

AusAID South Asia Scholarships Program

Design Document

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

A-Based	AusAID staff at a country Post who are normally based in Australia
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADS	Australian Development Scholarships
ALA	Australian Leadership Awards Scholarships
ASAN	Australian Scholarships Alumni Network
ASG	AusAID Australian Scholarships Group
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CHTDF	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility
CM	Carnegie Mellon University
CTCP	Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DFID	UK Department for International Cooperation
DIAC	(Australian) Department of Immigration and Citizenship
Endeavour	Australian Government “Endeavour Award” scholarships, managed by DEEWR
ELT	English Language Training
Fulbright	Fulbright Program established in 1946 by U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GoM	Government of the Maldives
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HRD	Human Resource Development
IAP	Introductory Academic Program
IDP	IDP Education
ICDDR.B	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
IT	Information Technology
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Managing Contractor
MTR	Mid Term Review
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NFP	The Netherlands Fellowship Programs
O-Based	Overseas Based AusAID staff at a country Post, normally based in that country
OASIS	Online Application Scholarships Information System
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PMTc	PMTc Bangladesh Ltd (a consulting group)
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy (Bangladesh)
QAI	Quality at Implementation
SIMON	Student Information Management Online
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States of America
VFS	VFS Global (Australia Visa Application Centre)
WB	World Bank
WoG	Whole of Government

Executive Summary

Rationale for the Outsourcing

This design is for the outsourcing of selected management and administrative functions of AusAID's scholarships program in South Asia. The scholarships program is a key delivery mechanism of the Australian Government's development cooperation across South Asia. Approximately 500 Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) have been offered in the past five years, and around 102 Australian Leadership Awards (ALAs) were offered in 2007 and 2008. At present, staff at AusAID's South Asia Posts are responsible for administration and management of the scholarships programs. Scholarship administration is resource intensive, absorbing a significant proportion of Post resources, which would be better directed towards higher-level policy, strategic tasks and managing AusAID's increased aid flows. A review of the Australian Scholarships Program in South Asia, conducted in late 2007 focused on improving effectiveness and efficiency, recommended AusAID to outsource routine administrative functions to an external provider, using a centralised single contractor approach with the Managing Contractor (MC) office in Dhaka.

There is also increasing need for AusAID to focus more on monitoring scholarship effectiveness and the overall impact. This will include developing and strengthening Alumni, tracking scholarship impact, the contribution to development by returned scholars¹ and using targeted selection and reintegration strategies. An increased focus on effectiveness will include developing and trialing of scholar reintegration strategies and (where applicable) HRD planning with key partner government and counterpart stakeholders.

The proposed contract is up to five years, with an initial contract of three years and an option of a two-year extension, subject to a favourable performance review. Given this outsourcing covers six countries, it is important that the MC is completely aware of the different schedules, deadlines, methods and considerations that apply to the scholarship cycle in each country. Annual reviews will address performance issues and act as a basis for continuous improvement of systems and services.

Australia's South Asia Development Assistance Program

The estimated ODA budget for 2008-09 is \$113.47 million, plus additional funding for humanitarian, emergency and refugee programs.

Country	Estimated Country Program Funds 2008-09 (Million)	Estimated total ODA in 2008-09 (Million)
Bangladesh	\$34.45	\$52.57
Nepal	\$5.69	\$8.22
Sri Lanka	\$10.93	\$27.02
India	\$2.2	\$5.36
Maldives	\$2.6	\$4.57
Bhutan	\$2.0	\$3.23
South Asia Regional	\$10.42	\$12.5
Total	\$68.29	\$113.47

AusAID will deliver the major part of its assistance through partnerships with multilateral agencies, NGOs and bilateral donor partners. It will focus on meeting the needs of vulnerable groups, including the poorest, women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. The program will maintain its strong gender focus, targeting the needs of women and girls. Equal numbers of male and female ADS scholarship awards will remain, with AusAID focused on maximising opportunities for women to receive scholarships.

The Goal and Objective

Goal: Australian scholarship awardees contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in South Asia.

¹ AusAID's Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) has developed guidance for Monitoring and Evaluation of AusAID Scholarships to assist country programs to develop a specific M&E framework. The ASG is taking the lead role in conducting a series of M&E activities including ongoing student survey, review of student selection and reintegration strategy, and review of scholarship effectiveness.

Objective: Increased capacity in priority fields, disciplines and organisations in South Asia, via increased access to higher professional and technical knowledge and linkages with individuals and institutions within the region and Australia.

Priority sectors, partner organisations and the unique requirements for each Country Program are determined by AusAID. The role of the MC is to support AusAID and the scholarships program to achieve the Objectives and to better contribute to the Goal. The MC, in the context of the overarching South Asia Regional Framework, will ensure that its staff provide scholarship support, have local delegation of responsibility and that service levels are appropriate to each country. To clarify the administrative support needs in each of the six countries, a detailed matrix is included in the Scope of Services (SoS) at Annex 5. The SoS including the matrix provides details of scholarship support requirements and a basis for the MC to establish and manage staffing in each country, including liaison with each AusAID Post and the required support / IT systems.

Key Issues to be Included in Outsourcing

Outsourcing of key services involves inherent risks and potential issues that need to be addressed through the design, via the contract and through Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems. The following risks and potential issues are addressed in the design and also through the SoS:

- o The identity of the Australian Government / AusAID as the funding provider for scholarships programs, so the MC will need to ensure that the profile of AusAID is maintained and enhanced.
- o Governance and transparency are addressed through the design, including the operation of scholarship administration and the modeling of good practice.
- o The relationship between AusAID, partner governments and Australian Whole of Government (WoG) partners must be understood by the MC, with support provided to maintain dialogue and communication.
- o Women, minority and disadvantaged groups will be given special consideration, with suitably qualified female candidates and applicants from specifically targeted disadvantaged groups encouraged to apply. As part of increasing access, it is proposed, on a country by country basis, some support be provided to non-urban, women and other disadvantaged ADS applicants who missed out because their IELTS score was not quite high enough to qualify. The Post responsible for each South Asia country will decide on how and to whom if this additional support will be provided and develop their policy for “off-the-shelf” in-country English Language Training (ELT)². Under instruction from the individual Post, only candidates from minority groups, disadvantaged (ie by caste), women or non-urban applicants would be eligible for ELT support. It is expected that the maximum period of ELT will be no more than six months.
- o Consistency in MC services to all stakeholders is critical. There may be significant overlap in the timing of scholarship activities across the six countries, and these schedules will be accommodated by the MC.
- o IT and office infrastructure will be of high importance, as AusAID progressively utilizes its online systems such as Online Application Scholarships Information System (OASIS) and Student Information Management Online (SIMON) for application processing and program implementation.
- o AusAID requires the MC to support its own internal and external reporting requirements, as well as information available through M&E systems, tracer studies and case studies.
- o A systematic approach to HRD planning for scholars / partners and establishing scholarship impact has not been established. The sustainability of South Asia’s scholarships program is difficult to assess. The MC will support each Post in developing strategies to assess impact and effectiveness through drafting a reintegration strategy that will be used as a tool to increase awareness of the need to align study with agency priorities and as support forward planning. The HRD will focus on supporting AusAID staff develop methods and templates to work with Partners in clarifying forward development priorities as part of nominating staff for an award. The HRD and career planning will become a focus at the time of scholars’ re-entry back into their organisation as part of determining overall impact of the program.
- o Limited emphasis has been placed on Alumni networks and linkages. The MC will develop an Alumni Plan for South Asia covering the Alumni objectives, establishment and maintenance approaches, scope of alumni activities, sustainability strategies, critical risk factors and proposed mitigation actions, and costs..

² Each country context is different, with varying levels of ELT resources available outside of the main centres. The proposed ELT support provides an option, should the Post determine, to provide this additional ELT support to a small number of targeted candidates.

Lessons Learned from Previous AusAID Scholarship Outsourcing

Lessons from AusAID country programs that have already outsourced parts of their scholarship administration include the following:

- o Strengthening profile, with scholarships clearly identified under AusAID's banner, including AusAID presence at key promotional and management activities, scholar Pre Departure briefing and functions.
- o Scholarship integrity must be maintained, not compromised by ineffective, inefficient or unskilled MC staff.
- o Maintaining AusAID's corporate knowledge and staff skills is required for staff to effectively monitor the contract, ensuring policy, strategy and other key scholarship activities are controlled by AusAID.
- o AusAID's reporting requirements cannot be compromised or delayed and the Scope of Services and M&E framework clearly outline AusAID's support and activity requirements for South Asia. In addition to AusAID reporting requirements, the MC must ensure timely, quality communication with local stakeholders.
- o Impact and sustainability of AusAID's scholarship program need to be measured, evaluated and reported.

Summary of Scholarship Services

The services required include the activities related to promotion, advertising, pre-selection, placement, student mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), development of a reintegration strategy, and development of Alumni Plan. The country details of the AusAID scholarships are:

Bangladesh	ADS and ALA	India	ALA only
Nepal*	ALA only	Bhutan	ADS and ALA
Sri Lanka	ADS and ALA	Maldives	ADS and ALA

(*For Nepal, it is anticipated that ADS will be reinstated in 2010 to enable scholarship holders to commence studies in 2011. At this stage, the number of scholarships expected to be awarded in 2011 will be around 10 subject to funding availability.)

A small number of scholarships have been awarded for study at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and the Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention Scholarships Program (CTCPSP) at the University of Wollongong. In 2008, three CMU-AusAID scholarships and no CTCPSP scholarships were awarded to students from countries covered by this design document. It is anticipated the number of scholarships offered under these two schemes to South Asia countries during the life of the Contract will be very small. If these scholarships are awarded, it will be the responsibility of the MC to provide support and management services.

While the MC will be required to provide scholarship data, information and reporting, AusAID will continue to hold responsibility for undertaking M&E that deals with the impact of the South Asia scholarships program in each of the six countries. The MC, through case studies and tracer studies, will contribute the collection and analysis of information that relates to the efficiency of the scholarship management systems as well as overall impact.

At commencement, there will be a 2-week training / workshop activity in Dhaka. This will be delivered by AusAID staff to MC staff holding responsibility for support in the six countries. This workshop will provide MC senior staff and their country associates with all templates, standard documentation, processes and requirements for the scholarship management in each country, including training on SIMON and OASIS. It is expected that this 2-week activity will involve AusAID staff from Canberra, from Dhaka Post and from other South Asia Posts. An indicative program, covering topics from the general to the specific, could include:

- o Week-1: General information and management requirements: the AusAID scholarship structure; quality measures; security and confidentiality; gender; scholarship eligibility criteria; AusAID's global and regional reporting requirements; introduction to the functionality of SIMON and OASIS systems;
- o Week 2: Specific Country-based issues, context and arrangements, key contacts; existing templates; communication channels. This detailed information would be delivered by the appropriate AusAID Post staff member attending the workshop on behalf of that country's scholarship program.

Following this initial training in Dhaka, it is expected that ad-hoc training for MC staff will be provided by AusAID, focused on country specific requirements and updates on AusAID scholarship management policy, guidelines, processes, and SIMON / OASIS. While some activities will be immediately transferred to the MC, the majority of scholarship services outsourced will be handed over to the MC within the initial 2-month period. Additional

training and ad-hoc advice from Post staff will likely occur over the initial 12 months, covering specific issues and processes until the time that the MC has completed a full cycle of the scholarship program.

The workshop will be followed by the MC training its staff for each country's scholarship requirements, standards, confidentiality and deadlines. This in-house training will be followed by the progressive handover of responsibilities from AusAID Posts. The MC in each country will work with AusAID Post staff to ensure a smooth transition and the first point of contact for the MC in each country will be the nominated AusAID staff member at the Post.

AusAID will maintain its strategic engagement responsibilities, including with Partner Government counterparts, as well as for setting scholarship numbers and defining priority areas of study. AusAID will also maintain its control / management of key decision points, particularly those relating to short-listing and final selection.

1. RATIONALE

1.1 Background

The Australian Scholarships program is a key delivery mechanism and integral part of the Australian Government's development cooperation program across South Asia. Approximately 500 Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) have been offered in the past five years, and around 102 Australian Leadership Awards (ALAs) were offered in 2007 and 2008. Other scholarship programs supported in selected countries in the region include Carnegie Mellon Scholarships (CMS) and the Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP) awards. At present, staff at AusAID's South Asia Posts are responsible for scholarship administration and management, with specialist support provided by short-term and external consultants. Current management and administrative processes include the promotion of scholarships; receiving applications / nominations; short-listing of applications, ranking and joint selection of candidates; placement of awardees in Australian institutions / courses; conducting scholar pre-departure briefing and mobilising of scholars, and post award monitoring.

Scholarship administration is resource intensive, absorbing scarce South Asia Post resources which would be better directed towards higher-level policy/strategic tasks and managing AusAID's increased aid flows to the region.

The majority of AusAID's scholarship programs have already outsourced their administrative functions, with South Asia one of the last to contract out the services. Currently, Post resources are largely devoted to scholarship administrative processes with little time available for program improvements, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and scholarship impact assessment. The forecast is for an increasing size and volume of Australia's aid in South Asia, while AusAID's overall Post staff numbers will essentially remain the same. With increased aid flow, it is important to ensure AusAID Post staff resources are used effectively and efficiently to better focus on:

- o Policy and strategic issues;
- o Greater dialogue and engagement with partner government, bilateral / multilateral partners and NGOs; and
- o Program quality, effectiveness, performance and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

There is increasing need for AusAID to focus more on the M&E of scholarship effectiveness and impact. This includes establishing and promoting an effective Alumni, tracking scholarship impact and contribution to national development by returned scholars, and developing reintegration strategies involving key counterpart stakeholders. At the country program level, while certain elements of M&E activities can be outsourced, AusAID Posts will increasingly take a leading role in overseeing local M&E activities in line with AusAID's overall scholarships M&E Framework.

A review of the Australian Scholarships Program in South Asia was conducted in late 2007 to assess scholarship program processes and management arrangements in order to:

- o Propose ways of rationalising the management and administration of South Asia scholarships, streamlining processes through a regionally consistent approach, and
- o Recommend options for maximising overall management effectiveness of the program.

The review focused on improving effectiveness and efficiency in scholarship management and recommended AusAID outsource routine administrative functions / tasks to free up Post resources for policy and strategic development tasks. All Posts have agreed that administration of the scholarships be outsourced using a centralised single contractor approach, with the MC office located in Dhaka.

AusAID's Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is currently conducting a number of reviews on AusAID scholarships including scholarship effectiveness review, selection and re-integration review, Introductory Academic Program (IAP) review, and Australian Scholarships Alumni Network (ASAN) scoping pilot. These reviews are aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of AusAID funded scholarships. The MC will be expected to work with each Post to implement the recommendations of these reviews and may also be asked to provide input into any future scholarship reviews.

1.2 Australia's Policy Framework and Aid to South Asia

Australia has provided development assistance to South Asia since the 1950s, as part of international efforts to promote regional growth and development. The South Asia program consists of country programs in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The program is guided by the South Asia Regional Framework,

which has an emphasis on increasing aid effectiveness, and supporting human resource development. Monitoring and evaluation of scholarships program will continue to be strengthened.

Australia's South Asia policy framework emphasises the value of well-targeted scholarships with proper gender balance. This is a highly effective approach, empowering people to drive their national development and reform agendas. Scholarships are also seen as an investment in nation-building, supporting the development of future leaders while fostering relationships between Australia and the region.

Total Australian aid to South Asia is forecast to increase. Bangladesh will continue to be the largest country program, and is expected to absorb around half of South Asia program financial resources by 2010. The Nepal program will also grow, through new investments in health and education, while bilateral funding for Sri Lanka is expected to be maintained at the current level in the short to medium term. Australia's broadening relationship with India may lead to increased aid flows, principally as a component of regional programs including adaptation to climate change. Australian aid to the Maldives and Bhutan, with their combined population of around one million people, will remain commensurably modest and will focus on scholarships.

1.3 Australia's South Asia Development Assistance Program

Australia is a relatively modest donor in South Asia, though this profile may change with the projected growth. It is important that Australian aid maximises effectiveness and efficiency. Approximately \$66.1 million in 2007-08 was provided under country programs focusing on improving basic service delivery, better governance and responding to humanitarian needs. The estimated budget for 2008-09 is \$68.3 million, plus any additional funding for humanitarian, emergency and refugee programs.

As the largest of South Asia program, Bangladesh will receive the largest allocation in coming years. AusAID will deliver the major part of its assistance through partnerships with strong multilateral agencies, NGOs and bilateral donor partners and the program will increase focus on meeting the needs of vulnerable groups, including the poorest, women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. Table 1 below provides the 2008-2009 budget breakdowns for each country under the South Asia Program.

