feel that the resources are enough. But we need to develop a culture among the lecturers that values improvement rather than being defensive*" (PGMI lecturers)

Arguably, an important contributor to concerns about sustainability arose from the fact that LAPIS was located outside any particular institutional framework. Although this situation is now in stark contrast to AusAID's commitment to working through partner systems in accord with the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action, the original rationale was clear given the sensitivities at the time of LAPIS' inception, and also AusAID's desire to engage widely and freely within the subsector[32]. However, a legacy of this structural arrangement is that "*the program is essentially in an institutional vacuum*" (a LAPIS Coordinator). This is not to say that the arrangements could have been different at the time, since GoI stakeholders also appreciated LAPIS' independence:

> "*Bureaucracy has its own limitations; so generally speaking the arrangements were appropriate*" (senior MoRA official).

LAPIS managers shared this concern about being encumbered with an institutional framework:

> "*LAPIS could never just be an arm or department of MoRA because the intervention would then have to tackle broader challenges related to institutional strengthening within government; which isn't the point of LAPIS*".

Notwithstanding the benefits of independence, a consequence of the way LAPIS was established is uncertainty concerning the way forward for some aspects of the program. This issue is particularly the case concerning ownership and maintenance of resources developed by the program. For example, there is uncertainty about how the twenty-five subject modules developed by PGMI will be maintained, revised and disseminated:

> "*DITKIS is unlikely to be able to maintain and revise the content. The universities have committed to revisions, but we're not sure how liquid that commitment is. We need to build the capacity of the bureaucracy to utilise the material—and the will to use it*" (PGMI Coordinator).

A similar concern relates to ELTIS training materials:

> "*MoNE will take over the resources. We will hand over the master copies. But there is no contract or MoU with MoNE about ongoing management and development of the resources. We are curious about what will happen and how they will continue to use the resources but we don't know for sure*" (ELTIS Coordinator).

More could have been done, even from outside an institutional framework, to cement mutual obligations concerning the program deliverables. For example, memoranda of understanding concerning the ongoing maintenance and dissemination of program products, if signed from the outset, could have provided a platform for dialogue about resource and institutional constraints facing partner institutions. Simply 'handing over' program products at the end is unlikely to be successful.

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[31] Approximately AUD225,000 was invested in small infrastructure/refurbishment projects in approximately 70 schools through Integration Activities and Innovation Activities.
[32] A LAPIS manager referred to LAPIS as "*Switzerland"* with respect to the fact that the program was able to achieve notable early results by not being encumbered with the political hurdles of any particular institution.

> Lesson
>
> 15.   The sustainability of program deliverables could have been advanced by introducing mechanisms to promote mutual accountability; e.g. Memoranda of Understanding concerning the ongoing maintenance and dissemination of resources.

Also, more could have been done to articulate the value of the program to MoRA and other stakeholders. For example, during this evaluation MoRA representatives expressed surprise at the scope and scale of LAPIS deliverables, and requested that the program supply basic datasets such as the number and details of all English language teachers trained by the program, and a database of key findings of the madrasah mapping exercise, such as places requiring disability support. These kinds of datasets seemed to represent genuine value for MoRA.

Future engagement within the subsector should move to strengthening institutional ties.

> "*The sustainability of the program should come from being attached to MORA where the responsible staff and directors are already in place. The extent of embedding in MoRA so far has been sufficient but in an extension this relationship should be expanded*" (Rector UIN Sunan Kalijaga).

The Director of Islamic Education in MoRA affirmed this view: "*in the future I hope we have even better coordination at the central level*". Arguably, more progress could have been made during the latter part of this phase to increase the extent of engagement and institutionalisation within MoRA. MoRA's willingness in this regard could be extrapolated from a statement by a senior official: "*If LAPIS closes down and there is no further support from AusAID, MoRA should follow this up so that the program is sustainable*".

A general strength of the program was the commitment to using and strengthening local actors and systems. For example, all subject writers and master trainers were lecturers within partner universities. According to the PGMI Coordinator:

> "*It was good development because it responded to an obvious need with limited foreign support. It built on what was already there and found local champions...the aim of PGMI was to avoid setting up a parallel universe. It was a reason for our success*".

There was no evidence that the program had fostered dependence on external assistance. Rather, the LAPIS approach seemed to be generally rewarded with local ownership. Evidence included the voluntary establishment of several support groups or 'alumi forums'. For example, ELOIS partners formed a virtual community to provide ongoing support and development of a schools database developed and disseminated by the program. Similarly, ELTIS District Trainers formed fourteen teacher support groups (MGMP) in nine districts. ELTIS stakeholders reflected what seemed to be a predominant optimism:

> "*we can continue the work by ourselves if there is sponsorship from MoRA, but if it is not available, we will try to work independently and find resources from various sources. It's not that much money*".

Future strengthening and sustainability opportunities lie with Madrasah Development Councils (MDC). According to a senior MoRA official "*the MDC is like a consultant organisation at the provincial level. They can play a role in socialising their stakeholders and strengthening madrasah*"

> Lesson

> 16.   Future support to the subsector should explore the potential of working with Madrasah Development Councils (MDC).

3.7   Gender Equality

'Gender equality' concerns the extent to which the program fostered greater equality between the genders. LAPIS was assessed as 'very high quality' (6/6) owing to: the sensitive and practical way it addressed the challenge within a complex environment; the implementation of a dedicated component project, and; the comprehensive cross-cutting approach to the issues.

Relative strengths:

☑ Pragmatic approach taken to address a sensitive policy issue

☑ Dedicated project (ELOIS) to explore gender equity issues in madrasah

☑ Program deliverables/materials assessed from perspective of gender equity

☑ ELOIS engaged with other program components in training/advisory capacity

☑ ELOIS built on decade of foundational work by key partner

Relative weaknesses:

☒ Gender equity (ELOIS) predominantly viewed as an AusAID policy-driven initiative

☒ Extensive/convoluted cascade model for effecting gender empowerment

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Gender equity was identified as a challenging and sensitive area for the program to tackle. It was initiated as an AusAID policy agenda rather than a demand-led agenda, so it tended to be viewed with suspicion within the subsector as an imposed western construct that was potentially counter-culture and in opposition to Islamic values. According to one of the LAPIS Coordinators, early attempts to engage stakeholders on the issue of gender equity were fraught. LAPIS addressed this sensitively with the support of the LAB members by framing gender equity from the broader perspective of social 'inclusion'. This was considered consistent with Islamic values and allowed the program to progress an important overarching development principle.

One PSW member stated "*we've had to show that the concept of 'equity' is not a western idea. It is part of Islam. The greatest amount of resistance arose from this issue".* By approaching gender from the broader perspective of inclusion, and by addressing concerns that gender equity was in conflict with Islamic values, the program was able to influence changes through practical mechanisms. A ELOIS stakeholder reported:

> "*we gave the madrasah teachers information in stages so that they would progressively learn what they need to do to have an equitable madrasah. We developed checklists that asked 'is it inclusive? Is it responsive?'.*

LAPIS addressed gender equity both through a dedicated component (ELOIS) and as a crosscutting theme. Each of these approaches is discussed in turn.

LAPIS invested AUD1.992 million over almost 3.5 years (January 2007 – May 2010) in ELOIS—a dedicated project established to explore ways of improving the equality of learning and the understanding of gender issues in Islamic primary and junior secondary schools. The UIN Sunan Kalijaga Rector stated:

> "*This is the first and only program focussed on gender. It is well thought out after the ten years of discourse...The ministry* [of Women's Empowerment] *doesn't even have something like this. We've worked on this even more than the ministry itself!*"

ELOIS partnered with established Women's Studies Centres (PSW) in six Islamic higher education institutions which was critical to its success. The project

strengthened these existing structures, which in turn supported a cascade of trainers[33]. Trainers provided formal and informal support to improve gender responsive teaching and learning activities and equitable madrasah management. According to one PSW member, "*the highest level of resistance was from the teachers, but in the final evaluation we found that they had the highest level of awareness*".

Arguably, ELOIS' apparent successes were a function of working through the established PSW, which themselves were a product of long-running advocacy and discourse. The Rector of UIN Sunan Kalijaga articulated how the current phase is the most recent in a long-running reform agenda. He stated:

> "*we began discussing gender mainstreaming at UIN in 1996. It was only after about ten years of debate and discourse that we then had a foundation to move from discourse to praxis. This step had to be taken. We had to approach this big agenda gradually*".

Lesson

17.   Profound changes in attitude and culture, such as those pursued by ELOIS, are contingent on a long-term foundation of awareness and advocacy being laid.

Evaluations conducted by the ELOIS implementing team found positive changes in the equality of participation by girls and boys in school activities, and less gender-based harassment and violence among students. In essence, ELOIS worked to change the organisational culture of madrasah management committees, principals and teachers towards a culture that was more sensitive to the particular needs of girls and boys, women and men. Among the 259 targeted madrasah there was an increase in the number of equal opportunity policies developed and implemented and all target schools developed gender-responsive local curricula.

In addition to being a stand-alone project, ELOIS supported the other LAPIS component projects (ELTIS, PGMI and Integration activities) with gender and inclusion training and resources.

