



Core Programme's Documents



Annual Report 1997

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Foreword

In many ways, 1997 was a particularly challenging year for the NGO Forum, but one which had some genuine highlights. For much of the year, the Forum was ably represented by Nora Fernandes, in an interim capacity, assisted by the irreplaceable Ek Sophanna. Russell Peterson took on the job of Representative in late November. Significant progress was made in increasing the participation of Cambodians in Forum activities. Membership of Cambodian NGOs grew, and international NGOs were increasingly represented by their Cambodian staff. This has brought new energy and new perspectives to the organization and is beginning to shape the future of the Forum.

The new membership profile has brought new challenges. Accommodating both English and Khmer in meetings, reports and minutes has proven time-consuming, costly and open to misunderstandings. Differing levels of understanding and expectations of the role and functions of the Forum have occasionally led to confusion and frustration. But they have also offered valuable learning experiences for all concerned.

The Environment Working Group remained active, commissioning a study into people's participation in environmental impact assessments, compiling and publishing a directory of agencies interested in the development of the Mekong River Basin and collecting information on logging issues. While the Development Assistance Working Group lay relatively dormant, a "Study Group" grew out of an interest in the ADB programs in Cambodia. During the year a new Women's Working Group was also formed to advocate on issues specifically related to women in Cambodian society. The many years of tireless effort by the Landmines Working Group, a member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), culminated in the Ottawa Treaty in December and acceptance of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize several days later in Oslo.

The outbreak of fighting in early July and the threats of renewed international sanctions put pressure on the Forum to respond quickly, at a time when members themselves were feeling insecure and unsure about their immediate future and that of the country. The Civil Society Working Group has been instrumental in assessing the situation and monitoring events within the country since that time. The event also highlighted the need for the Forum to maintain its international network of supporters - an aspect which may have been partially neglected in the shift of focus to national issues. A task force

began preparing a "Cambodia Information Project" which will provide accurate and balanced information on the situation inside the country starting in early 1998.

The influx of new members, the political crisis in July and the absence of a permanent Representative all converged to create some frustration and a reactive rather than proactive approach to some issues. In November, the Management Committee, most of whom were new to the job, held a three day meeting in order to explore their role and that of the Forum. Following this meeting, the Management Committee drafted a revised mission statement, a strategic plan, a number of information sheets and some procedural guidelines. These will be discussed by the membership in 1998.

As we head into 1998, there is a need for the Forum to clarify its mandate and operational procedures, without stifling the energy and initiative of its working groups, in order to better face the challenges which lay ahead as a body of member organizations committed to working together on issues of common concern.

Management Committee (from June 1997)

Robert Clarke, AFSC (Co-Chair)

Kien Serephal, CWDA (Co-Chair)

Mal Simmons, ACR (Treasurer)

Hok Buntheoun, ADHOC

Lim Phai, USG

Patricia Lamotte, Maryknoll

Chhun Huot, PADEK

Soun Champu, KWVC

NGO Forum on Cambodia

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Message from the Interim Representative

Nora Fernandes

The year 1997 was a year of transition for the NGO Forum on Cambodia. Several decisions of 1996 to increase participation by Cambodians in activities of the Forum, were implemented. As a result of this,

issues appeared on the agenda which were important to the Cambodian membership. In the months before the previous Representative, Nicola Bullard, left, she prepared an excellent paper raising questions and concerns on structure, policy and direction of the Forum. These were discussed at the Monthly Members Meeting and by the Management Committee and Steering Committee and later put forward at the Annual General Meeting in March 1997. As a result of the discussion, the Forum acquired a new administrative structure: an International Liaison Group (formerly the overseas Steering Committee) to assist with advocacy campaigns of the Forum at a global level; and a Cambodia-based Management Committee with increased representation of Cambodians and expatriates.

But it was in early January 1997 that the Forum began to work on increasing participation and membership of Cambodians in the working groups. This involved talking to local NGOs about their issues and concerns and inviting them to bring these concerns to the various Working Groups of the Forum. At that time, a major concern of Cambodian NGOs was how to appropriately respond to increasing suspicion of NGOs by local authorities in the provinces. The Civil Society Working Group provided a forum for voicing these concerns and understanding how to deal with the situation. Within a few months, more and more local NGOs sought membership in the Forum raising the total of Cambodian NGOs from 12 to 38 (By the end of the year there were 47 local NGOs in the Forum). Two new Working Groups were formed by local NGOs wishing to advocate on 1) development projects of the ADB and 2) the situation of women in Cambodia. By this time, all the Working Group discussions were conducted in Khmer or Khmer and English.

In July 1997, despite disrupted communications, members of the Forum volunteered time and energy to spearhead a campaign of reassurance to local and international NGOs and to the international donor community on the continuing need for foreign assistance. The event brought its own lessons and questions: what should be the response of the Forum in similar situations in future? How to facilitate an advocacy campaign that is culturally acceptable and sensitive to the varying interests of all members. What should be the role of the International Liaison Group? The Management Committee and some members began to express the need to formulate a long term strategy for the Forum to respond consistently to situations affecting the development of the people of Cambodia. Strengthening advocacy skills of members came to be seen as important as understanding the issues in their entirety.