Table 1. 2008-09 Budget for Australia's Development Assistance in South Asia³

Country	Estimated Country Program Funding in 2008-09 (million)	Estimated total ODA in 2008-09 (million)
Bangladesh	\$34.45	\$52.57
Nepal	\$5.69	\$8.22
Sri Lanka	\$10.93	\$27.02
India	\$2.2	\$5.36
Maldives	\$2.6	\$4.57
Bhutan	\$2.0	\$3.23
South Asia Regional	\$10.42	\$12.5
Total	\$68.29	\$113.47

The AusAID program in South Asia will maintain a strong gender focus, targeting the needs of women and girls. Achieving equal numbers of male and female ADS scholarships will remain a priority. AusAID and the MC will focus on opportunities for women to receive scholarships, with ongoing strategies that seek out eligible scholars from currently underrepresented groups. To achieve this gender target, in consultation with AusAID, the MC will promote the Australian scholarship opportunities to as broad an audience as is possible. This will help ensure a larger group of eligible women are aware of ADS / ALA opportunities, including the support that is available to women to undertake study in Australia (e.g. benefits of accompanying spouse and children allowances for ADS scholars).

³ Development activities funded under each country program can be obtained from the following website: <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/default.cfm>

Increased efforts to promote the Australian scholarship opportunity to women should use a variety of dissemination methods including where appropriate (for example) local and national newspapers, FM radio and through providing targeted information to specific Partner agencies. In addition, it is proposed that the AusAID Posts in the individual countries may choose to provide targeted ADS candidates with additional support via short-term in-country English Language Training (ELT)⁴. This would be limited to using “off the shelf” local training courses. The Post for each South Asia country, based on the country situation, will decide on how and to whom this additional support will be provided. It is expected the maximum period of ELT will be no more than 6 months.

1.4 The Australian Scholarships Program in South Asia

Australian scholarships represent a significant proportion of the overall Australian Government aid budget to the region. The ADS scholarships are offered in four of the six South Asian countries covered by this design document, with the exceptions being Nepal and India, where they were phased out in 2006 and 2004 respectively. The ALA is offered to all countries in South Asia. The total number of ADS awards offered in the region for 2008 was around 102, including 54 for Bangladesh, 22 for Bhutan, 20 for Maldives, and 6 for Sri Lanka. Total ADS expenditure for 2007-08 was approximately \$8 million. In addition, the South Asia programs were allocated 49 ALA awards in 2008, with expenditure in 2007-08 of over \$3 million⁵. Table 2 below shows ADS and ALA expenditure in 2007-08 by country.

Table 2. ADS and ALA 2007-08 Expenditure by Country

Country	ADS expenditure in 2007-08 (million)	ALA expenditure in 2007-08 (million)
Bangladesh	\$4.419	\$1.409
Nepal	-	\$0.555
Sri Lanka	\$0.557	\$0.519
India	-	\$0.243
Maldives	\$1.516	\$0.236
Bhutan	\$1.394	\$0.208
Total	\$7.886	\$3.17

The Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) aim to contribute to long term development needs of Australia's partner countries to promote growth and stability. They provide opportunities to undertake full time undergraduate or postgraduate study in Australia, with fields of study targeted to address the priority HRD needs of recipient countries, in line with Australia's bilateral aid program. ADS equips scholars with the skills and knowledge to drive change and influence the development outcomes of their own country through obtaining tertiary qualifications at participating Australian higher education institutions and technical colleges⁶.

There are two categories of ADS: **Public sector**, where applicants are public sector employees nominated by their government agencies through a competitive selection process. They are required to return to their role in the public service at the completion of their award to strengthen public service capacity. **Open / Equity** ADS applicants do not need to be nominated by their government agencies or employer. Anyone who meets the selection criteria may apply under this category. These applicants are required to return to their country of citizenship after the completion of the award to contribute to the development of the identified priority sector in their country.

The Australian Leadership Award (ALA) scholarships aim to develop leadership and build partnerships and linkages within the Asia-Pacific. They are intended for those who are already leaders or have the potential to assume leadership roles that can influence social and economic policy reform and development outcomes, both in their own countries and the Asia-Pacific region. The ALA program comprises of Scholarships and Fellowships.

⁴ It is expected that, if requested by the AusAID Post, the MC would identify suitable local EL providers with suitable “off-the-shelf” 3-6 month courses for ADS applicants to undertake to improve their IELTS score.

⁵ Information on AusAID scholarships including objectives, eligibility criteria and conditions at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar/default.cfm>

⁶ See the Australian Development Scholarship Handbook, in the Scholarship section of the website at www.ausaid.gov.au

Detailed information is available from AusAID's website⁷. The ALA Scholarships are academically prestigious awards offered to high achievers from the Asia-Pacific region each year to undertake postgraduate study (Masters or Doctorate) and a Leadership Development Program in Australia. Selection for ALA Scholarships is highly competitive, based on leadership qualities and on academic excellence.

The **Carnegie Mellon Scholarships Program** (CMU-AusAID) supports a limited number of students to undertake a Masters Degree at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Administration at Carnegie Mellon's campus in Adelaide. These scholarships aim to strengthen human resource capacity in partner countries in public policy, management and information technology. In 2008, three CMU-AusAID scholarships were awarded to students from South Asia countries.

The **Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention Scholarships Program** (CTCPSP) is administered by the University of Wollongong's Centre for Transnational Crime. The courses focus on responses to organised criminal activities that impact on regional and global security, including narcotics production, trafficking of firearms and people, terrorism, fraud and money laundering, corruption, cybercrime and natural resource poaching. In 2008-9, no CTCPSP scholarships were awarded to students from countries covered by this design.

It is anticipated the number of CMU-AusAID and CTCPSP scholarships to be offered during the contract period will be very small. If these scholarships are awarded, it will be the responsibility of the MC to provide support and management services.

In 2008 intake, a total of 102 ADS scholarships were awarded for the South Asia region from 325 ADS applications received. In addition to ADS, 49 ALA scholarships were awarded to South Asia region on a competitive merit-basis from 364 ALA applications received. In 2009 intake, approximately 92 ADS and 40 ALA scholarships were awarded. It is expected that around the same level of ADS scholarships will be awarded in South Asia for 2010 intake and around 40 ALA scholarships will be allocated for South Asia countries for 2010 intake.

For Nepal, it is anticipated that ADS will be reinstated in 2010 to enable scholarship holders to commence studies in 2011. At this stage, the number of scholarships expected to be awarded in 2011 will be around 10 subject to funding availability.

Table 3 indicates the number of ADS and ALA Scholarships applications, awards and expected returned awardees for each country for studies commencing in 2008 and 2009. These figures provide an indication of the workload at each country and subsequently the required support staff.

Table 3: Anticipated scholarship application numbers and expected awards, by country⁸.

	BANGLADESH	BHUTAN	SRI LANKA	MALDIVES	NEPAL	INDIA	Total
ADS							
# 2008 ADS Applications	180	35	33	71	n/a	n/a	325
# of 2008 ADS Awards	54 (Including 20 for CHT)	22	6	20	n/a	n/a	102
# of ADS Expect to Return home in 2008	50	4	5	11	n/a	n/a	80
ALA							
# of 2008 ALA Applications submitted	131	29	70	14	69	51	364
# of 2008 ALA eligible applications	108	23	49	10	62	30	282
# of 2008 ALA Awards	16	7	9	3	10	4	49

⁷ See the Australian Leadership Awards Scholarship Handbook, in the Scholarship section of the website at www.ausaid.gov.au

⁸ Other small scholarship programs, including the CMU and CTCPSP, involve relatively minor ad-hoc support services, including for mobilisation. As an indication of the support required, South Asia has had a total of 6 such scholarships to support over the past 3 years.

ADS							
# 2009 ADS Applications	150	38	27	108	n/a	n/a	323
# of 2009 ADS Awards	46 (Including 20 for CHT)	22	10	14	n/a	n/a	92
# of ADS Expect to Return home in 2009	41	28	5	17	n/a	n/a	91
ALA							
# of 2009 ALA Applications submitted	133	38	58	14	48	20	312
# of 2009 ALA eligible applications	108	27	20	7	37	15	214
# of 2009 ALA Awards	13	6	6	2	8	5	40

1.5 Potential Future Trends and Contract Requirements

Table 3 provides information for an MC to estimate its required staffing levels and IT / logistical systems for each country. With Value for Money being a major factor, it is clear an MC will need to provide flexibility in their staffing / system availability levels, should the number of scholarships increase in the future. The proposed costs of MCs key staff and support services will be assessed as part of tender evaluation, with the base costs for staff forming part of the contract. It is expected the MC will accommodate small changes in the number of applications received and then processed across the participating countries. However it is also clear that, above a certain increase in numbers, a variation to contract would be required.

Taking into account the potential variation in numbers processed, it is proposed that AusAID take into consideration any large change in scholarship numbers as the basis for a contract variation. This approach enables the MC to estimate their proposed staff numbers and system requirements in relation to the volume of work. It is proposed that an increase (or decrease) of more than 20% from the overall number of scholars that are mobilized in any academic year, will act as the trigger for a contract variation. The base line for the numbers will be the 2008 scholarship figures as outlined in Table 3. The fee rates used to make changes to MC staff inputs / numbers etc will be those nominated as part of the tender process and subsequently used at contract negotiation.

With the increasing need for AusAID to spend more effort on measuring the effectiveness and impact of scholarships, Post and MC staff will devote more time to working with Partners Government in relation to scholar reintegration strategies including monitoring implementation of the ADS student's Human Resource Development (HRD) plans within their home agency. To achieve this increased focus on HRD, the MC will develop a cohesive scholar reintegration strategy, linked to agency HRD plans where applicable. Under AusAID guidance, the reintegration strategy will become part of the overall management process for the scholarship program and highlight (to scholars and to agencies) the importance of career and agency planning as part of maximizing scholarship impact over time.

As part of the approach to increase both impact and profile of the Australian scholarship program, under AusAID guidance, the MC will develop an Alumni Plan covering the Alumni objectives, establishment and maintenance approaches, scope of alumni activities, sustainability strategies, critical risk factors and proposed mitigation actions, and costs. .

1.6 The South Asia Country Setting

With over 400 million people in absolute poverty, South Asia faces huge development challenges and only moderate progress has been made towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Bangladesh is unlikely to meet its MDG targets by 2015, including those for eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, and reducing maternal and child mortality. Economic growth has been strong over the last five years, from 7% (Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) to 9% (India) in 2006, although development has been hampered by political instability, natural disasters, violent civil conflicts and widespread corruption.

A risk in taking a regional approach to outsourcing scholarship services is ensuring consistent levels of service quality and support to AusAID and ADS / ALA programs. Each participating country has its own unique requirements, in terms of AusAID representation, government timelines, local sensitivities and networks. It will be

the responsibility of the MC to understand the needs within each of these countries and put in place the required staff and systems to reflect and meet the local needs.

From the completion of the initial 2-week training / workshop activity, the MC would progressively take over the agreed responsibilities from AusAID for ADS / ALA management, working in cooperation with AusAID staff in Dhaka, Colombo, Kathmandu, and New Delhi offices. It is anticipated the handover of scholarship responsibilities would happen in a way that enables AusAID to complete any outstanding work for the 2009-2010 intake, while handing over responsibility for 2010-2011 ADS / ALA intakes.

The following brief summaries are meant to provide a “snapshot” of the ADS / ALA scholarship context within each participating country. Additional information and details for the Australian Government’s South Asia program, as well as detailed descriptions of the individual country programs, are available at AusAID’s website.

The Context in Bangladesh

Bangladesh remains one of the poorest, densely populated countries in the world with over 80% of its 150 million people living on less than \$2 per day. It is ranked 140th out of 177 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI).⁹ Due to its low-lying landscape, Bangladesh is prone to frequent natural disasters and vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Bangladesh’s political and governance also poses a significant challenge and since independence, Bangladesh has been plagued by political instability and corruption. Constraints include poor quality of service delivery, combined with inequities to basic services in terms of access, equity and gender. This is primarily the result of systemic weak governance, limited Human Resource Development (HRD) capacity and highly centralised systems.

In response to the MDGs, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) developed a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) with seven critical pathways to poverty reduction. Progress has been made towards MDG health and nutrition targets, most notably in education. Bangladesh has achieved the MDG of gender parity in enrolments, and the literacy rate increased from 17% in 1971 to 48% (54% males: 41% females) in 2001¹⁰.

Australian aid to Bangladesh in 2007-08 was \$46.5m, a 37% increase over 2006 - 07. By 2009-10 assistance to Bangladesh is anticipated to be around \$80 million, with further increases expected in following years. Bangladesh has the largest number of the South Asia ADS, with 54 and 46 awarded in 2008 and 2009 respectively. These ADS are designated for employees of the GoB, the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B - a non-government international health research institution) and indigenous people of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). With Bangladesh ADS representing around 50% of South Asia scholarships, the MC will be located in Dhaka and have strong, reliable networks of associates / affiliates to support ADS / ALA in the other five countries.

Within the 54 and 46 ADS scholarships awarded in 2008 and 2009 in Bangladesh, 20 in each year are allocated to indigenous CHT communities. These targeted scholarships reflect the commitment of the GoB to provide ongoing opportunities for indigenous communities as part of peace building and social / economic development. No specific number of ALA scholarships is “set aside” for the indigenous CHT communities. The CHT scholarships have several unique requirements, including for ADS and ALA opportunities to be well publicised across the CHT communities, improving access and heightening awareness of the scholarship availability.

The promotion and administration of ADS for the CHT is currently undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Dhaka, under a direct contract with AusAID until 2011. The UNDP have networks in the CHT that are used to publicise ADS / ALA opportunities, including through the use of traditional systems and “village heads” to promote the scholarships. It is proposed that the administration of the CHT ADS be included in the overall responsibility of the MC, including receipt of the CHT ADS applications for short-listing, as well as the administration of logistics and mobilisation / return support for the CHT scholars. However, it is proposed that the UNDP expertise and existing networks continue to be used to promote the ADS / ALA opportunities across the CHT communities. This ADS promotion and advocacy work for the CHT communities would remain under a

⁹ UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-8

¹⁰ 2001 Census.

contract between AusAID and the UNDP, with the MC assuming responsibility for scholarship management once the CHT applications are lodged¹¹.

The Context in Nepal

Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita GDP of US\$272 and low rates of economic growth. Some 30% of Nepal's 27.1 million people live in absolute poverty with 68% living on less than \$2 per day. Nepal is ranked 142nd out of 177 on the HDI¹². Nepal is at a turning point in its history since the April 2008 Constituent Election (the first in Nepal since 1999), where the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) won 220 of the 601 seats in the new Constituent Assembly, which declared Nepal a republic and abolished the monarchy.

The MDG Progress Report (2005) indicates the country is unlikely to meet the goals, particularly in education and health. Progress has been made in some health and education indicators, especially for improvement in child and maternal mortality and increased girls' enrolment in school and Nepal has an adult literacy rate of only 48%. Due to limited staffing resources and complications in visa issuance at Post, ADS was terminated in Nepal in 2006. It is anticipated that ADS will be reinstated in 2010 for awardees to commence studies in 2011. At this stage, the number of scholarships expected to be awarded in 2011 will be around 10 subject to funding availability.

One of the features of the scholarships in Nepal is the high concentration of awardees that live and work in the Kathmandu Valley. It is expected that the MC will continue the efforts to promote the scholarship opportunities outside of Kathmandu, using relevant media including the universally available FM Radio to reach eligible candidates living / working in the more remote communities. This process of raising awareness of the ALA scholarships will need to be started well in advance of the closing dates, to enable the potential candidates to receive the information and make the necessary arrangements to apply.

The Context in Sri Lanka

With over 40% of its 19.1 million people living on less than \$2 per day, Sri Lanka is ranked 99th out of 177 on the HDI¹³. Since 1983 Sri Lanka has been afflicted by serious civil conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). This has exacerbated poverty and resulted in large inequities between regions. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced, there are estimates of over 70,000 people killed and the immediate prospects for a resumption of peace talks appear bleak.

Although Sri Lanka's health and education systems are good compared to other countries in the region, their quality is under threat because of a lack of government investment in infrastructure, education and public services. Health is of concern in rural pockets and war affected areas, hill country plantations and in remote rural areas. Sri Lanka has an adult literacy rate of over 90%, however there is a large gap in higher education between the available training and the country's needs. Lack of facilities and services and the ongoing conflict in Sri Lanka are important issues. High emigration rates means many of those who are best qualified are now overseas. There is some concern that due to the deteriorating security situation in Sri Lanka, the Australian scholarships program could be used by some who wish to leave Sri Lanka, as an alternative route to gain entry into Australia.