Beyond the dedicated focus on gender equity that ELOIS brought to the program, gender advisers were engaged as part of the designs of the individual component projects. For example, gender advisers for ELTIS reviewed all training materials and processes to ensure that the project was gender-responsive. One ELTIS team member reported:

> "*gender specialists conducted a very rigorous and detailed review that even included counting the gender of people depicted in illustrations in the training materials and assessing the implied role filled by women in these illustrations*".

According to one LAB member, an important contribution of LAPIS was the involvement of NGOs in the program and the influence exerted on these NGOs, especially in relation to empowering women. She stated "*as a result of the NGO's work, madrasah now have a female face*".

The emphasis on gender and inclusion by LAPIS was noted by a senior MoRA official who reported that "*LAPIS required fifty-fifty participation by both genders in everything, which we were able to achieve. LAPIS really seemed to focus on those things*".

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[33] According to the LAPIS-ELOIS ACR, "*seven experienced master trainers (3 M, 4 F) and twenty four (6 M, 18 F) regional trainers have been developed and are available to support ongoing work in the area. Six madrasah training packages have been designed and used in training activities. In addition to direct LAPIS-ELOIS mentoring support, the seven higher education institutions each received almost 200 person/days of training support and 259 madrasah each received approximately 90 person/days of workshop training*".

From a management perspective, ELOIS was challenging due to the complex and sensitive environment and the emergent nature of the project. A LAPIS manager stated:

> "*from a management perspective ELOIS was vague or nebulous. It was constantly evolving and changing shape exploring what could be done to support women in the sector. If I was able to know then what I know now I would have modelled ELOIS differently and been much more structured about inputs and activities*".

The program was assessed as 'very high quality' against the gender evaluation criterion owing to the dedicated emphasis on this issue and the prominence that it brought to the agenda within the program more broadly. Further, a significant investment in obtaining the advice of gender specialists was indicative of a commitment to good practice in this area. Thirdly, building on existing local momentum (particularly at UIN Sunan Kalijaga) and supporting/reinforcing existing initiatives (PSW) was a pragmatic way to progress the gender equality issue. In brief, the program seemed to do all that could reasonably be expected in the context to both promote gender equality as an overarching development principle, and to mainstream gender considerations within component project implementation.

One major outstanding concern relates to the sustainability of the interventions and the extent to which they have contributed to significant and lasting changes. Given the broader contextual challenges, it is unrealistic to expect a program of this scale to achieve more within the allocated timeframe to effect more change. Further, the intensive nature of training combined with the well documented challenges associated with effecting organisational culture change suggest that ELOIS success is a function of the intensive engagement by trainers/PSW. The extent to which this momentum can be continued beyond the life of the program is a matter for speculation. Certainly the convoluted cascade training model is time and cost intensive and is likely to be ineffective if extended to a larger scale.

3.8   Monitoring & Evaluation

'Monitoring and evaluation' concerns the extent to which adequate arrangements were put in place to ensure accountability, enhance decision-making and promote learning. The M&E arrangements for LAPIS were assessed as 'adequate quality' (4/6).

Relative strengths:

☑ Significant investment in M&E throughout life of program

☑ 'Evaluability assessment' was productive/appreciated

☑ Considerable performance data was collected and used to serve reporting needs

☑ Several processes of external review

Relative weaknesses:

☒ Multiple M&E advisers inefficient, and contributed to 'evaluability' concerns

☒ No systematic capture of risk events as building blocks of learning

☒ Preoccupation with being 'different' fostered a defensiveness about M&E methods

☒ Questionable rigor of some M&E methods (but pragmatic)

☒ Limited evidence of impact among ultimate beneficiaries (as defined) during life of program

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LAPIS commitment to good practice M&E was reflected in the resources invested and the iterations in the development and refinement of the M&E arrangements. The total cost of all M&E activities carried out by LAPIS Central and the ELTIS and PGMI subcontractors amounted to approximately four percent of total LAPIS expenditure[34].

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[34] This level of investment is consistent with what has generally been considered necessary for good practice within AusAID initiatives, although European and US guidelines often suggest up to 7%.

Several iterations were involved in the development of the M&E arrangements for LAPIS. One LAPIS team member noted "*it took a lot of time but we finally got something that worked"*. Two M&E planning workshops were conducted with stakeholders (March and May 2005) to create the broad framework. An early draft of the M&E plan was critiqued by a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) in May 2005 before a final draft was submitted to AusAID towards the end of May 2005. An AusAID Quality Assurance Group (QAG) reviewed the M&E plan in November 2005 and assessed it as 'good practice' but highlighted several areas for strengthening. At AusAID's request, an 'Evaluability Assessment' was conducted in the latter half of 2008.

	Lesson
18.	The coherence and clarity of LAPIS' M&E arrangements was reported to improve following the facilitation of an 'evaluability assessment'. Periodically conducting such exercises is likely to hold particular value for evolving/emergent program designs such as LAPIS.

At the heart of challenges faced in developing a program-wide M&E framework (MEF) was the ambiguous/evolving purpose of the program from AusAID's perspective, along with the dynamic nature of the individual component projects. This meant that different performance information was needed by different stakeholders at different times—the M&E arrangements had to play 'catch-up'. Early work in developing the MEF for LAPIS seemed to grapple with a tension between respecting the emergent/flexible/evolving nature of LAPIS, and the requirement to account for results and demonstrate valuable and sustainable change in plausible/measurable ways. This tension between rejecting 'conventional' M&E methods and appreciating the pragmatic reality was reflected in the May 2005 draft of the MEF (p 7):

> "*since LAPIS is not a project and does not therefore centre on a cause and effect logic, a full [evaluability] assessment is not appropriate. A formal logical framework, the result of a cause and effect analysis during design, is not considered a critical management tool for an activity such as LAPIS. However for a MEF, statements of objectives as well as an explicit rationale for the selected strategies or approaches employed to achieve them are required.*"

Arguably, this apparent preoccupation with LAPIS being 'different' fostered an unhelpful defensiveness concerning M&E methods during the early stages of the program.

In practice there was a conflict between an administrative and conceptual need for an overarching (i.e. 'top-down') M&E framework to bring coherence to the whole program, and a practical and context-sensitive need for M&E plans to be grounded in the realities of the individual projects (i.e. 'bottom up'). The Evaluability Assessment Report stated (p 3):

> "*since LAPIS had grown from the bottom-up with differently focused components and in response to needs of counterparts as they arose, an overall M&E framework had, to date, not been fully developed*"

One feature of the 'bottom-up' approach to the development of a program-wide MEF was that M&E advisors were engaged for each component project. A LAPIS manager stated:

> "*there were multiple M&E advisors for each component. We should have just had one overall LAPIS M&E Advisor. We faced major challenges arising from clashes between 'M&E Titans'.*"

This sentiment was reflected in several interviews during this evaluation. One coordinator stated "*the coordination of the M&E stuff was a dreadful waste of money*".

Another stated "*there was a gap between theory and practice. In most cases the M&E detail was onerous".*

Lesson

19.   A single conceptual framework to guide the LAPIS M&E arrangements would have facilitated greater coherence and improved management efficiency.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the ultimate value of the M&E arrangements was borne out in the level of information reported to in Annual Plans, Six-monthly Reports and the ACRs prepared by the component projects and the program overall. In general, these reports included a range of facts (empirical data) and interpretation that was drawn from the various M&E methods.

M&E is a challenging field located at the nexus between social research and management science. The tension implicit in this nexus resides between the need for research rigor and the requirement for management efficiency/pragmatism. In other words, M&E practitioners must deliver defensible findings but with a high level of management efficiency. This tension is borne out in M&E arrangements alternately being criticised for lack of rigor and then for being excessively onerous.

In the case of LAPIS, some of the M&E methods can be criticised from a methodological standpoint, while on the flipside, they were pragmatic and efficient. For example, the raft of 'self-evaluation studies' (SES) conducted by the project components arguably lacked independence/objectivity and in some cases suffered from various forms of sample bias. Nonetheless, they provided AusAID and program management with insights into the merit of the various approaches and early indications of likely outcomes.

A universally challenging area for M&E practitioners is impact evaluation. Not only must M&E methods contend with the 'open systems' nature of development assistance and the fact that this renders attribution difficult (if not impossible) but the timeframe for impact frequently extends beyond the life of funding. In LAPIS' case, impact in terms of improved student academic and vocational performance as a consequence of higher quality education will not be realised for many years. However, this reality does not change the bureaucratic need to justify the program's investment in terms of tangible benefits. LAPIS addressed this issue by accruing evidence of 'upstream' changes, such as attitudes and practices in relation to improved teaching and learning resources and methods.

Much was made of a plan to conduct a baseline analysis of the context, and mapping of madrasah needs. The CDD stated (p 7)

> *"It is therefore essential that any GOA-sponsored initiative prioritise collection of baseline data and mapping of the Islamic Education Sub-Sector as an early phase of program establishment, so that the identification of counterparts can be based on as broad an understanding of the sector as possible, and so that an appropriate balance between competing stakeholders can be created."*

Some mapping was carried out, but there was no plan to carry out an endline analysis of paired data to establish the extent of changes over the life of the program. Such a study would provide valuable insights concerning the efficacy of program approaches to inform future policy and design work.

