

**DEVELOPMENT PARTNER TALKING POINTS
ON NSDP UPDATE 2009-2013**

**AT THE 15TH MEETING OF
THE GOVERNMENT-DEVELOPMENT PARTNER COORDINATION COMMITTEE
PHNOM PENH, SEPTEMBER 29, 2009**

The development partners appreciate the provisions made by the Government for the inclusion of the technical working groups (TWGs) in the process of updating the National Strategic Development Plan. We value the Government's efforts to ensure that input submissions from line ministries involve input from the sectoral development partners through the TWG mechanism. Lead development partner facilitators have advised that while consultation has occurred in some TWGs, other Groups have not yet been able to meet in the time available.

We fully support the Government's intention to update and improve the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, and we welcome the invitation for development partners to participate in this work. Over the last few years, MoP and its partners have invested considerable effort in reviewing the current M&E framework, identifying where revised indicators or gaps where new indicators are needed. Over the same period, line Ministries have further improved their own sector M&E systems. There is now an opportunity to bring all this work together in an improved NSDP M&E framework, and we appreciate the chance to working closely with the Government on this.

As with the policy content of the NSDP, we recognize that designing a good M&E framework requires active collaboration between MoP and the line Ministries. It is line Ministries' responsibilities to develop good proposals for monitoring indicators to be included in the NSDP M&E framework: we would encourage Ministries who have not yet submitted indicator proposals for inclusion in the NSDP to do so soon and call for support from the TWG facilitators where needed. The criteria for a good indicator, circulated by MoP, provide very helpful guidance. MoP needs to review the indicators currently in the NSDP and those indicators proposed now by the line Ministries, to ensure that there is balance between sectors and between types of indicator (input, output, outcome). MoP can also complement and cross-check monitoring data from line Ministry information systems with data collected through surveys and census conducted by the NIS. The development partners are happy to support MoP in this role of review and dialogue with line Ministries.

One topic of particular interest is the development and implementation of a Government social safety net strategy. At the CDCF in December the Government and development partners agreed on the need for this, to tackle both "normal" household vulnerabilities (illness, harvest failure etc) and occasional economy-wide shocks, such as the current global financial crisis. The Council for Agriculture and Rural Development was given the mandate to coordinate the preparation of this safety net strategy, and has done an extremely good job. A national forum in July 2009 laid out the issues and options; the strategy will be finalized by the end of the year. Given the importance of this strategy, and the fact that it depends on ensuring effective coherence between several Ministries who will have implementation responsibilities, it needs to be reflected well in the NSDP extension. This is a challenge as safety nets are a cross-sectoral policy issue. Development partners would encourage active collaboration between CARD, MoP and line Ministries with roles in the delivery of safety nets, to ensure that this emerging strategy is written up clearly in the NSDP.

We look forward to reading the first draft of the NSDP. For some development partners, this will be the first chance to see their TWG's sectoral contributions. For all of us, it will be the first chance to have a look at the whole document and see how it brings together sectoral strategies within an overall framework of resource forecasts and budgets; management of external assistance; and monitoring and evaluation. The NSDP Update is also a critical opportunity for advancing the Government's work on the integration of planning, budgeting and aid management.

Development partners commend the Ministry of Planning for its pro-active coordination and guidance of the updating process, in particular in arranging meetings with each Ministry and agency. This approach would also be useful in finalizing the NSDP update. Given the importance of this document, we would welcome guidance on the process and format for finalizing the NSDP update, and the possibilities for the development partners to provide feedback and comments on drafts. We are keen to continue to play a constructive role in providing comments, on both sectoral content and the overall strategy framework: given that it takes some time to collate and synthesize comments, it is easier to play this positive role if we see drafts as soon as they are ready.

Questions to ask, if needed:

When there is more than one source of data for monitoring a given NSDP indicator, which source will be chosen, on what criteria? Line Ministry administrative data systems provide regular updates that can be broken down to small scale; by contrast population-based data from NIS surveys and censuses are only available after a longer lag, but tend to be more accurate, and allow for identification of relations between variables. When both the line Ministry and the MoP could generate alternative progress estimates from these different systems, which source will be chosen, and why?

Can the Government update the DPs on where and how they intend to discuss the topic of social safety nets within the existing NSDP Update structure?

When will there be a complete first draft of the document? How long will DPs then have to comment on this draft? What format will the consultation process take - simply written comments by e-mail, or will there be an opportunity to debate issues in a workshop or forum?