

June 12th, 2014

JOINT STATEMENT

“The CSO/NGO Statement on the Monitoring of the JMI 2012 Implementation and Comments on the JMI 2014-2018”

CSO/NGOs community in Cambodia welcome the TWG Network Retreat (16-17 June 2014) which will be organized by the CRDB/CDC of the Royal government of Cambodia, as an important opportunity to (i) review and discuss the TWG performance including the progress in implementing the Joint Monitoring Indicators for the period of 2012-2013, (ii) present and discuss the NSDP 2014-2018 and CDPC 2014-2018, and (iii) other related issues.

CSO/NGOs have played a very important role in the development of Cambodia in every sector including humanitarian activities as well as development progress, and are formulating development priorities for policymaking in Cambodia. Furthermore, CSOs are able to provide their inputs and comments in their areas of expertise. Particularly, the CSO/NGOs work with government and other Development Partners (DPs) to monitor the performance of a wide range of development programs. They participate in 16 of the 19 Technical Working Groups (TWG) that are organized by government ministries and that set and periodically revise Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMIs).

In this capacity, CSO/NGOs have produced "the CSO/NGO Statement on the Monitoring of the JMI Implementation for 2012-2014" which put together all CSO/NGOs' findings working in various issues ranging from land reform, education to legal & judiciary reform. The statement were endorsed in **“CSO/NGO Consultation Meeting on JMIs, NSDP, Partnership Strategy of the Royal Government”** on 11 June 2014, which was co-organized by the NGO Forum on Cambodia (NGOF), the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) and MEDiCAM.

CSO/NGO communities suggest that the following “CSO/NGO Recommendations” should be considered by the RGC and the DPs with comprehensive discussion in the TWG Network Retreat (16-17 June 2014), and other relevant forums.

Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMI)

Our assessment is based on implementation of JIM 2012-2013, draft JMI 2014-2015 and based on draft NSDP 2014-2018, dated Feb 2014.

1. In general, there should be collective efforts to promote and accelerate inclusive growth based on triangular measurements: advancement of democratization, social inclusion and economic growth indicators.
2. Clear M&E framework with measurable indicators and consistent with NSDP. The indicators at outcome and impact level should more measurable and achievable. They should emphasis more than on socio-economic growth but also on social inclusion, sustainable environmental management and its resources, promoting gender, woman, child and human rights.
3. The parliamentarians, citizens and CSOs are viewed as playing important role in monitoring the development progress of implementation of national strategic development plan in this new

development partnership. The DCPS should have well reflected this. Evidence based research studies must be consolidated and their results must be taken into account.

Specific recommendations on JMI as follow:

On Good Governance: Transparency & Accountability

1. Early passage of the draft Law on Access to Information with clear rules and time frames;
2. A timely and systematic release of budget documents, and the speedy finalization of the Debt Bulletins and the procurement website; more transparency of and tax collection, aid information and condition of concessional loans released by the government and Development Partners;
3. Increased transparent and public consultation over draft laws and regulations on extractive industry (oil, gas & mining) process. CSO/NGOs should have been genuinely engaged in this process;
4. Clear indicator on reduction of corruption on a certain commitment figure.
5. Strengthening of capacity building and accountability to the sub-national authority from the grassroots citizen.

On Rural Development and the Economy

1. Support for farmer associations through rice productivity improvement projects, small- and medium-scaled irrigation systems, and market access; establishment of rural vocational training schools for rural youth and farmers wishing to take a career in farming business; allocation of funds for exchange visit/study with each other; and law enforcement on promoting non-pesticide, and chemical fertilizer management;
2. Ensure the mechanism of human resource and budget for speedy forest management planning, fishery and Communal Speeding up Land Registration.
3. Participative consultation and decision for citizen in all development projects (mining, land, dams, etc.), and provision of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reports two weeks in advance of hearing dates; and new measures be required to monitor the impact of climate change;
4. Adoption of international best practices to compensate communities negatively affected by hydropower dams; and resolution of trans-boundary conflicts to protect the interests of Cambodian communities;
5. Strengthening of capacity building on Disaster Management at sub-national level, Disaster Preparation and practical standard.

On Land & Natural Resource Management

1. Transparent and comprehensive demarcation of state land with data to be publicly displayed; adoption and implementation of a national resettlement policy and legal procedures consistent with international standards; and measures to ease and expedite communal land registration for indigenous communities, while providing effective protective measure in the interim; strengthened independent & impartial land dispute resolution mechanism;
2. The definition of “forests” to be limited to “natural forest” and exclude plantations; an increase in the allowable size of community forests and speed up the granting of communal forestry; meaningful participation by local communities and civil society actors in the implementation of internationally agreed measures and incentives to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD).

