

**Notes of  
UNDAF Joint Annual review meeting  
15 March 2016, 3:00- 5:00 pm  
Palais du Gouvernement, CRDB/CDC**

On March 15, 2016, The UN Country Team in Cambodia (UNCT) organized the Eight Joint Annual UNDAF Review and dialogue with the Royal Government of Cambodia on the achievements of continued UN programme implementation in Cambodia.

The dialogue focused on concrete results achieved in the final year of the UNDAF 2011-2015 implementation of the priority areas: i) Economic Growth and Sustainable Development, ii) Education and Health, iii) Gender, iv) Governance and v) Social Protection. On that occasion, the implementation of the new UNDAF 2016-2018 was launched, with an indication of programmatic areas of priority for 2016, under the new UNDAF structure.

The review was chaired by H.E. Chhieng Yanara, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister, Secretary General, CRDB/CDC and Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren, UN Resident Coordinator in Cambodia. The senior representatives from the Royal Government of Cambodia and the UN Country Team actively participated in the dialogue. *(The participant list attached)*

**1. Opening remarks by H.E. Chhieng Yanara, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister, Secretary General, CRDB/CDC**

His Excellency Chhieng Yanara officially opened the annual review meeting and welcomed participants to the meeting. He emphasized that the purpose of the meeting is to promote dialogue between the Royal Government of Cambodia and the UN Country Team, specifically focusing on concrete results and achievements made in the final year of the UNDAF 2011-2015 implementation and 2016 implementation priorities of the new UNDAF 2016-2018. His Excellency appreciated that the UNDAF 2016-2018 had been prepared based on a rigorous and inclusive preparation process and well aligned with Rectangular Strategy Phase III and National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018.

His Excellency Chair took the opportunity to inform the review meeting that the Royal Government of Cambodia has continued to make significant progress to maintain economic growth at around 6.9% and to further reduce the national poverty rate to under 18%. Highlighting that the GDP per capita increased from USD 738 in 2008 to USD 1,228 in 2015, he indicated that Cambodia meets the threshold to graduate from a Low-Income Country to Lower-Middle Income Country, expected to be confirmed in mid-2016. This achievement is a result of the high commitment of the Royal Government of Cambodia to ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

His Excellency Chhieng Yanara added that the Royal Government of Cambodia is currently in the process of localizing the 2030 Agenda and expects that the SDGs will provide synergy to the Royal Government of Cambodia's own national priorities and will be a catalyst to mobilise support and maintain progress on the path of economic development.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, H.E Chair acknowledged the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the contribution of all UN Agency Heads and UN staff and

congratulated colleagues from the Royal Government for their sustained commitment and input that guided the UN to ensure that its work is relevant to the needs of Cambodia and is results-based. He highlighted that this cooperation has demonstrated good results and assured that each UN agency has worked effectively to deliver the results that are anticipated in the UNDAF.

## **2. Opening Remarks by Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren, UN Resident Coordinator**

On behalf of the United Nations System in Cambodia, both resident and non-resident agencies, Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren, the UN Resident Coordinator welcomed colleagues representing the Royal Government of Cambodia to the annual review and appreciate the valuable opportunity to discuss the progress made on the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2011-2015. She thanked His Excellency Chheng Yanara and the CRDB team for convening and organizing the meeting.

Ms. Van der Vaeren emphasized the importance of the dialogue which aimed at reviewing achievements made in 2015, the last year of implementation in the UNDAF 2011-2015 cycle and to look ahead at the priorities for 2016, the first year of implementation of the new UNDAF cycle for 2016-2018.

She highlighted that in 2015 the co-operation of the Royal Government and the UN in Cambodia through the UNDAF brought notable results across the five UNDAF outcomes. These included among others support to the development of national sectoral policies and cross-sectoral policy frameworks; providing basic services to the unreached; the formulation of national action plans in key sectors; advancing key state reforms and institutional capacity building, across sectors as diverse as food & nutrition, employment, health, education, gender, justice and social protection.

The UN Resident Coordinator further highlighted some of the achievements made in the whole five-year period of the UNDAF that were brought about through a successful collaboration between the RGC and the UN, building on broad based partnerships across sectors. The achievements include support to the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs), the development of key laws, policies and strategies as well as strengthened local, national and institutional capacities, advancing national development priorities and on-going reforms. Support to research and analysis as well as to programme implementation was also provided. An independent evaluation of the UNDAF cycle 2011-2015, combined with a mid-term evaluation of the 2016-2018 cycle is planned for 2017 as part of the new UNDAF monitoring and evaluation framework.

Ms. Van der Vaeren officially announced that as of January 2016, the implementation of the new UNDAF cycle 2016-2018 has begun and reminded participants that this new UNDAF sets out three outcome areas, which are mutually supportive and interlinked, and which focus on: 1) Sustainable, inclusive growth and development; 2) Social development, Social Protection and Human Capital; and 3) Governance and Human Rights. The cross-cutting issues of environmental sustainability, gender equality, human rights and youth will be integrated throughout UNDAF implementation and monitoring. She emphasized once again that the UNDAF gives particular attention to the vulnerable and unreached groups, to equitable access, inclusiveness and participation, and to sustainability in light of the progress achieved in the CMDGs.