These needs were reflected again in the Action Plans of the Working Groups which had been prepared over several months after much discussion and debate. More questions from the members: how to get support for advocacy campaigns at the international level? The Forum succeeded in its search for a permanent Representative after several months of searching in-country and abroad. Russell joined the Forum in November and brings with him a perspective of development and a knowledge of Cambodia that can only enrich the process. Here's wishing you all the best, Russell!

Message from the New Representative

Russell Peterson

Coming in new to the NGO Forum, I can not give detailed comment on the Forum's activities in 1997. But I can say what impresses me about the Forum and also raise some questions.

I am impressed by two things. The first is the role of the Forum in addressing the wider context in which NGO development work takes place. This wider context has ranged from the aid embargo in the 1980s to the impact of globalisation on the environment and the poor today. If we do not address these larger problems, our individual NGO projects are like small bandaids placed on a much larger wound. The second is recent attempts to further open up this formerly expatriate organization to Cambodians and local NGOs. Advocacy work will be neither sustainable nor representative of civil society if it is done only by outsiders. The Forum provides an opportunity for true partnership between local and international NGOs. While the term "partnership" has often been used as a euphemism for donor-recipient or teacher-student relationships, in the NGO Forum we have a unique opportunity for Cambodians and expatriates to work together and learn from each other.

My questions are as follows:

How much commitment do the international NGOs and supporting organizations have to carrying out the partnership they started?

Having been encouraged to join the Forum on a free of cost "come-and-see" basis, do local NGOs now feel that the Forum reflects their priorities? Is the Forum the best place for them to pursue those priorities?

How can the Forum keep its focus while also accommodating a much broader membership?

When differences of opinion arise, to what extent will member NGOs take up the opportunity provided by the Forum to openly debate the issues?

How can the Forum become more a venue of collective action and less a venue of endless meetings? How can we foster active involvement instead of passive attendance?

Does the Forum have unrealistic expectations on the time NGOs and their staff have available? How can the Forum better define its role, especially in relation to advocacy work being done by other groups?

How can we move beyond our "capacity building" rhetoric, and really build the capacity of NGOs to advocate for justice and peace in Cambodia and the world?

These are all questions which I imagine we will need to grapple with in 1998. As the Forum and its member NGOs come under increasing pressures during an election year, finding answers to these questions may well be of critical importance in improving the effectiveness of our collective efforts in support of the Cambodian people.



NGO Forum Statement, July 1997

After the fighting in Phnom Penh last July, the NGO Forum was quick to release a statement following intensive debate on its contents by the members. The final version of the statement, released on 15 July 1997, sympathized with the victims of the fighting, gave a pledge of commitment that NGOs would not abandon Cambodia, and called on the international donor community to continue their commitment to the Cambodian people. The statement was released in a number of languages including Khmer, English, French and Japanese. The NGO Forum also met with the Co-Ministers of the Ministry of Interior, on 23 July, to discuss human rights concerns. A copy of the statement appears below:

Statement to the International Donor Community

Members of the NGO Forum and other concerned institutions, many of whom have been working among Cambodians since the early 1980's, gathered on July 15th in Phnom Penh to reaffirm our commitment to the people of Cambodia and to signal our intention to stay. Our mission has been and will continue to be to support Cambodian efforts to rebuild the country and to bring about a peaceful and just society. In light of the current situation, we feel an even stronger commitment to remain in Cambodia to work in solidarity with the people. We appeal to the international community and to our governments to avoid taking sides with parties to the conflict; to pursue all efforts towards constructive dialogue and negotiation; and to continue providing development and humanitarian assistance to the Cambodian people. We have seen, in Cambodia as well as in other parts of the world, that it is ordinary people who are the most vulnerable and who suffer most when punitive measures are imposed.

We condemn the violence and are greatly distressed by the physical and psychological

damage which Cambodian people are suffering as a result of current events. The suffering is further exacerbated by the widespread fear of Cambodians that they will once again be abandoned by the international community and that repression will increase. The international community has made tremendous investments in support of Cambodian people's efforts to reconstruct their country and to bring about a peaceful and just society. With international support, the seeds of a democratic process were sown; civil society was strengthened; infrastructure was partly restored; the economy was stabilized creating an environment more conducive to development; and significant progress was made in human resource and institutional development. More importantly, these achievements contributed to restoring people's confidence and to healing the psychological trauma of the past. Recent and ongoing events have not only shattered the hopes of the Cambodian people, but have jeopardized the accomplishments of the last decade. At this juncture, it is crucial to continue humanitarian and development assistance so as to nurture what remains. The isolation of Cambodia would be counterproductive and would further undermine all that has been achieved to date.