3. There should have clear indicators on commitment to protect deforestation.

On Human Development

1. Improvement of quality of education and service delivery;
2. Removal of financial barriers to increase access to health care services, especially the poor, the vulnerable, the hard-to-reach population; quality of care in both public and private sectors needs to be further improved, making sure that both sectors are working together complementarily; the public administration reform must be expedited to address salary issues for civil servants including health and education.
3. Clear indicators on social protection for Cambodian population, especially aging, children, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalized people.

Development Cooperation and Partnership Strategies

The current and future roles of CSOs are bound to go beyond acting as supporting service delivery and providing humanitarian assistance, towards becoming active implementers along with governments and the private sector. But there are several options for equipping civil society with expanded sets of functions. Clearly they should build on existing Technical Working Groups (TWG), GDCC, and CDCF mechanisms, but performing other roles such as community empowering, advocacy, and monitoring. CSOs should be adding in other stakeholder groups, as well as creating a formal space for theme-based and expert involvement from civil society at both national and sub-national level will be important.

To start a constructive and forward-looking dialogue civil society’s role in the future development agenda, CSOs propose more reflection on following parameters:

1. The diversity of civil society and social movements and the diverse means for outreach to their respective constituencies should be respected, as they represent significant capacity necessary to connect agenda setting with implementation;
2. The roles of CSOs in research, advocacy and monitoring should be increased as these roles are critical to support government, development partners and private sectors to have more comprehensive perspectives on the needs of the community for more sustainable development of Cambodia
3. Transparent, inclusive and meaningful opportunities for civil society interactions with inputs to line ministries, development partners and private sectors should be included in the proposed mechanism. If necessary, new forms such as regular dialogue between CSOs and development partners, and CSOs and private sector should be encouraged.
4. Transparency: all results, both donor and government, need to be transparent through compulsory information disclosure, which is publicly accessible and could enable the government and donors to hold each other accountable and civil society can also hold both of them accountable to their commitments.
5. Sustainable resource mobilization for the post-2015 development agenda needs to be urgently identified and agreed upon by all development actors. Civil society is encouraged to support the establishment and implementation of a Cambodia National Trust Fund. This fund would ideally be set at X percent of national budget.

Technical Working Group (TWG)

1. To promote effective use and management of resources, especially official development aid, country ownership, and democratic development of Cambodia, CSOs should be strongly encouraged to be co-chairs/co-facilitators of the TWGs and/or sub-working group, and other established groups at both national and sub-national levels.
2. Appreciate that some TWGs allow having many representatives (3-8) from CSOs. It would be more important if such practice expended to other key TWGs, especially as D&D, Planning, and PFM.
3. There should budget allocated for capacity development for TWG members including CSOs so that they can have better capacity in responding to the need of their group and sector.
4. Anti-corruption is core and key to promote good governance and fighting against corruption, therefore, the TWG on Anti-corruption should be created which participated by all relevant stakeholders especially CSOs.
5. The draft NSDP 2014-2018 stressed the potential of oil and gas as new sources for energy and economic growth; developing laws and regulatory framework for the sector is in place. However, the sector is not reflected in the Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMI) 2014-2018. The CSOs working in the area would like to suggest the RGC to: (1) Develop new JMI which will focus on the implementation of mining oil and gas sector; and (2) Form a new TWG on mining oil and gas which brings together relevant government institutions, Development Partners and CSOs representative in addition to the existing 19 TWGs.

All in all, civil society in Cambodia is committed to work as a development partner for the good of all our people. Civil society trust that the Royal Government of Cambodia and DPs respond to our recommendations in a similar spirit of partnership. We would like to see further discussion on result based framework/JMI versus the commitment in NSDP and the arrangement and engagement of CSOs in Technical Working Group. We are confident that the collaborative mechanism established by the CRDB/CDC is the surest way to advance the interests of all parts of Cambodian society and to reach our shared goals.

For any additional information, please contact:

Mr. TEK Vannara, Executive Director, The NGO Forum, 012 793 489, vannara@ngoforum.org.kh
Mr. SOEUNG Saroeun, Executive Director, CCC, 016 900 503, saroeun.soeung@ccc-cambodia.org
Dr. SIN Somuny, Executive Director, MEDiCAM, 012 573 062, ssin@medicam-cambodia.org