The AusAID staff in Colombo is also responsible for the agency's development program in the Maldives, including for the ADS and ALA scholarships. Therefore the MC representative in Colombo will also be required to liaise with the local AusAID staff in relation to ADS and ALA in the Maldives.

The Context in India

Over 80% of India's 1.1 billion population lives on less than \$2 per day, ranking it 128th out of 177 on the HDI¹⁴. India has made progress on a scale, size and pace unprecedented in its history and is one of the world's fastest growing economies, with GDP growth over 9%. While successfully pursuing growth, India faces new challenges, including improving core public services and making growth more inclusive and sustainable. Critical health

¹¹ There is also a network of CHT people who have migrated to Australia and who provide support to the CHT scholars, especially in the early stages of their time in Australia

¹² UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-8

¹³ UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-8

¹⁴ UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-8

indicators such as maternal mortality rates have shown little improvement and minimal progress has been made in addressing malnutrition.

Economic growth has created disparities between urban and rural areas, prosperous and lagging states and skilled and low-skilled workers. Infrastructure has been unable to keep pace with the country's needs. Access to safe water and adequate sanitation is emerging as a critical challenge, as is the threat of HIV/AIDS. AusAID's program is now focused on HIV / AIDS including harm reduction, being geographically focused in the North East. While India is an eligible country for ALA, there is no ADS program. In the continued absence of a bilateral program, it is unlikely that the ADS will be introduced by AusAID in the near future.

The AusAID staff in New Delhi are also responsible for the ADS and ALA in Bhutan and make regular visits as part of managing the scholarship cycle. The MC's representative in Delhi will need to work closely with AusAID New Delhi office in relation to the Bhutan scholarship program.

The Context in the Maldives

The Republic of Maldives, a chain of ecologically fragile coral atolls in the Indian Ocean, has a population of around 300,000. It is economically dependent on fishing and tourism, although the shipping, banking and manufacturing sectors are growing at considerable pace. Relative to other South Asian nations, the Maldives has a relatively high and rapidly growing per capita GDP of US\$2,800 in 2006, with growth rate of 19%.

While the Maldives has made significant progress in social and economic development, heavy economic reliance on tourism and fisheries is risky, with both being fragile and vulnerable to external change. Environmental vulnerability is also an issue, including susceptibility to the effects of global warming. HRD is essential to ensure continued progress toward social and economic development. Although Maldives has a high adult literacy rate of 96%¹⁵, there is a shortage of skilled resident nationals in some key sectors. Compounding this, there is only a single degree-granting institution, so development therefore relies heavily on overseas tertiary training. There is not a well developed private sector and the overall skills capacity is relatively low.

The Maldives country program is substantially focused on the ADS, providing scholarships in designated priority sectors to public and private sector candidates. Most Maldives scholars complete their study and return home to take up positions of responsibility in government or private sector. The program is well received by Government of Maldives (GoM) and reports suggest their education system has been shaped by scholars returning from ADS. The Maldives Government plays an active role in AusAID's scholarships program, as there are no AusAID staff based in the Maldives. The scholarship management and administration is managed from the AusAID office in Colombo. The MC will work with AusAID Colombo office to plan and manage Maldives ADS and ALA support.

The Context in Bhutan

About half of Bhutan's 800,000 people live in remote areas, with per capita GDP of US\$864 (2005) and growth rate of 6-8% since the mid-1980s. Over the past decade social indicators have improved: infant mortality and maternal mortality have dropped, while literacy and education enrolment rates have increased. Unlike much of South Asia, primary school enrolment among girls is higher than boys in many urban areas; nationwide almost half of primary school students are girls.

Bhutan faces the challenge of matching the gains from strong economic growth with rising community expectations for increased opportunities and welfare improvement, whilst at the same time preserving its environment and culture. Providing employment opportunities for an increasingly urban and educated labour force is not easy and the private sector is currently not well-developed, so agriculture absorbs the bulk of the rapidly growing labour force.

The Bhutan country program is substantially focused on the ADS, providing scholarships in defined sectors to both public and private sector candidates. The scholarships align with priorities as outlined in Bhutan's 5-Year Plan and focus on strengthening HRD. The program provides good profile for Australia. Report from Government of Bhutan (GoBu) indicates many senior government officials, as well as at least one Minister, studied in Australia under ADS awards. Bhutan has also developed strong linkages with several Australian universities.

GoBu representatives play an active role in the scholarship program including in scholarship promotion, selection and mobilisation. There are no AusAID staff based in Bhutan. Scholarship management and administration are

¹⁵ UNDP, Human Development Report 2007-8

carried out by staff from the AusAID office in New Delhi. The MC's representative will work closely with the AusAID staff in New Delhi office to plan and manage ADS and ALA program support in Bhutan.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

South Asia is one of the last regions to outsource scholarships management and administrative functions in AusAID. Following the decision to outsource services, the design mission was conducted; details of the organisations / people involved in field discussions are included as Annex 6. The following design issues and lessons learned have been incorporated into the approach and the Scope of Services.

2.1 Key Issues in Outsourcing ADS / ALA

The following key issues will be built into the MC's management and service-delivery systems:

- o It is important to maintain the identity of the Australian Government/AusAID as the funding provider for the scholarships program. The MC needs to ensure the profile of the Australian Government is maintained. Several publications are available to enable MCs to comply with the requirements¹⁶. AusAID will have a presence at key promotional and management activities, scholar Pre Departure briefings and major functions.
- o Governance and transparency are key issues for consideration in outsourcing elements of scholarship programs. To minimise risk, AusAID will maintain control of scholarships policy, strategy and key points of the scholarship selection process.
- o The relationship between AusAID, partner governments and other Australian Whole of Government (WoG) partners needs to be understood and supported. AusAID is the point of contact for partner governments and WoG partners. While the MC may be requested to seek information or facilitate the dissemination of information or services on behalf of AusAID, the MC must not approach partner governments or WoG partners on any scholarship matters of policy or funding levels without AusAID approval.
- o Women, minority and disadvantaged groups will be given special consideration. The MC will need sufficient resources and arrangements in place to ensure that suitably qualified female candidates and applicants from disadvantaged and/or minority groups are specifically targeted and encouraged to apply. A range of promotional materials and targeted methods will need to be developed and subsequently utilised to ensure opportunities are accessible to potential candidates from marginalised or disadvantaged backgrounds. It is proposed that, on a country by country basis, some level of support be provided to non-urban, women or disadvantaged ADS applicants who missed out on selection because their IELTS score was not enough to qualify. The Post responsible for each South Asia country will decide how and to whom if support for English Language training is required. It is proposed that only candidates from minority groups, disadvantaged by caste, women or non-urban, and other disadvantage applicants would be eligible to any ELT support and the maximum period of ELT will be no more than six months.
- o Consistency in the MC services to all stakeholders will be a critical issue. Whilst the MC office is located in Dhaka, it is expected the MC will have strong representation where required and its staff will work cooperatively with the appropriate AusAID Post staff. AusAID and other key stakeholders outside of Dhaka will each expect equal levels of quality and service and the MC will be required to respect and address the unique characteristics, timing and requirements of each South Asian country. There may be significant overlap in the timing of scholarship activities, with schedules in each country to be accommodated. Scholarship priorities may also differ across the region and through liaison and cooperation, the MC will ensure that each country's needs are addressed when implementing the program.
- o IT and office infrastructure are of high importance, increasingly so as AusAID progressively introduces online systems such as OASIS and SIMON for application processing and program implementation. The MC will require up-to-date IT infrastructure, facilities, appropriate office space and staff to ensure effective implementation. The MC offices in each country should be conveniently and strategically located near to the Australian Embassy / High Commission, providing easy access for both MC and AusAID staff to work together as required, especially in the first 12 months of the contract.

¹⁶ The publication "Australian Scholarships Communication Guide" provides specific guidelines and required practice for scholarship branding and promotion, including letterheads, publicity material, exhibitions and descriptions of Australia's various scholarship programs. A copy of the document will be provided to the successful tenderer.

- o AusAID will require the MC to support its internal and external agency reporting requirements, including scholarship M&E. Occasionally new scholarship programs are introduced and existing programs are modified. The MC may be required to assist with the implementation of these new and existing programs and a contract variation will be triggered should there be substantial increase in the number of scholarships due to introduction of new AusAID scholarship programs.
- o Up until now, a well defined approach to scholarship impact has not been well established. The MC will be required to work with AusAID Posts to better develop strategies and methods that align knowledge and skills gained via scholarships to the effectiveness of the scholar's home agency or organization and demonstrate the impact of GoA support. This initiative will require specific technical HRD inputs from the MC, to develop scholar reintegration strategies as part of providing support AusAID Post staff in addressing ways to strengthen and enhance scholarship program outcomes. This reintegration (and where applicable) HRD activity will need to be well managed, so that there is no perception of any implied interference or undue influence on Partner priorities. Rather, it is proposed that this be a collegial activity that seeks to promote a better perspective, via tangible agency approaches and measures, on the impact that the scholarship program has had as a result of the scholar's return.
- o Sustainability of the overall scholarships program has been difficult to assess until now. It is envisaged that MC will work with Posts to assess sustainability of scholarships and associated activities. The M&E framework and system will build on the existing scholarship base-line data, aligned to the framework provided at Annex 2, together with the relevant country strategies via AusAID's website.
- o To date, limited emphasis has been placed on establishing or fostering Australian Alumni networks and linkages in South Asia. The establishment of AusAID scholarship alumni networks to support the long-term objectives of the scholarships program is an important agenda for AusAID. AusAID has a view to develop a global Australian Scholarship Alumni Network with the purpose of strengthening the scholarship program and to maximise development impacts at the local, regional and national level. Currently, AusAID ASG is finalising a Scholarship Alumni Network Implementation Plan which is expected to commence implementation in the first half of 2009. Under the guidance of AusAID, the MC will need to develop an Alumni Plan for South Asia covering the Alumni objectives, establishment and maintenance approaches, scope of alumni activities, sustainability strategies, critical risk factors and proposed mitigation actions, and costs.¹⁷ The Alumni Plan should be developed in light of the identified development foci for each country in South Asia and should be linked directly with the broader AusAID Alumni Network Implementation Plan.

2.2 Increasing Effectiveness of the Scholarships Program

Australian scholarship Alumni arrangements and membership levels are not well developed or effective, although some Australian universities follow up their graduates directly as part of their internal Alumni procedures. This problem is not confined to South Asia, although some of donor scholarship programs (including Fulbright, the Japanese and the UK) have relatively strong Alumni organisation and membership.

The proposed Australian Scholarships Alumni Network (ASAN) will help increase the profile and impact of Alumni arrangements, so strengthening Australian Alumni will be a priority. Additional Alumni focus will support AusAID and Partner government efforts to identify the impact and ongoing benefits that can arise from scholarships. The MC will use the context in each of the 6 South Asia countries to develop an Alumni Plan with a view to effectively engage the returned scholars.

As an example, the Alumni can provide support and valuable inputs as part of the scholar pre-departure briefing (PDB) of new scholars. These briefings should be at least one full day and should be attended by a number of previous ADS graduates, who are Alumni members from a range of Australian universities that match (where possible) the universities chosen by the departing students. This will raise the profile and status of the Alumni, whilst providing the departing scholars with valuable information and academic / logistical guidance.

¹⁷ It is anticipated that potential MCs tendering for the South Asia scholarship management would use their local knowledge and understanding to suggest way in which the proposed Alumni could be established and maintained.

An additional area that may have some potential for gaining increased Australian Alumni support and profile in South Asia is through greater joint cooperation / sponsorship arrangements. This may be possible through increased cooperation with major Australian private sector organisations operating within South Asian countries¹⁸.

2.3 Lessons Learned from AusAID Outsourcing

The South Asia Australian Scholarship Program Review, released in December 2007, outlined several lessons learned from other country programs. The following lessons learned have been taken into consideration as part of developing this design and the SoS.

Maintaining AusAID's Scholarship Profile

Some countries report that AusAID's profile diminished as a result of engaging an MC to work on elements of their scholarships. This is a potential negative outcome in South Asia, especially since MC representatives will be in Dhaka and their associates will work across the other countries. Maintaining effective relationships with key stakeholders is of central importance to the success of scholarships, including universities, partner governments and other Australian government agencies.

Both AusAID and the MC will ensure that these relationships are fostered at appropriate levels once the contract is in place. When working with key stakeholders, the MC will articulate the nature of the relationship with AusAID at all times. The MC will be required to take steps to ensure AusAID's scholarship profile in South Asia is not diminished, enabling the seamless delivery of scholarship program support under the GOA and AusAID banner¹⁹.

Scholarship Program Integrity

The integrity of AusAID's scholarships is a key consideration. Outsourcing elements of scholarship management is expected to release AusAID staff capacity at the Posts to deliver high level analysis and maintain policy dialogue with key stakeholders. It is imperative that the MC has appropriately skilled staff to implement the program and the staffing arrangements for supporting scholarship management, the basic administration/data entry, monitoring and evaluation, approaches to develop alumni and strengthening of HRD will be taken into consideration as part of tender evaluation. Value for money is a key consideration and AusAID will closely analyse and monitor MC expenditure and service levels / quality. Quality of the scholarship program cannot be compromised by ineffective, inefficient or unskilled MC staff. AusAID will carefully consider the MC staffing arrangements and quality assurance measures as part of the tender evaluation process.

Maintaining AusAID's Corporate Knowledge

AusAID will maintain responsibility for scholarships policy, strategy and key points of the scholarship selection process. The MC will be contracted to support the implementation of the scholarship programs across the South Asia region. Maintaining AusAID's corporate knowledge and staff skills required to effectively monitor the contract were reported as a concern at some Posts. Ensuring the policy, strategy and other key scholarship activities are controlled by AusAID will help to minimize this concern on corporate knowledge.

Reporting and Communication

Quality and timeliness of reporting and communications are critical and AusAID's reporting requirements cannot be compromised or delayed by the outsourced elements. The SoS and M&E framework clearly outline AusAID's support and activity requirements for South Asia. In addition to AusAID reporting requirements, the MC will ensure timely and quality communications with all local stakeholders.

Measuring Impact

The overall impact and sustainability of AusAID's scholarship program needs to be measured, evaluated and reported as part of the management process. To achieve this, AusAID will work with the MC to guide the development of appropriate base-line data and performance indicators to monitor and evaluate the scholarship programs in South Asia. This includes identifying case studies and data that measure the impact that ADS / ALA have had, and continue to have, on partner agencies. In addition, the selection process will maintain its focus on

¹⁸ Examples of these large entities include SANTOS, Westfarmers, BHP Billiton and other transnational companies, each having an interest and commitment to South Asia.

¹⁹ The format and detail of this aspect of the scholarship profile will be discussed during the initial 2-week workshop in Dhaka. The MC's Promotion and Communications Plan should have an outline on the standard templates and protocols to be used across the MC's scholarship support systems.

candidates' potential to return and contribute to his / her agency, as well as the likelihood of them completing the award on time.

2.4 Lessons Learned from other Scholarship Programs

There are a large number of scholarships and awards in South Asia, funded by international donors, foundations, "private" university scholarships and through various donor development projects. For the purposes of this design, the following donor scholarship arrangements were reviewed as part of identifying risks and potential lessons for ADS / ALA outsourcing. The following brief summaries are meant to place the ADS / ALA within the broader donor context, identifying key elements and lessons learned that could strengthen this design.

Fulbright Scholars

Out of all available scholarships, the most well known and prestigious appears to be the Fulbright Foundation program. Fulbright scholarships are designed as two-way, promoting scholars both to and from the US. These are offered at a range of academic levels, with each being held in high esteem.

No significant part of scholarship management is outsourced by Fulbright, with permanent staff managing the process in each country, supported by the US Embassy (The Department of State) and members of the Fulbright Alumni. The Alumni promotion starts from the time the scholarship is offered. The Fulbright represents a high status award, often being the first choice of many leading academics.

The Government of Germany

A small number of scholarships are offered in Germany, managed by Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD: German Academic Exchange Service), funded by the German Government. The number of post-graduate students in South Asia with high-level command German language is small, with scholarships mainly allocated for PhD study. To overcome this constraint, the program sends its awardees to German universities that provide courses in English. The German program is relatively small, with a record of Alumni kept by DAAD. To promote the Alumni, the DAAD utilize some alumni members as "honorary advisers" who guide DAAD on any evolving technical or promotional issues, as well as taking part in selection processes where their skills and background are relevant. The DAAD have taken back the scholar selection process from external contractors and consider it important that all short-listing and the final selection involve the donor representative, rather than only the contractor and the partner agencies.