Beyond the internal M&E methods employed, a range of external oversight mechanisms were used to promote quality and accountability and must be considered integral to the broader performance assessment arrangements:

- Early critique by an AusAID appointed TAG
- Independent midterm review (MTR)
- Operational review

- Evaluability assessment
- Quality at implementation (QAI) assessments
- Independent completion report (ICR)

3.9 Analysis and Learning

Analysis and learning concerns the extent to which relevant analysis of the context was carried out and past lessons learned informed the design and approaches taken. LAPIS was assessed as 'good quality' (5/6) in this regard.

Relative strengths:

☑ Phases of the program reflect progressive learning

☑ Whole approach oriented to learning-by-doing

☑ M&E processes informed learning and decision-making

☑ LAB provided relevant context analysis and insights

☑ Ausaid's flexibility in oversight

Relative weaknesses:

☒ Tacit risk management (systematic may have improved capture of lessons)

☒ AusAID had limited direct engagement with partners

☒ Learning predominantly within individuals; limited institutionalisation of lessons by AusAID

LAPIS whole rationale and structure was oriented towards learning; as reflected in the overall progression through the three 'phases' described in Section 1.3. The Integration Activities in the final year aimed to draw on lessons and experience from each of the component projects.

As reflected in the CDD, and summarised in Section 1.2, there was limited analysis of—or experience in—the Islamic education subsector among bilateral donors at the time that LAPIS was conceived. The program design drew effectively on the limited knowledge available, including reports prepared by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. AusAID also drew on its own limited knowledge from previous assistance to the subsector through AVI, ADS and IASTP. Beyond this background analysis, the program established a 'learning by doing' *modus operandi*. The program management acknowledged that this was facilitated by AusAID's flexible management. The LAPIS General Manager reported

> "*AusAID did a really good job of enabling a flexible mechanism. They let us go through the agreed process and didn't change it. They signed off when they needed to. They questioned things at the right time. They haven't micro managed at all*".

The M&E arrangements were reportedly a key element in capturing lessons learned and informing decision-making. However, risk monitoring was predominantly a tacit process that drew on the extensive knowledge, experience and contacts of the LAPIS Technical Advisor, program staff and LAB members. This approach was adequate, although dependent on key individuals. Arguably, a more systematic approach to risk monitoring could have introduced greater rigor to the process, and may have helped to capture trends and issues more effectively. The rationale for more systematic risk monitoring is that risks can provide a valuable driver of organisational learning[35].

Lesson

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[35] One practical definition of learning provided by Gharajedaghi links learning with risk monitoring through the concept of 'surprise': "*Learning results from being surprised: detecting a mismatch between what was expected to happen and what actually did happen. If one understands why the mismatch occurred (diagnosis) and is able to do things in a way that avoids a mismatch in the future (prescription), one has learned.*" (Gharajedaghi, J. (1999) *Systems thinking: managing chaos and complexity*, Oxford)

> 20.   Future engagement by AusAID in the subsector should involve systematic approaches to monitoring risks and capturing lessons learned.

A reported shortcoming in the learning agenda was that, despite AusAID's original intention to use LAPIS as a vehicle for learning about the subsector, there was only limited engagement in the detail of the program and with stakeholders. AusAID's 'hands off' approach to the program was noted by several people, and may be construed as a risk management approach given the acknowledged sensitivities early in the program or simply a function of workload issues and conflicting priorities. A LAPIS team member stated:

> "*AusAID could have done better with understanding and handling the relationship with MoRA and other counterparts. This relationship was almost entirely delegated to the contractor. Perhaps they didn't have the time to invest in the relationships; but the consequence is that they don't seem to know what really goes on*".

The ToR for this ICR required a specific focus on lessons of relevance to AusAID's planned ESSP; in particular the madrasah accreditation component.

The experience of LAPIS broadly—and the Integration Activities specifically—provided AusAID and MoRA with valuable lessons to guide planning of future initiatives; in particular, the accreditation component of ESSP. A LAB member stated "*of the five components, I think 'integration' is the most important. I think this should be developed*".

Integration Activities

LAPIS engaged 11 local NGOs—termed Integration Local Partners (ILP)—to work with 61 madrasah in 4 areas. The ILPs facilitated a broad three-step process:

i) School mapping to assess the baseline status of the madrasah against the 8 national accreditation standards;
ii) Facilitation of training sessions by contracted trainers covering 10 subjects (curriculum development, teacher portfolio development, ToT lifeskills, health living, HIV, leadership & management, madrasah resource centre, gender, English, library development).
iii) Technical assistance provided by a locally-engaged trainer to position a madrasah for accreditation based on the mapping exercise and in response to the training. In many cases block grants were disbursed to resolve issues.

The approach taken for the Integration Activities was, by design, an intensive and protracted engagement with madrasah. The 'technical assistance' stage alone typically extended up to three months involving regular intensive sessions. This close interaction was evidently highly valued by madrasah stakeholders, and is likely a key factor in the apparent success of the project. But this intensity also limits the scalability of the model, and hence its value to MoRA in support of the 2014 full accreditation agenda. This tension between quality and quantity is at the heart of the challenge facing MoRA, and therefore AusAID's planned support for accreditation through ESSP. Discussions with Integration Activity stakeholders identified several lessons/recommendations; some of which could reduce the intensity and timeframe, and others that could increase it.

- The limited number of capable local trainers and local NGOs (ILP) to facilitate the LAPIS integration process was a limiting factor, and is likely to pose a major challenge for scalability in the future.
- Integration activities typically involved three trainers working with five schools; but ILPs recommend that a higher intensity of engagement (1:1) would produce more effective results.

- The time and/or scope of integration activities was considered problematic As a consequence either the number of topics included in the training program should be reduced, or amount of time allocated should be increased, or stakeholders should accept a lower standard of accreditation.

- Strategies should be developed to foster the intrinsic motivation of madrasah stakeholders in relation to madrasah quality in order to mitigate a regression to old practices following accreditation.

- Equipping the ILPs to deliver the accreditation training directly (rather than having them engaging sector specialists) may improve overall efficiency of the integration activities.

- Training in relation to the eight national standards was delivered over ten sessions, but these topics could potentially be compressed into four sessions.

- Future assistance to accreditation may be made more efficient by stratifying madrasah based on a rapid assessment of their alignment with the national standards. A program of assistance would then be delivered commensurate with the needs of madrasah falling within defined thresholds of quality (with more capable/better-resourced madrasah receiving only minimal assistance).

- It may be appropriate to work with MoRA to re-examine the national accreditation standards with a view to rationalising them and making accreditation more accessible.

- It may be appropriate to examine the nature, structure, membership and governance of the accreditation panel with a view to expanding its reach and improving the scalability of the accreditation process.

- It may be possible to develop a peer-support system whereby 'graduating madrasah' can assist weaker madrasah to achieve minimum accreditation standards, or interim accreditation.

Beyond the overwhelming task of preparing and then conducting accreditations is the challenge of maintaining quality improvements. A LAB member stated "*we need some kind of M&E system to support accreditation*".

In addition to the Integration Activities, LAPIS Innovation Activities also captured lessons that may be relevant to future assistance to the subsector. The small grants were typically in the order of AUD65,000, were implemented over a one-year period, and provided a valuable mechanism for establishing AusAID's profile and credibility within the subsector. There was also some capacity building value for proponent organisations—many of whom were receiving significant funding for the first time and hence developed skills related to project management and grant administration. The merit of the innovation grants was that they addressed immediate/obvious needs and were rewarded with short-term impact that was highly regarded by madrasah stakeholders and MoRA. 0

4.   CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

LAPIS was conceived within a complex geopolitical context and was established to be a flexible and responsive program. It pursued a development agenda of improving education quality in madrasah, while also serving a need for AusAID to establish a constructive and credible presence within the Islamic education subsector. The program deployed a range of modalities to implement five component projects that addressed recognised needs within the subsector. The value of each of these projects was affirmed by key stakeholders.

The following recommendations arise from the LAPIS experience broadly, and the findings of this evaluation specifically, and concern AusAID's future engagement with the Islamic education subsector:

- Any future engagement should explicitly seek direct partnership with MoRA rather than operating outside of an institutional framework.

- A partnership arrangement should explicitly set out the mutual obligations of the partners, not just in relation to the implementation arrangements, but also the fate of deliverables beyond formal assistance.
- The wider social and economic impact of accreditation on communities should be studied; including how this affects affordability for poor households.
- LAPIS should supply MoRA with a database of all English teachers trained by the program.
- LAPIS should supply MoRA with all school mapping data, including for example the extent of disability support required.
- AusAID should plan an *expost* evaluation to ascertain the contribution of the program to changes in student academic performance and employability.
- LAPIS should carry out an endline analysis to ascertain the extent of changes in key dimensions since baseline school mapping was carried out.
- AusAID's future assistance should include school management capacity development as a component of any future assistance; this should include entrepreneurship training to foster independence.

APPENDIX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE
INDEPENDENT COMPLETION REPORT (ICR)
LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR ISLAMIC SCHOOLS
(LAPIS)
MAY 2010

Context

The Australia Indonesia Partnership Country Strategy 2008-13 aims to strategically support sustainable poverty reduction in Indonesia. Among the key pillars of this strategy is to invest in people, where Australia will work with Indonesia to deliver improved education quality, access and governance, in accordance with the priorities defined in Indonesia's National Medium Term Development Plan.

