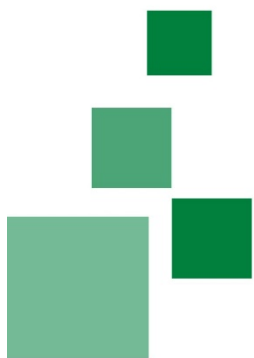




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*The NGO Forum on Cambodia*



# ANNUAL REPORT

The NGO Forum on Cambodia

2023  
JAN-DEC



# MESSAGE FROM CHAIR and EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NGO FORUM ON CAMBODIA

## Dear colleagues and friends

We are pleased to share with you our annual report 2023, highlighting key achievements, challenges and solutions, financial status, internal governance, and plan for the next year.

In 2023, NGOF delivered many significant outputs and outcomes being harvested in terms of behaviors, actions, and policy changes. The policy dialogue space was increased; some measures were put in place; and actions were taken to address issues faced by communities in the area of fair finance, land and natural resources governance, water governance, and private sector engagement. For instance, the Association of Banks in Cambodia increased cooperation through more engagement and dialogue between CSOs; the MRCS established the Mekong Community Roundtable that enabled affected communities to have a direct dialogue with the MRC; the Minister of MoWRAM called for urgent action to minimize and mitigate the impacts on Tonle Sap Lake, responding to the current flow condition of the Tonle Sap Lake. More interestingly, the private sector in the Cambodian rubber industries expressed an interest in ESG in the rubber sector through engaging with a rubber farmer cooperative in its rubber supply chain.

Despite some staff turnover, insufficient resources, and leadership changes, from the former ED of NGOF, Dr. Tek Vannara to Mr. Soeung Saroeun, NGOF continues to put a lot of effort into the evaluation of the strategic plan 2018-2023, and the designation of new one for 2024-2030 or vision 2030, as well as reviewing internal policies, bylaws, and working approaches. This reform aimed to transform the NGOF to be a more relevant, efficient, effective, innovative, responsible, impactful, sustainable, and professional network-based organization to serve the best interest of its members, partners, and especially for the poor and Cambodians as a whole.

Finally, we would like to thank members, partners, donors, government, and communities for their energetic engagement and support to NGOF to implement the activity plan effectively. We would like to welcome any comments or clarifications related to our annual report 2023 and we strongly hope that the respective partners and donors will continue in supporting and working together to bring positive changes to Cambodians live in peace and enjoy equitable, resilient, sustainable, and inclusive development in Cambodia.

Respectfully yours,

February 15, 2024

Chair



Tourt Chamroeun

Executive Director



Soeung Saroeun

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	..... 3
<b>Context Analysis</b>	..... 5
<b>I. PROGRAM FOCUSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	..... 6
<b>1.1 Natural Resource Governance (NATGOV) Program</b>	..... 6
1.1.1 Significant Achievements.....	6
1.1.2 Contributions to the Significant Achievement .....	8
<b>1.2 Partnership for Sustainable Growth (PASGRO) Program</b>	..... 14
1.2.1 Significant Achievements.....	15
1.2.2 Contributions to the Significant Achievement .....	16
<b>1.3 Socio-Economic Equity in Development (SEED) Program</b>	..... 20
1.3.1 Significant Achievements .....	20
1.3.2 Contributions to the significant achievement.....	21
<b>II. KEY CHALLENGES AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS</b>	..... 24
<b>III. STAKEHOLDER AND BENEFICIARY</b>	..... 25
<b>IV. GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS AND FINANCE</b>	..... 26
<b>4.1 Governance and Leadership Changes</b>	..... 26
<b>4.2 Operations and Staffing:</b>	..... 26
<b>4.3 Finance and Compliance</b>	..... 27
<b>V. WAY FORWARD FOR JANUARY -DECEMBER 2024</b>	..... 27
<b>Priority 1: Social Capital and Social Protection</b>	..... 27
<b>Priority 2: Inclusive and Green Growth</b>	..... 27
<b>Priority 3: Climate Change and Natural Resource Governance</b>	..... 28
<b>Priority 4: Vibrant, Proactive, Resilient, and Sustainable Civil Society</b>	..... 29
<b>VI. ANNEXES</b>	..... 32



វេទិកាសម្រាប់ការមិនមែនរដ្ឋាភិបាល ស្តីពីកម្ពុជា  
*The NGO Forum on Cambodia*

# VISION AND MISSION

## VISION

The NGO Forum on Cambodia's vision is that Cambodia had well-informed citizen and civil society organizations, who positively influence equitable and sustainable development for the benefit of the poor and vulnerable people, and which supports transparent and accountable government, and the rule of law.

## MISSION

The NGO Forum on Cambodia's mission is to coordinate and equip network/members and other civil society organizations in actively engaging in policy dialogues, debates and advocacy for poor and vulnerable people in Cambodia.

## List of Acronyms

Acronyms	Full
<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>AWN</b>	Agriculture and Water Network
<b>BWG</b>	Budget Working Group
<b>CC</b>	Coordination Committee
<b>CCC</b>	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
<b>CF</b>	Community Forestry
<b>CIPO</b>	Cambodian Indigenous People Organization
<b>CIYA</b>	Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association
<b>CLEC</b>	Community Legal Education Centre
<b>COP</b>	Conference of the Parties
<b>CPA</b>	Community Protected Area
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CSR</b>	Cooperate Social Responsibility
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>ELC</b>	Economic Land Concession
<b>FA</b>	Forestry Administration
<b>GDR</b>	General Directorate of Rubber
<b>IBP</b>	International Budget Partnership
<b>IC</b>	Indigenous Communities
<b>IEC</b>	Information, Education, and Communication
<b>IP</b>	Indigenous People
<b>LAHRiN</b>	Land and Housing Right Network
<b>MAFF</b>	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
<b>MEF</b>	Ministry of Economy and Finance
<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>MRC</b>	Mekong River Commission
<b>MRD</b>	Ministry of Rural Development
<b>MVi</b>	My Village Organization
<b>MoWA</b>	Ministry of Women Affair
<b>N4F</b>	Network for Forest Governance
<b>NA</b>	National Assembly
<b>NATGOV</b>	Natural Resource Governance
<b>NECA</b>	NGOs Environmental and Climate Change Alliance
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organization
<b>NGOF</b>	Non-Government Organization Forum on Cambodia
<b>NMC</b>	National Mekong Committee
<b>NSDP</b>	National Strategic Development Plan
<b>OBS</b>	Open Budget Survey
<b>PASGRO</b>	Partnership for Sustainable Growth
<b>PFM</b>	Public Financial Management
<b>PFMRP</b>	Public Financial Management Reform Program
<b>PMEAL</b>	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluating, Accountability & Learning

<b>RCC</b>	Rivers Coalition Cambodia
<b>RGC</b>	Royal Government of Cambodia
<b>RINNO</b>	Research and Innovation
<b>SEED</b>	Socio-Economic Equity in Development
<b>SWG</b>	Social Protection Working Group
<b>TWG</b>	Technical Working Group
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations for Development Program
<b>WATNET</b>	Water Governance Network
<b>WWF</b>	World Wide Fund
<b>QMM</b>	Quarterly Members Meeting

## Executive Summary

The NGO Forum on Cambodia (NGOF) is a membership organization for local and international NGOs that has existed for information sharing, debate, and advocacy on priority issues affecting Cambodia's development since the mid-1980s. Its vision is the Cambodian people live in peace and enjoy equitable, sustainable, and inclusive development. Its mission is to coordinate and equip members, networks of NGOs, CSOs, and other stakeholders to actively engage in policy dialogue and advocacy to ensure equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development in Cambodia.

