



Consultation meeting on DFID's reviews of Building Support for Development
14 September 2009

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Working-with-DFID/Consultations/Open-consultations/Recommendations-of-Reviews-of-DFIDs-Building-Support-for-Development-Work-in-the-UK/>

Submission Deadline: 23 October 2009
To: bsdr@dfid.gov.uk

The Geographical Association (GA) is pleased to take this opportunity to respond to the DFID reviews. The GA conducted a very successful three-year DAF project called 'Valuing Places' 2003-06 with part-funding from the Tubney Foundation. It is largely on this basis that these comments are made.

Education Review

The findings report "some useful project-level outputs" from DAF and we are confident that the GA project reporting clearly identified solid examples of outputs. Furthermore, we should like to add that this project has continued to reach the large audience of secondary school geography teachers and primary school teachers of geography through publications, online and face-to-face continuous professional development (CPD). Through the structure and continuing activities of the GA this project has had a deep impact on the methodology and content of subsequent projects. It has significant impact on the manifesto from the GA called 'A Different View' (www.geography.org.uk/adifferentview)

The finding that the "DFID's work is not sufficiently visible" is contrary to our own experiences of the geography teachers, and other educators, who have used and valued the magazine and website called 'Global Eye' formerly funded by DFID. Teachers know and use resources produced by NGOs funded by DFID and educational use is also made of 'Developments'. However, it should be recognised that the prime motivator for use of these materials is the quality of the teaching and learning they offer. Partnerships with subject associations such as the GA ensure the rigour in terms of **curriculum making** and help overcome teachers' resistance to learning resources more inclined towards promotional purposes.

The GA is supportive of the recommendations and would welcome the opportunity to help develop the strategy further. A management and delivery recommendation refers to engagement with local authorities and we feel subject associations should be added to this point in maintaining a regional or local presence.

Development Awareness Fund and Mini-Grants Review

The findings and recommendations do not recognise the role of other players such as the subject associations. The language of the findings in saying the formal sector 'dominated' and 'crowded out' other sectors is unhelpful in that it gives no base-line. That formal sector education has the potential to reach every child at a time when they are most open to explore global issues is undeniable. This combines with the further influence through the family and beyond.

The contribution of the DAF project to the entire work of the GA has been mentioned above and, clearly, a longer-term strategic approach in working with the GA would bring significant benefits to DFID – and vice versa: fuller knowledge of DFID's work by mainstream teachers of geography throughout the primary and secondary phases has the potential to deepen and enhance their work with young people.

Impact of Strategy, Expenditure and Activities

The recommendation one in paragraph 27 refers to 'a more equitable balance' between education and other audiences and, again, this appears to diminish the value of the formal sector to BSD without any evidence given.

Under recommendation six, the GA's on-going relationship with sections of DCSF and other government departments and bodies could facilitate DFID's policy engagement. The GA membership and activity includes Wales, Northern Ireland and, through association with SAGT, Scotland.

The recommendations are well-framed for moving forward the DFID vision and strategy. The GA supports the recommendations made under 'management' and would be pleased to operate within any new arrangements. Specifically, in the context of its 2009-14 strategic development plans, the GA considers that it is well-placed as an organisation central to the BSD strategy and fit for longer-term grant support.

**Compiled on behalf of the Education Committee of the Geographical Association by
Angus Willson
22 September 2009**

Ratified by the Education Committee of the Geographical Association at its meeting on
25 September 2009