The killing, ongoing intimidation, and violence throughout the country must be stopped immediately. The Cambodian authorities need to demonstrate through concrete actions their commitment to reestablish the process of democratization; to restore public confidence and allay fears; and to make restitution for loss of life and property to those poor and vulnerable who were affected by recent violence and looting.

We once again urge donor governments and the international community to continue the work they have started in support of Cambodian people and not to again use the withdrawal of humanitarian and development aid as a political tool. We appeal to our governments to listen to all parties in the conflict and to join efforts to encourage constructive dialogue and negotiation.

Women Working Group

In 1997, the Women Working Group of the NGO Forum was established by eight core group members: Heng Sovuthy (CWCACD), Aing Cham Roeun (NAPA), Koy Veth (KWVC), Soeung Ly Pao (CWCC), Youk Kalyann (PADV), Chhoeung Sunlay (CWDA), Ros Sopheap (GAD) and Ek Praney (Oxfam Hong Kong). It was established in response to priorities expressed by local NGOs within the Forum. Meetings are held solely in the Khmer language.

The Women Working Group has a goal: to educate, support, train, and disseminate information in order to promote self-confidence and skills. In order to achieve the above goal, the Women Working Group has specific objectives:

- to strengthen women's capacity to advocate on gender, morality, and education issues;
- to promote advocacy skills training programs for women in associations and local NGOs;
- to support and disseminate information on women's concerns to associations and non-government organizations in Cambodia;
- to promote exchange of information and experiences at the international level.

The above goals and objectives are implemented through group discussion, training sessions, meetings and workshops activities which have support from associations and non-government organizations.

Monthly activities

The core group has met every month to work on the activities plan of the group and to exchange experiences and information on women's concerns. The network of the Women Working Group has been formed, with participants from associations and non-government organizations, to disseminate

information about women's concerns.

Training activities

The Women Working Group organized a training session on October 29 on Advocacy Skills Training. There were two speakers, one from Women for Prosperity, Ms Pok Nanda, and the other from Oxfam UK/I, Mr Biranchi Upadhiyaya. The workshop discussed advocacy in Cambodia and Asia. The thirty-five participants took the knowledge gained to serve the program of their own organizations.

Workshop activities

On 23 December 1997, the Women Working Group organized a workshop on Domestic Violence. There were two speakers from PADV (Program Against Domestic Violence) and 45 participants from non-government organizations in Cambodia. This workshop has made the participants interested in the content and committed to educating the community about women and gender and increase understanding so that domestic violence does not happen again.

Future Plans

In early 1998, the participants of the workshop will to make a statement on Domestic Violence and will advocate to the government that domestic violence be considered as a social problem and not just an internal family problem. By having the government pay attention to implementing the law and educating the people through educational and religious institutions, a new generation will understand about domestic violence more clearly. The Women Working Group will try to advocate to four ministries: the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Council of Ministers.

The Women Working Group plans to hold a meeting in early 1998 to discuss how to improve and increase their activities and strengthen the capacity of the group and wider network.



Civil Society Working Group

Events in Cambodia during 1997 have brought the notion of civil society into sharper focus than at any other time since the formation of this working group in 1995. It is ironic that misfortune sometimes leads to new opportunities and gives us fresh perspectives. As NGOs, we do not like to see the powerless continue to be victims of factionalism, of authoritarian forms of social control and organization, of impunity and the lack of the rule of law. We feel a renewed commitment to continue our work with the most vulnerable and not to abandon them in the face of aid-cuts and the ravages of a regional market collapse.

Merely to continue our work on the ground is not enough however. So many events in 1997 have reinforced the necessity of working on so many different levels, using as many different strategies as possible, in order to stimulate a more developed, just and civil society.

Notable contributions and presentations at monthly meetings were by Yonekura Yukiko (Center for Advanced Study) on civil society; Brad Adams (UN Center for Human Rights) on the Draft NGO Law; Pok Than (COFFEL) on the NGO role in the election process; Monique Sokhan (UN Center for Human Rights) on the UNCHR report on the Human Rights situation as of the end of August 1997; and Thun Saray (ADHOC) who gave feedback on the Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum.

Discussions at the monthly meetings centered around the contributions and issues raised by the above-mentioned speakers but there was much time also spent discussing how international NGOs and Cambodian NGOs could work together in looking at local concepts and actions to strengthen civil society and to reduce undemocratic forces. In particular, rural civil society was looked at and strengths and weaknesses identified in order to produce recommendations for strengthening civil society.

Draft statements and plans for follow-up were also prepared after both the March 30 killings and the events of early July and the subsequent outbreak of civil war or factional fighting in the Northwest. The NGOs' non-partisan stance was clearly spelt out in how we addressed these issues with calls for an end to fighting, commemoration of the dead and the need for peaceful resolution of conflicts in Cambodia today. Concern was clearly expressed over the apparent impunity of perpetrators of extra-judicial killings and the apparent lack of political will to bring violators of human rights to justice. These statements were designed to be sent to the UN and the signatories of the Paris Peace Accords.