The NGOF has implemented three programs namely 1) Natural Resource Governance (NATGOV), 2) Partnerships for Sustainable Growth (PASGRO), and 3) Socio-Economic Equity in Development (SEED). In the fiscal year 2023, NGOF has achieved twelve significant outcomes across the three programs. Those include:

- In February, The Ministry of Economy and Finance integrated one of the six CSOs' inputs concerning public disclosure of the draft national budget law into the new law on the Public Finance System.
- In April, the MRC incorporated the community's comments and suggestions into the 4th Vientiane Declaration and took action to ensure timely notification of unusual water flow, as well as to be more responsive to community concerns to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.
- In April, the Association of Banks in Cambodia (ABC) and its members increased good cooperation through more engagement and dialogue between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to enhance the role of the financial sector and consumer protection mechanisms.
- In May, the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction (MLMUPC), Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), and Provincial Administration accelerated a communal land registration process in Samlot district, Battambang province.
- In May, the BAO MAN Rubber Processing Company expressed an interest in engaging with a rubber farmer cooperative in its rubber supply chain at national and international manufacturing.
- In June, medium and smallholder farmers expressed commitment to function the existing Community Rubber Farmer (CRF) to access local and global rubber markets.
- In June, the Network for Forest Governance (N4F) and Land and Housing Rights Network (LAHRiN) strengthened its operation for more gender-transformative practices by building the capacity of its NGO members on gender responsiveness, conducting gender audits, and receiving key ideas for developing the gender-transformative action plan.
- In June, the MRCS established the Mekong Community Roundtable, enabling CSOs and affected communities to have a direct dialogue with the MRC and take actions to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts on Mekong water governance.
- In October, the MRC considered hydrological limits for key wetland assets to be integrated into study 2 of the MRC proactive regional planning.
- In November, the Minister of MoWRAM under his current chairperson of the MRC Council called for urgent action to minimize and mitigate the impact on

Tonle Sap Lake, responding to the current low flow condition of the Tonle Sap Lake.

- In December, 7 of 20 documented cases of land disputes were successfully solved by provincial authorities of Kratie, Stung Treng, Kampong Thom, Preah Vihear, Battambang, and Siem Reap, resulting in 310 households having full access to land tenure security in equivalence to 434,45 hectares.
- In December, The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) set out a plan to develop Cambodia's Green Finance Taxonomy and Market.

Despite the significant achievements resulting from the project implementation across the three programs, key challenges emerged in the fiscal years that undermined the deliverable of project outcomes. Staff turnover and shortage of funds were among the major challenges together with the limited capacity of CSOs in responsible investment contributed and private sector engagement in the area of agriculture.



## Context Analysis

2023 was a critical year as the national election took place in July. Leading to the national election, some advocacy NGOs faced some restrictions from the government which imposed a limitation on the ability to deliver the project outputs concerning an organization of any mass assembly, workshops, or training in provinces especially those who strengthen capacity and support activists in the sensitive sectors including land, forestry, water governance, and agriculture. A few environmental activists were detained, and independent media was shut down for some reason. Democracy and civic space that often utilized by civil society were continued to be shrunk. The imposing a complicated tax issue, compliance, enforcing the LANGO, telecommunication law 2015, Inter-ministerial proclamation on a website and social media control 2018, and National Internet Gateway 2021 law, and drafting cybercrime law, has led to shrink the freedom of expression space, thereby constraining the ability of individuals and CSOs to freely express their thoughts, opinions, and engage in open dialogue.

After the July election, the new government was formed. It is a new era for the young generation to take force in various leadership positions in the government. It is observed an emergence of new working approaches, changes in leadership style, and opportunities to engage.

The government launched The Pentagonal Strategy Phase I, focusing on building resilience, promoting sustainability and inclusiveness, and driving development across various sectors, recognizing the interconnectedness of these priorities and their significance for long-term prosperity and well-being. To implement the strategy, the government led by the MoP has been facilitating government agencies, and all relevant stakeholders including NGOs to develop the new National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2024-2028. This is a good opportunity for NGOs to use all abilities to integrate their agenda into the government platform. The NGOF and CCC were officially appointed to facilitate the NGO sector to develop inputs and position papers to be submitted to relevant ministries and the MoP.

# I. PROGRAM FOCUSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

## 1.1 Natural Resource Governance (NATGOV) Program

The Natural Resources Governance Program looks at the critical component of natural resources to ensure proper stewardship in pursuit of environmental justice such as land and forest for the benefit of all Cambodian people including indigenous communities. The program works through 44 NGO members in two networks to achieve its aims such as (i) Land and Housing Rights Network (LAHRiN) coordinates 34 NGO members and 15 NGO partners to influence the policy process for securing land tenure and housing rights for displaced communities including indigenous communal land title, and (ii) Network for Forest Governance (N4F) coordinates 31 NGO members and 14 NGO partners for strengthening collaborative forest governance of natural resource-based communities including indigenous communities with state actors.

**Objective 1:** The NGOF supports sustainable and equitable governance of natural resources.

- Outcome 1.1: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced policy processes to ensure land security and housing rights for displaced communities including Indigenous Peoples.
- Outcome 1.2: By 2023, NGOF and its members have contributed to strengthening collaborative forestry governance.
- Outcome 1.3: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced RGC policy processes to ensure sustainable and inclusive governance of water ecosystems.

The achievements were directly contributed by the NGOF and indirectly contributed by NGO members and partners under the coordination of the NGOF working secretariats.

### 1.1.1 Significant Achievements

Name of Networks	Target Indicators of program	Significant Achievements of Program
Outcome 1.1: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced policy processes to ensure land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicator 1.1.1: % of NGOF key recommendations on existing land and housing policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

security and housing rights for displaced communities including Indigenous Peoples.	implementation enacted by relevant government counterparts	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.1.2: # of communities supported by NGOF to achieve land tenure or suitable resettlement opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By Dec 2023, 7 of 20 documented cases of land disputes were successfully solved by provincial authorities of Kratie, Stung Treng, Kampong Thom, Preah Vihear, Battambang, and Siem Reap, resulting in 310 households having full access to land tenure security in equivalence to 434,45 hectares.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.1.3: % of NGOF key input statements incorporated into dialogue and policy formulation processes on indigenous peoples' issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In May 2023, the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction (MLMUPC), Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), and Provincial Administration accelerated a communal land registration process in Samlot district, Battambang province.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.1.4 # of communities supported by NGOF to obtain land tenure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
Outcome 1.2: By 2023, NGOF and its members have contributed to strengthening collaborative forestry governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.2.1: % of NGOF key recommendations on forestry governance that are enacted by relevant government counterparts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.2.2: % of community members in focus areas citing an improvement in forestry governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By June 2023, the Network for Forest Governance (N4F) and Land and Housing Rights Network (LAHRiN) strengthened its operation for more gender-transformative practices by building the capacity of its NGO members on gender responsiveness, conducting gender audits, and receiving key ideas for developing the gender-transformative action plan.</li> </ul>
<p>Outcome 1.3: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced RGC policy processes to ensure sustainable and inclusive governance of water ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.3.1: % increase in affected community representatives who are actively involved in decision-making processes concerning water ecosystem governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In April 2023, the MRC incorporated the community's comments and suggestions into the 4th Vientiane Declaration and took action to ensure timely notification of unusual water flow, as well as to be more responsive to community concerns to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.3.2 % of NGOF key recommendations on sustainable and inclusive water governance policies enacted by relevant government counterparts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In June 2023, the MRCS established the Mekong Community Roundtable, enabling CSOs and affected communities to have a direct dialogue with the MRC and take action to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts on Mekong water governance.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicator 1.3.3: % of affected community members reporting an improvement in sustainable water ecosystem practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In October 2023, the MRC considered hydrological limits for key wetland assets to be integrated into study 2 of the MRC proactive regional planning.</li> </ul>

### 1.1.2 Contributions to the Significant Achievement

**Outcome 1.1: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced policy processes to ensure land security and housing rights for displaced communities including Indigenous Peoples.**

**Outcome 1.1.1:** By Dec 2023, 7 of 20 documented cases of land disputes were successfully solved by provincial authorities of Kratie, Stung Treng, Kampong Thom, Preah Vihear, Battambang, and Siem Reap, resulting in 310 households having fully accessed to land tenure security in equivalence to 434.45 hectares.

