KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
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MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

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GDCC meeting, October 5, 2006,
Presentation by
H.E. Dr. lng Kantha Phavi,
Minister of Women's Affairs

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished speakers, and guests.

I am very pleased to present to you the progress on the National Action Plan to **Combat Violence against Women.**

Domestic violence - a development indicator

Combatting violence against women is a priority for the Royal Government of Cambodia. Our country is in fact the first country in the world to include violence against women and children as an indicator in measuring the country's development. The task of drafting a Prevention Plan is part of these Cambodian Millennium Goals. The specific CMDG reads *"Developing and Implementing a Prevention Plan by 2OO5"*.

A Participatory Approach

In order to draft a national plan to prevent violence against women, a wide range of governmental and non-governmental actors are needed.

A National Action Plan must enable collaboration between sectors that might contribute to preventing violence, such as the criminal justice, education, media and the social welfare sector. Therefore, in November 2005 the Ministry of Women's Affairs called experts to join an Advisory Board. Members of the Advisory Board come from several line ministries such as Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice and other relevant government organizations. Other members were invited from relevant NGOs working in the specific sectors.

The Consultation Process

In line with the participative approach, the members addressed relevant topics in subgroups in the following areas: *Information and awareness, Social Services for victims* and *Legal issues* such as the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence. The Ministry of Women's Affairs subsequently reviewed the recommendations of the Advisory Board and prepared a first draft plan. This draft plan has now been submitted to the Advisory Board for consultations. Although the consultations may be time-consuming and are still ongoing, this is an important process, since it is important that this national planning effort to prevent violence will be based on the consensus of a wide range of governmental and non-governmental actors.

The structure of the Plan

The Ministry of Women's Affairs added an *introductory section* to the National Prevention Plan which introduces definitions of violence and prevention.
Moreover, it provides an overview of the situation of women and the prevalence of violence in Cambodia. The National Action Plan shows where violence is already

#3, Blvd Preah Norodom, Sangkat Watt Phnom, Phnom Penh (Cambodia) Tel/Fax : (855) 23 426 539 / 23 426 915
Tel : (855) 216 704

addressed in the legal framework and the policy of the Royal Government, in order to avoid duplication.

The second part of the document includes the following *sub-plans:*
Plan to raise public awareness;
Plan to provide and improve services;
Plan to develop policy;
Plan to amend the legal framework;
Plan to implement the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of the Victim;
The last part of the National Action Plan deals with Coordination and Monitoring.

Next steps

Once the draft plan has been agreed upon, a discussion with all partners is needed. So far, we have developed policy recommendations, however, specific indicators and activities have to be developed to allow for *monitoring of the implementation* of the National Action Plan. Only with a detailed implementation matrix can we ensure the coordination of data collection the analysis of the data and the incorporation of lessons learnt in future implementation strategies.
Such an implementation matrix cannot be developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs alone. Implementing partners in line ministries have to work cooperatively on this implementation matrix, across all relevant sectors.

Challenges

To implement a National Action plan to Combat Violence against Women, *funds* are needed. Whereas the Ministry of Women's Affairs received funds from GTZ to implement the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence; and to train officials, and funds from UNFPA and IOM, more funds are needed.

To prevent violence - *values* need to be changed. Many media campaigns, changes in the education sector, improvement of the health and social services are required for the effective implementation of this plan.

Training of officials on the law alone will not change the prevalence of violence because if people do not understand that violence in the family is not acceptable they will not use the law! Therefore, *a holistic approach* is needed. We can only reach this goal with more support for all relevant sectors.

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Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished speakers, and guests. I am pleased to have been invited to present the progress on the National Action plan to Combat Violence against Women.

- Thank you -