The most tangible activity in 1997 was the Three Freedoms Workshop in early December. Guest speakers were Dr. Lao Mong Hay (Khmer Institute of Democracy) and Thun Saray (ADHOC). There was much worthwhile discussion of the state of the freedoms of association, assembly and expression in Cambodia today and what NGOs can do to ensure the continuation of or improve these three freedoms.

The year ended on a worrying note for both NGOs and civil society in Cambodia. There were allegations of corruption, bribery and lack of due process in the election of the NGO representative to the National Election Commission which does not bode well for the fairness of the elections themselves. The logical question arises: how can NGOs monitor the national elections if they cannot ensure the free and fair election of their own representative?

The emergence of the Civil Society working group as a vibrant, energetic and neutral forum of debate and discussion for Cambodian NGOs is refreshing and most welcome. The enlightened and strong facilitation by Mr Koul Panha of ADHOC and the participation of some international NGO Forum members has helped to ensure that the group is not manipulated by individuals or parties for their own ends.

Environment Working Group

Activities in 1997 In early 1997, the members discussed the direction in which the Environment Working Group (EWG) should be going. It was felt that the members should contribute to strengthening the understanding of NGOs through information sharing and by building the capacity of state bodies especially those working at the provincial level.

Related to the search for environmental information and ways for dissemination, the EWG made an effort to identify more NGOs working on environment issues and form a link between environment oriented NGOs and development related NGOs.

Attendance & human resources

Thus far, every monthly meeting brought together a number of local and international NGOs, bilateral and multilateral donors and representatives from government bodies and international organizations. Over the year, the number of regular attendants varied, but the participation of local NGOs grew dramatically and they now make up the majority of the group.

The growing number of Cambodian groups concerned with environmental issues is a positive development and in line with the overall NGO Forum policy of shifting the lobby and advocacy work on different issues from the international community to Cambodians themselves. However, with the influx of various groups new to the Forum's activities and unfamiliar with some environmental issues, there is a strong need for internal "environmental literacy".

As the problems re logging, Mekong river development and public participation in EIA continued to be big issues of national and international interest, requiring swift action and thorough follow-up with international agencies, the need to internationally recruit an Environment Coordinator remained urgent. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, it was not feasible to hire someone.

Hiring Cambodians with expertise in the environment also proved to be difficult. As recommended by the EWG a year before, a Mekong Network Coordinator (MNC) was selected half way through the year. Unfortunately, the candidate had to decline the position due to the opportunity to study at AIT in Thailand.

An expatriate and Cambodian consultant were hired to prepare and conduct a series of public participation workshops and to present the results at a workshop in Thailand organized by UNESCAP on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in hydropower development. In November, the Cambodian consultant, Uy Khema, was invited to become the new MNC, which he accepted.

In October, Mahesh Mishra, who had been the convenor for more than a year, had to hand over his task, because he was leaving Cambodia. Maaïke de Loor, working for the ADHOC human rights NGO, accepted to function as interim convenor. It is proposed that someone from an environment NGO eventually take over this position.

Educational Activities

Members of the EWG celebrated Environment Day (June 5) by organizing different activities throughout the country. Among these were quiz competitions at secondary schools in Kratie, street cleaning with children, tree planting and a film on TV Channel 5. These activities complimented those of the Ministry of Environment, which organized an environment awareness program at the Olympic stadium in Phnom Penh.

CEPA, one of the few and most active Cambodian environmental NGOs, regularly presented their Environmental Update to the EWG, a written summary of news on the environment published in Cambodia's most widely read newspaper, Raksmei Kampuchea. CEPA also publishes a monthly bulletin targeting high school and university students, ministries and some local NGOs.

Mekong River Basin Development and Dams

In an effort to facilitate networking among NGOs concerned about Mekong River basin developments, the EWG researched and published a "Mekong Director." The Mekong Directory lists local and international NGOs, regional environment networks and other organizations working or advocating on Mekong River basin development issues. Copies in both Khmer and English were made available to NGO Forum's membership and other interested groups.

In October, an expatriate and a Cambodian consultant organized a series of public participation workshops in Stung Treng, Crate and Kandal provinces and in Phnom Penh. The workshops aimed to get ordinary people's perspective on the impact of dam construction in the Mekong and its tributaries and the potential for public participation in environmental impact assessment (EIA). The findings were reported in a publication called 'Mekong People', which was made available in both Khmer and English. The NGO Forum presented the paper to a UNESCAP-organized regional workshop in Bangkok on EIA for hydropower development. The consultancy also received support from UNDP-ETAP.

Logging Issues

Many discussions of the EWG covered the ongoing unsustainable scale of legal and illegal logging practices. Another concern was that with the rapid scale of deforestation, especially in remote areas, both indigenous peoples and areas designated as national parks and wildlife zones were being endangered.