With regard to the context of the country's rapid economic growth and the transition to Lower Middle Income Country status in 2016, the UN Resident Coordinator stated that the role of the

UN in Cambodia is evolving, with cooperation increasingly framed through policy dialogue while maintaining a focus on the most marginalized and vulnerable. The UN system in Cambodia is committed to work with the Government through a partnership that promotes development effectiveness, based particularly on national ownership and joint resource mobilization. The UN stands committed to support the Government in the SDG localization process and to facilitate SDG implementation through the UNDAF results framework.

Ms. Van der Vaeren concluded her opening remarks by reiterating the importance of the dialogue which always presents an opportunity to discuss how the UN system as a key partner in a coordinated aid environment can continue to respond effectively. She reaffirmed the UN commitment to continue to progress in the implementation of the UN reform and Delivering as One.

### **3. Sector review of key achievements in 2015 under UNDAF (2011- 2015)**

**3.1** The presentation on the UNDAF achievements and challenges in 2015 and priorities for 2016 was delivered by a number of UN Country Team Members, on behalf of the UN Country Team:

- a. Economic Growth and Sustainable Development, Mr. Oum Kosal, FAO*
- b. Health and Education, by Ms. Anne Lemaistre, UNESCO*
- c. Gender Equality, by Ms. Wenny Kusuma, UN Women*
- d. Governance, by, Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki, UNDP*
- e. Social Protection and 2015 UNDAF financial overview, by Mr. Gianpietro Bordignon, WFP*

**3.2 Priorities for 2016 under the new UNDAF 2016-2018** were presented by Mr. Nimol Soth, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator around the three outcome areas:

- a. Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development*
- b. Social Development, Social Protection and Human Capital*
- c. Governance and Human Rights*

## **4 Discussion and dialogue**

HE Yanara thanked the presenters and appreciated the well-structured presentation clearly highlighting the achievements, challenges and priorities for 2016 that serves as a solid foundation for dialogue. He then invited colleagues from the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to provide comments and suggestions.

### **4.1 Comments from the RGC on the challenges included:**

**The land tenure rights and status of land titling:** In Cambodia, “tenure rights” is clear. Within the framework of land reform, 59% of total land in Cambodia starting 1995 to date achieved more than 4.2 million title provided to people (1000 land titles every day). In 2017/18 the target is 70% and in 2023 it is 100%, when all land in Cambodia will be titled. With regards to Indigenous people and their communities, the Royal Government committed to speed up the progress to register 10 communities every year and this has been achieved.

It was proposed to revise the text in the annual monitoring report to “land rights remain unclear but tenure rights in Cambodia are very clear based on conventions / rights”.

### **The Process of D&D Reform and Gender:**

Both achievements in D&D reform and recommendation to strengthen and promote women leadership at sub-national level which presented in Outcome 3 (2011-2015) of the report was appreciated.

The government has given very clear indication on the number of women representatives in its strategic plan for D&D. So far the Ministry of Interior has put great effort to introduce some key policies to encourage women to be head of office at subnational level (local government can propose the candidates). The Ministry of Interior has also proposed guidelines for women nomination in key positions in the local government.

The progress and challenges of the D&D reform has been reported to the DP group recently. The policy is a very complex issue and therefore the reform should progress strategically and carefully. It is better to take it slow and not repeat mistakes of other countries in the region.

Despite the challenges, a lot of remarkable progress has been achieved and it is important that these achievements are disseminated widely to other stakeholders as part of our effort to promote information sharing and communications.

**Education:** Education reform progress should be presented as the result, not only in challenges and priority part of the report. On page 19, it would be more accurate to mention “UN has played a role as Partner in early childhood” instead of as “lead role of UN in early childhood sub-sector”. In addition, the indicators on access to early childhood education are unclear whether it is disaggregated by age *from 3-5 or 5-8*. Therefore, it would be better to specify the age groups.

**Gender:** The 2015 results including indicators reported and 2016 priorities on Gender do not seem to include other components related to women and gender that are supported by other agencies such UNDP and UNFPA (e.g. women leadership and governance). The Ministry of Women’s Affairs offered support to work with the UNDAF outcome group to provide inputs, data and assist with key terminology translation for the 2016 annual report.

#### **4.2 Comments from the RGC on the priorities for 2016 included:**

**Human Capital Development:** The priority in 2016 on investment in human capital is very much appreciated, especially for agricultural issues. The country depends a lot on import from other countries which is challenging. It is important to consider that the growing industries are not only about agriculture. The growing industry should focus on value addition and productivity in agriculture, therefore the investment in human capital should look at both *agriculture and agro-industry*. This will suit well as Cambodia is implementing the Industrial Development Policy (IDP) and National Employment Policy (NEP).

