

Cambodia Social Safety Net
BRIEF PROGRESS REPORT (January – 28 April 2009) of
the Technical Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-FSN)
For
14th GDCC Meeting
Government Palace, 28th April 2009

*Excellency Deputy Prime Minister Keat Chhon,
Excellency Chhieng Yanara,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It's my great honour and pleasure to be invited to participate in the 14th Meeting of the Government-Development Partner Development Committee (GDCC) and very briefly report the progress on social safety net.

1. During the 2nd Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum (CDCF) held on 04-05 December 2008, social safety nets issue was discussed. It was agreed that the first step is to undertake a mapping exercise to determine the nature of existing safety net provision and to identify policy, institutional and capacity gaps for developing a more systematic and integrated social safety net system, and this task was assigned to the Technical Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-FSN), co-chaired by the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD and Ministry of Planning (MoP) and facilitated by World Food Programme (WFP).

2. As mandated and in order to start the concrete steps, with close collaboration with the World Bank (WB) and World Food Programme (WFP), CARD has convened several meetings among government line agencies and development partners. As a result, the followings concrete outputs of the work concerning SSN issue have been achieved.

❖ **The Interim Working Group on Social Safety Net (IWG-SSN) was established.** The working group consists of representative from respective government agencies, development partners and NGOs. The TOR of the IWG-SSN was endorsed and the overall objective of the IWG-SSN is to coordinate and technically support the work on the development of development of a social safety nets strategy for Cambodia, which is scheduled to be completed by December 2009.

❖ **A Draft Concept Note** (*Reference: First Draft 18 March 2009*) was developed. This concept note is intended to respond to the mandate to TWG-FSN to develop a social safety nets strategy for Cambodia and of the interim working group to develop a concept note for the social safety net strategy. The concept note first:

- addresses the conceptual understanding of SSN/social protection and highlights the experiences with SSN measures in Cambodia over a long period
- includes a first mapping and scoping for the broad area of social policy and social risk mitigation measures including an overview of Cambodian social protection programs;
- presents a menu of policy options that other countries have adopted to create social safety nets that can reduce the negative impact of crises on the poor and vulnerable and provide a springboard for the poor to escape long-term poverty and
- lays out Cambodian specifics, including examining the profile of vulnerable people in Cambodia, the likely impact of the food, fuel, fertilizer, and financial crises on these vulnerable groups, the informal safety net in Cambodia, and fiscal decentralization and local capacity assessment.

❖ **Two Terms of Reference for the development of the Concept Note were developed.**

(1) Terms of Reference (TOR 1) for Qualitative Informal Safety Net in Cambodia:

The informal safety net in Cambodia is again facing stress in terms of the impact of the food, fuel, and fertilizer price shocks and the global financial crisis. It is quite likely that the informal safety net is eroding under increased stress and pressures from urbanization, cultural change, and the impact of the food, fuel, and fertilizer and financial crises. The purpose of this TOR is to lay out a plan of qualitative research on the informal social safety net in Cambodia.

(2) Terms of Reference (TOR 2) for Social Protection Capacity Assessment: Using the PFM methodology of cross-cutting fiscal, fiduciary, procurement and working closely with the Bank's EAP Social Protection Team, the fiscal decentralization consultant will assess the capacity at local and district levels to formulate and undertake social safety net provision. This TOR seeks to expand the work program of the fiscal decentralization consultant to include assessing the ability of sangkat/commune and district levels to undertake and implement social safety net programs.

3. The TWG-FSN by working in a strategic partnership with relevant government institutions and development partners, especially the World Bank and WFP, is committed to continue fulfilling the tasks as assigned by the RGC as follows:

- a. Mapping and scoping exercise to be completed by May 2009 with support from the World Bank ;
- b. Concurrent work on a draft of policy options to be presented at the National Forum on Food Security and Nutrition under the theme "Social Safety Net" to be organized in June 2009, with possible financial support from the World Bank and other development partners of the Interim Working Group on SSN;
- c. Policy option paper to be finalized by September 2009, CARD/TWG to lead, with the support from development partners,
- d. SSN strategy to be completed by December 2009, CARD to lead and development partners to support

Thank you very much for your kind attention.