

**Minutes of the Second Meeting  
of the  
Partnership and Harmonization TWG  
held on  
24 February, 2005, 8:30 am at CDC**

1. Mr. Chhieng Yanara, Secretary General of CRDB/CDC and Chairman of Partnership and Harmonization TWG, opened the meeting by welcoming all participants to the meeting. He proposed the following agenda for the meeting:

- i. Report on the progress made during the last quarter
- ii. Institutional set up within ministries to implement H & A Action Plans.
- iii. Promotion of PBAs by organizing workshop for senior officials
- iv. Any assistance the Partnership Working Group can provide to other TWGs
- v. Other items to be discussed by the working group

2. The proposed agenda was adopted. In discussion on the agenda, Mr. Claes Leijon of SIDA asked for a short briefing on Cambodia's report to HLF2 and Mr. Douglas Gardner of UNDP asked for an update on the preparation of the NSDP for 2006-2010. Ms Fleur Davies of AUSAID wanted a discussion on the topic of how to phase out salary supplements.

3. Agenda item #1: Report on the progress made during the last quarter. Mr. Chhieng Yanara made a presentation on progress made over the last three months. He informed the meeting that a major task of this Working Group is to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the H&A Action Plan. He distributed a copy of a reorganized version of the Action Plan based on target completion date of the activities that was prepared by CDC (see Annex I). The restructured format lists activities that were planned to be completed during the last quarter, activities that are planned to be completed in the next quarter (March- May) and so on. According to the list provided, the following 11 activities in the H&A Action Plan were scheduled to be completed during the last quarter:

- i. Formalize institutional mechanism for formulating NSDP (TWG/Planning and Poverty reduction) -- activity A.1.a(i).
- ii. MoP requests all line Ministries & Institutions to formulate individual Strategic Plan -- A.1.a(i).
- iii. Use the new TWG on Planning and Poverty Reduction as mechanism for coordination for planning and monitoring the implementation of the NSDP -- A.1.b(i).
- iv. Secure agreement between RGC and interested donors on a Partnership Agreement -- A.2.a(ii).
- v. Strengthen CDC's leading role within the RGC on ODA coordination and resource mobilization -- A.2.b(i).
- vi. Strengthen CDC's focal point for ODA planning -- A.2.b(ii).
- vii. CDC leads the coordination process to implement Cambodia's Action Plan on Harmonization and Alignment -- A.2.b(iii).
- viii. Restructuring of the Working Groups finalized leading to joint planning and monitoring on the implementation of RGC's development priorities outlined in its strategic development framework(s) and the Rectangular Strategy -- A.2.d(i).
- ix. Donors provide periodic progress reports on on-going harmonization and alignment efforts to RGC -- A.2.e(ii)

- x. RGC reports progress at the Second High Level Forum on Harmonization and Alignment (HLF2) -- A.3.a(i).
- xi. All donors give CDC permission to freely disseminate information on ODA -- C.3.c(iv).

4. He noted that the first three activities concerned the formulation of the NSDP and informed the meeting that discussions between the MOP and UN System, ADB and World Bank have been taking place on the preparation of the National Strategic Development Plan. He emphasized the importance of this task which is central to achieving alignment of ODA supported activities with Cambodia's national development priorities. He informed the group that progress so far is a bit behind schedule and emphasized that there is a need to fast track this very important task, including the formation of the Planning TWG.

5. In term of progress on other activities he informed that:

- Activity #4 was successfully completed and a Partnership Agreement was signed by the RGC with 12 development partners on 2 December 2004.
- Activity #5, CDC's leading role within the RGC on ODA coordination and resource mobilization is now well recognized both within the Government and among development partners.
- Activity #6, CDC is leading discussions on ODA planning.
- Activity #7, CDC is leading discussions on the implementation of the Harmonization and Alignment Action Plan -- not only within the Government ministries and agencies but also through this Working Group
- Activity #8 -- the restructuring of the Working Groups under the CG mechanism was completed and reported both at the Pre-CG meeting in September and CG meeting in December.
- Activity #9, CDC has sent a questionnaire to all TWGs to report on progress made in the last quarter. He hoped that all TWGS will submit their first progress report by tomorrow, February 25, that have been endorsed by both the Chair and the Lead Donor Facilitator of each Working Group.
- Activity #10, Cambodia's Progress Report to the HLF2 has been prepared by CDC. He informed the meeting that the Second High Level Forum is scheduled to be held in Paris from 28 February to 2 March and that H.E. Keat Chhon and he will be attending this meeting. He also informed the meeting that Mr. Douglas Gardner will also be attending this meeting on behalf of UNDP Headquarters. He distributed an advance copy of "Cambodia's Report on Progress Toward Enhanced Aid Effectiveness" that will be presented by H.E. Keat Chhon at the HLF2 in Paris.
- Activity #11, he informed the meeting that as of now CDC does not as yet have written permission from all of our development partners to freely disseminate information on ODA. He informed the meeting that all documents related to the 7th CG meeting have been posted on CDC/CRDB website ([www. cdc-crdb-gov.kh](http://www.cdc-crdb-gov.kh)). He also distributed a CD ROM containing all documents related to the 7th CG Meeting.