The EWG expressed the intention to follow closely what concessions were being given out and make the information public and hold the government accountable. Indonesian company Macro-Panin was taken as a target to address the logging issue and monitor the situation, as Macro-Panin was given the largest concession in the provinces of Rattanakiri, Stung Treng and Mondulakiri. Some members of the EWG met in a sub-group to further action on the deforestation issue.

The outcome was that, because of the political sensitivity, no joint statement or letter of concern was sent to the government. Further concrete action against deforestation was not taken by the EWG as a whole. The majority of the organizations reported that in principle they would like to sign a carefully worded statement and contribute to organizing a workshop; but, fearing the military or local authorities, they did not wish to monitor logging practices.

Nevertheless, the EWG members concluded there was a need to inform each other further on what deforestation means for Cambodian environment and economic development. In this light, a fact sheet on Rattanakiri province with the title "Community or Concession?" was produced by EWG members. The EWG set up two sub-groups to gather information on logging to get a better understanding of the situation and to disseminate that information. The Macro-Panin issue was kept on the agenda of individual members to watch developments.

Future Direction

The aim of the EWG is to complement the work done by local environmental NGOs. The EWG and NGO Forum can take collective action on issues which are too much or too sensitive for one NGO alone. But limitations as to what NGOs inside Cambodia can do still apply.

With the logging going on even at a faster rate than ever before due to the upcoming elections, this issue will continue to be a matter of concern. Ideas include environmental information networks, lobbying of the government and political parties contesting the elections, and educating the general public through a workshop on the link between logging and poverty.

To strengthen the Environment Working Group itself, further effort will be made to have the international NGOs and agencies work closely with the new group members from local organizations.



Monitoring Development Assistance

With the unfolding of the development process since the Paris Peace Accords and the UNTAC-organised elections, the role of bilaterals and multilaterals has become increasingly important. So also the management role of the Royal Government is becoming crucial in directing the efforts of donors and other players to effectively manage and efficiently address the needs of the poor. NGOs bring their own perspectives to the debate on aid, based on their involvement with local communities and poverty alleviation.

NGO Forum cooperates closely with the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC), which has provided the lead in representing NGO views on development assistance. When CCC organized the NGO Statement and delegation to the Consultative Group (CG) meeting, held at the end of June, NGO Forum provided a supplementary statement which reflected some of the additional concerns of the Forum working groups. The CG meeting is the World Bank-assisted annual meeting between the Royal Government of Cambodia and international donor countries. The NGO Forum statement called for guaranteed titles for de-mined land for the landless, the signing of the Treaty to Ban Land-mines and additional funding for de-mining and victim assistance. It also pointed out the long-term impact of commercial exploitation of forest resources on the ecological balance and on the livelihood of local communities who depend on these resources. The statement was released in Khmer, English, French and Japanese.

The NGO Forum has also been active in efforts to address concerns arising from the activities of the multilateral development banks. Two separate working groups have been addressing these issues: the SAPRI (Structural Adjustment Program Review Initiative) Group and the ADB Study Group. Both groups were formed and are led by local NGOs.

SAPRI Working Group

SAPRI, or the Structural Adjustment Program Review Initiative, is a process of dialogue between the World Bank, civil society organizations and governments which is currently taking place in a number of different countries. The purpose is to examine the social effects of World Bank/IMF structural adjustment and stabilization programs.

In January 1997, NGO Forum convened a meeting of NGOs interested in SAPRI. The meeting

identified the need for better understanding of structural adjustment, stabilization programs and the role of multilateral finance institutions. At subsequent meetings, a core group of local NGOs was formed to carry the process forward. The local NGO ADHOC, as lead agency of the SAPRI core group, has made available a consultant to work part-time on the initiative. A support group of international NGOs promised to provide resources. NGO Forum provides secretarial support.

It became clear that civil society in Cambodia does not have the capacity to follow the World Bank-prescribed process and be part of the global SAPRI exercise. Instead, it was decided to follow a modified process more suitable for the Cambodian context and focused on capacity building. The Thai-based NGO Focus on Global South agreed to support the process with information and training.

The progress of the group was interrupted by the events of July. For a number of months the group did not meet as NGOs became preoccupied by other concerns. Also, the IMF suspended its stabilization loan program, citing the inability of the government to collect revenues from logging. However, the group met again twice before the end of the year and confirmed the need to continue examining the effects of ongoing stabilization policies and the likely consequences of future IMF-led programs in Cambodia. A two-day training workshop facilitated by Focus on Global South is scheduled for early 1998. It is planned that a Civil Society Steering Committee will be formed that will become part of a National Steering Committee in which dialogue between the World Bank, NGOs and the Royal Government can take place.

NGO Study Group on the ADB

Despite difficulties and inexperience, the Study Group on the ADB has been very busy and active in 1997 from the start. In January 1997, the regional NGO Working Group on the ADB based in the Philippines invited two NGO Forum members to attend an internship workshop in Manila in March 1997 to share on issues and concerns with regards to the ADB and to get hands on training on the Bank's programs, policies and projects. Due to time conflicts, only one representative from Cambodia was able to attend. The representative came back full of knowledge to share among other study group members.