Indonesia has made significant progress in education, and is on track to achieve Millennium Development Goal 2 of universal primary education. But the core challenges are improving quality and access at all levels of education and addressing disparities between provinces. Australia has a long history of engagement with Indonesia's education sector, and assistance encompasses both government and private schools, including faith-based schools. Private madrasah account for 12% to 15% of primary and junior secondary schooling for girls and boys. Madrasah expand access to children from low income families; however the quality of education they deliver is generally lower than in general public schools.

Australia's support to Islamic schools therefore addresses the quality divide between public schools and madrasah. The Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS) (2004-2010) has been the primary mechanism for delivering Australian development assistance targeted specifically to Islamic schools. With a total initiative value of $35.3million, LAPIS aims to enhance the capacities of (1) **support agencies** to provide quality education services in the Islamic schools sub-sector, (2) **madrasah communities** to manage and provide quality education, and (3) **local networks** to improve their madrasah communities.

Program Description

LAPIS was initially designed in 2004 to build relationships and coordinate between disparate stakeholders of the Islamic schools subsector, as well as to provide immediate support to strategic investments in this subsector. The intention was to develop a more defined programmatic approach to Australia's engagement with Islamic schools once key critical needs were identified. During the first two years of LAPIS (2004-2006), the focus of the program was to establish a wide-reaching stakeholder network and conduct a needs analysis of targeted Islamic school communities.

The LAPIS Strategic and Implementation Plan (SIP) was finalised in 2006, and it set the direction for the second phase (2006-2010) of the program based on lessons learned from the implementation of the first two years. In essence, the SIP constituted a re-design of the program, where LAPIS's conceptual framework (including its program objectives) was remodelled to reflect the major stakeholder groups involved in the Islamic schools sub-sector. The current program objectives, which are significantly different from the ones set out in the concept design document, were derived from the SIP.

The SIP broadened the scope of LAPIS activities to include larger components oriented towards supporting key service delivery institutions and organisation, but the program still maintained its capacity to support small-scale innovative projects initiated by madrasah communities.

At AusAID's request, LAPIS conducted an Evaluability Assessment (EA) in 2008 for several purposes. The prime purpose was to determine if LAPIS was "evaluable" (i.e. to determine whether LAPIS as a program has been planned and implemented well enough to be evaluated). Secondly, since LAPIS has evolved largely from the bottom-up with a range of activities formed over four years, the EA presented an opportunity to clarify overall program outcomes. Thirdly, the EA enabled LAPIS to re-affirm stakeholder understanding, and build further involvement and commitment leading into its final 18 months to assist in future sustainability through clear, achievable indicators as part of an ongoing ME framework.

As a result of the EA, five program outcomes were defined[36]:

- Outcome 1: Improved performance of school students
- Outcome 2: Improved performance of school teachers
- Outcome 3: Improved performance of school personnel
- Outcome 4: Improved performance and involvement of support agency personnel
- Outcome 5: Improved performance and involvement of community members

LAPIS activities currently comprise five main components: **ELTIS**[37], a basic English language training project for junior secondary teachers; **PGMI**[38], a project to improve the capacity of support agencies to deliver teacher training programs for primary school teachers; and **ELOIS**[39], which promotes the equality of learning outcomes for girls and boys in primary and junior secondary Islamic schools; **Innovation Activities**, which provide small grants to pilot proposals generated by schools, communities or Islamic education institutions; and **Integration Activities**, which support targeted madrasah to meet educational standards required for national accreditation.

Key Issues

The Education Sector Development Mid-Term Review (2008) assessed LAPIS progress as satisfactory, effective and efficient. It found that LAPIS was meeting a very strong need for quality improvement in private Islamic schools, and that LAPIS' initial exploratory approach and efforts to build trust and strong relationships within the Islamic schools sub-sector provided a solid basis for the development of a strategic plan and informed the subsequent design and implementation of its activities. As AusAID plans to engage further in the Islamic schools sub-sector through supporting accelerated accreditation of targeted madrasah, two key issues are of particular importance to be considered in evaluating LAPIS:

1. *Program Approach*

   Previous reviews and contractor performance assessments indicate that LAPIS has established a good rapport with the Islamic school communities and stakeholders that it works with. Stakeholders have also commented positively on the LAPIS implementation team's comprehensive understanding of the

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[36] Details of these outcomes and related indicators are outlined in the LAPIS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
[37] ELTIS: English Language Training for Islamic Schools
[38] PGMI: *Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* – Teacher Upgrading Program for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers
[39] ELOIS: Equality of Learning Outcomes in Islamic Schools

sensitivities and political nuances that colour the Islamic schools sub-sector. However, further investigation needs to be conducted on whether the program's approach was appropriate from a developmental perspective, including an assessment of its sustainability Has the program actually targeted madrasah communities that are most in need of assistance? Has the program built the capacity of the key service delivery institutions it works with? Have the activities of the program unintentionally created a dependence on "external" assistance in madrasah communities and Islamic education institutions? Was the program cost effective?

The consideration of these issues will assist AusAID in planning its approach and modality in future engagement with the Islamic schools sub-sector.

2. *Lessons to be applied in future initiatives*

AusAID plans to utilise lessons learned from LAPIS in the implementation of its next phase of support to the Indonesian education sector. AusAID is finalising design of the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP), which will be a joint Australia-European Union (EU) program of support for education sector development (2010-2015), scheduled to start in 2010.

Australia's engagement with the Islamic schools subsector will be continued through the Madrasah Accreditation component of ESSP, which focuses on providing support towards accelerating the accreditation process in targeted madrasah. National accreditation will help ensure that madrasah have access to other forms of financial support provided by the Government of Indonesia (such as the School Operational Support funds– BOS), as well as to ensure that graduation certificates issued by these madrasah are formally recognised by the State. The madrasah accreditation plans will be determined during the implementation phase of the ESSP.

AusAID would like to integrate lessons learned from LAPIS (particularly from the Integration Activities) into the implementation planning for this new component.

Objective

The objective of the independent completion evaluation of LAPIS is to assess to what extent program objectives have been achieved, and to draw out valuable lessons to assist with the planning for the implementation of the Madrasah Accreditation component of the upcoming ESSP.

The primary audience of the Independent Completion Report (ICR) is AusAID management and relevant directorates of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Scope

The ICR will assess and rate the program's performance against the eight AusAID's evaluation criterion of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact (or potential impact), sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, gender equality and analysis and learning. The ratings will be based on the standard AusAID six-point scale, as outlined in the ICR template (see Annex 4). Standard evaluation questions to guide the evaluation consultant in forming these ratings are at Annex 2.

Although the evaluation consultant must be able to provide an assessment and rating of the evaluation criterion above, the consultant should give particular priority to examining the following questions:

1. **Effectiveness**: Have LAPIS program objectives been achieved?

- To what extent have LAPIS activities contributed towards achievement of objectives?

- To what extent have LAPIS program outcomes been achieved?

- Is there clear alignment between program activities and end-of-program outcomes?

2. **Lessons**: What lessons from LAPIS can be applied to the planning and implementation of the Madrasah Accreditation component of the ESSP?

3. **Program approach**: How appropriate have LAPIS' approaches been in:

- Establishing strong and productive relationships with key stakeholders of the Islamic schools sector, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs, private madrasah communities, and other Islamic organisations?

- Selecting partner madrasah and ensuring that the benefits of the program reach the madrasah that are most in need of assistance in targeted areas?

- Ensuring that knowledge gained from training and capacity development activities is applied by beneficiaries?

- Ensuring that program activities do not create undue dependency on external assistance?

- Achieving sustainability of program outcomes?

- Maximising cost effectiveness?

4. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Does evidence exist to show that objectives have been achieved?

For all key findings, the consultant should describe the current situation, identify key enabling or inhibiting factors, provide an analysis of its implications for AusAID, and recommend an appropriate response.