The British Government

The UK provides scholarships and fellowships across South Asia, awarded via open advertisement, with the largest program in India. A relatively small number of formal scholarships are offered to South Asia in comparison to the large number of "customised" 3-month Fellowship programs, offered for specialized training in the UK.

The Alumni are active, with returned scholars debriefed and included on a data-base. Employment / professional opportunities that arise from the DFID and other UK funded projects are provided to Alumni members, providing a tangible benefit for members. However, a significant proportion of the scholars (over a third) do not return to their home-country after the scholarship is completed.

For many years the operational elements of the UK scholarship and fellowship program have been outsourced to the British Council, which have offices in many countries and promote (amongst other things) study opportunities in the UK. A long-term outsourcing arrangement has been entered into between the UK Ministry in London and the British Council and the outsourcing arrangement appears to be working well, operating within a cooperative, complementary environment.

An issue raised in relation to outsourcing was the potential for UK scholarships and fellowships to be considered British Council awards, rather than UK government. This situation is a result of all scholarship processing, communications, interviews and mobilisation arrangements being undertaken by British Council. The potential confusion on "badging" was a common theme, with scholarship programs of donors (including AusAID) being promoted and managed in a way that could give an impression the MC was the source of scholarship funds. This potential loss of AusAID identity for its scholarships is a real possibility unless clear guidelines are provided to the MC on promotion, communications and general operations.

The Government of Japan

The Japanese manage two types of scholarship: Post Graduate (normally PhD in Japan) and Undergraduate (for school leavers to complete a degree in Japan). There are limited numbers available and they are advertised with all of the selection criteria (including the required level of academic results) clearly included in the advertisement. With a large emphasis on academic record and results achieved, gender is not taken into account in the Japan scholarship selection process²⁰.

There appears to be a strong Japanese Alumni, with Alumni in each country holding regular technical meetings, where outcomes of scholar study / work is presented. In addition, regular dinners are organized and Alumni participation in cultural activities within the Embassies is encouraged.

One of the issues raised was the potential for "interference" in the selection process, with written or verbal requests made to the Embassy in relation to awarding scholarship places. While attempts to influence selection are rejected outright, it remains an issue to be addressed in relation to AusAID's proposed outsourced services and the need for the reporting of any attempted interference.

Australia's Endeavour Scholarship

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) manages the Australian Government "Endeavour" scholarship, which provide opportunities to undertake study, research and professional development in Australia²¹. The stated aims of Endeavour Awards²² are to:

- o Deepen Australia's global engagement in education and research;
- o Reinforce Australia's reputation as a high quality education provider and leader in research, innovation and knowledge management;
- o Enhance language skills and cultural understanding of Australia; and
- o Provide opportunities for Australian professionals to enhance their skills and knowledge.

To avoid any confusion between ADS, ALA and the Endeavour, the MC will need to become familiar with the timing, purpose, promotion methods and target group for Endeavour awards. The MC will then focus on ensuring ADS and ALA scholarships continue to be well promoted, differentiated through their development focus, maintain a high profile and encourage quality development outcomes. This will be an important aspect of scholarship promotion, to ensure ADS and ALA are clearly differentiated and thus well targeted.

3 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED SERVICES

It is proposed that a range of administrative and operational tasks relating to AusAID funded scholarships in the South Asia region (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives and Sri Lanka) be outsourced to a MC. The services required of the MC include activities related to promotion, advertising, pre-selection, placement, student mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), development of a reintegration strategy including strengthening the HRD outcomes and development of an Alumni Plan.

A regional approach to scholarship outsourcing will be taken, with an MC based in Dhaka having overall responsibility for the support activities across the South Asia region. The countries / scholarships are offered in:

Bangladesh	ADS and ALA	India	ALA only
Nepal*	ALA only	Bhutan	ADS and ALA
Sri Lanka	ADS and ALA	Maldives	ADS and ALA

(*For Nepal, it is anticipated that ADS will be reinstated in 2010 for scholarship holders to commence studies in 2011. At this stage, the number of scholarships expected to be awarded in 2011 will be around 10 subject to funding availability.)

²⁰ As an example, in Nepal, in the past 5 years have been a total of 91 scholarships awarded, with 74 to males and 17 awarded to women.

²¹ Text and information taken from the Endeavour Award website at http://www.endeavour.deewr.gov.au/endeavour_awards/

²² More information on Endeavour Awards can be found from the following website: <http://www.endeavour.deewr.gov.au/>

A small number of scholarships have been awarded for study at CMU and the CTCSP at the University of Wollongong. In 2008, three CMU-AusAID scholarships and no CTCSP scholarships were awarded to students from countries covered by this design document. It is anticipated the number of CMU-AusAID and CTCSP scholarships to be offered to countries will be very small. If these scholarships are awarded, it will be the responsibility of the MC to provide support and management services.

The MC will be required to tailor its management and support approaches to match specific priorities, needs, requirements and activity levels that exist within each of the above South Asia scholarship programs. It is recognized that this diversity of requirements to these countries has potential for confusion and a subsequent variation on service levels. To assist to overcome this, the design has differentiated all support and service requirements across the full scholarship cycle for all of the six countries. This enables the MC to better understand the required service requirements for each country, within the broader regional scholarship framework.

The SoS in Annex 5 provides detailed information on scholarship management and support services required from the MC, with ADS and ALA support activities separated by country.

Importantly, AusAID will maintain control/management of key decision points in the scholarships cycle, particularly those relating to short-listing and to the final selection of candidates. AusAID will also maintain its strategic engagement for the scholarships program, including with Partner Government counterparts and priority setting for scholarship numbers and areas of study. Although the MC will be involved in the development of reintegration strategies that enhance the effectiveness of the program, AusAID will hold overall responsibility for M&E that covers the impact of the scholarships program in each country.

The MC will be required to provide accurate and timely M&E information in relation to each of the ADS / ALA programs, as well as performance information relating to the effectiveness of the outsourced services. Reporting requirements are further outlined in the M&E section of this document and the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework in Annex 2, while the MC Performance Indicators and Criteria are included in Table 4.

Australian Visas

Visas for ADS / ALA scholarship holders for all South Asia countries receive priority by Australia's Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). Much of the work associated with lodging visa applications and documentation has already been outsourced by DIAC, so that the process of applying for a Visa is now much easier from the applicant's perspective, especially in the regional centres.

A briefing for the MC in each country will be arranged by AusAID, so that the country-specific Visa requirements and arrangements are understood and complied with. The MC will work closely with the nominated Visa service provider and with DIAC, to ensure that the existing good relationships and the efficient Visa application / processing systems that are already in place are maintained and progressively improved.

To obtain a visa to study in Australia, each scholar must undergo a medical check at a designated panel doctor and submit the results to DIAC. The MC should work with the Post to facilitate medical checks for scholars (and their family members if necessary).

4 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

4.1 Goal and Objectives

The goal and objective for the South Asia scholarships programs are:

Goal: Australian scholarship awardees contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in South Asia.

Objective: Increased capacity in priority fields, disciplines and organisations in South Asia via increased access to higher professional and technical knowledge and linkages with individuals and institutions within the region and Australia.

Priority sectors, partner organisations and unique requirements for each country program are determined by AusAID in the context of the overarching South Asia Regional Framework. The role of the MC is to support AusAID and the scholarship program to achieve Objectives and to better contribute to the Goal.

4.2 Expected Core Outcomes of the Scholarship Programs

Key outcomes of the South Asia scholarships program include:

- o Awardees develop higher level professional and technical skills relevant to their area of expertise;
- o Awardees return to their home country and reintegrate back into the workforce successfully;
- o Awardees exercise good leadership, apply new skills and nurture partnerships with institutions in the region and Australia;
- o Awardees apply their skills to contribute to the improved capacity of their organisations/institutions;
- o An active and effective Australian scholarships alumni association is operating in South Asia.

4.3 Anticipated Outcomes from the Administration Outsourcing

There are outcomes for AusAID South Asia Posts in addition to maintaining efficient and effective administration and management. These can include:

- o AusAID Post staff will be able to focus more on analytical and strategic issues underpinning the scholarship programs. This includes increased engagement with Government counterparts, focus on how the scholarships fit within Australian Government priorities within the region, the partner government / agency HRD priorities and assessing overall impact of ADS / ALA scholarships through effective M&E.
- o Potential skill development and increased level of responsibility for AusAID Overseas Based staff, including increased skills in monitoring and evaluation, increased engagement with partner agencies and exposure to new MC methods and systems.
- o More streamlined and standardized scholarships management for the six countries in the Region.
- o The streamlining and coordination of scholarship management should provide opportunities to strengthen and highlight the Australian Alumni, in a way that encourages members to better engage in technical and social events, maintaining and promoting ties with Australia.

4.4 Proposed Scholarship Outsourcing Contract Duration

Indicative Schedules / Timing of ADS and ALA activities in South Asia

Table 4: Indicative dates and deadlines for ADS and ALA scholarships in South Asia countries.

Event	Bangladesh		Bhutan		Sri-Lanka		Maldives		Nepal	India
	ADS	ALA	ADS	ALA	ADS	ALA	ADS	ALA	ALA	ALA
Agree on Overall numbers	August of previous year	N/A	August of previous year	N/A	May	N/A	May	N/A	N/A	N/A
Advertise the Scholarships	Feb	Mar	Feb	Mar	Feb	Mar	Feb	Mar	Mar	Mar
The Application Closing Date	April 30	June 30	June 30	June 30	July 15	June 30	July 15	June 30	June 30	June 30
Vetting and Short Listing of applicants	From 1 May	From 1 July	From 1 July	From 1 July	From July 16	From 1 July	From July 16	From 1 July	From 1 July	From 1 July
The final Selection Process	Mid June	Mid-Sept	Mid-Sept	Mid-Sept	Late July	Mid-Sept	Early Aug	Mid-Sept	August	Mid-Sept
Arrange with Australian	Oct		Oct		Oct		Oct			

Institutions										
Pre Departure Briefing	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Nov	Nov
Mobilisation of scholars to Australia	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Dec	Dec

Options were considered for the management contract, based on AusAID experience from other countries where similar services have been outsourced. A 3-year outsourcing contract was initially considered, followed by a possible redesign and new tender. However, the preferred option is for a two-phase, 5-year contract. This involves an initial contract of three years, with an option of an additional two year extension, subject to a favourable contractor performance review. The longer-term approach also assumes no fundamental design changes emerge in Australia's scholarship program before the end of the initial 3-year period.

At contract commencement, there will be a 2-week training / workshop activity in Dhaka. This will be delivered by AusAID staff to MC staff holding responsibility for support in the six countries. This workshop will provide MC senior staff and their country associates with all templates, standard documentation, processes and requirements for the scholarship management in each country, including training on SIMON and OASIS. The program will move from the general to the specific, including:

- o Week-1: General information and management requirements: the AusAID scholarship structure; quality measures and requirements; security and confidentiality; gender; scholarship eligibility criteria; AusAID's global and regional reporting requirements; introduction to the functionality of SIMON and OASIS;
- o Week 2: Specific Country-based issues, context and arrangements, key contacts; existing templates; communication channels. This detailed information would be delivered by the appropriate AusAID Post staff member attending the workshop on behalf of that country's scholarship program.

Following this initial program of training in Dhaka, it is expected that ad-hoc training for MC staff will be provided by AusAID, focused on country specific requirements and updates on AusAID scholarship management policy, guidelines, processes, and SIMON / OASIS.

Following the 2-week workshop / seminar there will commence an immediate ADS / ALA handover period. This transfer of responsibility will be progressively implemented, from AusAID to the MC, involving scholarship support in six countries. The handover period will be managed as quickly as possible, reflecting the MC's clear contractual requirement to have identified and mobilised a quality team, each with the capacity to manage the demands and priorities in each country. Additional training and the provision of ad-hoc advice from the Post staff will likely occur over the initial 12 months, covering specific issues and processes until the time that the MC has completed a full cycle of the scholarship program. However, the MC will be expected to ensure that, once the training has been completed, the MC staff in each country will embed the required procedures and standards into their working systems. It will not be AusAID Post responsibility to provide ongoing re-training if (for example) the MC in a particular country loses a key staff member.

Contractor non-performance issues will be handled as they arise, based on the quality assurance provisions included as part of the Scope of Services. It will be highly important for the MC be completely aware of the varying schedules, deadlines, methods and considerations that apply in each of the countries, as well as the higher education context and study options in Australia. Annual performance reviews, involving South Asia AusAID Posts and the MC, will address performance and management issues. These annual performance reviews will focus on lessons learned and the emerging issues, with the MC expected to incorporate a process of continuous improvement across scholarship management. The review also provides an opportunity to discuss emerging country priorities and issues or difficulties experienced through the year.

The outsourcing arrangements are planned for commencement in July-August 2009. As the 2009 intake of ADS and ALA scholars will have been selected and mobilised, the MC will commence an agreed handover schedule that enables them to progressively assume responsibility for their full support to scholarship management over a period of 2-3 months from contract commencement.

After 30 months of contract commencement there will be an external review of MC performance and outcomes in each of the countries, which will provide AusAID with the performance information necessary to confirm (or reject) entering into an additional 2 year extension with the MC.

5 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 AusAID responsibilities

At each South Asia Post, AusAID will maintain the existing engagement with partner agencies for strategic decisions on ADS scholarship numbers, target groups and the focus study areas. For ALA scholarships, the numbers and priority themes will be determined by AusAID ASG in Canberra.

A major issue for AusAID staff at the South Asia Posts will be the scholarship management transition, through which the MC will progressively take over administration of activities within the scholarship cycle.

To enable a smooth and effective transfer to take place, there will be a period of intense knowledge transfer between AusAID staff and key staff from the MC. This knowledge transfer is not about dealing with the basic management systems, process mapping of the scholarship cycle or the required levels of service delivery: the MC must already have demonstrated all of these attributes and understanding to successfully tender for this work. Rather, the transition period will be about identifying and embedding the requirements of the ADS and ALA, for each country, into the MC's systems and procedures.

The MC will receive detailed briefings, relevant operational and policy information and periodic training on AusAID's systems and requirements, including (for example) in the use of OASIS. AusAID will provide the MC with the quality, reporting and the M&E requirements of its scholarship management, as well as specific advice on such issues as transparency, the existing ADS / ALA scholarship templates; the guidelines used for advertising, shortlisting, selection; and a review of all steps in the scholarship cycle. In addition, the confidentiality / security arrangements covering scholarship applications and specific South Asia country management requirements will be covered in depth, including procedures to be followed that ensure transparency and accountability.

The workshop and training will also cover the similarities and differences that exist in the six South Asian countries and what specific arrangements and procedures need to be taken into account as part of managing aspects of the ADS / ALA. As previously mentioned, any country-specific training that is required to accommodate the technical or procedural needs of AusAID and its local partners will be provided to the local MC staff by the relevant AusAID staff.

Security of information and issues of governance will be stressed. While individual AusAID Posts have direct contact with their local MC representative, it is not up to the Posts to provide ongoing training or detailed briefings to the MC's local staff. At completion of the workshop in Dhaka, it is expected the MC will then take on the responsibility for the ongoing training of their internal staff, at all of the country locations. The MC training should cover, in detail, the key elements of scholarship management, across the full cycle.

The initial 2-3 months of the contract will be an intense but essential investment that, if managed well, will pay dividends to both parties over the full contract period. Over time, AusAID will provide further scholarship management / systems training to MC staff including country specific requirements and updates on AusAID scholarship management policy, guidelines, and processes, if and when the need arises. However, it is expected the MC will quickly train staff in the efficient use of SIMON and OASIS databases which are the major tools for managing scholarship application data and information.

5.2 Managing Contractor Responsibilities

The following broad summary indicates the responsibilities of the MC in relation to providing scholarship management support.

The MC Location

With around 50% of South Asia ADS scholarships awarded in Bangladesh, the MC's main office and contractual point of contact will be in Dhaka. The MC's associates in each country will work with the relevant AusAID Post staff member, in order to ensure the scholarship program runs smoothly in each of the six countries.

It is expected that an association will be formed between the MC in Dhaka and partners / associates in the other South Asian countries. It will be most important for the MC in Dhaka to have strong lines of communication with their associates and to have clearly identified roles and responsibilities for all activities as are outlined in the SoS. The MC will be required to ensure all offices have appropriately qualified staff and IT systems to apply to this activity.