The study group also drafted a strategic plan which included the main objectives of the group, activities and strategies, and expected outputs and indicators. The budget for an "ADB Literacy Workshop" was drafted, though the workshop itself was postponed to 1998. A work plan schedule was drafted and presented to the group for discussion and approval.

In May 1997, the NGO Working Group on the ADB in Manila invited one NGO Forum member to attend the 30th Annual ADB Board of Governors meeting in Fukoka, Japan. John Phay from CFDS went as the NGO Forum on Cambodia delegate. During the meeting with the Bank president, Mr Mitsuo Sato, issues were raised on: the gap between the Bank's sustainable development rhetoric and the reality of communities affected by the Bank's projects; the cumulative environmental impacts of the projects or "might-be" projects in the Mekong greater sub-region; lack of information like environmental impact assessments (EIAs) in the local language; and the need to implement quality projects rather than adopting many not-so-good projects. The issue of moral and ethical responsibilities of the ADB in project implementation were also raised by NGO delegates around the region. Overall, the greater Mekong sub-region was one of the highlighted issues at the ADB meeting in Fukoka.

In June 1997, Ms Aviva Imhof from the International Rivers Network came to provide background information on the work of her organization and offered support for future scholarships for two Cambodian persons to improve lobbying skills on issues relating to Mekong/ADB or World Bank projects in Cambodia. In July, Mr Andrew Nette from the environmental group in Bangkok, TERRA, came and met with some NGO Forum members to discuss a possible study tour in Thailand in relation to the impact of dam projects which are financed by either the ADB or the World Bank.

In September, the ADB invited two NGO representatives from Cambodia (John Phay of CFDS and Khou Somatheavy of CCC) to attend the Regional Workshop on Non- Government Organizations in Development which had participants from nine countries in Asia. The purpose of the study was to examine the role of NGOs in development and relationships among NGOs, governments and the Bank

in national development programs.

The intended outcome of the projects would be to explore future directions for NGO involvement in development efforts and to identify an operational framework and set of best practices for NGOs, governments and the Bank to work together effectively and productively. After coming back from this meeting in Manila, on 5 December, the two representatives who went to Manila set up a panel discussion with the ADB representative here in Cambodia, a representative from the Ministry of Finance and other resource people. The purpose was to follow up on the outcome of the Manila meeting and to present the concept paper on NGO perspectives of how to improve cooperation with the Bank and the Government.



Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines

Highlights

December 1997 was a great cause of celebration for the Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines. On December 3, the treaty to ban land-mines was signed by 122 countries, including Cambodia, in Ottawa Canada. Tun Channareth (from Siem Reap), Sok Eng (Sisophon), Song Kosal (Bavel), Sam Ouen (Pursat), Maha Ghosananda (Dhamayietra Center) and Denise Coghlan of the Campaign were present. Excellency Ung Huot as Foreign Minister signed the Treaty on behalf of Cambodia, witnessed by Tun Channareth and Excellency Ieng Mouly, Chair of CMAC. Tun Channareth spoke on one of the panels. Sok Eng and Song Kosal addressed the Parliament. Jody Williams, the International Coordinator, hailed the assembled 122 nations as the new superpower.

During the ceremonies, the Cambodia group were very active in organizing the signing of the "Peoples Treaty", which allowed people to make their personal commitment to eradicating land-mines. They participated in numerous media interviews and in the inter-faith service. "It was tremendously hard work, very tiring, emotionally and physically, but worth every effort," a member of the Cambodian delegation said. Tun Channareth remarked "It is difficult for me to have you all looking at my body, but you need to look until the last land-mine is gone from the earth and the world is safe for my children and yours." The women of the Campaign held a special luncheon to honor Jody Williams and to celebrate the contribution of women in the international campaign. This was also organized by the Cambodia group.

The Nobel Peace Prize given to Jody Williams and to Cambodia's Tun Channareth, who received it on behalf of the Campaign, was the other high point of December. The ceremonies in Oslo were inspiring and a lot of fun. Liz Bernstein and Dalma Faldes, old Cambodia Campaign members now very active with the international campaign, celebrated the sheer joy of the moment with us. In Cambodia, the Campaign celebrated with a candle light procession through the streets of Phnom Penh.

Needless to say, such extraordinary moments of history are not achieved without much hard work, effort and time commitment by national groups, NGOs which work across countries, and dedicated individuals.

Goals

The Cambodia Campaign had clear goals for 1997.

International Level:

- To get at least 100 countries to sign an effective treaty that bans the use, protection, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel mines; calls for funds for demining and "victim assistance."
- To lobby countries in the region.

National Level:

- To get Cambodia to sign the treaty and accede to the Convention.
- To urge all Cambodians to stop using mines.
- To urge the Government to pass national legislation and to implement the proposed treaty demands.

Campaign Calendar 1997

January:

- Letters to all Ambassadors in Cambodia and Thailand from amputee ambassadors encouraging them to sign the treaty.