Required Expertise

One evaluation consultant is required to undertake the work described above. The consultant should:

- Hold a postgraduate degree that has included a research dissertation component, or alternatively, provide evidence of training in advanced research or evaluation design, conduct and management;

- Demonstrate practical experience in research or evaluation design, conduct, and management, including articulation of evaluation questions, development of sound methods and tools, conduct of data collection activities, analysis of data (or supervision of such), interpretation and dissemination of results and report preparation;

- Demonstrate an ability to breakdown and communicate complex concepts simply with a range of stakeholders in multi-cultural settings;

- Have previous experience in evaluating the impact of international development programs, preferably in education;

- Preferably have knowledge of demand-driven and community based approaches.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation will take around 4 weeks and is planned for May-June 2010. The exact date and timeline of the ICR is to be confirmed based on the evaluation plan (including methodology) that will be developed by the evaluation consultant.
In undertaking the ICR, the evaluation consultant will:

a. Conduct a desk study to review relevant program documentation provided by AusAID and advice AusAID of any additional documents or information required prior to the in-country visit (2 days)

b. Develop an evaluation plan, which includes methodology, field research guide, as well as instruments and identification of key respondents and further documentation required (3 days)

c. Participate in an AusAID briefing session in Jakarta at the start of the in-country field visit, including introduction to LAPIS implementation team (1 day)*

d. Conduct meetings in Jakarta and field visits to LAPIS activity sites, as required (up to 8 days)*

e. Conduct preliminary analysis of field visit results (1 day during the field visits period)*

f. Prepare an Aide Memoire for submission at the end of the in-country mission, which outlines the major findings and preliminary recommendations of the ICR (1 day during the field visit period)*

g. Aide Memoire submission, revision (1 days)

h. Participate in an AusAID debriefing session in Jakarta at the completion of the in-country mission and present initial findings of the ICR to AusAID Jakarta and other relevant stakeholders (1 day)*

i. Process evaluation data (3 days). If required, AusAID maintains the right to see processed data.

j. Submit a draft ICR (4 days of writing)

k. Submit the final ICR (3 days of writing)

in country work, includes weekends

Reporting requirements

The evaluation consultant shall provide AusAID with the following:

a. Evaluation Plan (including methodology) – to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the in-country visit for stakeholder consultation;

b. Presentation of an Aide Memoire and discussion on the initial findings of the ICR – to be presented to AusAID, MORA and other key Islamic schools sector stakeholders as appropriate at the completion of the in-country mission;

c. Draft ICR – to be submitted to AusAID within 5 working days of completion in-country mission . AusAID may share the report with and seek feedback from MORA and other key stakeholders, as appropriate; the evaluation will

also be subject to technical quality review from AusAID/OPS M&E Service Panel and review by peers.

d. Final ICR – to be submitted before 24 June 2010. The report should be a brief and clear summary of the ICR outcomes and focus on a balanced analysis of issues faced by the activity.

Both the draft and final ICR reports should be no more than 25 pages of text excluding appendices. The Executive Summary, with a summary list of recommendations, should be no more than 2-3 pages. Where possible, recommendations should be costed.

LIST OF ANNEXES:
ANNEX 1   : KEY DOCUMENTS
ANNEX 2   : AUSAID GUIDELINE ON STANDAR STANDARD
            EVALUATION
              QUESTION
ANNEX 3   : AUSAID TEMPLATE ON AIDE MEMOIRE OUTLINE FOR
              EVALUATION
ANNEX 4   : AUSAID TEMPLATE ON ICR
ANNEX 5   : LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

ANNEX 1   : KEY DOCUMENTS

- LAPIS Concept Design Document (2004)

- LAPIS Strategic and Implementation Plan (2006) – program redesign

- Australia-Indonesia Education Sector Development Midterm Review Report (2008)

- LAPIS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (2008)

- LAPIS Evaluability Assessment Report (2008)

- LAPIS Annual Implementation Plan 2009-10

- LAPIS 6-Monthly Progress Reports (for the periods of January- June and July- December 2009)

- Exit Sustainability Report (2009)

- Executive Summary – ESSP Component 3: Madrasah Accreditation

- LAPIS Gender and Inclusion Strategy (2008)

APPENDIX B: CONSULTATIONS

Class	Stakeholder(s)	Institution
Donor	Katheryn Bennett Joanne Dowling Michael Morrissey Diastika Rahwidiati Zullia Saida Mila Nurichlas Dwiagus Stepantoro Walia Murtiana	AusAID
Partner	Dr Firdaus, Director Islamic Schools Pak Rohmat, Head of Sub-directorates	MoRA
Implementing Team & Partners	Robert Kingham Robert Kennedy LAPIS Advisory Board members (x5)	LAPIS Central
	Sunaryo, Program Coordinator Amin Abdullah, Rector UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyas Susilaningsih, Director PSW UIN Sunan Kalijaga Ema Marhumah, Head of PSW Yogyakarta Muh Isnanto, PSW member Marzuki, madrasah principal	ELOIS
	Russell Keogh, Team Leader Student teachers, IAIN Sunan Ampel Sugiyar, Subject Writer Hanun Asroh, Lecturer Junadedi, Master Trainer Nurul Hamamah, Principal Siti Mas'udah Yunifah, Teacher Imam Safei, School Supervisor	PGMI
	Dr Zuliati Rohmah, Coordinator A.Dzoul Milal, Master Trainer Master Trainers (x2) Dr Sjairofi Caroline Bentley, Team Leader Denise Finney, CEO IALF Dr Sjairofi Muhsinin, Mataram Coordinator Rahma Diana Sari, Curriculum Adviser Agnes Nindyarini Curriculum Adviser, Mark Hinde, ELT Specialist	ELTIS
	Integration School Development Coordinator Integration Local Partner, LEKDIS NUSSATERA	Integration

APPENDIX C: QUESTION GUIDE

Evaluation Criteria	Questions from ToR	Additional Questions	Methods	Sources
Relevance	Was the program's approach appropriate from a developmental perspective? Have LAPIS approaches appropriately selected partner madrasah? Have LAPIS approaches appropriately ensured that benefits reach the madrasah most in need of assistance?	What do the various stakeholders consider the 'LAPIS approach' to actually be? What is the development rationale for LAPIS (i.e. beyond relationships in the sector)? Is the 'most needy' the best selection criteria to achieve the intended results?	Doc review	ACR MEF
			KII	LAPIS staff LAB MoRA Support agency reps Madrasah s'holders
Effectiveness	Has the program built the capacity of key service delivery institutions? Was the program effective? Have LAPIS objectives been achieved (support agency capacity, madrasha community capacity and local network capacity)?	Were the approaches to capacity building perceived as relevant/valuable?	Doc review	ACR MEF Evaluability Assessment AIP MTR report
	To what extent have LAPIS activities contributed to objectives? To what extent have LAPIS outcomes been achieved (students, teachers, school personnel, support agency personnel, community members)? Is there alignment between program		KII	LAPIS staff Support agency reps Madrasah s'holders

Evaluation Criteria	Questions from ToR	Additional Questions	Methods	Sources
	activities and end of program outcomes? Have LAPIS approaches appropriately ensured that training and capacity development activities are applied by beneficiaries?		Obs	General perceptions of value among stakeholders
Efficiency	Have LAPIS approaches appropriately maximised cost:effectiveness?	In retrospect are there other ways that the program could have been structured/implemented differently/better achieve its aims? Has the program been implemented on time and within budget?	KII	LAPIS staff MoRA LAB Implementing partners
			Doc review	ACR AIP
Impact		Is there any evidence of significant and lasting changes in the quality of education? What unintended (positive/negative) changes have emerged? What are some key factors that may erode the emergence of the intended impacts through time?	KII	Madrasah s'holders Support agency reps LAPIS staff
			FGD	Madrasah stakeholders
			Doc review	ACR

Evaluation Criteria	Questions from ToR	Additional Questions	Methods	Sources
Sustainability	Are program outcomes sustainable (students, teachers, school personnel, support agencies, community members)? Has the program unintentionally created dependency among madrasah communities or education institutions? Have LAPIS approaches appropriately established strong and productive relationships with key stakeholders in the Islamic school sector (MoRA, madrasah communities and other Islamic organisations)? Have LAPIS approaches appropriately ensured that activities do not create undue dependency on external assistance? Have LAPIS approaches appropriately achieved sustainability of outcomes?	What will be the implications of ceasing the flow of LAPIS resources? How will ongoing activities be resourced? What key deliverables has LAPIS been responsible for that will need to be taken over by other stakeholders? Does capacity exist? What constitutes 'strong and productive' relationships, and what development purpose will these achieve?	Doc review	Sustainability Rpt ACR
			KII	Madrasah s'holders MoRA Support agency reps Implementing partners
			Obs	Partner engagement, ownership and capacity
Gender equality		What evidence was collected to establish claims about improved gender equality? How did the gender strategy influence implementation	KII	LAPIS staff Support agency reps

Evaluation Criteria	Questions from ToR	Additional Questions	Methods	Sources
		activities?		Madrasah reps
			Doc review	ACR Gender & Inclusion Report MEF
M&E	Does evidence exist to show that objectives have been achieved?	What elements of the M&E arrangements were the most challenging? In retrospect, how might the M&E arrangements have been done differently? How has the M&E information actually been used? What aspects of the M&E arrangements have been institutionalised?	Doc review	MEF Evaluability Assess ACR
			KII	LAPIS staff Implementing partners
Analysis & learning	What lessons from LAPIS (especially the integration activities) can be integrated within ESSP? What lessons can be applied to the planning and implementation of the madrasah accreditation component of ESSP?		Doc review	ACR AIP ESSP concept
			KII	LAPIS staff MoRA LAB Support agencies

APPENDIX D: AIDE MEMOIRE

Evaluation Background

The Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools (LAPIS) was an initiative of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) that was conceived as a way for the Government of Australia to engage with the Islamic education sub-sector, and to contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning in private Islamic primary and junior secondary schools. The program was initiated as a Ministerial instruction in the wake of the Bali bombings. The program was implemented over 66 months ($33.494 million) and, in retrospect, can be seen as evolving through three phases: i) *Engagement*: establishing key relationships, conceiving of and experimenting with various entry points, and clarifying relevant needs/opportunities; ii) *Consolidation*: clarifying objectives, formalising priority engagements, delivering significant outcomes; iii) *Integration*: testing a model of integrated capacity development aimed at positioning private madrasah for accreditation with MoRA. The program was implemented in 19 provinces[40].

