AusAID Management Response

RedR Partnership Mid-Term Review (2012)

In 2010 AusAID and RedR Australia established a 3 year partnership, the overarching goal of which is to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity during, and where possible before, international emergencies. The partnership contributes to the Australian Government strategic goal of strengthening the capacity of Australian agencies and the international humanitarian community to respond to humanitarian crises.

RedR Australia delivers humanitarian training and provides gratis surge capacity of qualified personnel as a Standby Partner to selected United Nations and multilateral organisations in humanitarian emergencies. The RedR Australia Partnership 2010/11 - 2012/13 (the partnership) aims to:

1. Extend the reach and impact of Australian humanitarian assistance aligning with the goals and principles of AusAID's Humanitarian Action Policy;

2. Enhance capacity within the Australian humanitarian community to contribute to international emergencies; and

3. Increase the profile of Australian humanitarian responses among the Australian public, host governments and within the UN system.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- RedR deployees are highly valued by the UN agencies (92% of RedR Australia's UN Performance Evaluation Reports were exceptional and/or very good).

- The RedR Australia training program has expanded its reach, breadth and participant numbers and is positioned as a leading humanitarian training organisation working with the UN, NGOs and government agencies

- Deployment months over the two year period exceeded expectations, with 589 deployment months achieved surpassing the target of 450.

- RedR Australia is unanimously seen as responsive and supportive to deployee/training needs.

- Women accounted for 44% of deployees in 2011-12 and 46% in 2010-11 and the register has 41% female and 59% male members.

Under the Partnership Agreement a mid-term review is to be carried out to determine the value and impact (and inform a possible next phase) of the Partnership. The Review:

- Examined the training and deployment of personnel including administrative, management and monitoring processes, and the extent to which objectives, results and impacts are being achieved.

- Identified lessons learned (both operational and activity related).

- Proposed enhancements in the RedR Australia/AusAID relationship and objectives, including possibilities for the Partnership after 30 June 2013.

The Review found several areas for increased attention by both partners, and highlighted priority recommendations for the current and future partnership. AusAID's Management Response outlines how AusAID will progress those recommendations pertinent to AusAID, and our position on those recommendations for action by RedR Australia.

Recommendations and AusAID response

The current AusAID – RedR Partnership is due to conclude on 30 June 2013. AusAID is committed to continued support for RedR Australia's activities, pending action on several key recommendations. These priority recommendations are highlighted below.

	Review Recommendation	AusAID response	Action/Progress	Responsibility
1	RedR to strategically broaden its services and funding sources to remain relevant to the market.	**AGREE** AusAID acknowledges that this recommendation may require time to implement; however this is a recurring finding on funding (since 2009) and AusAID strongly encourages RedR Australia to make a concerted effort to address this issue before new partnership negotiations begin.	Fundraising manager has been recruited; beginning February 2012.	RedR Australia
2	RedR and AusAID to review the legal framework that restricts the RedR register to Australian and New Zealand residents. The register should be opened to other country nationals (in line with the Stand-by Partnerships Program evaluation recommendation).	**AGREE** AusAID agrees in principle subject to cost and process issues being satisfactorily resolved.	RedR Australia to seek legal advice.	RedR Australia
3	RedR to engage experienced psychologists and/or protection specialists working in the international humanitarian field to present sessions in security training modules regarding dealing with sexual assault incidents, including practical strategies and protocols.	**AGREE** AusAID understands that this recommendation has been and continues to be implemented.	RedR has engaged experienced psychologists or protection specialists since 2011 for this purpose.	AusAID and RedR Australia
4	RedR to consider a marketing strategy	**AGREE**	RedR to consider marketing strategy/ training opportunities with UN agencies. RedR has recruited a permanent Fundraising manager to address these issues.	AusAID and RedR Australia
5	RedR to provide a small acquittable stipend of up to $500 a month to deployees to employ an interpreter.	**AGREE** where required; noting the majority of deployments are to English-speaking countries or translating needs met by the responsible agency.		RedR Australia
6	RedR to pursue further training opportunities with standby partners and UN agencies.	**AGREE**		RedR Australia
7	RedR, with AusAID support, to more proactively network with and visit UN Asia-Pacific regional offices.	**AGREE** AusAID understands that RedR Australia does work proactively with UN Pacific regional offices. AusAID and RedR Australia should consider whether further RedR Australia expansion into Asia-Pacific would 1) duplicate existing surge capacity in region 2) or add value in emergency responses.	AusAID understands that RedR Australia has ongoing working relationships with these partners and it is part of their operational plan to continue as such.	AusAID and RedR Australia