February:

- Feb 10-28. Sok Eng, Tun Channareth, Mounh Sarath, Kike Figaredo lead workshops, teaching and learning, at the Strengthening Southern Campaigns conference, in Maputo, Mozambique.
- Feb 24. Mine Awareness Day: Display in Phnom Penh; motorbike and bicycle parade in Siem Reap; march in Sisophon; media campaign.

March:

- Peace March: Pailin and Phnom Malai.
- Japan Regional Meeting attended by representatives from AARCC and VI.
- Handi Sports and Display.

April:

- "Plant Trees Not Mines" campaign in Siem Reap, Sisophon, Kandal and along the route of the Dhamayietra.

May:

- Tun Channareth and Patty Curran go on US lobbying tour sponsored by CWS.
- Printing stickers, post cards.
- Cambodia accedes to the CCW CONVENTION.

June:

- Kong Chim and Sok Eng meet Princess Di in Washington (sponsored by ARC) Chim Phan, Klieng Vann and Tun Channareth ride cyclos and wheelchair from Paris to Brussels to draw attention to mine problems and the ban.
- Printing of tourist leaflets in Chinese and Japanese.
- International meeting in Brussels where countries sign on for the final draft treaty meeting.
- Extended Steering Committee Meeting.
- Thai and Cambodian amputees link to write to the Thai Princess.

July:

5-6. Fighting in streets of Phnom Penh.

- Regional workshop in Sydney, Australia. Cambodian delegation sent papers, as the events of 5-6 July precluded their attendance.

- Environment Day Display "A world free from mines; a world free to dance."

August:

- Emma Leslie attends Indian Regional Meeting and gives paper.

September:

- Chim Kong, Sok Eng, Tun Channareth and Patty Curran attend International Draft Treaty meeting in Oslo. (By then we knew there would be a worthwhile treaty. A concentrated effort to attract signatories before Dec. 3 began).

October:

- Nobel Peace Prize to ICBL and Jody Williams announced. Street banners, letters to ambassadors, media efforts in Cambodia.

November:

- Extensive speaking tour of Japan by Tun Channareth (40 speaking engagements); Visits by campaign members to Indonesia and Thailand - In November, all three countries agree to sign.
- Film night hosted by H.I. in Phnom Penh.
- Extraordinary steering committee meeting.
- Man Sokheum and Kite Figaredo attend the launching of the Spanish book which Sokheum had inspired the photo-journalist to produce.
- Cambodian law is passed by the Council of Ministers.

December:

- Cambodian delegation to Ottawa in Oslo for Treaty Signing and Nobel Peace Prize.
- Candlelight Procession in Phnom Penh.



Structure

The Cambodia Campaign to Ban Land-Mines is a coalition of NGOs and international organizations working together to ban land-mines in Cambodia and around the globe. It is part of the NGO Forum, but is also much broader than the Forum membership. Many organizations in Cambodia have contributed to the success of the national and international campaigns.

Thanks go to those who funded the Campaign in 1997 through the NGO Forum, namely ARC, AFSC, Bread for the World, CIDSE, CWS, LWS, MCC, Oxfam UK/I and PADEK. Thanks also go to those organizations who bore significant costs on behalf of the Campaign, including ARC, CWS, HI, ICRC, JRS, JS, Maryknoll and WV. Most of the office and logistical support has been provided by the Jesuit Service office and staff. Frazer Power, Patty Curran, Sok Eng, Vuthy, Emma Leslie and Denise Coghlan have been press liaisons at different points of the campaign. All work for the campaign is done on a volunteer basis and in addition to normal jobs. Decisions are made by the group that attends the monthly meetings.

The Cambodia Campaign is part of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. It has been represented at all international planning meetings, whether as part of the steering committee or as part of the assembled body.

Future Plans

In 1998, the Campaign will focus on ensuring ratification of the treaty, monitoring compliance, attracting funding for demining and victim assistance, and destroying stockpiles. Efforts will be made at province level to persuade Cambodian people to stop using mines.

The Campaign will closely monitor developments in the Asia region. The money and effort spent has been well rewarded in 1997. Much work remains for 1998 if the world is truly to be mine free and people and communities victimized by mines are to live satisfying lives.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1997

NGO FORUM ON CAMBODIA

Sources and Applications of Funds For the year ended 31 Decombor 1997

<u>SOURCES</u>	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>US\$</u>	<u>US\$</u>
Opening Balances:			
Cash in hand		811	
Cash at bank	2	<u>84,762</u>	85,573
Funds from donors	3	<u>27,827</u>	
Grants	4	<u>29,297</u>	
Membership subscriptions	5	<u>4,295</u>	
Other income	6	<u>931</u>	<u>62,350</u>
<u>APPLICATIONS</u>			
Core cost	7	<u>39,976</u>	
Environment project	8	<u>6,314</u>	
EIA consultancy costs	9	<u>7,260</u>	
Landmines project	10	<u>21,914</u>	
Civil society project	11	<u>2,400</u>	
Development assistance	12	<u>1,251</u>	
Other costs	13	<u>589</u>	<u>79,704</u>
Closing Balances:			
Cash in hand		670	
Cash at bank	14	<u>67,549</u>	<u>68,219</u>
			<u>147,923</u>