6. He informed the meeting about the study to develop guidelines on procurement that ADB, World Bank, and MEF are carrying out. He asked the question if these guidelines will cover all development programs or only programs funded through loans. He also informed the meeting that work is on-going, with support from UNDP, on the preparation of National Operational Guidelines for Development Cooperation Activities for the grants component of ODA under the

umbrella of the Sub-Group that is Chaired by Mr. Vongsey Vissoth Deputy Secretary General of MEF.

7. In addition to reporting on progress on the implementation of the H&A Action Plan, he also highlighted the importance of development partners support to ministries and agencies in developing sector or thematic programs. He emphasized that a wider use of sector or program based approaches will enable both Government and development partners to reduce the large number of stand alone projects, reported to be over 500 in 2003, encourage delegated cooperation arrangements among the development partners, and reduce the need for individual donor missions that have been reported in the recent OECD/DAC survey report to be the highest in the region. He also noted that sector or program-based approaches can also play an important role not only in better aligning ODA supported activities with Cambodia's national development priorities to achieve Cambodia's Millennium Development Goals, but more importantly, they provide a practical framework for harmonizing and aligning the development partners activities around jointly agreed priorities and actions.

8. As the final item in his presentation he provided an update on work that has been underway on the preparation of Royal Government's Strategic Framework on Decentralization and De-concentration Reform. He thanked development partners who have been supporting this effort. He reported that he has received the consultant's report. He noted that decentralization and de-concentration reform is not just a simple technical issue. To move forward and achieve sustainable results, the D&D Inter-Ministerial Working Group that is leading this process needs to secure the full support of decision-makers at the highest level on the concepts and approaches that need to be implemented. This process is now underway. He expects that this process of consultations and approvals will be completed by the end of March at which point the Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Sar Keng will present the Royal Government's Strategic Framework on Decentralization and De-concentration Reform at a national workshop of senior officials responsible for planning, personnel and budgets to which development partners will also be invited.

9. In discussion following the presentation, Mr. Gardner highlighted the urgency to set up the Planning TWG as soon as possible. Ms. Agrawal pointed the need for donors and civil society participation in the processes of the preparation of NSDP. She also informed the meeting that procurement guidelines that are being prepared by WB, ADB and MEF only apply to loans. Mr. Leijon emphasized the need to ensure the inclusion of all ministries in the preparation of the NSDP. He noted that this has not been the case before. Mr. Yanara agreed that the process of preparing the NSDP must be inclusive and should include donors, civil society, and all ministries. Mr. Leijon asked about the status of the D&D TWG. Mr. Yanara informed the meeting that in the case of D&D TWG there are two important dates to keep in mind, that is, the period to the end of 2005 and after 2005. Until the end of 2005, members of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on D&D Strategic Framework now constitute the Government members of the D&D TWG and accordingly he is the Chair of the D&D TWG. Starting in 2006, the representatives from the Government side will be based on decisions made in the course of the on-going work on preparing the D&D Strategic Framework. In response to Mr. Leijon's query about Cambodia's report to the HLF2, Mr. Yanara informed that Cambodia's message is that harmonization process in Cambodia is moving in the right direction, the formation of the new TWGs has put in place an important mechanism to strengthen Government-Donor dialogue.

However, Cambodia also faces many challenges. For example, how to strengthen national systems and procedures to encourage development partners to use Government systems, how to strengthen information sharing among donors, and the need for donor headquarters to operationalize the policies agreed at the international fora and delegate authority to their country offices to enable them to effectively participate in the implementation of Cambodia's H&A Action Plan.

10. Agenda item #2: Institutional set up within ministries to implement H & A Action Plans. Mr. Yanara informed the meeting about the need to establish focal points for the implementation H&A Action plan. Ms. Fleur Davies informed the meeting that some TWGs are setting up a Secretariat. After discussion, the meeting agreed not to consider the option of setting up a new mechanism to serve as point within ministries to implement the H&A Action. It was agreed that within the structure of TWGs a focal point will be identified and made responsible for dealing with issues on the implementation of the H&A Action Plan.