The significant achievement resulted from a series of activities conducted by LAHRiN and NF4.

- LAHRiN and NF4 coordinated with member organizations to document 110 land dispute cases in 16 provinces.
- In January, LAHRiN and NF4 organized a meeting with member organizations to update land dispute data. As a result, we agreed to select 18 high-impact cases in four provinces such as Kampong Thom, Preah Vihear, Stung Treng, and Kratie for scrutinizing and taking the case to dialogue with provincial authorities.
- In January, LAHRiN and NF4 provided a training course on community organization to build the capacity of local communities to conduct community-based documentation and effective engagement. Following up on the training, community representatives conducted community-based research in Preah Vihear and Kompong Thom provinces, resulting in 12 land dispute cases being documented and presented to provincial authorities to seek a solution.
- In February, LAHRiN and NF4 and its members such as CLEC, PKH, DPA, ADHOC, and NTFP coordinated a meeting with community representatives to verify 6 cases of land and natural resource disputes in Preah Vihear province.
- In February, LAHRiN and NF4 and its members such as CLEC, AFD, EHEO, and HOM coordinated a meeting with community representatives to verify the land and natural resource disputes in Kampong Thom province.
- In February, LAHRiN and NF4 organized a provincial dialogue to discuss land disputes in Kratie province. As a result, an overlapping boundary between a mega agriculture plantation and processing and local communities was addressed. On the other hand, further actions were put in place to address social and economic land concession disputes.
- In March, LAHRiN and NF4 organized a provincial dialogue to address land disputes in Kompong Thom province. As a result, 3 cases were successfully solved, enabling local communities to access and manage 202 ha. A temporary working group was appointed to measure the land size.
- In 2023, the NGOF provided capacity building to IP community leaders on advocacy and community coordination. On the other hand, NGOF built the capacity of SVG based in Battambang province to coordinate and strengthen the capacity of IP communities to advocate for their right.
- In 2023, the NGOF also raised the land conflict of the IP communities in the quarterly meeting with the Ministry of Rural Development, suggested conflict resolution, and continued the CLT registration process.

**Outcome 1.1.2:** In May 2023, the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and

Construction (MLMUPC), Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), and Provincial Administration accelerated a Communal Land Title registration process in Samlot district, Battambang province.

The significant achievement resulted from a series of activities conducted by LAHRiN and NF4.

- In January 2023, the NGOF coordinated a multi-stakeholder, consisting of a representative from the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Rural Development, provincial administration, local authority, and NGOs including CLEC and LICADHO, to visit Phnom Rey village, Ta Tok commune, Samlot district, Battambang province where the IP communities have requested for CLT registration for a decade. The exposure visit aimed to better understand the Indigenous Communal Land Title (ICLT) process and key challenges faced by the Indigenous Peoples Community (IPC). The Ministry of Interior pledged support for updating the list of IP community members, and the sub-national government committed to coordinating demining activities in the area.
- In February, the NGOF in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, provincial authorities, and CSOs like LAHRiN and CLEC, conducted capacity-building sessions for IP community leaders and supported the organization of a community congress to expedite the CLT process in Phnom Rey.
- In February NGOF provided capacity building to community leaders on land application formats and procedures, updating the list of community members, and adhering to legal requirements and procedures for IP communities.

**Outcome 1.2: By 2023, NGOF and its members have contributed to strengthening collaborative forestry governance.**

**Outcome 1.2.1:** In June 2023, Members of the Network for Forest Governance (N4F) and Land and Housing Rights Network (LAHRiN) strengthened its operation for more gender-transformative practices through building capacity of its NGO members on gender responsiveness, conducting gender audits, and receiving key ideas for developing the gender-transformative action plan.

The NGOF has a strong commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering women in every aspect of its interventions. In building true gender equality and contributions to achieving sustainable development goals, it is essential to build gender-inclusive capacity in staff, NGO members, and their targeted communities.

The NGOF achieved significant progress through various activities.

- NGOF conducted a gender training needs assessment to understand current practices, challenges, and knowledge gaps related to gender mainstreaming.
- Following the assessment, NGOF organized a three-day training on the "Integration of Gender Responsiveness into Land and NRM Governance." It aimed at providing

capacity to NGO members on gender sensitization, gender analysis tools, and practical application in the context of land and natural resource governance.

- In September, NGOF released a gender audit report. A three-day training on gender responsiveness and social inclusion was organized in Kratie province for the network members and target community of the members. The training built the capacity of the network members on how to communicate with duty-bearers during a conference of NRM; to be able to identify gender best practices, challenges, and policy gaps.
- In December, NGOF published a gender analysis report and factsheet in the area of land and NRM. The report provided gender analysis, gender challenges, gender needs and roles, and the control and access over resources of men and women.



Figure 1: 12<sup>th</sup> National Farmer Forum on “Food Safety and Knowledge Fair” organized on 6-7 December 2023 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

**Outcome 1.3: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced RGC policy processes to ensure sustainable and inclusive governance of water ecosystems (WATNET).**

**Outcome WATNET 1.3.1** In June 2023, the MRCS established the Mekong Community Roundtable, enabling CSOs and affected communities to have a direct dialogue with the MRC and take action to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts in Mekong water governance.

NGOF/RCC has been advocating for a concrete space and enhanced engagement of CSOs and affected communities in a dialogue platform with the Mekong governments and MRCS. This effort aimed to address the significant issue of inclusion in Mekong water governance.

The significant change resulted from a series of activities conducted by NGOF/RCC.

- Since 2018, NGOF/RCC has been advocating for a dedicated space and enhanced engagement of CSOs and affected communities in Mekong water governance by submitting official statements, participating in formal and informal meetings, and engaging in various dialogue platforms to address this issue of inclusion.
- In October 2022, NGOF/RCC discussed the establishment of a formal dialogue

platform with MRCS in Bangkok.

- In February 2023, NGO/RCC urged the MRC Development Partners to include stronger engagement with CSOs and communities in their statement to the MRC.
- In June 2023, NGO/RCC provided inputs to the draft MRC-DP statement, emphasizing the need for the Mekong Community Roundtable and the Mekong Fund to address community concerns.
- In June 2023, NGO/RCC submitted a comment to the MRCS, highlighting the importance of engaging national CSOs and local communities in the proposed platform.



Figure 2: 4<sup>th</sup> MRCS-CSO Annual Informal Dialogue on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand.

**Outcome WATNET 1.3.2** In April 2023, the MRC incorporated the community's comments and suggestions into the 4th Vientiane Declaration and took action to ensure timely notification of unusual water flow, as well as to be more responsive to community concerns to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.