8	AusAID to consider a cost effectiveness review across the range of deployment services it funds.	**AGREE**	AusAID and RedR Australia to consult on timing to begin the review.	AusAID
9	RedR to consider stronger "two-factor authentication" access to register personal data, particularly for remote access.	**AGREE** AusAID understands that secure systems are in place to ensure personal data is protected.		RedR Australia
10	RedR to raise salaries for associate trainers and honorariums for volunteers.	**AGREE**	RedR reviews salaries every year as part of usual budget processes; this issue will be dealt with as part of this process.	RedR Australia
11	RedR to address potential health and safety risks of trainers working long days.	**AGREE**		RedR Australia
12	RedR to provide death by illness insurance cover for all deployees, as a matter of urgency.	**AGREE – PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** AusAID strongly encourages RedR Australia provide advice on the viability of providing 'death by illness' insurance cover for all deployees as a matter of urgency.	AusAID seeks formal legal advice from RedR on this type of insurance, and details of the measures RedR Australia has in place in lieu of this insurance.	RedR Australia
13	RedR to bring salaries in line with UN rates; and consider uncapping daily subsistence allowances in major western cities.	**AGREE**		AusAID and RedR Australia
14	When requested by AusAID, RedR to provide AusAID with a one-page profile on deployees when they are entering the country.	**AGREE** Given the variability of AusAID Posts' capacity to engage with RedR deployees, a one-page profile will only be requested on advice from Post.		AusAID and RedR Australia
15	RedR employ an M&E strategic adviser to develop a practical overarching M&E Framework linked to AusAID's Performance Assessment Framework.	**AGREE – PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** AusAID strongly encourages RedR Australia to implement this recommendation as soon as possible.	RedR advises that they have recruited a consultant for this purpose.	AusAID and RedR Australia
16	RedR allocate at least 3-5% of the overall budget to M&E	**AGREE – PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** AusAID strongly encourages RedR to allocate sufficient resources to implement this recommendation.		AusAID and RedR Australia
17	RedR ensure that it is part of the AusAID/NGO partners' consultations on the AusAID Performance Assessment Framework.	**AGREE**	AusAID to ensure RedR included in PAF consultations.	AusAID and RedR Australia
18	RedR and AusAID to discuss emerging priorities in the humanitarian sector and possible avenues of policy influence and surge support that could be pursued with UN partners	**AGREE**		AusAID and RedR Australia
19	RedR to actively seek MOU agreements with other UN organisations such as UNFPA and UNOPS.	**AGREE**		RedR Australia

20	RedR to establish cost-sharing mechanisms with UN in line with SBPP evaluation recommendation.	**AGREE** AusAID is keen to understand the position of other Standby Partners on this issue.	AusAID understands that where appropriate, RedR does request cost-sharing arrangements	RedR Australia
21	RedR to develop a social inclusion policy, covering gender and disabilities.	**AGREE**		RedR Australia
22	As a priority, RedR invests in seeking alternative forms of funding. (Note: RedR has recently decided to appoint a manager to pursue priority target areas for funding.)	**AGREE – PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** AusAID acknowledges challenges in pursuing this path, however (given concerns have been raised since 2009) evidence of a concerted effort to address sustainability issues is required.	RedR Australia will provide a progress report on alternative funding sources for future partnership arrangement discussions.	RedR Australia
23	RedR training services to start seeking accreditation as a Registered Training Organisation and to widen its customer base. This could include, but is not limited to: • The five in-house trainers given study support to achieve Certificate IV status. • Review specific RedR courses and redesign current learning and assessment material in line with accreditation. • Improving student management systems. • Tailoring of existing policies and procedures.	**AGREE**	RedR Australia will provide a progress report on feasibility study RTO vis-à-vis international applicability, flexibility and cost implications for future partnership arrangement discussions.	RedR Australia
24	AusAID to advocate within the UN system for formalised handover strategies of RedR deployees.	**AGREE** AusAID commits to advocate for formalized hand-over strategies within the UN system and to identify fora to pursue this issue.		AusAID
25	RedR to develop and implement a strategic 5-year plan to take RedR to the next phase of its ongoing development.	**AGREE**		RedR Australia
26	AusAID and RedR commit to 6-monthly meetings that have a strategic focus, set agenda, time limit and documented outcomes.	**AGREE** AusAID wishes to engage constructively with RedR Australia on issues but mindful of pressures increasing transaction costs	Improvements have been made in response to the preliminary review findings. ADG March briefed RedR Australia Board in October 2011; Director HER met with Mr. McLean in December 2012; ADG met Mr. McLean 21 August; with ongoing operational engagement.	AusAID and RedR Australia