It is also expected that the MC will nominate a senior person to act as a single point of contact in relation to overall scholarship management support. While there will be regular, ongoing dialogue and interaction at each country location between the MC associate's staff and local AusAID / Visa officers, overall responsibility for maintaining quality in the South Asia ADS / ALA service delivery will remain with the MC in Dhaka.

Progressive transition of Scholarship Coordination Responsibilities and Tasks

Each element of the Australian scholarship support services, as outlined in the SOS, will be progressively transferred to the MC. From the outset, by negotiation with AusAID in Dhaka, specific elements on the outsourced services will be transferred immediately, the rest in priority order, in accordance with an agreed schedule that covers all countries and all activities. It is expected that, following the activities immediately transferred to the MC, the full scholarship services will have been outsourced to all Posts within the initial 2-3 months period.

As the point of contact for the MC, AusAID Dhaka will provide the existing templates, schedules, pro-forma and data that have been used to manage scholarships to date. From then on, the MC in Dhaka will take responsibility to document the various scholarship management procedures that will be required in each country. Once AusAID have endorsed these country procedures, the MC will pass on this detailed information and templates to their associates, so that a transfer of responsibilities can commence in each South Asia country location.

While AusAID in Dhaka will have the initial role in organizing the workshop and scholarship management templates (ie those used by AusAID for advertising, PDB and mobilization), each AusAID Post will deal directly with the MC representative in their country on all day to day management and operational issues. Through this arrangement, AusAID staff at each Post will be in a position to direct the MC on local priorities, issues and schedules and to ensure that all local country issues are being addressed effectively.

Close liaison will be vital, especially in the first year of the contract and in getting the application / scholarship data entry underway and security of information established. However, AusAID staff in each country will not take responsibility for the ongoing briefing of local MC associates, in each country, on basic procedures and the management requirements of the ADS / ALA scholarships - this basic staff training and the check-lists and explanations will have been carried out by the MC, following the 2-week workshop.

Once the MC has received scholarship templates they will commence transfer of responsibilities for scholarship management. At this time, the AusAID representatives in each Post will work with local MC staff to hand over responsibility for activities, as defined in Annex 5.

From this handover, the MC will commence delivering services to meet the country-specific ADS / ALA requirements so establishing the "base-line" data is important. The transfer of responsibility for the immediate administrative and coordination functions will take a matter of weeks and, over time, the MC will progressively assume more responsibility on M&E, developing reintegration strategy, and Alumni Plan..

Scholarship Promotion and Communications

The MC will be required to draft a Scholarship Promotion and Communications Plan for the ADS and ALA for AusAID approval, based on the Australian Scholarships Communications Guide (a copy of the document will be provided to the successful tenderer), and methods used by each Post. The strategy will focus on increasing the profile, impact and equity of AusAID's scholarships. Individual Posts will provide the MC with a profile of the ideal scholarship candidate (from an academic and development perspective), used as the basis of developing the plan. The Plan will include lines of communication and reporting to AusAID at Post, marketing and recruitment plans, and the contractual relationship between the MC and AusAID in Dhaka. The plan should cover strategies to address equity and access issues, including how country-specific measures can be applied to enhance scholarship opportunities.

The Scholarship Promotion and Communications Plan will include how scholarships will be promoted (eg through newspaper²³, radio, promotional events) and ways to ensure that the spread of advertising enables maximum opportunity for targeted, eligible people to apply. This particularly includes effective communication of scholarship opportunities to women, minority groups and those from non-urban areas, where advertising in the local press and other media will be required to stimulate interest in the opportunities.

Each year AusAID Posts will confirm the people and sectors that they are planning to target for the coming round. The Plan will focus on how to match the number and type of scholarships available with the target audience, so it is very clear what the criteria are and what an applicant will need to have any real chance of success.

As part of the Plan, the MC will need to understand and be able to provide information on Australian and regional higher education institutions, as well as the range of programs and awards that are available in Australia. This knowledge is required for two reasons: to enable the MC to support the assessment of a candidate's existing qualifications, as part of the processing their application / scoring; and for providing advice and information to the successful candidates in relation to the choices and options available for their study in Australia.

The Scholarship Promotion and Communications Plan will be endorsed by AusAID before the MC proceeds to implementation. . The Plan will also include clear lines of communications for all aspects of communication with AusAID in Dhaka and in other South Asia Posts.

On acceptance of the Plan, and in cooperation with AusAID, the MC will prepare a simple "Scholarship Planning Guide" to clearly identify what is required and thereby assist scholars and their Partner government managers in the preparation of scholarship applications. The MC will also develop an annual "ADS / ALA Calendar of Key Dates" for the following scholarship cycle, providing targets and deadlines for the selection, preparation and placement of ADS and ALA scholars. These will be provided to key agencies, partners and included on relevant websites and distribution networks as part of promoting Australian scholarship opportunities and clarifying the relevant criteria.

Scholarship Branding in Relation to MC Services

While the MC has a role in promoting and supporting the program, AusAID will require its funding of scholarships is fully acknowledged and that all scholarships remain clearly and unambiguously an initiative of the Australian Government in the six South Asia countries. The acknowledgment of the Australian Government, through AusAID, as the donor and responsible agency for the scholarships will be highlighted in documentation and in correspondence. The AusAID logo and some brief words (ie the ADS / ALA scholarship program is part of AusAID's South Asia development assistance program, funded by the Australian Government) will be included where appropriate. The acknowledgment will appear on all formal communications (letters, emails, faxes, business cards, advertisements) as well as in public forum signage or meetings²⁴.

As part of the initial commencement activities, the MC will provide AusAID Dhaka with the draft templates to be used for all official communication, for endorsement.

SIMON and OASIS databases

Two online databases (SIMON and OASIS) are used to implement AusAID's scholarship programs, with OASIS and SIMON systems are currently being used to implement the ALA scholarships. Through OASIS, ALA scholars are able to lodge online applications. (Applications can be lodged in hard copies where applicants have difficulties in accessing internet. In 2007 and 2008 intakes, a small number of applications was submitted in hard copies and AusAID was required to upload those applications into OASIS.) AusAID (Post and ASG) use OASIS to finalise scholarship selections. Once scholarships have been awarded, requests for placements are forwarded to universities through SIMON. Student contracts and scholarship management in the post-award phase of ALA is monitored in SIMON.

²³ Advertisements in the press should follow the ASG guidelines. The message should be clear, simple and identify the key attributes required for being a successful scholarship applicant. There will be additional avenues through which the scholarship information can be disseminated, including institutions, associations and via the traditional community leaders.

²⁴ As previously stated, AusAID has standard templates and conditions that cover promotional, signage and other materials.

ADS and any other smaller scholarship programs utilise the SIMON database. Applications are only received in hard copy for these scholarships at this stage. OASIS Phase III is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2009, after which scoping and development for Phase IV, involving the Alumni, will begin. This will be followed by the scoping and development of Phase V, which involves the AusAID scholarships application process.

Management and Governance Arrangements

For ADS, the AusAID South Asia Section in Canberra (in consultation with the Posts) will be responsible for seeking annual funding approval for scholarships in each country. Each Post is responsible for monitoring its ADS expenditure and targets. Dhaka Post will be responsible for the overall MC contractual arrangements. Through this arrangement, AusAID will have a single point of contact with the MC and there will be clear lines of communication and reporting.

The AusAID Post responsible for scholarships in each of the other 5 countries would then be expected to have direct day-to-day communication with the MC's representative in their country. This ongoing dialogue between the MC and the Post will focus on all aspects of the country-specific scholarship management operations as well as the local M&E, ELT and scholarship scheduling matters.

To assist the potential MC to better understand their role across South Asia, Annex 5 provides details of each step of the ADS and the ALA scholarship management and the implementation cycle. The activities listed in the tables of Annex 5 are not exhaustive. They are provided to give an indication of the type of activities involved in each stage of the scholarship implementation and management processes. The Annex includes clear roles and responsibilities for each step of the scholarship cycle, for the MC and for AusAID. While the administrative functions of the scholarships management and implementation will be outsourced, AusAID will retain key decision making role and functions, such as selection, and will monitor critical decision points. It is also important for the MC to comply with privacy requirements of all scholarship applications and awards and not to use or apply any of this data or information, other than as required for the actual scholarship management.

The Government Partners will be consulted by each of the AusAID Posts and closely involved in key decisions, especially in agreeing on the level of scholarship support to country priority sectors, the number of available scholarships and through being part of the local selection process. Some partners (such as in the Maldives and Bhutan) are currently active in the scholar selection process while others have less direct involvement.

Open and transparent selection processes will be promoted and applied to minimise the potential for any corruption and nepotism. A joint and independent selection panel will be established during each ADS cycle, involving government partners, and used as a method of promoting and modelling fair and transparent selection. The MC will support the selection panel and any contracting process and act as its secretariat, but will play no role in the members of the panel or in the actual candidate selection process. The MC will liaise closely with Australian tertiary institutions in seeking to place awardees in relevant courses that align with the country scholarship program and the partner government priorities. The process will be repeated for candidates unable to achieve their first preference placement until a suitable arrangement is finalised. This placement process will be followed by the range of mobilisation activities as are outlined in Annex 5.

For ALA, the AusAID's ASG will be responsible for seeking funding approval and allocation, and for monitoring ALA expenditure. An independent selection panel will be established at each country during each ALA cycle to identify suitable nominees for consideration by the ALA Interdepartmental Selection Panel in Canberra. The final selection process that determines successful ALA scholars will continue to be located and managed in Australia by AusAID. The MC will be expected to provide secretariat support to the South Asia ALA selection process outlined in Table 2 of Annex 5.

5.3 The Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

To date, scholarships supported under the South Asia program have not established systematic approaches for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of ADS / ALA scholarship outcomes or impact. The success and the quality of the delivery of scholarships programs have been primarily in terms of satisfactory completion of process oriented tasks relating to the scholarships cycle, followed by the anecdotal evidence of subsequent impact. AusAID ASG has developed guidance for M&E of the Australian Scholarships (a copy of the document will be provided to the successful tenderer). Monitoring and Evaluating scholarships consists of two main elements which include

- o Monitoring of shorter term outputs and outcomes in terms of aspects of selection, in country study/placement and completion stages of the scholarships process on an annual basis; and
- o Periodic evaluation which involves an assessment of outcomes during the post award stage.

While acknowledging the significance of individual country strategies and objectives in influencing specific M&E requirements for their country, the guidance for M&E of the Australian Scholarships identifies a number of commonalities across Australian Scholarships. The types of questions that could be considered to inform measurement of both quality and effectiveness of Australian scholarships include:

- o Is AusAID securing the 'right' candidates for the ADS and ALA?
- o Is AusAID on track to achieve our target sectors, areas and numbers?
- o Are Australian higher education institutions meeting their key performance measures?
- o Are the awardees' in-Australia experiences positive?
- o Are awardees successfully completing their placement?
- o Have the awardees returned to their home country?
- o Have the awardees re-integrated back into their workplace successfully?
- o Are awardees applying the skills they gained in Australia effectively?
- o Are awardees maintaining linkages with Australia and networking with other awardees?
- o Are awardees contributing to the development of their country or other countries in the region?
- o Has Australian Scholarships strengthened the host organisation's effectiveness?
- o Has there been a successful outcome in relation to gender, leadership and governance?

The South Asia scholarships M&E Framework is included at Annex 2 and summarizes how these questions will be applied / answered in the South Asia context, how and when the data will be collected and specifies roles and the responsibilities for the various elements of M&E. This framework is not exhaustive and is provided as a guide with an intention for further progressive refinement and improvement.

The MC will be required to develop an M&E system that is based on the M&E Framework and involve working with staff at individual AusAID Posts to determine country specific indicators and key performance management information. It is expected the M&E Framework in Annex 2 and the SoS in Annex 5 will form the basis for this M&E, with country-specific indicators identified and included during commencement in order to provide AusAID with information it needs for program evaluation and for external reporting.

5.4 The Monitoring & Evaluation Methods and Tools

Information on awardees is required at all stages of the scholarships cycle – the selection phase, in-country, completion and post-award. The M&E will focus on measuring outcomes and outputs rather than process. Data collected will be gender-disaggregated and by those identified as coming from targeted minority and disadvantaged groups where appropriate. The subsequent analysis will assess scholarship outcomes/impact and any constraints or barriers for both women and men, and identified disadvantaged groups where appropriate. The M&E system will also have the capacity to identify the country specific indicators that are unique to that context. This includes the number and outcomes of minority groups (including the CHT and the non-urban) that have received Australian scholarships as well as the discipline areas / sectors of their completed studies.

The MC will establish and maintain a database to record all M&E data collected, and this information will be entered into OASIS where possible. The M&E methods/tools will include:

Scholarship Student Records: the MC will keep student records/profiles up to date on SIMON/OASIS, including contact details once scholars return to their home country. These records will be used to track progress and to compare the actual scholarships vs the country sector targets (in terms of priority themes / sectors, gender balance, diversity, representation from disadvantaged groups).

Annual Student Surveys / Focus groups – ASG has developed and will administer annual student surveys, as well as conduct annual student focus groups for awardees while studying in Australia, including:

- o Arrival survey and focus groups – to obtain perception/satisfaction of students with the selection / mobilisation processes, pre-departure briefing, Introductory Academic Program (IAP) and the quality of courses taken at academic institutions.
- o On-going student survey and focus groups – to obtain perception/satisfaction with services and programs provided by academic institutions and experiences in Australia.

The MC / AusAID Posts will utilise the results of these annual surveys to inform and improve the student recruitment, selection process, mobilization and the pre-departure activities.

Tracer Studies – A small number of tracer studies will be conducted to capture information on scholarship outcomes for a range of individual awardees. The tracer study will be based on guidance provided by AusAID, which will be tailored for South Asia's scholarship context and local development priorities. Each tracer study will focus on returned scholars who have been back in their agency for 12 months and again after 5 years. The study will explore issues including whether awardees have returned to their home countries to live and work, have they successfully reintegrated into their agency, are they using their skills effectively, how are their skills contributing to the capacity of their organisation and do they have ongoing professional links to Australia / within the region.

The number and target of these tracer studies will be discussed and agreed with AusAID. Arising from these tracer studies will emerge a smaller number of individual success stories / case studies that may be suitable to showcase ADS / ALA scholarship outcomes. These success stories will comprise positive news items for media, etc as part of raising the scholarship profile.

Periodic Evaluations / Case studies – periodically case studies will be conducted to evaluate how awardees have contributed to capacity building in their particular fields, organisations, institutions or groups. Some targeting of organizations and groups is occurring through the ADS program in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan. It is estimated that there will be up to four case studies per year provided to AusAID across the South Asia scholarship program. Possible case studies include:

- o ICDDR B (Bangladesh) – as ongoing scholarships have been allocated to staff from this institution.
- o The public sector in Bhutan and in the Maldives, with both having relatively small populations (and small public sectors) and receiving Australian scholarships for a significant amount of time²⁵.
- o Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh –scholarships have been allocated for those living in the CHT. Case studies will help determine how successful this approach has been, do the awardees continue to live / work in this region and have they contributed to development of CHT.
- o Case studies from Sri Lanka, especially where the scholarship has been useful in providing opportunities for communities located in areas of civil disorder.

Annual Reporting

The MC will also be required to collect and record the data required to submit an Annual Report which will contain the following elements:

- **Promotion/Selection/Placement:** including the features of each annual recruitment round detailing promotion, selection and screening activities (with clear dis-aggregation of gender and any targeted disadvantage groups, location, fields of study, indicated area of development contribution) and lessons / continuous improvement approaches to incorporate into future promotion and selection rounds. Additional information will be collected on scholar Australian placement experience and outcomes for the past years cohort.
- **English Language Training (ELT):** including the progress of scholars who undertaking formal ELT and the broader outcomes for the program through introducing ELT for select participants.
- **Academic outputs:** including:
 - o Information to be collected from universities, tracking scholars' progress during the study in Australia, by semester, noting in particular deferrals, extensions, suspensions, upgrades and drop-outs, highlighting high achievers, those students who may be at risk and measures taken to mitigate the situation.

²⁵ Note: An effectiveness review of ADS in the Maldives was conducted in 2001

- o Details of completed scholarships, including information on pass/failure, with an analysis of the reasons for failure and suggestions for areas where improvements could be achieved.
- o Details of post-graduation monitoring activities, focusing on recording of returned graduates in each year, locations of resumption of employment on return and information on expected areas of contributions to development from initial employment taken up by the graduates.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** including progress towards achievement of program outcomes based on data collected from the M&E tools above.
- Updated **Risk Management** arrangements.