The engagement of affected communities with the MRC and government's dialogue platform is one of the RCC approaches that would provide opportunities for the affected communities to share their concerns with the duty bearers at the national and regional levels. Furthermore, NGO/RCC has worked with our local partners to build local capacity in conducting community research.

The significant change resulted from a series of activities conducted by NGO/RCC.

- In February 2023, NGO/RCC organized a meeting with their members, requesting a presentation slot for a woman community leader to share their research findings.
- In February 2023, NGO/RCC also advised the MRC-DP to provide an opportunity for the local community to present their transboundary research during the conference.
- In March 2023, NGO/RCC collaborated with WWF and MVI to nominate a women



community representative and provided support for their presentations.

- In April 2023, NGOF/RCC coordinated the community representative to share her research findings during the conference session on "Innovation for advancing gender equality and responsiveness to water resources management." Ms. Verng Many, who represented the riparian community in Preah Rumkel commune, Borey O'svay district, Stung Treng province, presented the findings of the community-based research concerning the decline of fish catch, frequent water fluctuation, the change of flow pattern, and the collapse of a flooded forest in their community resulting livelihood difficulties. The community suggested that the government of Cambodia as well as MRC 1) conduct further investigation of the cause of impacts and find possible ways to mitigate the impacts; 2) minimize water release during the dry season to allow flooded forests and another biodiversity to growth and survive in the natural environment; 3) allocate budget to restore the collapse of the flooded forest; 4) restore the livelihood condition of local communities located downstream of Don Sahong dam; 5) provide an effective early warning system to prevent any impacts water resources management."

**Outcome WATNET 1.3.3** In October 2023, the MRC considered hydrological limits for key wetland assets to be integrated into study 2 of the MRC proactive regional planning.

In October 2023, the affected communities successfully advocated for action regarding the collapse of the flooded forest at the Ramsar Site in Stung Treng province, leading the Mekong River Commission (MRC) to consider integrating hydrological limits for key wetland assets into study 2 of their proactive regional planning. The NGOF/RCC, along with its member organizations, has been working to empower riparian communities to document environmental changes in the Mekong River caused by upstream hydropower dams and express their concerns to the Mekong governments for appropriate mitigation measures.

The NGOF/RCC achieved significant progress through various activities.

- In February 2023, RCC participated in a meeting with MRC-DP, suggesting that the MRC provide a platform for local communities to share their research on transboundary issues during the 4th MRC International Conference.
- In April 2023, RCC coordinated a community representative to present her research findings on the collapsed flooded forest at the Ramsar Site during the conference's session on "Innovation for advancing gender equality and responsiveness to water resources management."

- Additionally, in October 2023, RCC took part in the 13th MRC Regional Stakeholder Forum, where the MRC Secretariat (MRCS) announced a study aimed at determining hydrological limits for key wetland assets of the Mekong River.

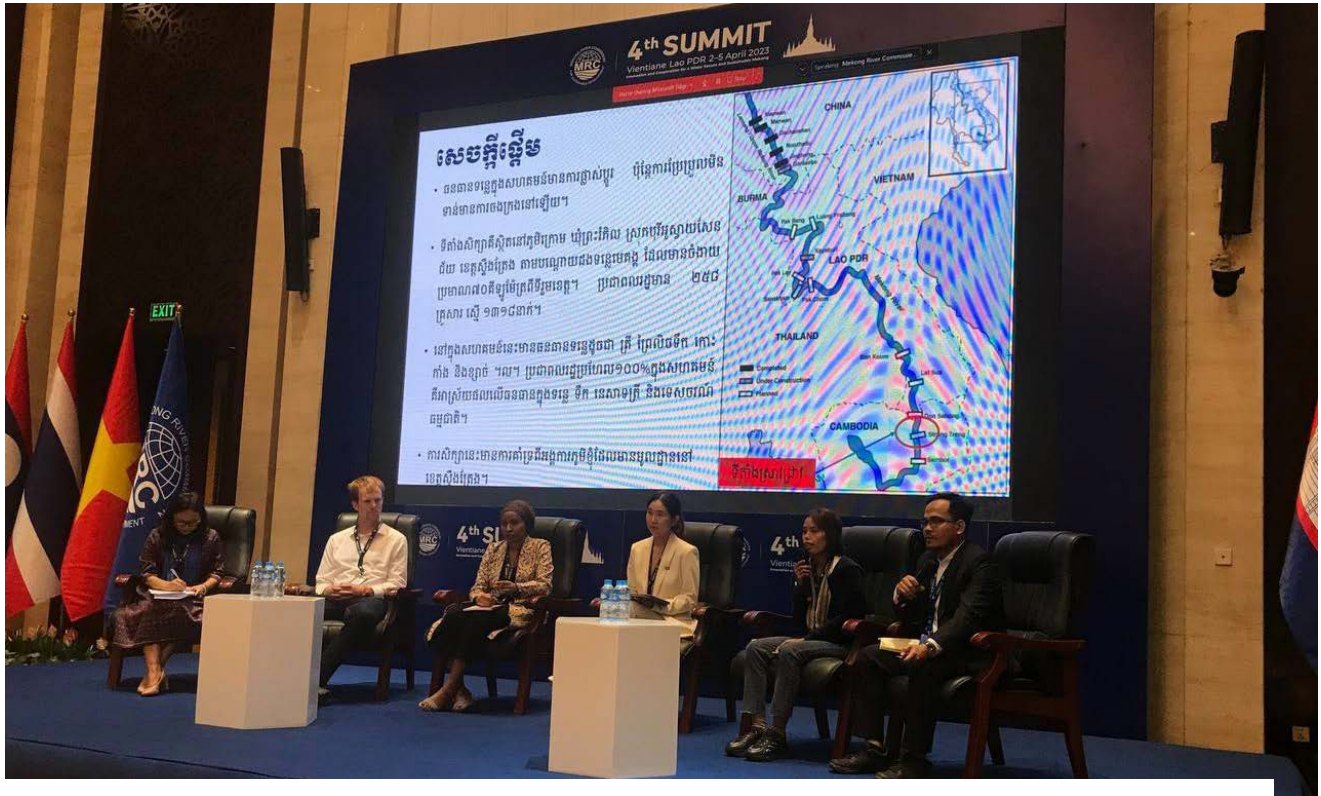


Figure 3: Ms. Verng Many spoke in a session on "Innovation for advancing gender equality and responsiveness to water resources management." Of 4<sup>th</sup> MRC International Conference organized on 3 April 2023 in Vientiane, Laos.

## 1.2 Partnership for Sustainable Growth (PASGRO) Program

The Partnership for Sustainable Growth (PASGRO) Program focuses on the second of five strategic objectives of the NGOF aiming to see sustainable growth through effective government and private sector partnerships which is the second strategic priority area of the NGOF for 2021-2023 – the NGOF contributes to sustainable growth through effective government and private sector partnerships.

The PASGRO program is built on SDG17 and the notion that CSDGs can only be met with fruitful cooperation among the government, private sector, and civil society. The program currently consists of 3 projects/working groups including 1) agriculture and water, 2) private sector engagement, and 3) climate change. The specific outcomes include:

**Objective 2:** The NGOF contributes to sustainable growth through effective governance and private-sector partnerships. Three O2 outcomes have been harvested by the first half of 2023:

- OUTCOME 2.1: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced policy processes to ensure sustainable agricultural development (AWG).
- OUTCOME 2.2: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced environmental policy processes to ensure responsiveness to climate change (NECA)
- OUTCOME 2.3: By 2023, NGOF and its members have meaningful engagement with the private sector toward achieving the CSDGs (PWG).