Description of Evaluation Activities

This independent completion review (ICR) was conducted over seven days of fieldwork (17 – 25 May 2010) to assimilate the perspectives of around 45 key LAPIS stakeholders. AusAID's standard evaluation criteria was used as the basis for the evaluation, with particular emphasis on assessing the extent to which the program's objectives were achieved, and synthesising lessons of relevance to AusAID's ongoing support for the education sector in Indonesia under the Australia Indonesia Partnership (AIP).

Initial Findings and Recommendations

Relevance

Private madrasah represent the only realistic schooling option for a large proportion of poor households in Indonesia. To meet its commitment to universal education, the Government of Indonesia (GoI) has acknowledged the important role of private education. A policy imperative of the GoI to accredit all private madrasah by 2014 means that schools not meeting the eight national quality standards will be forced to close. Many private madrasah lack the resources or knowledge to improve their standing in relation to the standards[41]. Unaccredited schools cannot secure government funding, and certificates issued by these schools are not recognised, meaning that students are unable to progress to higher education or seek employment.

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[40] **Small projects:** Aceh, North Sumatra, South Sumatra, West Sumatra, Lampung, Bangka-Belitung, Bengkulu, Riau, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, South-East Sulawesi, West Sulawesi, Jakarta, Banten, East Java, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, West Nusa Tenggara; **English Language Training:** East Java, South Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara; **Teacher Education:** East Java, South Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara; **Equal Learning Outcomes:** Yogyakarta, East Java, Central Java, South Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara; **Accreditation Support**: East Java, South, Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara

[41] i.e. "*even the most basic standards such as the presence of toilet facilities is problematic for a high proportion of madrasah*"(LAPIS Advisory Board Member).

LAPIS addressed a widely acknowledged gap in the quality of education provided through private madrasah by tackling key issues such as the quality of compulsory English language teaching in junior secondary schools, the quality of primary teacher training in tertiary institutions, inclusiveness (including gender equity) in schools, inadequacy of classroom teaching resources, poor/absent school facilities (e.g. libraries, toilets etc.), and weak school management skills. This focus was consistent with the objectives of MoRA and AusAID[42], and was widely appreciated by program stakeholders.

The development rationale for the program appreciated that private madrasahs are typically under-resourced and unsupported compared with other schools, and often attended by students from poorer households in areas where there are no other schooling options. The 'LAPIS approach' involved a mix of approaches: i) investments aimed directly at teachers; ii) investments aimed at teacher training institutions; iii) investments aimed at school principals and committees; and iv) investments involving material support to schools.

The original overarching goal[43] of LAPIS was concerned with poverty reduction[44]. In practice this occurred to the extent that target provinces and districts[45] were assessed as being disproportionately poor, and that private madrasah are generally less well resourced. However, beyond this broad framework, beneficiary teachers/schools/institutions were largely self-selecting rather than narrowly focussed on the most impoverished, meaning that LAPIS beneficiaries were not necessarily the 'poorest of the poor'. Some stakeholders noted a tension between selecting the 'most destitute' or problematic schools and AusAID's imperative for the program to achieve notable success within the timeframe and budget allocated[46]. It is likely that consistently/narrowly working with the 'poorest of the poor' would have required more intensive effort, thereby reducing the overall effect of the program.

Overall relevance was considered good quality owing to the alignment with strategic objectives and the contribution to a recognised development need.

Effectiveness
A summary of key actors (including beneficiaries) and change factors is attached in Annex C.

An evaluation of 'effectiveness' as defined by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) was challenging owing to the evolutionary/rolling nature of the LAPIS design. As noted, the program commenced with a broad 'exploratory' mandate to test the merit of bilateral donor support within the sub-sector, with clarity of objectives and the establishment of discrete projects emerging later. In the final stage, 'Integration Activities' drew the various elements of the program into a model of engagement in the sub-sector aligned with the broad agenda of improving education quality in private madrasah. Notwithstanding the apparently fragmented

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[42] N.B. there seems to have been some ambiguity within AusAID concerning the underlying rationale for LAPIS at the outset, with some internal stakeholders arguing that the establishment of relationships was an end in itself, and others arguing for a developmental rational: improved quality of education, or indeed poverty reduction.
[43] Original Concept Design Goal: *To contribute to poverty reduction in Indonesia by improving the quality of basic education in Islamic schools.*
[44] Beyond the explicit goal of poverty reduction was an implicit rationale that investing in impoverished Islamic education would help to mitigate the emergence of extremism.
[45] Targetting was predominantly driven by AusAID's priority provinces. Districts and target madrasah were selected in consultation with MoRA.
[46] . "*The downside is that we didn't get to target the basket cases. We picked the winners*" (LAPIS manager). "*LAPIS has tended to select partners likely to be successful. Selection should be systematic. We should work with the facts*" (LAB member).

early program, there was evidence that individual activities achieved results among direct beneficiaries and will foster plausible impacts among the ultimate beneficiaries. Of note was the development of a cardre of master trainers with significant resources such as educational modules and training methodologies. These 'products' should provide enduring benefit to counterpart institutions. Further, there was evidence that through LAPIS, AusAID was able to secure the respect of key stakeholders within the subsector[47]. MoRA's request for further assistance from AusAID is indicative of this developing respect; especially given the early suspicion surrounding the program. An area for further development noted by several stakeholders was school management capacity. The program invested some resources in this area but this was considered minimal relative to the significance of the problem. Future interventions in the sector should prioritise strengthening school management capacity, including entrepreneurship. Overall the program's effectiveness was adequate in achieving both the explicit and implicit objectives.

Efficiency

The program's efficiency was adequate with projects mostly completed on time and with modest surplus. As noted, significant results were achieved with the resources and time allocated. MoRA noted that the investment was very small relative to the magnitude of the challenges, but appreciated the progress made on key quality issues. The program produced 'value-for-money' for the Australian Government, especially when considered in the light of the knowledge and relationships built within the subsector.

The program's evolution involved several changes to scope and approach which necessitated budgetary and managerial changes. There were also shifting priorities and emphases. These changes created frustrations but according to implementing team members, did not substantively affect activity implementation.

Interviewees in MoRA and partner institutions appreciated the program's management and were unaware of any areas of significant waste or excess. The English language training component was the most expensive, but arguably responded to the strongest beneficiary demand. Further it adopted a cost-effective cascade model rather than employing native English speakers. One area of management inefficiency noted by several stakeholders was the engagement of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and gender advisers for each discrete component, rather than engaging a single overall expert in each field. There was some internal debate concerning the merit of outsourcing/subcontracting two of the major projects[48] with plausible arguments for and against[49].

By definition, the program's agenda of securing strong positive working relationships within the sub-sector was an intensive foundational exercise. Arguably many of the program's apparent successes arose from this intensive engagement; but this raises questions about the cost-effectiveness of the 'LAPIS approach' at a larger scale. In the words of one stakeholder in relation to LAPIS' cost-effectiveness: "*small is beautiful*". Some aspects of the program could be scaled significantly (e.g. ELTIS

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[47] "In general, the program has done very well to improve the quality of learning. Through the national exams it is obvious that the quality is improving" (MoRA official).

[48] PGMI was implemented by Coffey International and ELTIS was implemented by IALF.

[49] The merit of either model is a function of the nature of the project being undertaken. In the case of a technical area (e.g. English language training) there is likely to be additional value in outsourcing the project to a speciliast organisation (in the case of ELTIS, IALF). A more generic area (arguably curriculum development such as was done with PGMI) lends itself to direct management. The cost of outsourcing is likely to be higher than direct management, but this may be justified if risk is transferred to a subcontractor.

and PGMI), while others would be cost-prohibitive and/or ineffective if scaled significantly beyond the current level (e.g. innovation activities and ELOIS).

Impact

A precise evaluation of the impact of LAPIS among the ultimate beneficiaries (i.e. students) was beyond the scope of this ICR, and is likely to take several years to emerge[50]. Nevertheless, there is plausible evidence[51] that the program has contributed to significant and lasting changes that will flow from the program deliverables. Some program impacts (e.g. school student academic performance) will not be realised for several years owing to the fact that the program fostered changes in 'upstream' factors (e.g. the quality of teacher training programs). Nevertheless there is evidence of intermediary changes that will logically flow to the intended impact: i) an estimated 1,344 student teachers (primary school) have benefited directly from improved general studies curricula and more interactive lecture and laboratory practices in seven universities with indications from MoRA of a wider rollout across 60 accredited universities; ii) 259 madrasah are implementing more inclusive management and teaching practices led by sensitised/empowered principals; iii) 650 schools in three provinces are providing a higher quality of English language training through 773 qualified teachers; iv) 105 madrasah are better equipped/trained to meet student needs ; v) 60 madrasah have been positioned for accreditation against the eight national standards, thereby testing a model of capacity building. A notable contributor to constructive outcomes was the program's commitment to a comprehensive approach to capacity building that extended well beyond just the delivery of high quality training; employing a range of mentoring and support initiatives. M&E findings demonstrate encouraging uptake of training methods and resources promoted by the program. In several cases program partners/beneficiaries have established peer support/'alumni' groups to support the ongoing use, development and dissemination of program deliverables.