Quality at Implementation Reporting – In accordance with AusAID requirements, annually (Feb/March), Quality at Implementation (QAI) assessment and reporting will be conducted for the ADS program in each country. QAI reporting provides an assessment of the implementation the scholarships against the following criteria:

- o Implementation progress;
- o Achieving objectives;
- o Monitoring and evaluation;
- o Sustainability;
- o Risk management;
- o Gender equality and other overarching issues.

In cooperation with the AusAID Post, the MC will be required to provide specific input and data to AusAID's annual QAI reporting. At completion of QAI reporting in May, AusAID will convene the annual MC performance assessment meeting, to review operations and outcomes from the previous year and to agree on improvements and adjustments for ADS and ALA management.

Mid-Term Review – An independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) will be conducted early in the third quarter of year three. The MTR will assess outcomes of the outsourcing, the performance of the MC and recommendations on a contract extension for an additional two years. The MTR will also address the M&E framework, systems and data received by AusAID. The review will provide suggestions on improvement or changes to M&E systems as part of identifying the effectiveness of the MC as well as impact of the scholarship program.

The MTR will also make recommendations, as required, on any potential improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the scholarships in South Asia, with special reference to access, equity, gender and transparency. To do this, the MTR will also broadly review Australia's overall scholarship program profile and advantages in relation to those offered by other countries, as part of determining where the Australian program can increase visibility and / or quality.

5.5 The Responsibilities for Effective Monitoring and Evaluation

AusAID Posts, ASG and the MC all have responsibilities for the scholarships M&E. The following lists outline these individual responsibilities:

AusAID Post Staff

- o Define target candidate profile²⁶;
- o Define sectoral / institutional priorities;
- o Determine country specific indicators/targets against the overarching South Asia scholarship objectives / outcomes – with assistance from the MC;
- o Use results of annual student surveys to guide recruitment, selection and mobilisation processes;
- o Provide input to development of tracer studies and periodic evaluation/case studies;
- o Report on scholarship effectiveness at the country level through QAI reporting and any other information required for the Annual Report for Australian Scholarships;

²⁶ It is planned that the Posts will develop a set of 'preferred applicant profiles and provide these to the MC, with the profiles linked to country specific objectives. Depending on the context and the program, there may be more than one 'preferred applicant profile'

- o Review opportunities for a more systematic approach to support awardees and their institution, including the scholar reintegration into their agency on return from Australia;
- o Monitor the work of the MC in relation to meeting local ADS / ALA deadlines, and that the scholars have been placed in those Australian institutions that are most appropriate to their needs, taking into account the agreed sector priorities and satisfaction (of partners and scholars) to the services provided.

Managing Contractor Staff

- o Develop a South Asia Scholarships M&E strategy and system, based on AusAID guidance on M&E of Australian Scholarships Program, in close consultation with AusAID Posts, including assisting determine the country specific indicators;
- o Enter and maintain student records in SIMON/OASIS, keeping scholar contact details up to date and providing regular summary reports to AusAID;
- o Establish and maintain an M&E database, reporting the data to AusAID in a specific form when requested;
- o Utilise results of the Annual student survey to recommend to AusAID / Partner government improvements to recruitment, selection and mobilisation processes;
- o Under instruction from the individual AusAID Post, organise the placement of individual scholarship applicant and monitor any local “off-the-shelf” ELT course that is provided to selected borderline IELTS candidates who have been identified by AusAID and being from a disadvantaged background;
- o Develop reintegration strategies in support of scholars returning to their agencies;
- o Administer country-based tracer studies (including analysis of data) and report on outcomes and results;
- o Administer case studies, capture data, undertake analysis and report to AusAID on the results;
- o Monitor implementation progress, collect key performance management information and report to AusAID through the Annual Report and Planning process.
- o Provide requested inputs to provide data for AusAID Corporate reporting;
- o Incorporate lessons learned to systems and processes, as part of continuous improvement.

AusAID Scholarship Group (in Canberra)

- o Monitor performance of the Australian Universities and provide feedback as appropriate to the Post;
- o Develop and administer the Annual student surveys and focus groups;
- o Provide guidance on M&E, reintegration, and Alumni including providing tracer study and case study “Guiding Principles” for in-country MCs to implement.²⁷
- o Coordinate and respond to AusAID’s Annual corporate reporting on scholarship effectiveness.

5.6 Resources for the Monitoring and Evaluation

It is a requirement that senior MC staff have M&E skills to enable reliable and accurate reporting to take place. In addition, short term inputs may be required by the Contractor to assist with the initial establishment of the M&E system and database, as well as to support the MC in developing the M&E framework. The M&E will also build on any AusAID’s existing templates/models that cover the development of tracer study/survey and periodic evaluation/case study methodology and the subsequent data analysis.

AusAID Posts will also need to allocate staff time/resources to the M&E, especially in the initial stage of the contract, to strengthen the consistency and reliability of the data and to clearly identify that information that is to be collected and reported on.

5.7 Monitoring Contractor Performance

If the MC is not providing adequate levels of service or quality, the Post will make initial contact with the MC staff in that country and clarify problems and the required action. If this approach to the problem is not successful, then

²⁷ Each country is different, so the Post and MC will use the “guiding principles” and develop templates appropriate for each country.

the AusAID Post staff will advise the senior AusAID officer in Dhaka, who will take up the matter formally with the MC representative. It is expected AusAID staff at each South Asia Post will provide feedback, performance information and examples relating to the quality and service levels. These comments would be provided to AusAID in Dhaka, as part of the process in conducting the Annual Review of MC performance.

After receiving feedback from all AusAID Posts involved in the scholarship program, AusAID Dhaka will convene the annual MC performance assessment meeting, to review progress, standards and any issues that have been raised. Through this process, individual Posts will provide their comment and feedback on the services provided. The consolidated comments and evaluation outcomes will be provided to the MC representative, who will be expected to adapt and improve the operations and systems in response to outcomes of this annual assessment. The MC will be assessed on the performance indicators as outlined in Table 5 below, based on feedback provided by the Posts in each country.

Table 5: Managing Contractor Performance Indicators and Criteria

Performance Indicator	Criteria
1. Personnel Performance	All Contractor personnel: - o Act professionally and with integrity, and produce high quality²⁸ work ; - o Communicate with AusAID and other stakeholders in clear, transparent and effective manner; - o Deliver outputs on time.
2. Program Management	- o Good working relationships with each AusAID Post, effective coordination across the region and consistency of service levels across the region - o Finances are soundly and transparently managed and financial reporting meets AusAID requirements. - o Reports are clear, constructive and timely and meet the expectations of AusAID. - o Responsiveness to the reporting, management and planning needs of AusAID. - o Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is undertaken effectively and is being analysed and reflected in continuous improvement by the implementing team.
3. Communication / Coordination	- o Clear management arrangements and effective communication between all Contractor Personnel in each location. - o The "Scholarship Planning Guide" and "ADS / ALA Calendar of Key Dates" are developed and disseminated to appropriate networks and stakeholders. - o Personnel take proactive steps to ensure effective communication and working relationships with all stakeholders. - o Management identifies and reports any major difficulties in communication/ stakeholder relationships to AusAID as they arise.
4. Scholar Management	- o Scholarship promotional, management and monitoring processes implemented effectively and efficiently. - o Target number of students mobilised efficiently and on time within each country, including attention to cross cutting scholarship issues of gender, access and equity (including the oversight of any targeted ELT training) as well as an effective PDB which involves relevant Alumni presentations. - o All documents, applications, responses, scholar acceptances and the PDB carried out on time and required information recorded in the database. - o Effective and appropriate counseling and placement of scholars in courses relevant to their academic needs, with scholars in a cross-section of Australian institutions / universities. - o Information on scholar return and advise AusAID Post of any issues. - o The MC addresses improved access and equity as part of the scholarship promotion in each country.
5. Reintegration and	- o Reintegration Strategy developed and accepted by AusAID. - o Alumni Plan developed and accepted by AusAID.

²⁸ In this context, 'quality' means technically appropriate, relevant to needs, appropriately presented, clear and timely.

Alumni	
6. Profile	- o Appropriate Australian Government and AusAID profile and acknowledgement is maintained. - o Alternative avenues and methods used to promote the scholarship opportunities to a broader group of potential candidates.
7. Risk Management	- o Personnel respond effectively to new or changed environments or requirements from AusAID. - o Management issues are identified and resolved in a timely manner and/or reported to AusAID for decision where relevant. - o Management provides sound analysis of risks and develops and applies effective risk management measures.

5.8 Alumni and Post Scholarship Support

Currently AusAID has not developed a reintegration strategy for the South Asia scholarships program, with no established Australian Alumni networks active in the region. Contact is limited to the involvement of Alumni during pre-departure briefings; AusAID does not currently have a database with details of awardees or their positions / locations. An effective, well functioning Alumni can be beneficial for a number of reasons, including:

- Promoting and strengthening Australia's relationship with partner governments and key institutions;
- As a useful resource for promoting the scholarships programs, recruiting future candidates;
- As a recognized technical resource, available for workshops / seminars on specific priorities or topics and engagement with the PDB, providing professional and personal guidance for the departing scholars;
- For the establishment of mentors and for developing stronger regional networks; and
- As a useful vehicle for facilitating post award monitoring and evaluations.

The establishment of AusAID scholarship alumni networks to support the long-term objectives of the scholarships program is an important agenda for AusAID. AusAID wishes to develop a global Australian Scholarship Alumni Network to strengthen the scholarship program and maximise development impacts at the local, regional and national level. To ensure alumni networks at both local and broader levels are able to identify their contribution to development effectiveness of scholarship and other AusAID programs, AusAID ASG has developed a set of guiding strategic objectives. While these strategic objectives should not be directly used as objectives for individual networks (The objectives of individual networks should be more contextually specific), they may be coopted as goal statements. They thereby form the basic boundaries within which all alumni network development may be positioned, as well as guide individual country or regional programs in assessing the achievements of their individual alumni networks.

The five objectives of AusAID alumni networks are:

1. **Increased (individual and institutional) contributions made by alumni network members to respective country/regional scholarship program objectives.** A country/regional alumni network can continue to cultivate and strengthen the capacity of network members through professional development activities, supporting the achievement of scholarship objectives
2. **Increased M&E coverage of country/regional scholarship programs, both in terms of proportion of alumni/recipient institutions monitored and the range of modest outcomes able to be assessed.** A functioning and active alumni network provides country programs with valuable access to members for M&E purposes, such as on-going tracking of alumni careers and their achievements against scholarship objectives.
3. **Increased networking and communication by alumni network members at the local, regional and global level relevant to respective country/regional scholarship program objectives.** An alumni network provides members with a forum for active discussion and exchange of ideas/expertise relevant to development issues affecting members and their country or region.
4. **Increased engagement of alumni network members with AusAID and other Australian organisations relevant to country/regional scholarship program objectives or broader AusAID**

program objectives. An alumni network can facilitate two-way linkages between AusAID and other Australian organisations (such as Whole of Government partners or research institutions) which provide opportunities to enhance mutual understanding of development issues.

5. **Alumni network members are productively utilised as a resource for AusAID scholarship and broader country/regional program areas.** A functioning and active alumni network can provide valuable practical assistance and mentoring to new awardees, as well as to returning graduates through the post award reintegration processes. Network members can also be a resource in promotional strategies for AusAID scholarships programs, as well as a source of well-qualified local expertise and advice in broader country/regional program areas.

AusAID ASG is currently finalising the AusAID's Scholarship Alumni Network Implementation Plan and is expected to commence implementation in the first half of 2009. Under the guidance of AusAID, the MC will develop an Alumni Plan for South Asia including the Alumni objectives, establishment and maintenance approaches, scope of alumni activities, sustainability strategies, critical risk factors and proposed mitigation actions, and costs. The Alumni Plan should be developed in light of the identified development foci for each country in South Asia and should be linked directly with the broader AusAID Alumni Network Implementation Plan. Upon AusAID acceptance, the MC is expected to implement the Alumni Plan including taking a leading role in establishing and maintaining the Alumni Network. This could include developing and maintaining an Alumni database; providing support to returned awardees to establish an Alumni association in each country; working with AusAID Post and the Alumni themselves to facilitate and support alumni events and technical/social activities.

5.9 Sustainability and HRD

Sustainability is defined in the AusAID Business Processes as the continuation of benefits or outcomes of an activity after external support is removed and should not be seen in terms of continuance of the scholarship program. Rather it should be viewed in relation to capacity of the pool of individuals to apply knowledge and skills acquired in Australia, so they can be used effectively by their organizations to serve their country and society. Involvement and commitment of counterpart government and institutional stakeholders are also important for sustainability and effectiveness of scholarships and areas to be considered are:

- o The sustainability of the AusAID scholarship program, to be determined at corporate level, based on high-level indicators and impact assessment;
- o Increased Partner agency sustainability, including more focus on the HRD strategies of participating agencies and how returned scholars are deployed and contribute to the agency;

Up until now, a systematic approach to HRD planning for scholars / partners and establishing scholarship impact has not been established. Sustainability of the overall South Asia scholarships program has been difficult to assess and it is envisaged the MC will support each of the individual Posts through developing specific reintegration strategies that can better be used to assess the impact and effectiveness of returned scholars. This assistance in the planning and documentation of HRD will focus on supporting AusAID Post staff to develop methods and templates that can be jointly applied with the Partner agencies. The methods and processes can then be used when working with Partners in clarifying forward development priorities. This could form a part of discussion on the profile of candidates nominated for scholarships, as well as the agency priorities.

In addition, the HRD and career planning support will assist Post staff to monitor and analyse the agency-level context, as AusAID's focus increases on scholars' re-entry back into their agencies. This will link into analysis (via tracer studies and case studies) of the contribution to organisational development, made through the application of knowledge and skills gained as part of their program in Australia.

The MC scholarship management will further promote sustainability through the adoption of good practice and the use of transparent selection processes. The Partner Governments and AusAID, as major stakeholders in the decision making processes, will continue to develop profiles and strategies that increase the effectiveness and impact of the scholarships. Through a process of continual improvement and lessons learned, better targeting of scholarships to key agencies and the fields of study (fitting in with partner government priority policy frameworks) will also support sustainability.

It is envisaged that more effort will be devoted to providing scholars with post award support, through the strengthening of the Alumni. This will strengthen sustainability by allowing Alumni to share their technical and cultural experiences, whilst at the same time maintaining their professional and social networks.

6 OVERARCHING POLICY ISSUES: GENDER, ANTICORRUPTION, ENVIRONMENT

6.1 Gender and Access

The MC will be required to develop a Scholarship Promotion and Communication Plan (covering marketing and recruitment) incorporating the guidelines and policies of the AusAID scholarship program. The Plan will include strategies to promote equity and engagement and address gender, equity and any potential corruption issues. The MC will also ensure all reporting includes sex-disaggregated data, that scholar pre-departure briefings address treatment of gender in Australia. The MC itself must promote equal opportunity for women and men as part of managing elements of Australia's ADS / ALA program.

The ADS Operating Guidelines require that 50% of scholarships be awarded to male and female candidates. The South Asia scholarships program cooperates with partner governments to ensure 50% of scholarships are awarded to male and female candidates. The program encourages women, indigenous persons, disadvantaged groups, ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities from relevant organisations to apply, paying attention to these groups during scholarship promotion and selection.

Records indicate most country programs have achieved gender balance in the last few years. In some countries, including the Maldives, there were more female awardees than male. The program has been identifying access barriers to the program, providing additional logistic support to women candidates where possible. In the future, South Asia Program will continue to provide at least half of the development scholarships to women, with future promotion and targeting to encourage women, ethnic minorities persons, candidates from remote or disadvantages regions and people with disabilities to apply, contributing to equity in the access to opportunities under Australian scholarship programs.

As part of a process of continuous development, AusAID will also devote more effort to working with partner government agencies on encouraging leadership roles for minority groups in scholarship management and planning, as well as strengthening their strategies and plans prior to their departure and their re-entry into agencies. This will involve better targeting of women and minorities that are eligible for scholarships, ensuring that they have all of the required information to enable informed choices to be made. Efforts will be made to publicise the opportunities in less urbanised areas, to ensure information and feedback is freely available outside the major centres.