The achievements were directly contributed by the NGOF and indirectly contributed by NGO members and partners under the coordination of the NGOF working secretariats.

### 1.2.1 Significant Achievements

Name of Networks	Target Indicators of the Program	Significant Achievements of the Program
AWG	Indicator 2.1.1: % of NGOF key input statements incorporated into dialogue, and policy formulation processes on sustainable agriculture	• N/A
	Indicator 2.1.2: % of NGOF key recommendations on existing agricultural policy are accepted by relevant government counterparts	• N/A
NECA	Indicator 2.2.1: % of NGOF key input statements incorporated into dialogue, and policy formulation processes on environment and climate change	• In November 2023, the Minister of MoWRAM under his current chairperson of the MRC Council called for urgent action to minimize and mitigate the impact on Tonle Sap Lake, responding to the current low flow condition of the Tonle Sap Lake.
	Indicator 2.2.2: % of commune budget allocated for climate change activities in NECA areas	• N/A

PWG	Indicator 2.3.1: # of partnerships with the private sector established by NGOF in working towards the CSDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May 2023, the BAO MAN Rubber Processing Company expressed an interest in engaging with a rubber farmer cooperative in its rubber supply chain at national and international manufacturing.</li> <li>• In June 2023, medium and smallholder farmers expressed commitment to function the existing Community Rubber Farmer (CRF) to access local and global rubber markets.</li> </ul>
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### 1.2.2 Contributions to the Significant Achievement

#### **OUTCOME 2.1: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced policy processes to ensure sustainable agricultural development (AWG)**

No significant outcome has occurred in 2023 for the AWG.

#### **OUTCOME 2.2: By 2023, NGOF and its members have influenced environmental policy processes to ensure responsiveness to climate change (NECA)**

**Outcome NECA 2.2.1** In November 2023, the Minister of MoWRAM under his current chairperson of the MRC Council called for urgent action to minimize and mitigate the impact on Tonle Sap Lake, responding to the current low flow condition of the Tonle Sap Lake.

This significant change was the result of NGOF/RCC's efforts.

- Starting in August 2023, NGOF/RCC conducted a study to assess the effects of low water flow from the Mekong River to Tonle Sap Lake on livelihoods and the environment. Timed strategically during a period of unusually low flow, the study provided crucial insights.
- In November 2023, the NGOF/RCC organized a policy dialogue that brought all relevant stakeholders from MoWRAM, CNMC, TA, FiA, MRC, academia, research institutes, NGOs, and local authorities and communities. The dialogue centered around the study's findings and recommendations, fostering informed debate and discussions on implementing necessary measures. The engagement of diverse stakeholders led to the Minister of MoWRAM's urgent call for action, demonstrating the effectiveness of NGOF/RCC's advocacy in addressing the pressing issues affecting the lake.



*Figure 4: A national dialogue on the impact of low flow of water from the Mekong River to Tonle Sap Lake on the livelihood of different communities and natural environment, organized on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in Phnom Penh.*

**OUTCOME 2.3: By 2023, NGOF and its members have meaningful engagement with the private sector toward achieving the CSDGs (PWG).**

**Outcome PWG 2.3.1:** In May 2023, the BAO MAN Rubber Processing Company expressed an interest in engaging with a rubber farmer cooperative in its rubber supply chain at national and international manufacturing.

Rubber is one of the main agricultural commodities that the government has been promoting for its economic development. To be able to engage in the global markets, for instance, the EU, the rubber value chain needs to ensure high quality to environmental standards, non-deforestation, and inclusive business. To get the sector to that level, the NGOF has been working with the General Directorate of Rubber (GDR) to promote Environmental Social Governance (ESG) safeguards by encouraging small and medium-scale farmers to form an agriculture cooperative (AC) and to be officially recognized by the MAFF to gain maximum benefit from the rubber value chain and to secure the supply chain with the highest standards to ESG.

The NGOF works to promote ESG safeguards in the rubber sector through an engagement with the private sector to pilot an inclusive and sustainable business model. The significant change resulted from a series of activities conducted by NGOF. Those included:

- In March 2023, the NGOF organized a meeting with GDR to discuss cooperation in the area of small and medium-scale rubber plantations. The cooperation plan considers the area of capacity building, meetings, workshops, and research to increase the capacity of small and medium-scale rubber farmers. On the other hand, it is also looking at the possibility of working with a rubber investor in Cambodia to promote small and medium-scale rubber plantations in the supply chain of the investor.
- In May 2023, in collaboration with GDR, the NGOF organized a meeting with Mr. Cung Fuo Kun, Director of BAO MAN INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD to understand the rubber supply chain, challenges, and the needs of the company to secure their supply chain to meet current demand and future demand concerning the high standard of environmental and social. In the meeting, GDR shared the need to mobilize individual rubber farmers to form a rubber Agriculture Cooperative to engage in the rubber value chain. As a result, the BAO Man company expressed its interest in engaging the ACs in its supply chain.



*Figure 5: Meeting with Mr. Cung Fuo Kun, Director of BAO MAN INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD on 12 May 2023.*

**Outcome PWG 2.3.2:** In June 2023, medium and smallholder farmers expressed commitment to function the existing Community Rubber Farmer (CRF) to access local and global rubber markets.

NGOF supports GDR in developing a list and profile of small and medium-scale rubber

farmers in Thbong Khmum, Kg. Cham, Stung Treng, Rattanakiri, and Mundulkiri. It aims to form the farmers into an agriculture cooperative (AC) that would enable the farmers to connect with investors to gain benefits from the rubber value chain. In the Stung Treng province, rubber plantations covered a total area of 5,760 hectares, which belongs to 729 farmers. Only one agriculture cooperative was established and registered with MAFF on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2022, but the AC has not worked since its establishment. The NGOF supported GDR in organizing a meeting with the farmers and relevant provincial departments to reactivate and strengthen the work of the existing AC. The NGOF works to promote ESG safeguards in the rubber sector through an engagement with the private sector to pilot an inclusive and sustainable business model. The significant change resulted from a series of activities conducted by NGOF including the following:

- In May 2023, NGOF and GDR jointly organized a training course to strengthen the capacity of small-scale rubber farmers in Ratanakiri province on farm management, environmental management, and the need to form an agriculture cooperative to be able to engage in the rubber value chain and the supply chain of an investor. The training also shared with farmers some of the requirements of an example of the BAO MAN rubber company that would encourage farmers to understand the requirements and consider engaging in the supply chain of the company.
- In May 2023, the NGOF, GDR, and FNN jointly organized a meeting with small and medium-scale rubber farmers to reactivate the existing rubber agriculture cooperative; understand the challenges that the agriculture cooperative has met; and identify areas to be improved and set out the action plan.



*Figure 6: The NGOF, GDR, and FNN jointly organized a meeting with small and medium-scale rubber farmers to reactivate the existing rubber agriculture cooperative on 26 May 2023 in Stung Treng province.*

## 1.3 Socio-Economic Equity in Development (SEED) Program

The SEED focuses on the third of the five strategic objectives of the NGOF aiming to promote socio-economic equity in development processes. The program has been working in close partnership with three current working groups namely 1)- Budget Working Group (BWG) 2)- Strategic Development Working Group (DWG) and 3)- Social Protection Working Group (SWG).

