

Minute of Partnership & Harmonisation TWG meeting
14 January 2008
held at the Council for the Development of Cambodia

Opening Remarks

1. H.E Chhieng Yanara, Chairman of the Partnership & Harmonisation (P+H) TWG and Secretary-General of CRDB/CDC, welcomed all participants to the meeting. In his Opening Remarks, he wished all members a happy and prosperous New Year and observed that 2008 will be very active with aid effectiveness initiatives at national and global level. The Chair noted the forthcoming departure of Ms Helen Appleton (DFID) who had provided excellent support to the TWG in her capacity as co-facilitator; her efforts and cooperation was highly appreciated. It was also noted that Ms Nisha Agrawal (World Bank) would soon leave Cambodia and her presence in the TWG would be missed. Ms Sophie Baranes (UNDP) was welcomed as a new co-facilitator and both UNDP and DFID were once again thanked for their work as co-facilitators.
2. There were four agenda items for discussion:
 - a. Partnership and Harmonization Technical Working Group Annual Workplan
 - b. The Technical Cooperation Work
 - c. Paris Declaration Survey Exercise
 - d. Any other Business

P+H TWG Annual Workplan

3. H.E Chair informed the meeting that the TWG workplan was prepared based on CRDB's own workplan. There are six priority activities based on the mandate, capacity and resources of the TWG. There is also sufficient flexibility to incorporate any additional priorities that emerge:
 - Conducting the Paris Declaration Survey
 - Developing inputs to the technical cooperation guideline
 - Increased application and use of the ODA Database
 - Supporting the mid term review of the P&H Action Plan
 - Accra Preparation
 - Aid Effectiveness Report
4. After some discussion about timing and resource availability, the proposed P+H TWG Annual Workplan for 2008 was endorsed by the TWG.

Technical Cooperation – Next steps toward developing a Policy Guideline

5. The technical cooperation study served as an independent review, under the management of CRDB/CDC, to provide inputs to the formulation of Government policy. The draft report had been shared with all concerned development partners and RGC staff who have been interviewed during the study for comments. Most of the comments have been provided by developments partners, and fewer comments provided by RGC. It was agreed that much more dialogue – in particular within Government – would be required if the recommendations of the Report/Guideline were to be implemented. It would also be necessary to take explicit account of pay and incentive issues as the link to capacity development, and therefore the use of TC, was inextricably linked to

these issues. It was agreed that the final report will be translated and shared for further reflection and dialogue, in particular with Government staff.

6. A further two-week case study will be commissioned during the first quarter to complement the work already completed and to contribute to the global study managed by JICA as an input to the HLF in Accra. A sector must be identified; health and education were suggested but further consultation with those sectors is required. The Chair observed that the final decision to participate will belong to the sector management. Once the analysis is completed, the documents will be translated and synthesised into a draft for consultation prior to finalisation as a Government policy paper on the identification, provision, management & monitoring of TC in Cambodia.

7. It was agreed that a consultant would be retained with a view to undertaking the case study work in the last two weeks of March. This would allow sufficient time to consult on and to finalise the ToR and to ensure that all participants were fully prepared.

Paris Declaration Survey 2008

8. Cambodia is participating in the Paris Declaration monitoring survey exercise for 2008. Having learned from experience gained during the first round of the survey exercise in 2006 preparations have been made to ensure a timely and accurate response to this exercise. Many of the related aid management tools and processes, including the TWG and the Cambodia ODA Database, have helped to institutionalise the Paris Declaration work so that we can expect to make the process much easier as well as to ensure that survey results can be used for our national aid effectiveness work.

9. The following points were noted:

- The TWG Chair, as National Coordinator, will complete the country report and country spreadsheet based on returns provided by DPs in the ODA Database, so DPs do not need to complete the donor questionnaire, if information has been entered into the ODA database.
- All DPs should provide information on 2007 disbursement data by the end of February in order for CRDB to undertake the survey exercise that it will be finalized and submitted to OECD/DAC by 31st March, 2008.
- In addition, all DPs has been requested to complete non financial data, coordination of TC, use of PFM and procurement systems, missions and PIUs should have been entered by end of 2008.
- After CRDB validation, data quality is still a significant concern. It was observed that co-funded projects, for example, had multiple names and inconsistent application of definitions related to PIUs etc.
- It was agreed that the definitions needed to be adapted to the Cambodia case, in particular in the use of missions and to correctly classify/exclude humanitarian support.
- The Chair, with support from the two co-facilitators UNDP and DFID, has encouraged all DPs make more effort to work with focal point in the process of data validation provided to CDC in a timely manner and accuracy.

10. It was agreed to form a sub-group with representatives from both DPs and government consisting of Australia, Japan, World Bank, Canada, UK, and France, MOP, MEF, CRDB/CDC, to perform and guide the study. The sub-group would meet in the next few days.

Any other Business

11. Based on the European Road Map for Increased Aid Effectiveness in Cambodia, the European Union Development Partners informed the TWG that they have adopted a common position regarding the salary supplementation practices in Cambodia. EU DPs have agreed to phase out direct salary supplements and will support a government-led pay reform process using merit-based pay initiatives (MBPIs). In ministries/sectors which have not established MBPI schemes EU DPs have agreed to comply with the existing legislation regarding Sub Decree 98 (PMG/MBPI) and Sub Decree 10 (DSA). In response, the Chair extended his appreciation to the effort of developing the roadmap and harmonising aid practices amongst EU DPs. The Chair further suggested that the EU convene a meeting to discuss the new initiatives and to ensure that all interested parties were informed of these new practices.

12. In his closing remarks, H.E Chair thanked the P&H TWG members and those who contributed fruitful input to the meeting.