Sustainability

LAPIS was situated outside the ambit of MoRA, or any particular Islamic institution or non-government organisation (NGO); although establishing relationships with many organisations within the sub-sector. This 'independence' was a reflection of the fact that LAPIS was conceived at a point in history when the Australian Government prioritised the establishment of relationships in the Indonesian Islamic education sub-sector, partly as an end in itself. It also reflected a pragmatic response to early suspicion within the sector concerning the Australian Government's engagement in the sub-sector. The independent structure and evolutionary approach enabled the achievement of early results and the cementing of stakeholder trust, and the bypassing of institutional/bureaucratic hurdles. However, a possible cost of this independence is that LAPIS has not had significant impact on MoRA systems or structures, and there is no institutional 'home' for LAPIS broadly, and LAPIS products specifically. A

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[50] LAPIS collected impact-level data through Self Evaluation Studies (SES) which provide early insights into changes in educational quality that the program contributed to. However, for some elements of the program it will be several years before the efficacy of the interventions are borne out in student results. If AusAID is serious about testing the hypothesis that strengthening the capacity of educational support institutions indeed translates into improved student results it should commit to conducting an ex-poste evaluation.

[51] A series of Self Evaluation Studies (SES) conducted in 2009/10 found that the students—according to both principals and teachers—had improved their achievement in learning. For example the SES of Innovation Cycles 3/4, 94% of the seventy-four principals and teachers reported that student results had improved. Improvement could be seen in daily quiz results, semester results, and their grade promotion examination. For the SES of Integration Activities, 82% of 240 principals and teachers surveyed reported improvement in student results. The 2009 ELTIS SES 2 survey of 158 teachers (98%) and 29 District Trainers (96%) reported substantial improvement in student English ability.

case in point is ambiguity about the precise 'ownership' and ongoing maintenance/administration of curriculum and modules developed under the program. In retrospect, Memorandums of Understanding detailing mutual obligations during and beyond the program may have helped address this shortcoming.

In relation to some achievements, there is likely to be an erosion of benefits through time in the absence of further support/development. Notwithstanding these challenges, there is evidence that LAPIS activities fostered changes in capacity and produced resources that should generate enduring benefits. Examples include: development of 61 English language master trainers; development of 25 primary teacher training modules being implemented in seven tertiary institutions[52]; development of 24 gender and inclusion trainers working with madrasah principals.

The outcomes of the LAPIS projects should in general be maintained and used by partners without dependency on external resources. In this sense the program did not engender dependency. However, for the scope or impact to be expanded would almost certainly require additional donor support. A case in point is ELTIS, which delivered a cadre of qualified English Master Trainers and teachers that will continue to be supported within their institutional structures, providing higher quality education than previously possible. While this situation should be maintained without dependency on external support and intention to expand the model into new target areas would require additional donor investment. In that sense, replicating and/or scaling the cascade training model is dependent on donor support.

Over the life of the program, LAPIS has progressively deepened its engagement with MoRA[53]. Future AusAID engagements can build on this foundation by seeking a stronger partnership model which should foster greater institutional sustainability.

Gender

LAPIS employed a range of mechanisms to address AusAID's overarching development principle of gender equity through the broader perspective of 'inclusiveness'. An important early lesson from LAPIS was that while gender equality rhetoric was viewed by some stakeholders with suspicion, concepts of inclusion were considered consistent with Islamic theology and values. One component of LAPIS worked comprehensively with women's study institutes within six Islamic tertiary institutions. These institutes used participatory methods to promote gender inclusiveness in madrasah. The focus was on influencing the awareness and attitudes of key individuals such as principals in relation to gender equity. The rationale was based on the truism: 'leadership drives culture'. This component (ELOIS) was also integrated into the other LAPIS components in a 'crosscutting way (e.g. ELOIS staff facilitated gender training for Integration Activity partners). Further, program gender advisers reviewed all aspects of the program to assist with mainstreaming gender in the various aspects of program implementation and documentation. One minor source of frustration among implementing teams was the fact that different gender advisers were engaged to support the various program components, creating difficulties with the integration of approaches/theories at the program level. This situation arose as a function of the outsourcing/subcontracting

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[52] A letter has been issued by the national standards body (BAN/PT) requiring all tertiary institutions to use the subject resources developed by PGMI. This suggests a strong degree of ownership and support for this program deliverable.

[53] LAPIS coordinators and managers reported that the relationship had qualitatively improved with the program's success and the dissolving of early suspicions. It also improved in practical ways such as increasing interest/investment in program deliverables (e.g. curriculum modules) and methodologies. MoRA's request for AusAID to support their madrasah accreditation commitment is indicative of increased trust/appreciation.

model in which the projected was implemented in a discrete fashion. A single overall adviser would have been more efficient and effective.

Monitoring & Evaluation

A M&E framework was developed as an early deliverable of the program, but went through several revisions. Overall the M&E arrangements balanced the demands for comprehensiveness/rigor with the need for efficiency/pragmatism. The evolutionary/emergent nature of LAPIS rendered conventional 'hard systems' approaches to M&E less relevant. The socio-political context of the program ensured that the program attracted significant attention and the demand for evidence of 'performance'. AusAID's changing performance information needs posed a challenge for program staff. As with the multiple gender advisers (noted above), implementing teams expressed frustration with the appointment of individual M&E advisers for each component project. This situation was a function of the outsourcing/subcontracting model used, but created difficulties with analysing and reporting at the program level owing to the different philosophies and approaches of the various advisers. An 'evaluability assessment' submitted in December 2008 helped to bring coherence to the program in general, and M&E arrangements in particular[54]. Management and quality assurance mechanisms employed by AusAID included monthly meetings, Annual Plans, Six-monthly Reports, an Operational Review, a Midterm Review and this ICR.

Analysis & Learning

The whole rationale and approach employed by LAPIS was oriented towards learning about the Islamic education subsector in general, and opportunities for AusAID's engagement/support in particular. The transition through the three broad phases of the program (noted above) is indicative of learning and progressive engagement. The program engaged esteemed members of the sub-sector in an Advisory Board which helped to inform and manoeuvre the program. AusAID's flexible and accommodating stance in relation to the program's evolution was reported to be an enabling factor. The program's M&E arrangements and risk reporting also assisted learning, although the risk monitoring involved tacit processes rather than systematic processes, which may have otherwise helped to progressively capture salient lessons. The program has captured valuable knowledge about the subsector that can inform future AusAID programming, such as the key issues facing the sub-sector, the key change agents, and programmatic knowledge about drivers of success and causes of failure. Particular lessons and recommendations arising from the Integration Activities include:

- The availability of local trainers, and integration local partners (ILPs; local NGOs) to facilitate the process was a major limiting factor for scalability.
- ILPs typically involved three trainers working with five schools; but recommend a higher intensity of engagement (1:1).
- Either the number of topics included in the training program should be reduced, or the amount of time allocated should be increased.
- It is important to foster the intrinsic motivation of madrasah stakeholders to mitigate a regression to old practices following accreditation.

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[54] Evaluability assessments (EA) are still not commonly conducted on AusAID activities, but can provide particular value for evolving designs such as LAPIS. Following the LAPIS EA, preparation of Six-monthly Reports and Annual Reports was streamlined and project coordinators reported a great sense of clarity and coherence in the M&E arrangements.

- Training the ILPs to facilitate the training directly (rather than engaging sector specialists) may improve overall efficiency.
- Training in relation to the eight national standards was delivered over ten sessions, but could potentially be compressed to four sessions.
- Stratify madrasah based on a rapid assessment, with more capable/better-resourced madrasah receiving only minimal assistance.
- Re-examine the national accreditation standards with a view to rationalising them and making accreditation more accessible.
- Examine the nature, structure, membership and governance of the accreditation panel with a view to expanding its reach.
- Develop a peer-support system whereby 'graduating madrasah' can assist weaker madrasah.

Recommendations

- Any future engagement should explicitly seek direct partnership with MoRA rather than operating outside of an institutional framework.
- A partnership arrangement should explicitly set out the mutual obligations of the partners, not just in relation to the implementation arrangements, but also the fate of deliverables beyond formal assistance.
- The wider social and economic impact of accreditation on communities should be studied; including how this affects affordability for poor households.
- LAPIS should supply MoRA with a database of all English teachers trained by the program.
- LAPIS should supply MoRA with all school mapping data, including for example the extent of disability support required.
- AusAID should plan an expost evaluation to ascertain the contribution of the program to changes in student academic performance and employability.
- LAPIS should carry out an endline analysis to ascertain the extent of changes in key dimensions since baseline school mapping was carried out.
- AusAID's future assistance should include school management capacity development as a component of any future assistance; this should include entrepreneurship training to foster independence.

Next Steps

Completion of a full report of the evaluation will entail a review and coding of interview notes, comprising more than 16,000 words recorded during 20 interviews involving around 45 stakeholders. Analysis will involve the identification of predominant and exceptional perspectives in relation to AusAID's evaluation criteria. Lessons and recommendations arising from the analysis will be documented. A draft of the report will be submitted by COB on Monday June 7, 2010. The draft will be reviewed by key stakeholders and changes incorporated. The final version of the report will be submitted by 30 June 2010.