The monitoring of the progress of SEED implementation is focused on three main outcomes which have been defined in the current 3-year strategic plan of action as below:

- Outcome 3.1: By 2023, the NGOF and its members have influenced fiscal policy processes to ensure participation, transparency, and accountability to the poor (BWG).
- Outcome 3.2: By 2023, the NGOF and its members have influenced development policy processes to ensure they are equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the poor (DWG).
- Outcome 3.3: By 2023, the NGOF and its members have influenced RGC policy to ensure social protection and safeguards for vulnerable Cambodians (SWG).

The achievements were directly contributed by the NGOF and indirectly contributed by NGO members and partners under the coordination of the NGOF working secretariats of BWG, DWG, and SWG.

### 1.3.1 Significant Achievements

Name of WGs	Target Indicators of program	Significant Achievements of Program
BWG	Indicator 3.1.1: % of NGOF key recommendations on existing fiscal policy implementation enacted by relevant government counterparts [Steps 4, 5 of NGOF policy process]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In April 2023, the Association of Banks in Cambodia (ABC) and its members increased good cooperation through more engagement and dialogue between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to enhance the role of the financial sector and</li> </ul>
	Indicator 3.1.2: % of NGOF focus communes/Sangkat community members reporting an increase in meaningful participation in budget allocation processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A.</li> </ul>



	Indicator 3.1.3: % of NGOF key input statements incorporated into dialogue and policy formulation processes on national strategy and development [Steps 2 and 3 of NGOF policy processes]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In February 2023, The Ministry of Economy and Finance integrated one of the six CSOs' inputs concerning public disclosure of the draft national budget law into the new law on the Public</li> </ul>
DWG	Indicator 3.2.1: % of NGOF key recommendations on existing development strategies and policy commitments enacted by relevant government counterparts [Steps 4, 5 of NGOF policy process]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A.</li> </ul>
	Indicator 3.2.2: % of NGOF key input statements incorporated into dialogue and policy formulation processes on national strategy and development [Steps 2 and 3 of NGOF policy process]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In December 2023, The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) set out a plan to develop Cambodia's Green Finance Taxonomy and Market.</li> </ul>
	Indicator 3.2.3 (pilot): % of Cambodians in NGOF network/working groups member target areas reporting a positive change in their lives linked to key NGOF input statements [Steps 4 and 5 of NGOF policy processes]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A.</li> </ul>
SWG	Indicator 3.3.1: % of NGOF key recommendations on social protection are accepted and enacted by relevant government counterparts [Steps 4, 5 of NGOF policy process]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>

### 1.3.2 Contributions to the significant achievement

**Outcome 3.1: By 2023, the NGOF and its members have influenced fiscal policy processes to ensure participation, transparency, and accountability to the poor (BWG).**

**Outcome BWG 3.1.1:** In February 2023, The Ministry of Economy and Finance integrated one of the six CSO's inputs concerning public disclosure of the draft national budget law into the new law on the Public Finance System.

The Budget Working Group (BWG) of the NGOF has been working for years to demand a public disclosure of the draft national budget law for public consultation. As a result, the MEF accepted the inputs and integrated the provision of public disclosure of national budget

information into the new law on the Public Finance System. Article 51 of the law says that “...The annual financial bill shall be published within one week after it is submitted to the National Assembly and within two weeks after its approval...”

The significant outcome resulted from a series of activities conducted by NGOF include the following:

- In July 2022, the BWG submitted CSO’s position paper on building macroeconomic policy framework, and public financial policy for the preparation of the draft National Budget Law 2023. A few inputs requested the Royal Government of Cambodia to publicly disclose the draft national budget law for public consultation, and open more dialogue space between CSOs and respective government agencies.
- Since 2016, NGOF/BWG actively participated in the TWG on the PFM Reform Program.
- NGOF/BWG actively participated in the annual public forum on “Macroeconomic Management and Budget Law” organized by MEF; and participated in the annual public workshop on “Building Macroeconomic Policy Framework and Public Financial Policy for drafting law on National Budget” co-organized by NA & MEF.
- BWG produced a citizen budget to simplify the national budget document for public sensitization.



*Figure 7: Mr. MAR Sophal, SEED Program Manager spoke in a public forum on 2023 budget law organized by the Ministry of Economy and Finance on 25<sup>th</sup> January.*

**Outcome BWG 3.1.2:** In April 2023, the Association of Banks in Cambodia (ABC) and its members increased good cooperation through more engagement and dialogue between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to enhance the role of the financial sector and consumer protection mechanisms.

It was a remarkable achievement that the Association of Banks in Cambodia (ABC) opened more space for civil society organizations in the area of financial sector. This achievement was realized after an intensive engagement of the Fair Finance Cambodia (FFC) Coalition with the ABC in the past five years. The significant change resulted from a series of activities

conducted by NGOF including the following:

- In April, NGOF under FFC co-organized a joint dialogue forum between the financial sector and civil society organizations to discuss the role of the financial sector and consumer protection mechanism that enable CSOs to provide inputs and feedback concerning consumer protection in the banking and financial sector in Cambodia.



*Figure 8: A dialogue forum between the Financial Sector and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the “Role of the Financial Sector and Consumer Protection Mechanisms” on 28<sup>th</sup> April.*

**Outcome 3.2: By 2023, the NGOF and its members have influenced development policy processes to ensure they are equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the poor (DWG).**

**Outcome DWG 3.2.1:** In December 2023, The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) set out a plan to develop Cambodia's Green Finance Taxonomy and Market.

NGOF/Fair Finance Cambodia (FFC) has been advocating bank sector especially the National Bank of Cambodia to adopt regulations or guidelines that adhere to environmental principles and would contribute to the positive development of the country. This could be done through adopting the Green Finance Taxonomy. As a result, NBC with support from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) set out a plan to develop Cambodia's Green Finance Taxonomy and market. The partnership will help them develop a national taxonomy for green assets, improve capacity for financial institutions, and create a supportive financial ecosystem for green investment to promote sustainable development for Cambodia.

The significant change resulted from a series of activities conducted by NGOF/FFC including the following:

- In 2022, the FCC submitted a policy recommendation on “Green Financing Policy Implementation in Cambodia” to NBC. The significant recommendation suggested NBC to develop a regulation or guideline to regulate green sustainable financing for Cambodia that would require relevant actors to compulsorily avoid any harmful effects on the environment from their investment activities. This could be done through adopting Cambodia's taxonomy which aims to address climate change impacts in Cambodia and accelerate the country’s transition to a green economy.

**Outcome 3.3: By 2023, the NGOF and its members have influenced RGC policy to ensure social protection and safeguards for vulnerable Cambodians (SWG).**

No significant outcome has occurred in 2023 for the SWG.

## II. KEY CHALLENGES AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

During the implementation of the revised strategic plan of action, several key challenges were encountered while key strategic solutions have been identified to address those key challenges as highlighted in the table below:

Key Challenges	Key Strategic Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The limited capacity of NGO members and secretariat on responsible investment and value chains, private sector engagement, and building trust.</li> <li>• Private sectors in target areas and CSOs need more engagement and building trust to promote responsible investment.</li> <li>• Sub-national governments have insufficient resources and capacity for solving land conflict and natural resource governance.</li> <li>• Staff turnover and shortage of funds limit our ability to implement project activities.</li> <li>• Most of the network members ran out of funding or had insufficient funds which limited their operations and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen and coordinate NGO members and community leaders on responsible investment and value chains and actively engage with the private sector to open space for promoting responsible investment.</li> <li>• Strengthen capacity and coordinate NGO members and community leaders on environmental and natural resource codes, information collection, documentation, and negotiation to solve their cases.</li> <li>• Increasing engagement with LASED III, GDR, FA, and MoE.</li> <li>• Organize dialogues at provincial, regional provinces, and national levels on responsible investment, land tenure security, and natural resource governance.</li> <li>• Mobilize more resources from existing and potential donors, and especially work closely with the NGOF members and partners to get their technical/financial support on certain activities.</li> <li>• Try to do fundraising and work with WG members for support.</li> </ul>

<p>activities for collaboration and contribution to the whole network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For network members: Strengthen the capacity of members in evidence-based investigation and dialogue through close engagement with local authorities. The engagement will be linked to the conference platform, and it would help to leverage their activities for raising funds and the concept of consortium for joining the proposal when it is called.</li> </ul>
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### III. STAKEHOLDER AND BENEFICIARY

#### 3.1 Stakeholder

The NGOF has facilitated eight existing networks/working groups to address common issues in the areas of agriculture, climate change, water governance, land, forestry, national budget transparency, and social protection. The working groups meet quarterly depending on budget availability.

