

Anthony R (Tony) Carr

This is a written submission to the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness
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Background of person making this submission

I have served as a volunteer on 4 assignments overseas. In each case this has been arranged and funded by Australian Business Volunteers Ltd (ABV) with whom I am a registered volunteer and who at the time I believe received the large part of their funding from AUSAID. It is assumed that the aid review committee are familiar with the way ABV operates. My assignments were in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and East Timor.

During the last two years I have worked with two friends groups based near my home. These two groups are part of the larger network of such groups in Victoria as per a list which is attached hereto. The groups seem to be loosely associated with the Victorian Local Government Assn (VLGA) through to the various local government councils who often sponsor the groups.

Suggestions for improvement in the effectiveness of the funding.

I have made the following suggestions based on my personal experiences working as a volunteer.

1. I found ABV assignments were managed and run very well. However there is considerable scope to improve in two areas.
 - a. Do more scoping studies so that more complex assignments are better defined. The client sometimes does not know exactly what they require and the in-country Manager cannot know the details of all businesses.
 - b. Do more group training when specific capacity building through education is done. Too much of the training by the volunteer is one on one. Train the Trainer would also be useful.
 - c. Specific work with NGO's would I believe assist more with capacity building. Assisting small business should be looked at more critically to assess what is best for the country.
2. Australia to attempt to meet the requirements of a COUNTRY strategy based on input from the country supported ie What are the important areas that need help immediately. What areas is the government financing internally and in what areas do they need volunteers.
3. In 4 and 5 below the focus is on improving the competency of volunteers.
4. Build a solid data base of ABV volunteers to meet the required needs of the COUNTRY strategies. Target particular occupations by asking existing volunteers to spread the word. More articles in daily news about the work of volunteers would help.
5. Involve more Australian employers in the aid programs to increase availability and competency of volunteers.

6. Focus volunteering in all parts of the overseas country not just the capital or main cities. Often the population in the rural areas are most in need. In the case of East Timor there is a real need for more volunteers to be encouraged to learn TETUM as it is very difficult to place volunteers in the rural areas where English is not spoken.
7. The various Friends groups are playing an important part in East Timor. I suggest that there be a mechanism established to allow much more dialogue/networking between Friends Groups and Volunteer organisations. For instance the Friends groups may provide the finance and ABV or AVI the assistance. EG Building and staffing a kindergarden where the Friends group pays for the building and volunteers provide the training.

Friends Groups In Victoria 2010

Friends of

District/Sub District: Council/Group

Baguia	Stonnington
Venilale	Mansfield
Ermera	Casey
Manatuto	Kingston
Laleia	Bayside
Same	Boroondarra
Oecussi	Whitehorse
Vermasse	Monash
Aileu	Moreland/Hume
Balibo	Glen Eira
Suai	Port Philip
Lolotoe	Mt Alexander