As noted previously, there is potential for each of the country Posts to support the identification and potential selection of non-urban, disadvantaged or female candidates, through support for local ELT training. As part of increasing access, it is proposed, on a country by country basis, some support be provided to non-urban, women and other disadvantaged ADS applicants who missed out because their IELTS score was not quite high enough to qualify. The Post for each South Asia country will decide on how and to whom if this additional support will be provided and develop their policy for "off-the-shelf" in-country English Language Training (ELT), to raise IELTS scores to the level required. Under instruction from the individual Posts, only candidates from minority groups, disadvantaged (ie by caste), women or non-urban applicants would be eligible for ELT support. It is expected that the maximum period of ELT will be no more than six months.

6.2 Anti Corruption

The program supports good governance and anti corruption initiatives. The ADS candidates are selected from target agencies within those study areas and priority sectors that are in line with the South Asia Regional Framework. Priority fields of study supported by the program will contribute to addressing issues regarding effective governance including civil service reforms, transparency and accountability of public institutions. Through management practice and modeling equity, AusAID will ensure an open, transparent selection process is in place to avoid the possibility of undue interference, including potential for corruption or nepotism.

An independent selection panel, involving external members, will be established for each selection process to highlight and reinforce transparent decision making, clearly in accordance with agreed selection criteria. The M&E framework and Risk Management Plan developed by the MC will ensure any potential interference or corruption is documented, immediately addressed and AusAID advised.

6.3 Environment

For future ADS / ALA intakes, the program will support studies that are in line with the objectives of the new South Asia Regional Framework, which include renewed emphasis in areas of the environment and (importantly) the impact of climate change. The ADS program has also been supporting candidates from those partner government agencies that deal with national environmental issues and will continue to target these candidates. This includes a focus on climate change, with the impact in South Asia potentially very significant, especially for the Maldives, Bangladesh and India.

7 CRITICAL RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

There are significant risks associated with outsourcing support services, especially where these services are delivered in a number of countries under a single head contract. There are risks associated with governance, consistency of service levels, loss of AusAID management control and the potential loss of power / influence. The following major risks have been identified, with safeguards built into the design and suitable response actions identified. The detailed Risk Matrix is included as Annex 4, with the following major risks included:

Inconsistent Service Levels to Scholarship Program

It is crucial for the MC to match their staff, systems and service levels to the needs and requirements of each country / scholarship program. Each country will require MC staff that are available to the ADS / ALA program, have sound IT and English language skills, and who understand the importance of scholarships to AusAID's development program. Any major variation in service level or quality, across countries, will have negative implications for the scholars as well as for AusAID.

It is also critical that the MC and their in-country representatives have a sound understanding of the Australian university system and the courses offered. The MC will need to provide advice and guidance to enable the scholar's technical / professional requirements to quality courses / award offerings in Australia. The correct alignment of scholar needs with the relevant Australian expertise is an important element in scholarship effectiveness and therefore longer term sustainability.

As part of the Scholarship Promotion and Communications Plan, the MC will detail how the staff (in each country) will communicate with each other and also how they will maintain service levels to a minimum standard. The MC will ensure that service level quality provided to each of the AusAID Posts is consistent and meets all required standards. To achieve this, the MC in Dhaka will need to provide the necessary guidance and direction to their staff and their associates across the South Asia countries.

The proposed commencement workshop, to be held in Dhaka, will provide the MC with details, data and information on standards and the scholarship procedures, including access to existing templates, management methods and key local contacts. As the administrative tasks are handed over from AusAID to the MC, it will be critical that the MC's representatives and staff are fully aware of what is to be done, the various responsibilities and schedules for each country and who to contact if there are problems or issues.

Direct or Indirect Interference in Selection Process

To attract and select the most suitably qualified, appropriate person requires the use of selection criteria that are clear, open, transparent and easy to understand. To promote transparency, fairness and accountability, the ADS and ALA each have clear selection criteria, applied by a selection team that includes external, independent members. The selection of candidates is a crucial step in the cycle, representing probably the most important element in the program. In several countries around the Asia – Pacific, there have been past attempts to unduly influence the selection process, using a variety of methods and forms of external pressure.

The MC will support the selection process, through making arrangements for venues, contracting external members and in providing secretarial services. Each ADS or ALA shortlisting / selection panel will be chaired by AusAID: the MC will not have any voting or selection responsibilities. This selection arrangement protects both AusAID and the MC, ensuring that final decisions on the success of any applicant are not, in any way, aligned with the work of the MC. As previously stated, the MC is required to communicate, in writing to AusAID, any external approach or any attempt to interfere with the scholar selection process.

Loss of AusAID Identity in the Scholarship Program

There can be a tendency for the day-to-day manager of an activity, including the ADS / ALA scholarships, to gradually become perceived more as the funding source than as a service provider. This may happen unintentionally over time, or even be part of a strategy to increase an MC profile in the sector. In some countries where parts of scholarship management have been outsourced, the MC has (over time) taken too high a profile in comparison to the actual donor / funding agency.

In the ADS / ALA, the MC will ensure that the AusAID profile remains high in all aspects of the cycle. That includes the ADS / ALA promotion, administration, general management, communications, pre-departure materials and the various monitoring activities are all clearly being carried out by the MC on behalf of the Australian Government and AusAID.

Poor MC Performance Leads to Embarrassment for AusAID

Scholarship programs are high-profile and form a central part of each South Asia country program. The publicity associated with identifying and selecting scholars is an important part of transparency, with clear communication channels and responsibilities an important part of equity and access. A breakdown in any key elements of the contractor performance could well have implications for AusAID, with poor publicity and the various complaints / problems bringing the agency into disrepute. As an example, in terms of placements, it is imperative the MC and its in-country representatives have good understanding of Australia's higher education sector and are able to ensure the appropriate alignment of country / scholar needs (and capacities) against the relevant courses / institutions in Australia.

The MC will be expected to ensure all scholarship management strategies, plans and activities are well understood in each country and any emerging problems are communicated to the MC in Dhaka and to AusAID at the earliest opportunity. It will be important for the MC to operate on a principle of "no surprises" to AusAID, maintaining an open communication relationship so problems are identified early and jointly considered.

8 QUALITY MEASURES FOR SCHOLARSHIP MANAGEMENT

This outsourcing contract involves working with the senior AusAID staff responsible for each country, requiring the MC to provide services and outcomes that include quality inputs, elements of confidentiality, a sensitive approach and (above all) integrity. With designs of this nature, one of the highest risks is that the staff assigned by the MC, as well as the systems, are not of sufficient quality to provide the level of support required in each country. This is especially the case where a tenderer does not have representation in all countries and is required to enter into partnerships or through cooperation with local organisations or firms.

At commencement, the MC will be required to develop a Quality Assurance (QA) Plan and related QA Manual. This will encompass a continuous quality enhancement principle for all aspects of the scholarship management. The MC will monitor implementation, self-assessing performance in all countries and provide feedback to staff in order to improve service delivery. QA issues will also be addressed in the Annual performance review.

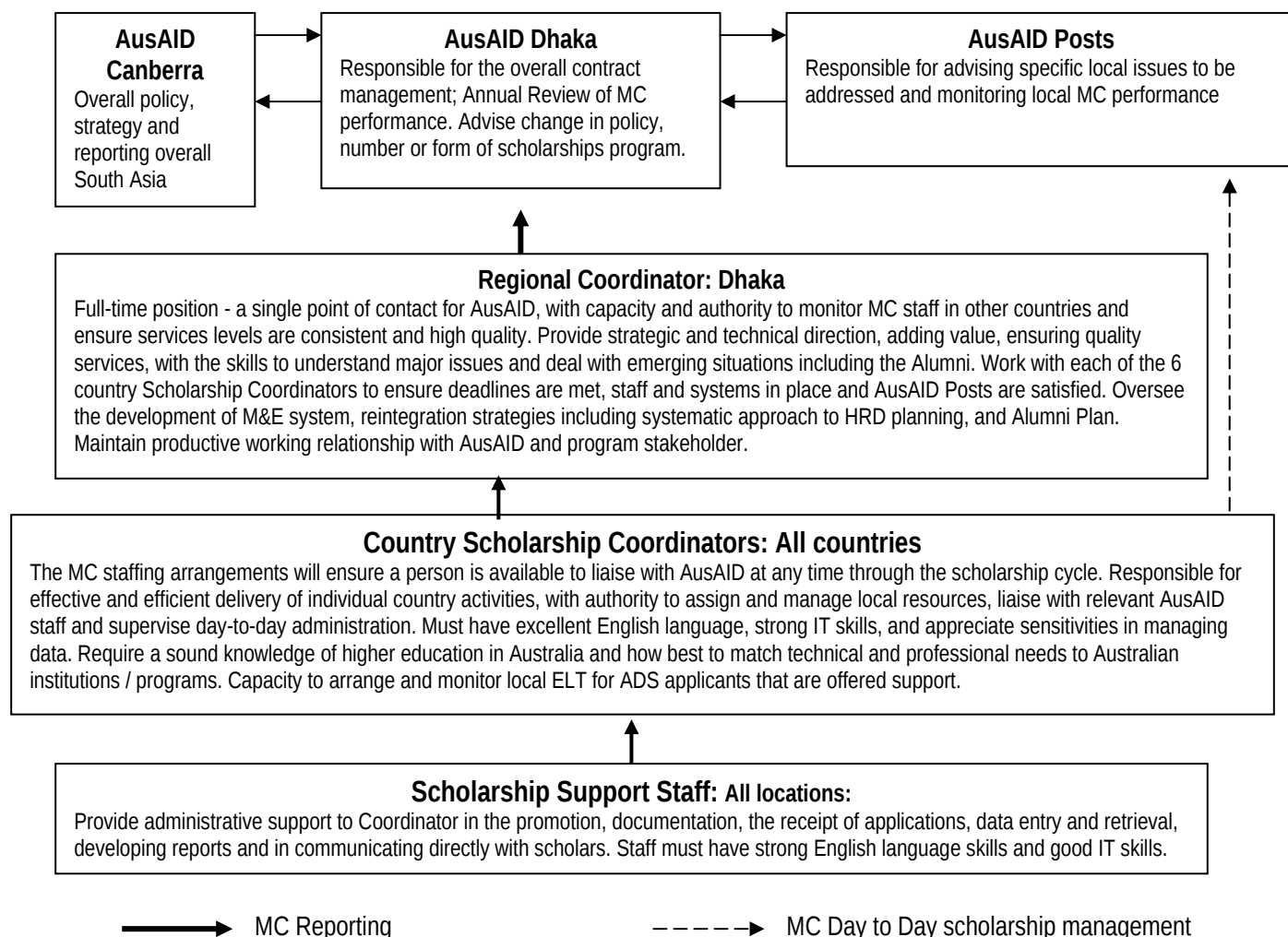
The annual MC performance review will also take into account the key M&E measures, as well as the level of satisfaction of all AusAID Posts in the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of scholarship support services being provided.

8.1 Clear Responsibility for Managing Scholarship Support Activity

Scholarships are high-profile, sensitive and highly sought after. The profile and importance of scholarship support to AusAID will need to be matched by the expertise, status and experience of personnel nominated by the MC to oversee the work. The nominated person will act as the single point of contact for AusAID and therefore will need to be readily available, highly skilled and an excellent communicator.

MC inputs will depend on the country, number of scholarships involved, complexity of the local context and staff required to provide quality service and backup. It is expected that the MC will provide an appropriate mix of full and part-time Contractor Personnel, located in a suitably equipped program support office in Dhaka and in the other countries in the region to deliver essential management services related to the scholarships program. The

support offices will be in accessible locations and of sufficient standard to reflect the high profile of the Australian Government's scholarships program. The MC is expected to appoint staff with roles as broadly indicated in the chart below, which summarises some indicative roles of key Contractor personnel²⁹. Beyond these requirements, MC has the flexibility to nominate a team considered to best meet the requirements of the Program.



8.2 The Managing Contractor Staff English Language and IT Skill Requirements

The receipt, reading and interpretation of Australian scholarship applications requires MC staff to have command of the English language and good understanding of Australia's higher education system. From the applications, a significant amount of information needs to be entered on data-bases, records etc. ALA Scholarship applications can be lodged online or in hard copy. Those received in hard copy will need to be uploaded onto OASIS. At present in-country scholarship management for all programs is carried out in the SIMON database. OASIS Phase III is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2009, after which scoping and development for Phase IV (the Alumni) will begin.

In the dynamic IT environment, the MC will need to assign staff who can understand and communicate well in English and who have good computer / IT skills that can be applied to scholarship management from the outset, with the MC having capacity to progressively work via the internet for receiving applications and managing data.

²⁹ Each of the MC's support office locations will also need to have good office computing facilities and IT skills. The IT capacity of the MC will become increasingly important as the ADS and ALA programs progressively use AusAID's new OASIS software.

8.3 Independent Selection Panel Members

The MC will be responsible for contracting and mobilisation / support of external consultants who provide AusAID and the partner government with independent advice and inputs on scholar short-listing / selection. Independent consultant nominations will be reviewed / endorsed by AusAID before any contract or arrangement is entered into by the MC. It will be expected that selection panel members will hold skills in IT, as information will (in future) be downloaded by panel members from OASIS, supported by the MC.

The use of external experts is one of the most important guarantees of the selection process objectivity and transparency. AusAID will therefore play a key role in the final selection of these independent consultant(s).

8.4 The Scholarship Visa Processing

In all South Asian countries, Australian Embassies / High Commissions have outsourced selected elements of their Visa processing requirements. While there are no Australian Visa application fees for Australian scholarship holders, there is a set processing fee that is paid direct to the organization holding the Visa outsourcing contract, to cover the costs of document collection, checking for compliance, the data entry and courier costs.

In Bangladesh and India (including for Nepal and Bhutan) the contract for outsourced Australian Visa processing is held by VFS. In Sri Lanka (including for the Maldives) the Visa processing contract is held by TT Services.

The MC will be required to work cooperatively with staff from the relevant in-country Visa support contractor staff and systems, making suitable arrangements for ensuring that all scholarship Visa applications are provided in an effective, timely manner.

8.5 Immediate AusAID Notification of Potential Interference in the Awarding of Scholarships

It is crucial the management of the Australian scholarships remains transparent, fair and equitable. Past experience across various scholarship programs indicates that, occasionally, senior people may attempt to influence the selection process in favour of a particular person or friend. These approaches can be in writing or made verbally, in an attempt to circumvent the public selection criteria.

While it is clear that no external approach will be allowed to circumvent agreed process, it is important for AusAID to be aware of any such approaches to the MC, as part of protecting the integrity of the ADS and ALA programs.

Therefore, in any instance of potential interference, whether in writing or verbal, the MC is to immediately contact the relevant AusAID person in the country Post, as well as the senior AusAID officer in Dhaka. This mechanism for reporting any external pressure to AusAID will be publicised as part of the initial outsourcing arrangements, acting as a level of "protection" for the MC from any local external pressure.