No	Network/Working Group	# of member
1	Agriculture and Water Working Group (AWG)	34
2	Network for Environment and Climate Change Alliance (NECA)	26
3	Land and Housing Rights Network (LAHRiN)	34
4	Network for Forest Governance	31
5	Water Governance Network/Rivers Coalition in Cambodia (RCC)	21
6	Budget Working Group (BWG)	22
7	Strategic Development Working Group (DWG)	25
8	Social Protection Working Group (SWG)	20

#### 3.2 Project Beneficiary

The project beneficiary is defined as people we work with throughout the year 2023, those including participants of our meeting, dialogue, workshop, and other events. Across the three programs, there are a total of 3858 participants in which 1220 are women as a direct beneficiary. Given that NGOF works directly with member organizations, the direct beneficiary of our members would be an indirect beneficiary of the NGOF.

Program	Project Beneficiary		Total
	Women	Men	
NATGOV	424	1086	1510
PASGRO	500	1038	1538
SEED	296	514	810
<b>Total</b>	<b>1220</b>	<b>2638</b>	<b>3858</b>

## IV. GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS AND FINANCE

### 4.1 Governance and Leadership Changes

The NGO Forum is a membership organization consisting of 71 members. The NGOF is overseen by the governing board, which is called the Management Committee, which consists of seven members, who are elected by the NGOF's member organizations.

The NGOF has gone through its leadership change. Dr. Tek Vannara, the Executive Director resigned from his position and finished his terms with the NGOF on 9 April 2023. Then, Mr. Soeung Saroeun took on the position as the new Executive Director of the NGOF through the recruiting process from April 2023 onward. Mr Saroeun has been working for civil society organizations for about 20 years in leadership and management positions such as the former Executive Director of the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC). Over the last three years, he joined the World Bank, UN agencies, and GIZ as a consultant, focused on social accountability, green economy, environmental management systems, and waste management.

NGOF conducted monthly staff and Coordination Committee (management team) meetings to update progress, share challenges, and propose solutions as well as learn about development trends affecting the NGOF, CSOs, and Cambodia. Management Committee (Board of Directors) meeting was also conducted to update the progress, discuss key governance issues, and agree on key areas for the reform to better serve the best interest of the NGOF members, and partners and especially responding to the development trends.

2023 was the critical year as it was the last year of the strategic plan 2018-2023. The strategic plan evaluation was conducted from June to September 2023 to understand the achievement against the targets outlined in the strategic plan and to evaluate whether the current approach is still valid and relevant to the current context of natural resource management in Cambodia. The finding was utilized to design a new strategic plan for 2024-2030 (or Vision 2030).

### 4.2 Operations and Staffing:

By December 2023, the NGOF employed 15 staff members. In general, the management and staff have viable competency and high commitment to navigate the NGOF toward a professional NGO network for promoting good governance of natural resources, inclusive and green growth, public finance and resources, and a resilient and sustainable community in Cambodia. The management and staff are committed to going through reform and revision of several policies, systems, and structures to promote a high level of performance in the future.

The annual staff reflection was conducted from 25-28 December in Phnom Penh following a field visit on 29 December. The annual staff reflection was organized to reflect on the

work, achievements, and challenges of all programs in 2023 and design an operational plan for 2024 following the new strategic plan for 2024-2030.

### 4.3 Finance and Compliance

The total budget for 2023 was US\$513,638.00. By 31 December 2023, the NGO Forum had received funds with the total amount of US\$453,708, USD392,641 of which from donors, and other income sources amounting to USD61,067. Donor's fund amount of USD392,641 are included fund from donors committed fund 2023 amount of USD342,641 which is approximately 94% of total committed funding of USD416,421 and new donor's fund amount of USD50,000 from SDC. 18% or US\$25,090 of the donor's committed fund will be reimbursed from donors in the first quarter of 2024.

The total spending in 2023 is US\$453,875, which accounts for about 88% of the total committed income amount of US\$513,638.00. The remaining of fund 12% is for some activities of donors for multi-years which can be carried over the amount of USD59,763 to the following year due to the fiscal year of some donors ending in the following year and grant agreements are still valid for the following year. On the other hand, there is one donor who has ended phase in 2023, there will be a refund to the donor in the amount of USD5,338 of Oxf-GRA.

## V. WAY FORWARD FOR JANUARY -DECEMBER 2024

In accordance with the new strategic plan 2024-2030 and based on the development trends /paradigm shift mentioned in the section above, there is a unanimous urgent call for all stakeholders to take strategic actions toward resilient, prosperous, and sustainable development. For 2024, the NGOF will play critical roles in alliance building and support within our members and beyond, capacity development of civil society, and advocacy on priority issues affecting Cambodia's development as listed below:

### Priority 1: Social Capital and Social Protection

The NGOF will focus on the promotion of social protection schemes, operational, health, and safety and fostering an alternative dispute resolution mechanism that is fair, equitable, accessible, predictable, and accessible to remedy for those affected by climate change, and development projects.

### Priority 2: Inclusive and Green Growth

The NGOF will put more emphasis on supporting members and partners on the following priorities and focuses:

- 2.1. **Transparent and Accountable Public Financial Management (PFM):** This will focus on National budget analysis, Open Budget Survey (OBS), and citizens budgeting and monitoring. on the national budget law and also to supervise the budget execution.
- 2.2. **Fair and Green Finance:** aims at promoting ESG in the banking sector and financial institutions, the mining sector, as well as green and fair finance, and tax justice.

- 2.3. **Food Sovereignty:** strengthening agri-food systems such as the idea of establishing the Agricultural Park, supporting the establishment of a new modern agriculture community (AC), and strengthening the capacity of existing ACs in Cambodia, hosting regular farmer forums as a space for dialogue and learning.
- 2.4. **Agri-business:** NGOF will work to promote ESG principles in rubber, banana, coffee, and other agri-business activities.
- 2.5. **Free Trade:** aimed at influencing the development of a fair-trade policy formulation and monitoring the implementation of the policies.