Acknowledgements

Murtiana and Dwiagus Stepantoro (AusAID Performance & Quality Unit). Language interpretation was provided by Fahmia Badib. All program stakeholders (GoI staff, AusAID staff/advisors, Cardno Emerging Markets consultants and sub-contractors) were appreciated for their candour and constructive stance, and for the generous contribution of their time for interviews.

Annex A: Independent Evaluator

Dr Paul Crawford has more than 14 years of experience managing and consulting for international relief and development agencies, government and corporate clients in around 40 countries. He holds degrees in agricultural science (BRurSc), management (MBA) and monitoring and evaluation (PhD). He is a member of AusAID's M&E Expert Panel, and AusAID's NGO Accreditation Panel. He holds long-term M&E advisory positions with the Philippines Australia Community Assistance Program (PACAP), Australian Community Development and Civil Society Strengthening Scheme (ACCESS Phase II), AusAID Civil Society Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Fund, and the Philippines Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Strategy. Paul is a Research Associate of the Institute for Sustainable Futures and since 2004, has been an Executive Director of Aid-IT Solutions Pty Ltd, a specialist independent M&E consultancy.

Annex B: Consultations

Class	Stakeholder(s)	Institution
Donor	Katheryn Bennett Joanne Dowling Michael Morrissey Diastika Rahwidiati Zullia Saida Mila Nurichlas Dwiagus Stepantoro Awalia Murtiana	AusAID
Partner	Dr Firdaus, Director Islamic Schools Pak Rohmat, Head of Sub-directorates	MoRA
Implementing Team & Partners	Robert Kingham Robert Kennedy LAPIS Advisory Board members (x5)	LAPIS Central
	Sunaryo, Program Coordinator Amin Abdullah, Rector UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyas Susilaningsih, Director PSW UIN Sunan Kalijaga Ema Marhumah, Head of PSW Yogyakarta Muh Isnanto, PSW member Marzuki, madrasah principal	ELOIS

Class	Stakeholder(s)	Institution
	Russell Keogh, Team Leader Student teachers, IAIN Sunan Ampel Sugiyar, Subject Writer Hanun Asroh, Lecturer Junadedi, Master Trainer Nurul Hamamah, Principal Siti Mas'udah Yunifah, Teacher Imam Safei, School Supervisor	PGMI
	Dr Zuliati Rohmah, Coordinator A.Dzoul Milal, Master Trainer Master Trainers (x2) Dr Sjairofi Caroline Bentley, Team Leader Denise Finney, CEO IALF Dr Sjairofi Muhsinin, Mataram Coordinator Rahma Diana Sari, Curriculum Adviser Agnes Nindyarini Curriculum Adviser, Mark Hinde, ELT Specialist	ELTIS
	Integration School Development Coordinator Integration Local Partner, LEKDIS NUSSATERA	Integration

Annex C: Actors & Factors

			Change Actors	Change Factors
Time & Effect	Implementing Team	Central	• MORA (Dr Firdaus, Pak Rohmat) • Rob Kennedy • Rob Kingham • Administration staff • LAPIS Advisory Board members	• Program administered • Strategic direction iteratively reviewed and refined • 7 LAB meetings • 4 Reviews/Evaluations/Assessments • 1 Strategic Implementation Plan, 4 Annual Plans, 6 Six Monthly Reports
		PGMI	• Russell Keogh • Deputy • 8 national advisers (pre-service, in-service, curric. dev., materials dev.) • 4 short-term advisers (M&E, gender) • 97 writers • 48 specialist editors • 179 Master Trainers	• Produced 25 subject modules • Supplied classroom resources for 7 tertiary institutions • Facilitated training programs for lecturers from 7 tertiary institutions in 3 provinces

		Change Actors	Change Factors
	ELOIS	• Sunaryo & two support staff • 7 Master Trainers (lecturers from 2 universities)	• Developed 6 ToT modules for PAKEM (active creative joyful & effective learning)
	ELTIS	• Caroline Bentley • Dr Zuliati Rohmah (Coordinator, Surabaya) • Advisers (curriculum, materials, ELT, gender, M&E) • 61 Master Trainers	• 6 months of Master Trainer training • Develop curriculum modules • Develop resource packs for teachers
	Innovation	• 5 Activity Managers	• Administered 105 small grants
	Integration	• Integration School Development Coordinator	• 11 Integration Local Partners (ILP) and 125 local trainers recruited and managed • 61 block grants administered • Liaison with National Accreditation Body
Partners	PGMI	• 1,009 lecturers from 7 tertiary institutions in 3 provinces involved with primary school teacher training • 814 teachers (ToT) • 81 madrasah principals and 20 madrasah supervisers, • 56 faculty managers trained in quality assurance and management	• Better equipped teacher training programs • Better quality (multi-media, more interactive & planned) lecture formats
	ELOIS	• 4 Trainers from each of 6 PSW (i.e. 24 trainers) • Formation of 16 KKG (cluster teacher working group)	• 1,998 training days • 206 activities (madrasah training, KKG formation/training, school implementation)
	ELTIS	• 64 district trainers (supporting MGMP groups) • 773 junior secondary school teachers in 3 provinces	• 1350 English language upgrading training days for 773 junior secondary school teachers • 1060 Communicative English Language Teacher training days • Progressed through 4 levels of English language training and teaching methodology • Demonstrated better quality English teaching practices • Management workshops (5 days) for principals
	Innovation	• 105 Implementing partners (NGOs, MDCs etc)	• Predominant foci: madrasah base management, general subject matter, teacher training, facility refurbishment

		Change Actors	Change Factors
	Integration	• 11 Integration Local Partners (local NGOs) • 125 local trainers	• Conducted school mapping against 8 national accreditation standards • Facilitated around 4 days training in each of 10 modules • Provided on-site technical assistance for madrasah
Ultimate Beneficiaries	PGMI	• Approximately 1,344 primary school student teachers • 60 tertiary institutions	• Higher academic standards • Better quality teachers • MoRA directing 60 accredited universities to adopt 25 subject modules
	ELOIS	• 259 madrasah (163 *madrasah Ibtidaiyah,* 96 *madrasah tsanawiyah*) • 24,800 beneficiaries (principals, teachers, committees, parents)	• Better quality, more inclusive and gender responsive teaching and school management practices
	ELTIS	• Junior secondary school students in 650 schools in 3 provinces	• Better quality English teaching • Positive learning experience
	Innovation	• 105 madrasah	• Better equipped and capacitated madrasah
	Integration	• 60 madrasah	• 18 accredited madrasah (to date) • Informal assessments show improvement of at least 1 level in 57/60

APPENDIX E: ACTORS & FACTORS MATRIX

		Change Actors	**Change Factors**
↓↓↓↓ Time & Effect ↓↓↓↓ / **Implementing Team**	Central	• MORA (Dr Firdaus, Pak Rohmat) • Rob Kennedy • Rob Kingham • Administration staff • LAPIS Advisory Board members	• Program administered • Strategic direction iteratively reviewed and refined • 7 LAB meetings • 4 Reviews/Evaluations/Assessments • 1 Strategic Implementation Plan, 4 Annual Plans, 6 Six Monthly Reports
	PGMI	• Russell Keogh • Deputy • 8 national advisers (pre-service, in-service, curric. dev., materials dev.) • 4 short-term advisers (M&E, gender) • 97 writers • 48 specialist editors • 179 Master Trainers	• Produced 25 subject modules • Supplied classroom resources for 7 tertiary institutions • Facilitated training programs for lecturers from 7 tertiary institutions in 3 provinces
	ELOIS	• Sunaryo & two support staff • 7 Master Trainers (lecturers from 2 universities)	• Developed 6 ToT modules for PAKEM (active creative joyful & effective learning)
	ELTIS	• Caroline Bentley • Dr Zuliati Rohmah (Coordinator, Surabaya) • Advisers (curriculum, materials, ELT, gender, M&E) • 61 Master Trainers	• 6 months of Master Trainer training • Develop curriculum modules • Develop resource packs for teachers
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↓↓↓↓ Time & Effect ↓↓↓↓ / **Partners**	PGMI	• 1,009 lecturers from 7 tertiary institutions in 3 provinces involved with primary school teacher training • 814 teachers (ToT) • 81 madrasah principals and 20 madrasah supervisers, • 56 faculty managers trained in quality assurance and management	• Better equipped teacher training programs • Better quality (multi-media, more interactive & planned) lecture formats
	ELOIS	• 4 Trainers from each of 6 PSW (i.e. 24 trainers) • Formation of 16 KKG (cluster teacher working group)	• 1,998 training days • 206 activities (madrasah training, KKG formation/training, school implementation)
	ELTIS	• 64 district trainers (supporting MGMP groups) • 773 junior secondary school teachers in 3 provinces	• 1350 English language upgrading training days for 773 junior secondary school teachers • 1060 Communicative English

		Change Actors	Change Factors
			Language Teacher training days • Progressed through 4 levels of English language training and teaching methodology • Demonstrated better quality English teaching practices • Management workshops (5 days) for principals
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