

Quality at Entry Report

Initiative Name: Laos Australian Scholarships Management

AidWorks ID: INH095

Start Date: 2 April 2007

End Date: 30 June 2007

Total Amount: \$7,235,920

	Rating	Explanation	Pending Action (if needed)
1. Clear objectives	5	Overall goal is consistent with directions of CPS and broader Australian priorities. ADS and ALA purpose are consistent with draft goals produced by Scholarships Thematic Group and tie into CPS Objective 1 – Building Lao Human Capital. All objectives are clear and in line with broader corporate objectives for scholarships programs. ADS objectives: 1 is measurable and realistic; 2 is realistic, but difficult to measure; 3 is realistic, but difficult to measure. ALA objectives: 1 is measurable and realistic; 2 is realistic, but difficult to measure; 3 is measurable and realistic. Objectives will strengthen partnerships with key Ministries (esp. Targeted ADS). Australian Scholarships program has been endorsed by GoL.	The Independent Appraisal indicated goals and objectives could better reflect relevance to key objectives of the aid program. The ongoing management and review components of the program (i.e. annual strategic review) will endeavour to strengthen this articulation.
2. Monitoring framework	4	The M&E Framework contains clear information on what we are seeking to measure and how we will go about it. The framework will require further development once Scholarships Thematic Group has completed work on an Australian Scholarships M&E Framework. There is sufficient flexibility in the current framework and scope of services to allow for this. The Contractor will collect performance information and include in each annual report. Annual reports will assist in the collation of APPUs. This, along with a mid-term review, will provide scope for learning lessons. Different roles and levels of monitoring for the Contractor, AusAID and GoL are articulated.	M&E Framework will require further development when the Australian Scholarships M&E Framework is finalised to ensure Lao data is consistent with corporate requirements. Need to discuss with Scholarships about who will collect what information, at what times and for what purpose.
3. Sustainability	5	The GoL strongly identifies with the ADS program and (in a recent review) expressed satisfaction with the program and its outcomes (there are many ADS graduates in the Lao Public Service, several of whom are high ranking officials). The National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2006-2010) states that “a policy will be established to encourage households to send their children to study abroad and then return to serve the country” (p.148). The structure of ADS and ALA awards fits with this policy as graduates must return to Laos once they have obtained their award.	Alignment with evolving GoL priorities will be ensured through the annual strategic review process and regular dialogue with key GoL counterparts.

4. Implementation and Risk Management	5	Roles and responsibilities for Post and the Contractor are well defined, but will also allow for adjustments (i.e. future outsourcing of more management aspects of ALA program to Contractor). Comprehensive risk matrix included in PDD, including proposed risk treatment and responsibilities. This matrix will be revisited regularly and updated to reflect any changes that occur. M&E Framework provides several mechanisms for assessing contractor performance and ensuring the ADS selection process remains open and transparent.	Further work to be undertaken on the M&E structures to align with broader corporate (Scholarships) priorities.
5. Analysis and lessons	6	The PDD is solidly grounded in the findings and recommendations of a recent major review and the future directions of the aid program as outlined in the White Paper. The review analysed cross-cutting issues and constraints to development and concluded the current program is working well, but could be enhanced. The GoL endorsed the findings of the review and indicated the Australian model of scholarship provision is one they would like to share with other donors as an example.	
Initially rated by:		Endorsed by peer review on:	 Approved by Meg Johnson (A/g Director Mekong Programs) – Chair Date 21/6/07  Approved by Michael Wilson (ADG ABB) Date 21/6/07
Michael Hassett, Maniuhda Sithimolada and Paul Mitchell		14 June 2007	