### Priority 3: Climate Change and Natural Resource Governance

In responding to promote climate actions and governance for sustainable natural resources, the NGO Forum on Cambodia will continue to build on its outstanding expertise and double and deepen its contributions to follow key priorities and focuses:

- 3.1. **Climate Change: The** Ministry of Environment (MoE), development partners, and other stakeholders have put a lot of effort into promoting waste and climate pollution management. It is clear that if emissions from waste disposal continue to increase, climate will not only be negatively impacted but also human health as well. Through environmental contamination, one can develop diseases, such as asthma, birth defects, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and more. These are both economic and non-economic losses for the community and the country as a whole. NGOF works to 1) influence both policies and practices related to plastic wastes, agricultural waste, and air pollution, 2) promote composited dumpsites, and 3) influence the mindset, behavior, and practices of the general population on the implications of wastes and pollution, 4) support communities initiatives and actions to promote clean, green and sustainable communities.
- 3.2. **Land Governance:** The NGOF will work and support members and partners to 1) advocate for a pro-poor land law and policy on land tenure, land value, land use, land cover, and land development, 2) have a proper EIA for any development project, 3) to have fair compensation and livelihood of the displacement from the development, 4) advocate on proper implementation of economic land concessions (ELCs), 5) participate in dialogue and addressing land dispute, and 6) work in partnership to use the lands withdrawn from the ELC.
- 3.3. **Water Governance:** NGOF will work and support members and partners to 1) promote evidence-based research and participatory action research on the impact of climate changes on the Mekong River, and Tonle Sap, and the livelihoods of people living along these rivers, 2) advocate for a fair transboundary water management of Mekong River and its tributaries such as Tonle Sap Lake through policies and law influences with MRC and National Commission on Tonle Sap and other stakeholders, 3) work and support the communities to have good knowledge on the impact of the changes of rivers flows and level of waters, and 4) support the communities to cope with more innovative, alternative, and sustainable solutions.
- 3.4. **Forest Governance, and REDD+ /Climate Finance:** On Forest Governance and REDD+, NGOF will work to influence 1) develop certain laws and guidelines for



implementation of the Environment Code, 2) revise CPA guidelines and CPA guideline implementation of the Ministry of Environment, 3) develop REDD+ benefit sharing mechanism, 4) develop CT documentation and RUM guidelines, 5) establishment and facilitation of Environment, Social, Governance, and Gender Inclusion (ESGGI), 6) mainstreaming gender and social inclusion to CPA guideline, REDD+ benefit sharing, and CT documentation and RUM guidelines, and 7) provide public awareness and actions of forest conservations and reforestation across the country. On green/climate finance, NGOF will work toward 1) initiating community reforestation, 2) promoting ESG guideline development for certain sectors such as mining, banking and finance institution, and other industries, 3) promote low carbon agriculture practices, 4) mobilize resources for communities to promote ESG guideline within their communities, and 5) strengthen partnership with investors, and other stakeholders to support and invest on green/climate finance including offset GHG emissions with carbon credits and share benefits to communities.

#### **Priority 4: Vibrant, Proactive, Resilient, and Sustainable Civil Society.**

In order to build a vibrant and resilient civil society to genuinely engage and impact fully address key priorities: people harmonization, prosperity, and a sustainable planet, the NGOF prioritizes putting its efforts for both its internal governance and sustainability strengthening and membership and civil society effectiveness and sustainability. Key areas for the strategic interventions are:

##### **4.1. Civic Space and Enabling Environment**

The NGOF will support members and partners to address three out of six key dimensions of civic space/enabling environment for civil society organizations defined by Civicus. The first dimension is the capacity of the CSOs to operate and advocate on issues related to their mandates, the second is financial sustainability (access to resources), and the third is on relationship with governments and other partners.

For the first dimension, NGOF works to 1) build the capacity of CSO members of Technical Working Groups, 2) build the capacity of members and partners of the NGOF at the sub-national level to be able to understand and translate the adopted policies/laws into practices within the communities they work with, 3) build the capacity of the members and partners on ESGs so that they can become a strong, accountable and transparent organization.

On financial sustainability, the NGOF works to 1) advocate development partners to allocate more direct resources or establish civil society facility funds to the local CSOs and community-based organizations, 2) promote partnerships between government, private sector, and civil society on certain join projects, 3) to advocate the government of Cambodia to allocate national budget for CSOs to implement their roles to support development and implementation of national and sub-national policies and

strategic plans more effectively and transparently, 4) build the capacity of members and partners on resource mobilization, especial local fundraising at commune level, and 5) support to CFs, CPAs, and CFIs through strengthening their capacity in resources governance aspects as well as addressing national policy ensuring equitable sharing benefits and that government need to be more transparent to its citizens.

In relationship with governments and other partners, NGOF works to 1) advocate for the development and implementation of Development Cooperation and Partnership Strategies (DCPS) 2024-2028, 2) strengthen line ministries via TWG and connection with focal points of each line ministries, 3) support the NCDDS/NASLA to develop and implement a) partnership guidelines between local authorities and CSOs, and b) multi-stakeholders guidelines for all key actors for sustainable and democratic development at the sub-national level, 4) work with development partners to have a regular sectoral issues based dialogue, and 5) work with private sector to bridge between CSOs, communities and private sector for impact projects and markets.

#### **4.2. Membership and Partnership Development:**

The NGOF is a membership-based organization and has been playing important roles in representing its members and the voices of the poor and vulnerable people in policy formulation and implementation. NGOF will expand its membership across the country from 70 organizations in 2023 to 150 organizations in 2030. NGOF will engage and link members with different stakeholders such as the TWGs, line ministries, development partners, the private sector, and others who can be partners in particular projects/actions.

NGOF has built strong collaboration with some government institutions and private sectors such as on water governance, the Ministry of Economic and Finance (MEF), Ministry of Planning (MoP), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (MAFF), and National Assembly (NA) to work on the national budget transparency, national policies such as NSDP, CSDG, and social protection policy and private sectors on the cooperate responsibilities, so that NGOF can also bring other members to participate in these platforms.






NGOF and civil society learned that although grants have declined, the impact and green funds have been increasing which can be another avenue for resource mobilizations to support their works and target communities. NGOF will have a department of fundraising, so it will play a critical role in working with members and stakeholders to join proposals, co-financing, and partnership in development.

#### **4.3. Governance and Sustainability of the NGO Forum:**

NGOF will put its efforts to strengthen its governance, and sustainability and improve its organizational governance. NGOF is governed and overseen by the members and management committee (MC)/Board of Directors (elected by the members). NGOF

will receive support from volunteer advisors who have long and rich experiences both institutional development, program quality, and compliance. Compliance with local government laws and regulations as well as donor requirements are always our priorities. Human resources development is a key of NGOF – it is not only about just internal team of the NGOF but also the human resources of the members. Sound financial management- NGOF will improve its financial policies and systems to meet the national laws and international financial reporting and auditing standards. NGOF will have a team of communication and fundraising which play a critical role in mobilizing resources for the organizations and for the members. To measure the success, NGOF will review and develop a strong monitoring, evaluation, accountability, learning, and innovation (MEALI) system which can be presented both at outputs, outcomes, and impact levels. MEALI system will be one of the role models that can be shared with members and partners of the NGOF as the learning/reference materials. NGOF will receive regular financial audits, mid-term and end-line evaluations, and more importantly regular meetings with its members and partners/donors for ongoing reflections and improvements.

## VI. ANNEXES

Financial report for January – June 2023	Revised operation and budget for July – December 2023	Narrative of Program Outcome Harvesting (NATGOV)	Narrative of Program Outcome Harvesting (PASGRO)	Narrative of Program Outcome Harvesting (SEED)
		<p style="text-align: center;"> Annex_2_Natural_R esources_Governan</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Annex_B_Natural_R esources_Governan</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Annex 1- WATNET Outcome Harvesting</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Annex_1_PWG Outcome Harvesting</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Annex_B3_Program_ Result_Framework_M</p>



វេទិកាសម្រាប់ការងារមិនមែនសម្រាប់ប្រយោជន៍ ស្តីពីកម្ពុជា  
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# THANK YOU

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