ANNEX 1

Detailed Budget / Cost Estimates
withheld

ANNEX 2

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

	Design Logic	Key Questions	Key Indicators/Key Performance Management Information	Means of verification	Responsibility	Timing/frequency
POST AWARD PHASE	GOAL Australian scholarship awardees contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in South Asia, through their improved contribution in priority fields, disciplines and organisations.	Impact on gender, leadership and governance	Priority sectors and organisations, through their effective utilization of alumni, strengthen their capacity to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in South Asia.	Periodic evaluation	ASG – thematic reviews MC – Periodic Evaluation	Periodically
	OBJECTIVE Improved capacity in priority fields, disciplines and organisations in South Asia due to increased access to higher professional and technical knowledge and linkages with individuals and institutions within the region and Australia	Have Australian Scholarships strengthened organisational effectiveness?	Evidence that Institutions/organisations that have received a significant number of scholarships have increased in capacity/ effectiveness. Evidence of returning graduates in target organisations supporting each other and helping to develop their organisations by playing an active role in reform processes.	Case studies of target institutions and organisations	MC – develop and administer case studies, analyse data and report back to AusAID.	Periodically
		Are awardees contributing to the development of their home country or other developing countries in the region?	Evidence that returnees are deployed in positions of leadership that allow them to use their new skills to influence positive change in priority sectors. If not, factors that are preventing them from utilising new skills. Evidence that returnees are extending the benefits to others by providing formal training, conducting seminars or active participation in conferences and workshops.	Tracer studies Case studies	MC – develop and administer tracer study and case studies, analyse data and report back to AusAID. Case studies provided by MC each year to AusAID	Tracer studies: Year 2 and in Year 5 Four case-studies per year
		Are awardees maintaining linkages with Australia and networking with other awardees	% returnees that claim to maintain professional relationships with Australian individuals and institutions that they established while on award. % returnees that join the Alumni Association.	Tracer studies Alumni data	MC – develop and administer tracer study, analyse data and report back to AusAID.	Tracer studies: Year 2 and Year 5

	Design Logic	Key Questions	Key Indicators/Key Performance Management Information	Means of verification	Responsibility	Timing/ frequency
			% returnees that are active alumni. Number / type of alumni events held annually			
		Are awardees applying the skills they gained effectively?	Evidence that returnees are in positions that enable them to effectively utilise their new knowledge, skills and qualifications. Evidence that returnees are making tangible work achievement as a result of new skills.	Tracer studies	MC – develop and administer tracer study, analyse data and report back to AusAID. Case studies provided by MC each year to AusAID	Tracer study conducted in Year 2 and in Year 5. Four case-studies per year
		Are awardees re-integrated back into the workplace successfully?	% awardees returned to previous workplace/institution. Evidence that awardees have received recognition from their employer and peers for their enhanced skills and knowledge. Proportion of graduates being promoted to a relevant position in their organisation.	Tracer studies	MC – develop and administer tracer study, analyse data and report back to AusAID. Case studies provided by MC each year to AusAID	Tracer study conducted in Year 2 and in Year 5. Four case-studies per year
		Have awardees returned to their home countries?	% awardees return to home country. % awardees that are residing in home country 12 months, 3 years, 5 years after completion of their studies. If no, country of residence (Australia, developed or developing country)	Tracer studies	MC – develop and administer tracer study, analyse data and report back to AusAID.	Tracer study conducted in year 2 and year 5.
IN-COUNTRY STUDY / COMPLETION PHASE	OUTPUT Awardees successfully complete Australian education, have positive experiences and links with fellow awardees and Australian institutions	Are awardees successfully completing their placement and award?	% students successfully complete study in Australia. Reasons for non-completion. % of awardees that requested an extension during their studies. Reasons for extension requests.	Student University results (OASIS/SIMON) Follow up with students who do not complete studies	Higher Educations Institutes – input University results MC – analysis of awardees' data for South Asia ASG – global analysis.	Annually
		Are awardees in-country experiences positive?	Key indicators to be developed by ASG.	Annual student surveys/focus groups	ASG	Annually

	Design Logic	Key Questions	Key Indicators/Key Performance Management Information	Means of verification	Responsibility	Timing/ frequency
		Are higher education institutions meeting their key performance measures?	Key performance measures for higher education institutions determined by ASG.	Annual student surveys/focus groups	ASG	Annually
SELECTION PHASE	INPUT Scholarships awarded to potential development leaders in the region	Is AusAID on track to achieve our target sectors, areas, numbers etc? Is AusAID securing the 'right' candidates?	% of target number of scholarships awarded. % of male and female awardees. % of awardees from target institutions and/or working in priority sectors. % of awardees studying in priority sectors. Representation from minority/disadvantaged groups. % of awardees from regional/rural areas. % of awardees undertaking Undergraduate, Masters or PHD.	Student profiles (SIMON/OASIS)	AusAID Post – define South Asia target candidate profile, and sectoral priorities and policies. MC – enter student data on SIMON/ OASIS, undertake analysis (comparison to target profile) and report to AusAID. ASG – global analysis of progress against targets.	Annually, after the selection process has been finalised
	PLANNING	What are the HRD needs of priority areas and institutions? What are comparative conditions and services of other scholarships available in the region? Has the introduction of ELT for marginalized groups increased the base from which ADS scholarships have been awarded?		Institutional Analysis Regional analysis Comparative analysis of selection results.	MC MC MC	As directed by AusAID Annually Annually

ANNEX 3

Implementation Schedule

Indicative Implementation Schedule for the South Asia ADS / ALA Scholarships Outsourcing: Initial Two Years

	2009						2010												2011						
Contract	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l
Finalise contractual arrangements																									
MC assigns staff in each country																									
MC establish support facilities																									
MC / VFS / TT arrangements for Visas																									
Scholarship support systems commence																									
ADS																									
Initial visit to all Posts / relevant agencies																									
Agree timing for progressive handover																									
Agree approach for cross-cutting issues																									
2-week Training for MC staff in Dhaka																									
MC train their country support staff																									
Initial handover ADS/ALA responsibilities																									
Progressive Handover of 2009/10 ADS/ALA																									
Handover of ADS returnee responsibility																									
Mobilise any mid-year ADS scholars																									
Develop Marketing/Communication Plan																									
Support new ADS intake Promotion activities																									
Receive ADS Applications and record																									
Enter data onto SIMON / OASIS																									
Support ADS short listing process																									
Support the scholar selection process																									
Support process to identify Aust Unis																									
Provide summary of institutions to AusAID																									
Manage ADS travel / logistics																									
Refine and deliver PD Briefing program																									

2009 / 2010 ADS scholars in Australia																										
Monitor / confirm scholar return dates																										
Develop/Refine AusAID Tracer Study methods																										
Conduct Tracer Studies in all countries																										
Analyse Tracer data - report to AusAID																										
Identify suitable case-study samples																										
Undertake approved case-studies																										
Analyse data - report to AusAID																										
	2009						2010														2011					
ALA	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	
Support for ALA Promotion																										
Collect and record ALA applications																										
Administer Visa requirements																										
Manage ALA travel / logistics																										
Refine and deliver PDB program																										
2009 / 2010 ALA scholars in Australia																										
Access and Equity																										
AusAID provide identity of target groups																										
Strategy for gender/rural/caste/minority																										
Promote opportunities to target groups																										
Identification of support measures (ie EL)																										
After AusAID approval, arrange ELT																										
Monitor progress/outcome of EL training																										
Provide disaggregated data to AusAID																										
EL outcomes and eligibility to AusAID																										
M&E, Reintegration and Alumni																										
Develop M&E strategy and system																										
Develop Reintegration strategy																										

Develop Alumni Plan																											
Reporting																											
Six Monthly Report to AusAID																											
Contribute to AusAID QAI Reporting																											
Annual MC Performance Assessment																											
Provide M&E to AusAID as required																											

ANNEX 4

Risk Management

Major Risk	Potential Impact	Level of Risk	Aspects in the Design to Minimise Risk	Actions if Risk Event Happens
Program Risk				
Poor Governance	Perceptions are that the Australian scholarship selection process is contaminated and not managed in a fair or equal manner.	Medium	- o Key elements of scholarship management process remain with AusAID supervision / engagement (including selection). - o Transparent process for advertising and attracting broad range of applicants	- o Immediate discussions between AusAID and MC on any negative perceptions. - o Assuming no basis for the perception, MC to increase efforts to model and demonstrate governance.
Limited Service Level Consistency	Different levels of MC management support to AusAID across the South Asia countries, leading to confusion and resentment by AusAID staff and the scholars.	High	- o Clear responsibilities allocated to the contractor and tasks well identified. - o Annual review of the contractor performance, including discussion and application of lessons learned.	- o Immediate action by MC should discrepancies in service levels become apparent. - o MC to rectify: problem to be reflected in contractor performance measures.
MC Staff not function at required level	MC staff not equipped to undertake the work, through a lack of skills or not enough training on the work required.	Medium	- o Staff quality / technical attributes included in RFT and quality standards required - o Clear definition of the services, language, IT and communication requirements included in tender	- o Immediate AusAID discussions with the MC Senior Manager assigned to oversee the outsourcing work. - o MC make staff changes where required.
Lack of MC Systems and Resources	The MCs IT and other systems are unable to support OASIS and other net-based scholarship management requirements.	Low	o As OASIS becomes more central to scholarship management, the MC systems and its IT capacity unable to respond.	- o Immediate AusAID discussions with the MC Senior Manager assigned to oversee the outsourcing work. - o MC makes system changes as required.
AusAID loses scholarship identity	The profile of AusAID as the funding agency and overall scholarship sponsor is lost through the MC taking a high-profile position in management.	High	- o Clear guidelines on how MC will promote the ADS / ALA including maintaining AusAID branding for scholarships. - o Clear statements on the way in which the "branding" of the scholarships will remain with Australia / AusAID. - o Local AusAID staff still involved in scholarship process.	- o MC to show examples of how AusAID will maintain its profile in the scholarship management. - o AusAID to monitor promotional materials, business cards, advertisements, email / letter identifiers
Confusion on Management Roles	Can be duplication of effort or (more likely) important steps in the scholarship management process can be left out until it is too late.	Medium	- o Clear identification of AusAID (Post and Canberra) and the MC roles and responsibilities included in the SOS. - o Initial discussions and handover at contract commencement to ensure that the contractor is very clear on what is required and how it will be delivered. - o As part of initial 2-week workshop, a set of clear guidelines and the priority issues to be provided by the AusAID Post staff for each South Asia country.	- o MC to make sure that associates in each country fully aware of the systems, processes and service standards. - o Immediate intervention from AusAID if required, which will be reflected in contractor performance measures.

Impact of the Scholarships	Little information or feedback on the work or contribution of the returned ADS / ALA scholars, including how their studies fit into the Partner agency HRD strategies. Partners could resent any perception of “interference” during the HRD discussions and also any follow up reintegration tracer or questions.	High	- o Increased focus in the design on impact and on stronger engagement (ie Alumni) as part of strengthening networks and support mechanisms, especially on scholars return. - o Increase AusAID focus on the Partner agency HRD planning, including the scholar reintegration into the agency on return. This to be approached carefully as a collegial way of identifying how Partner needs have been met. - o MC to have strong understanding of Australia’s tertiary system to better match scholars to relevant, quality awards.	- o AusAID to take lead role in monitoring impact through case studies and tracer studies, supported by MC as required - o AusAID work with Partner to review reintegration process in ways that maximize scholar success and impact. - o Care taken to explain HRD is joint process to identify impact, not interference in agency priority / practice.
Cross Cutting Risk				
Lack of Selection Equity	Not enough applications from eligible women or the non-urban for the ADS or the ALA. Results in lost opportunities for women and minority groups.	Medium	- o Wide promotion of opportunities to ensure that eligible candidates encouraged in put in the applications. - o Use of diverse media providers to suit the non-urban areas, including use of local FM radio. - o Potential for short-term 3-6 month ELT to targeted groups. - o “Scholarship Planning Guide” and “ADS / ALA Calendar of Key Dates” promote scholarships and clarify requirements.	- o Monitor profile of the received applications and (if required) focus scholarship promotional efforts on the non-urban areas. - o Revise “Scholarships Planning Guide” as required.
Loss of AusAID Control	With so many staff changes at the key AusAID Posts, a danger that the institutional memory will increasingly reside with the MC.	Medium	- o AusAID staff still involved in key elements of the process and this can facilitate continuity. - o Summary of responsibilities, roles, outcomes included in SOS, will make it easier for new AusAID staff to familiarise.	o AusAID to ensure that new staff are aware of the arrangements and understand the role and responsibilities of the contractor.
Security Risks for MC staff / scholars	Tension or civil unrest leads to increased security problems and danger to staff / scholars / dependants.	Medium	o Several countries are experiencing potential for civil unrest that can have a direct impact on the safety and wellbeing of MC staff and ADS / ALA scholars	- o Security plan for staff and scholars - o AusAID to advise MC on any specific security information as required
Political Risk				
Change in Government	Potential for AusAID or other Australian awards to be affected by change in the partner country government.	Low	o Responsibility for engaging with the Partner Government remains with AusAID, so that any potential for impact on scholarships can be discussed and changes made.	o AusAID to monitor any potential changes / amendments to scholarships and advise MC as soon as possible.
Awards perceived as being politically motivated	Potential for perceptions that Australian selection criteria and quota can favour certain groups / persuasions in the number of scholarships awarded and in the processes selecting / nominating.	Medium	- o Use and promote transparent processes and methods used in each of the countries to select scholars. - o Public notification of scholarships well in advance, including via a range of sources including press, FM radio, internet. - o MC to contact AusAID immediately that any written or verbal interference is received in relation to scholarship.	o AusAID to continue to promote the fairness and equity of scholarship programs and highlight those areas where policy frameworks impact on selection ie equal numbers by gender, disadvantaged groups (including CHT).

ANNEX 5

Scope of Services and Basis of Payment

RFT Parts 3 and 4 replace these versions and will form part of the final Contract

ANNEX 6

Summary of Organisations / People Consulted

Location / Organisation	Person	Position
Bangladesh (Dhaka)		
AusAID	Mr. Peter Duncan-Jones	First Secretary: Development Cooperation
	Ms Fahmida Shabnam	Senior Program Manager
	Ms Azra Karim	Program Officer
AUSTRAINING	Mr. Mohammad Badrul Alam	Austraining Country Manager, Bangladesh
AUSTRADE	Mr. Minhaz Chowdry	AUSTRADE Country Manager
	Mr. Mostafizur Rahman	Business Development Manager
VFS	Mr. Santanu Bhattacharya	Country Manager
	Mr. Sujoy Majumder	Unit Manager
Mott McDonald / Euroconsult	Mr. Farook Chowdhury	Business Development Manager, South Asia
	Mr. Mizanur Rahman	Country Director: Bangladesh
	Mr. Marc van der Stouwe	Consultant: Social Sector / Education
IDP	Mr. Shareef Rahman	Country Director
	Ms Fareha Begum	Manager: Student Services
UNDP	Mr. Prasenjit Chakma	Chief, Policies and Confidence Building
	Mr. Nasir Ahmed Chowdhury	Scholarship Officer
	Mr. Mithel Chakma	Scholarship Associate
SMEC	Mr. Gholam Mostofa	Managing Director, ACE Consultants Ltd
	Mr. Samiul Hossain	Coordination Manager
Maxwell Stamp	Mr. Syed Nuruddin Ahmed	Managing Director
	MD Nahid Hasan Sumon	Project Coordinator
	Ms Marie Howe	Resource Consultant
	Dr Mak Khan	Team Leader: DFID: Prosper Project
PMTc	Mr. Monjur Hossain	Managing Director
India (Delhi)		
AusAID	Ms Nadira Mailewa	Country Manager
	Mr Tiruchirappalli Vishwanathan	Senior Program Manager
IDP	Mr. Henry A S Ledie	Chief Executive Officer, IDP Education India Private Ltd
VFS Global	Mr. Akhil Ahuja	Unit Manager: Australia Visa Application Centre
DAAD	Mr. Apoorv Mahendru	Events and Promotions Manager
Fulbright: United States Educational Foundation in India	Mr. Adam Grotsky	Executive Director
	Ms Sarina Paranjape	Indian Program Officer
	Dr Girish Kaul	US Program Officer
Netherlands Embassy	Ms Sara Cohen	Head: Press and Cultural Affairs Department
	Mr. Muhammed Afzal	Program Officer: Press and Cultural Affairs
Australian Education International	Ms Linda Laker	Minister Counsellor: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
	Ms Priya Raja	Adviser: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
AUSTRADE	Mr. Harsh Mohan Puri	Business Development Manager

Nepal (Kathmandu)		
AusAID	Ms Tara Gurung	Country Manager
	Ms Sunita Gurung	Program Support Officer
Fulbright: Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States and Nepal	Dr Peter K Moran	Executive Director
Netherlands Consulate	Ms Kari Cuelenaere	Consular officer
	Ms Patricia Chettri	Asst Consular Officer / Fellowships Offices
Planet EDU / IDP Education Kathmandu	Mr. Suraj B Thapa	Adviser (Administration): Planet EDU Nepal
	Mr. Bardan Subedi	Team Leader (Operation): IELTS Australia Test Centre
	Mr. Shiva Raj Ghimire	Sr Counsellor, Student Services: IDP Educ Kathmandu
British Council	Ms Archana Sharma	Education and Governance Manager, Nepal
British Embassy	Ms Sheba Rosier	Third Secretary (Political)
Embassy of Japan	Mr. Daiji Sasai	First Secretary: Public Relations and Cultural Exchange
Sri Lanka (Colombo)		
AusAID	Ms Kim Pendreigh	First Secretary, Development Cooperation
	Ms Chandrika de Alwis	Program Officer
AUSTRADE	Mr. Shameel Javadh	Business Development Manager
	Mr. David Samuel	Business Development Assistant
IMMIGRATION	Ms Tara Cavanagh	First Secretary (Immigration)
	Ms Kiriilly Cunningham	Second Secretary (Immigration)
Third Wave Group	Mr. Stefan Moraes	Managing Director
	Mr. Arshad Ahamed	Business Development Executive
	Mr. Shameera Leitan	Business Development Manager
	Ms Maljinee Liyanage	Manager – Operations: 3 W Global Education
Infotech Ideas	Mr. B K D S Samarasinghe	General Manager
	Ms Dhakshy Kulendran	Program Officer
MG Consultants	Dr Manomi Perera	CEO
	Mr. Ranjith Gunaratne	Director