NGO Forum Members and Supporters in 1997

International NGOs (Full-membership):

- American Friends Service Committee
- Asia Foundation
- Australian Catholic Relief (Caritas Australia)
- Care International in Cambodia
- Catholic Relief Services
- Christian Outreach Church World Service-Cambodia Program
- Community Aid Abroad (Oxfam Australia)
- Concern Worldwide Cooperation International pour le Development et Solidarite (CIDSE)
- Don Bosco Foundation of Cambodia
- Forum Syd
- Health Unlimited
- HEKS Cambodia Programme (Swiss Interchurch Aid)
- Help Age International
- Institute per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (ICS)
- International Women's Development Agency

- Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)
- Jesuit Service Cambodia
- Lutheran World Service
- Mine Advisory Group (MAG)
- Maryknoll Mennonite Central Committee
- New Humanity
- Overseas Service Bureau
- Oxfam Hong Kong
- Oxfam UK/I PACT
- Partnership for Development in Kampuchea (PADEK)
- Quaker Service Australia
- Redd Barna
- SAO-SCALE Save the Children Fund Australia
- Save the Children Fund-UK
- Voluntary Service Overseas
- World Vision International-Cambodia

Local NGOs (Full-Membership):

- Action on Disability and Development
- ADHOC - Cambodia Human Rights and Development
- Association
- Association of Cambodia Local Economic Development
- Agencies (ACLEDA) Association for Disabled Widows and Orphans
- Association for the Support and Promotion History and Khmer Society
- Association of protection development for Cambodia Environment
- Buddhist Development and Supporting Environment
- Cambodia Disabled People's Organisation
- Cambodia Farmer Association
- Cambodia Light Children Building Center
- Cambodia Association for Development Farmer and Poor
- Cambodian Association for Repatriation to Development and Savings (CARDS)
- Cambodia Development and Relief Center for the Poor
- Cambodia Health Education Development (CHED)
- Cambodia Institute of Human Rights
- Cambodian Women's Crisis Center
- Cambodian Women's Development Association
- Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation
- Culture and Environment Preservation Association (CEPA)
- Cambodian Women Children Art and Craft
- Development
- Development Association of Cambodia Help the widow
- HURIPRUJA
- Improvement of the poor Cambodian Together (IMPACT)
- Khemara
- Khmer Development and Friendship Association
- Khmer Farmers Association, Kandal
- Khmer Human Resources of Development Organization (KHReDO)
- Khmer Rural Development Association
- Khmer Women's Voice Center
- Krom Aphiwat Phum

- Meada Khmer Development
- Nation Prosperity Association (NAPA)
- Rural Agriculture Development Democracy (RADD)
- Rural Association for Development of Economy (RADE)
- Rural Economic Development Association (REDA)
- Socio-Economic Development Organisation (SANTA)
- Socio-Economic Development Organisation of Cambodia (SEDOC)
- Sorsortroung (SST)
- Support Association for Khmer Teacher & Family
- Urban Resource Center Urban Sector Group
- Women Development Association
- Women Rights Development Association

Associate Members:

- CARERE-UNDP
- Christian Aid
- Diakonia
- Jesuit Refugee Service (Asia Pacific)
- Manitese
- Novib
- Oxfam Belgique
- U.S. Indochina Reconciliation Project (USIRP)
- United Nations Association of Great Britain and Ireland
- World Food Programme

Supporters in 1996-97:

- Australian Catholic Relief (Caritas Australia)
- American Friends Service Committee
- Bilance
- Bread for the World
- Cambodia Canada Development Programme
- Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD)
- Catholic Relief Services
- Christian Aid
- Cooperation International pour le Developpement et Solidarite (CIDSE)
- Church World Service
- DanChurchAid
- Diakonia
- Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe E.V. (EZE)
- HEKS (Swiss Interchurch Aid)
- Interchurch Aid for Development Cooperation (ICCO)
- Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC) Lutheran World Service
- Mennonite Central Committee Misereor
- NOVIB (Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation)
- Oxfam America
- Oxfam Belgique
- Oxfam Hong Kong
- Oxfam UK/I
- Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
- World Vision International

- World Vision UK

International Liaison Group

The NGO Forum has kept close contact with individuals in the following groups, who assist the Forum in its international advocacy work from time to time: Overseas Service Bureau (Australia), Oxfam Belgium, Cambodia Canada Development Programme, Manitese, Japan International Volunteer Center, NOVIB, DanChurchAid, CAFOD, U.S. Indochina Reconciliation Project, Oxfam America, Oxfam UK/I, Focus on Global South, Asia Pacific Human Rights Information Center (Japan), Diakonia, Asia Pacific Center (Washington DC).