11. Agenda item #3: Promotion of PBAs by organizing workshop for senior officials. Mr. Yanara informed the group that ministries have informed him that they need more information about the SWAP and other program-based approaches. Mr. Leijon informed the meeting that SIDA will be conducting a workshop on SWAPs in the Ministry of Education in May. There was general support for the idea. Mr. Baipai of ADB offered to provide TA support for the workshop and asked if SIDA will consider expanding its effort to other ministries. After extensive discussion it was agreed that a workshop should be organized in May or June. It was suggested that Mr. Leijon and Mr. Yanara should discuss on how to proceed with planning for this workshop.

12. Agenda item #4: Any assistance the P & H TWG Group can provide to other TWGs. It was noted that PBA Workshop just discussed is a concrete example of the type of support that the P&H TWG can provide to the TWGs. Mr. Yanara noted that through the UNDP Support Program at CDC/CRDB technical assistance to develop and upgrade aid management information systems in ministries is being provided. He informed the meeting that CDC./CRDB stands ready to provide assistance requested by the Chair of any TWG.

13. With regards to the study on the Capacity Building Practices of Cambodia's Development Partners, the meeting was informed that the study was completed more than a year ago. It was published in June 2004 as a discussion paper and posted on CDC/CRDB website. In the "Forward" of the published report, it is noted that, *"This Report presents factual information and analysis on the capacity building practices of our development partners as well as recommendations of the Study Team. I would like to note that the recommendations presented in the report reflect the views of the study team. In terms of the next steps, the report was officially submitted in March 2004 to H.E. Mr. Ngo Hongly, the new Secretary General of the Council for Administrative Reforms who also assumed the role of the Chairperson of the SWG for the study. Under the umbrella of the SWG for the study at the Council for Administrative Reforms, discussions are being held to: (i) arrive at a set of recommendations on which there is consensus, and (ii) to develop an action plan for their implementation."*

14. The meeting adjourned at noon.

### **List of Participants**

H.E. Mr. Chhieng Yanara	Secretary General of CDC/CRDB, Chairman
H.E. Mr. Douglas Gardner	UN Resident Coordinator, Lead Donor Facilitator
H.E. Mr. Koum Saron	Director General, MAFF
Mr. Chay Sakun	Director of Planning Dept., MAFF
Mr. Tep Thorn	Director of Planning Dept., MLMUPC
Ms. Nhean Sochetra	Director of Planning Dept., MWA
Mr. Chhuon Chham	DSG, CAR
Dr. Char Meng Chuor	Director of Planning, MoH
Mr. Yin Samray	Deputy Director General, MoE
Ms. Phon Tara	Vice Chief, Planning Department, MoEYS
Mr. Farid Siddiqui	Senior Advisor, UNDP/CDC
Ms. Harumi Okawa	JICA/Expert, CDC/CRDB
Ms. Heng Sokun	Director, Asia-Pacific Department, CDC/CRDB
Mr. Rith Vuthy	Director, EU Department, CDC/CRDB
Mr. Phon Samphors	Deputy Director, Information Department, CDC/CRDB
Mr. Saram Channarith	ICT Expert, UNDP/CDC
Mr. South Peo Piseth	National ICT, CDC/UNDP
Mr. Ou Viyouren	Officer, EU Department, CDC/CRDB
Mr. Chou Heng	National Policy Analyst, CDC/UNDP
Mr. Pen Raksa	National Professional, CDC/UNDP
Ms. Heang Kanelle	National Professional, CDC/UNDP
Ms. Khieu Samphors	National Professional, CDC/UNDP
H.E. Mr. Claes Leijon	Counselor, SIDA
H.E. Mr. Shyam P. Bajpai	Country Director, ADB
H.E. Dr. Thomas Engelhardt	Country Director, GTZ
H.E. Mr. Mogens L. Christensen	Minister Counselor, DANIDA
H.E. Ms. Nisha Agrawal	Country Manager, WB
H.E. Ms. Fleur Davies	Consellor, AusAid
H.E. Mr. Alan Leber	First Secretary, Embassy of Canada
Mr. Alain Benicy	Principal Advisor, CAR
Mr. Chinami Hanazono	Advisor, Japan Embassy
Ms. Sachiko Nishioka	Aid Coordination Advisor, JICA
Ms. Katheryn Bennett	Senior Programme Officer, AusAID
Ms. Barbara Orlandini	Coordinator, UNRC Office
Ms. Yoko Konishi	Programme Officer, UNDP