One of the priorities for 2016 under outcome 2 is to promote investment in human capital for value-addition to the economy and enhancement of productivity in the agricultural sector. In Cambodia’s context, the phrase is too broad therefore it was suggested to further elaborate by including the targets and specific fields. Science and Technology and Innovations should be added.

**Biodiversity:** In relations to outcome 1 of 2016 priorities, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) informed the meeting that the ministry has adopted a national biodiversity strategic action plan (BISA) but it is not yet available. The action plan includes the private sector, CSOs and the UN to support sustainable development in Cambodia, strengthening BISA and mainstreaming it into sectoral plan.

**Industrial Development Policy (IDP):** For priority in outcome 1, it was suggested to include additional priorities related to the IDP. The MAFF has developed an action plan to implement the IDP by 2025. Human resource and institutional capacity development is an ongoing effort and much has been achieved. In addition, advancement of technologies and private sector engagement should be part of priorities and is very relevant to the IDP action plan.

## **5 Conclusion and confirmation of next Joint Annual UNDAF Review Meeting in 2017**

The UN RC and the UNCT took note of the comments and suggestions provided by the RGC and clarified that:

**Gender:** Violence against women (VAW) and women leadership are highlighted in the report on the same page (p. 27). Gender related indicators are reported by agencies who monitor/ trace the indicators but this does not imply that only the reporting agencies are working on those indicators, there are different agencies and partners that contribute.

**Education:** The comments and suggestions are noted. It is acknowledged that the education reforms have started, with some components still in very early stages of planning and implementation such as strengthening quality of education at primary at secondary levels; reinforcement of skills and TVET; and quality teaching and learning as per teacher action plan.

**Early Childhood Education:** The UN has played a key role in support of government who has played the lead role in early childhood education sub-sector. The effort has been made to further improve quality of pre-school education including the community pre-schools. In 2016, there will be continued support to ECE and also WASH that are very important parts of early childhood care and investment.

**Employment:** With regard to the national policies (IDP and National Employment Policy), it is important to connect and build synergies as these policies should go hand and hand and support each other.

**NSDSS:** Some government reforms are progressing so quickly that they are sometimes missed in reports, e.g. SWAP/ changes of forestry management (conservation and development).

**Biodiversity:** The monitoring report cannot reflect all climate change and biodiversity related actions and conventions; focus has been put on natural resource management and climate change.

**IDP:** Examples from other countries show that IDP is a key towards LMIC and graduation from LDC so it needs to be carefully analyzed where investments are made; the needs and interests of the private sector should be taken into account so that skills can be aligned.

The UN RC confirmed that the UNCT will consider and reflect upon the comments and suggestion regarding further planning in 2016.

### **Comments from HE Chair:**

- As the presentation and report have different structures, HE Chhieng Yanara proposed that the priorities for 2016 are regrouped according to the presentation to make it easier to identify priorities and actions under each outcome of the new UNDAF;

- Investment in Human Capital is one of the important priorities with IDP and NEP as the key drivers. It is important to strengthen the synergy of application of these two policies.

#### **NEXT steps:**

The Royal Government colleagues are invited to provide written comments to the draft report and send them to the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, by 22 March 2016. The comments will be used to revise the report.

Based on the comments, the report format will be revised. The translation of sectoral languages and correct terminologies will be further clarified in the report especially in light of future reporting. However, a revision of the full translated version of the document is beyond our capacity.

Reflecting the comments on the process of preparing the report and to safeguard the joint nature of it, the UNCT confirmed the importance of allocating an appropriate timeframe for each UNDAF outcome group to facilitate dialogue with the Royal Government counterparts in providing inputs for preparing the next Joint UNDAF Annual Progress Reports.

#### **Closing remarks**

HE Chhieng Yanara concluded the meeting by expressing appreciation for the rich discussion, and for the clear comments and recommendations from all the participants.

Many interesting and insightful issues have been highlighted through the presentations and discussions. The need for inclusive and diversified growth is an area on which satisfying achievements can be seen and further progress, especially in the agriculture, education, and health will follow. But there remains much to be done, including on climate change resilience and gender equality. The Industrial Development Policy needs to be a priority as the central foundation for maintaining growth and ensuring widespread and sustainable benefits.

HE Yanara emphasized that the achievements of the UNDAF in 2015 position the UN very well to play an important role in complementing and supporting the efforts of the Royal Government. Moreover, the guidance that emerged from the dialogue will lead to concrete actions for implementing the UN programme priorities in 2016 for the new UNDAF cycle.

#### **Annexes**

1. *Opening Remarks of H.E Chhieng Yanara, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister, Secretary General, CRDB/CDC*
2. *Opening Remarks of Ms Claire Van der Vaeran, UN Resident Coordinator in Cambodia*
3. *Presentation of the 2015 results and 2016 priorities*
4. *List of Participants*
5. *Joint Annual Review Agenda*