

Remarks of NGO representative to the 16th GDCC Meeting, 29-April-2010
Government Palace, CDC

Excellencies, Development partners, Ladies and gentlemen,

This statement is made on behalf of the NGO community in Cambodia, the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, MEDiCAM, and the NGO Forum on Cambodia and their members who have always actively participated in Government's aid coordination mechanisms including: the 19 Technical Working Groups, meetings of the Government Donor Coordinating Committee, and the Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum.

We gratefully acknowledge the space for dialogue and our community sincerely supports the Royal Government's commitments to embrace the international aid effectiveness agenda and we appreciate the spirit of broadening the much needed enabling environment in which the NGO community can be part of these mechanisms which we believe are the strong basis for a genuine and constructive engagement with the Royal Government and its development partners based on true democratic principles.

Through a series of workshops in 2009 and 2010, CCC, MEDiCAM, and the NGO Forum raised awareness of the global aid effectiveness agenda among Cambodian NGOs and came to an NGO position on a way forward for further improvements in the aid effectiveness agenda laid out in the Cambodian Declaration on Enhancing Aid Effectiveness (2006) and the more recent guidelines of the Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

Of these awareness building workshops and 2 high level dialogues (CSO-CSO and CSO-DP), 3 key issues came to light:

- A need to clarify the role of NGOs in the Technical Working Groups, GDCC and CDCF;
- A need to have meaningful participation of NGOs in discussions with the Royal Government and its Development Partners in the Technical Working Groups on national planning and monitoring process and monitoring the Joint Monitoring Indicators;
- An urgent need to have genuine tri-partite dialogue based on trust and mutual understanding

The NGO community stands ready and is looking forward to working with the Royal Government and Development Partners to make the 3rd multi-stakeholder forum a reality.

NGOs applaud the Royal Government's attention on partnership with development partners, including NGOs and wider civil society. NGOs appreciate their current inclusion in the aid coordination mechanism led by the Royal Government, the CDCF, GDCC meetings, and the TWGs. NGOs currently participate in 14 out of 19 Technical Working Groups (TWGs). Of these TWGs, NGOs have the role of observer in the Technical Working Group on Public Financial Management. TWGs where there are currently no NGOs participating are: Decentralization and Deconcentration, Private Sector Development, Mine Action, Public Administration Reform, and Infrastructure and Regional Integration. Discussions among NGOs participating in the Technical Working Groups highlighted that the TWG meetings are a very useful source of information but it was generally felt that the space for constructive discussions and engagement among all stakeholders could be further improved.

In closing NGOs kindly put forward to the GDCC floor the following key requests:

- Representatives from Government, Development Partners and NGOs further strengthen their cooperation and engagement in the TWG and continue to build trust as constructive partners in Cambodia's development;
- Technical Working Groups with participating NGOs agree on a Terms of Reference that further clarifies the role and responsibilities of NGOs in the TWGs; The Terms of Reference for NGOs in the Technical Working Groups should be part of a wider update of the Cambodian Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, especially now that the NSDP Update 2009-2013 has replaced the NSDP 2006-2010.
- NGOs would also hope to see an increased and meaningful role and function of the National Assembly in planning, monitoring and evaluating of the NSDPs, foreign aid and national budget is elaborated in more detail.

- Constructive and relevant feedback from civil society stakeholders to the Mid-Term Review of the National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013 being taken on board for the betterment of national policy formulation.

Thank you for your attention