Independant Review of AID Effectiveness:

People In Aid welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to AusAID's review, with particular focus upon the importance of good management and strong Human Resources (HR) in enhancing the effectiveness of AusAID's Aid Program.

We recommend AusAID invest in funding value-added people-related initiatives which provide AusAID's operational grantees with greater organisational capacity to spend their program funds effectively and thereby offer value for money to AusAID.

Background on People In Aid:

People In Aid is a registered entity in Australia, linked to a UK charity with a global membership (180+ NGOs in 35 countries), and regional consultants in Central America and East Africa.

Our mission is to support organisations to improve their effectiveness through the better management of people. Our focus is strengthening the capacity of Development and Humanitarian agencies within Australia and the Pacific, via direct support.

The sector is primarily knowledge-based (rather than goods- or service-led) and therefore the skills and experience of people – both staff and volunteers – is the critical element to organisational effectiveness and the fulfilment of the mandate of INGOs, national NGOs, the public sector and those who fund them.

The People In Aid Code of Good Practice is the accepted people-management and HR standard for the sector, and all ACFID signatories. The Code offers certification, through audit and the award of quality marks, and is a tool that Australian agencies have used with success to set minimum standards in HR for their organisation.

People In Aid believes that improving and strengthening International NGOs (INGOs) in terms of good practice, effectiveness and impact at Headquarter and field levels pays dividends. How, and how well, people are recruited, managed, rewarded, briefed, trained, and physically and psychosocially supported, increases the impact of a program and of an employing organisation.

    A. General Points:
    i)   **Humanitarian response has specific and critical needs: staffing capacity, skills and HR support are one.**

Humanitarian response is implicitly linked to organisations' ability to "scale up" efficiently and effectively to meet the increased demand to stabilise or alleviate human suffering in any given population. This requires HR preparedness which needs to be multi dimensional if it is to respond to complex disasters and involves the development of an HR strategy and capacity. People In Aid can assist and support organisations in HR preparedness[1].

People In Aid has worked for the sector on many relevant issues and, based on surveys and regular insights, predicts a continued need by NGOs to invest in the following:

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[1] People In Aid - http://www.peopleinaid.org/publications/SurgeCapacity.aspx

- Individual Effectiveness: Leadership and talent[2], management development[3], competencies[4], coaching[5] and staff care.
- Organisational Effectiveness: Polices and practices, increasing professionalism (skills/competencies), accountability, learning and career development;
- Sectoral Capacity: Benchmarking (e.g. in rewards)[6], networking and peer learning, co-working.
- Resource Capacity: Investing in organisation-specific monitoring and evaluation tools.[7]
  Our involvement in initiatives such as the Future of Work Forum will enable us to inform and support change in organisations and the sector as a whole into the future.

There are a number of options for AusAID to address the sector's needs in these, and related, areas:
- Designating a percentage of a grant (above the programmatic needs) which must be spent on critical areas like management development, staff care, security management.
- Establishing a fund for capacity-strengthening (of Australian NGOs as well as their partners)
- Tasking a recognised and accepted support provider such as People In Aid to enhance organisational effectiveness e.g. through direct support, grants or another suitable mechanism.

ii) Value for money for a donor can be enhanced by supporting network organisations such as People In Aid.

The global credibility, connectedness and experience of networks like People In Aid feed good practice into the Australian context and promote Australian good practice to the world.

AusAID can ensure all grantees benefit from a single investment, that knowledge is shared and the learning is communal. This can be fulfilled by supporting the development of an open workshop, or a piece of practical sector-relevant guidance or research by a second-tier organisation such as People In Aid.

B: Direct Support to AusAID:

The review's ToR state as an objective: "An examination of the program's approach to efficiency and effectiveness and whether the current systems, policies and procedures in place maximise effectiveness". AusAID could benefit from joining the People In Aid network, as DFID (Department for International Development) has done in the UK. By doing so its own HR people and managers would benefit from the output, learning, research of the network and that which People In Aid produces for its members.

Summary:
The need and opportunity exists for AusAID to add value to its programs and its grantees' effectiveness by focussing attention and funding on people: staff and volunteers in both head office and the field. Whether they work for AusAID, an NGO, the public sector, it is people who deliver quality programs, people who ensure accountability towards donors and beneficiaries and people who ensure more cost-efficient organisations.

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[2] People In Aid - http://www.peopleinaid.org/hhr2010/

[3] People In Aide - http://www.peopleinaid.org/events/topics.aspx

[4] People In Aid - http://www.thecbha.org/media/website/file/CBHA_Objective_1_Final_Report.pdf

[5] People In Aid - http://www.peopleinaid.org/resources/coaching.aspx

[6] People In Aid - http://www.peopleinaid.org/groups/reward/

[7] People In Aid – Examples the Measuring HR Effectiveness Toolkit which is a series of HR Audits leading to certification, the actual Code of Good Practice itself and training evaluation tools.