

Minutes of the 4th DRIC Programme Board Meeting held on 27th August 2015

Venue: LAD Conference Room, UNDP

ATTENDEES:

Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren	UN Resident Coordinator (Co-chair)
H.E. SEM Sokha	Secretary of State, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) (Co-chair).
H.E. Prof. Heng Tay Kry	Secretary of State, Ministry of Health
Mr. Paul Keogh	Counsellor, Dev. Cooperation, Australian Embassy, Cambodia
H.E. Yi Veasna	Adviser to the Royal Government of Cambodia, Representative of People with Disability
Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki	Country Representative, UNDP
Ms. Sun Ah Kim	Acting Country Representative, UNICEF
Dr. Dong-il Ahn	Country Representative, WHO
Ms. Channtey Heng	Vulnerable Group Advisor, GIZ
Mr. Steven Iddings	Environmental Engineer/Team Leader, WHO
Mr. Enrico Gaveglia	Deputy Representative, UNDP
Mr. Arjun Bisen	Second Secretary, Australian Embassy
Mr. Bagival Pradeep	Joint Programme Coordinator, DRIC
Ms. Anne Lubell	Community Development Specialist, UNICEF
Ms. Mao Meas	National Management Specialist, UNDP
Mr. Vivath Chou	Technical Officer, Disability and Rehabilitation, WHO
Mr. Tokyo Bak	Senior Disability Programme Manager, Australian Embassy.
Ms. Vanny Chea	Administration Associate, DRIC
Mr. Mony Pen	UN Volunteer-National Specialist, DRIC
Ms. Sopheary Ly	UN Volunteer-Advocacy & Communication Officer, DRIC

Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

The Co-chairs H.E SEM Sokha, (MoSVY) and Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren (UNRC) welcomed participants to the 4th programme board meeting of the Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia (DRIC). The Co-Chair

introduced the agenda to the board and as there were no further comments or suggestions from the members, the board adopted the proposed agenda. The Co –Chair and UNRC took this opportunity to welcome the new member of the board Ms. Chantey Heng, the second representative of persons with disabilities and also informed the board about the appointment of the new Representative of UNICEF in the place of Ms. Rana Flowers who would soon be assuming charge. The board was informed that Ms. Sun Ah Kim, ad interim will be representing UNICEF as the member of the board during the interim period. Related to the agenda# 04 that was circulated to the members earlier, the Co-Chair and UNRC informed the members that it pertains to the Cambodia Rehabilitation Transition Analysis conducted by WHO and it will not be discussed during this meeting as the report is yet to be endorsed by the government. The Co-Chair H.E. SEM Sokha, thanked the Australian government and the three implementing UN agencies for their support to people with disabilities in Cambodia.

Agenda #01: Follow –up on the decisions of the 3rd Programme Board meeting

The Programme Coordinator briefly explained the decision of the previous board meeting to keep the members updated on the implementation of the recommendations of the Functional Analysis Study commissioned by the UNDP. Accordingly, the Programme Coordinator informed the board that out of 8 key recommendations, three recommendations have been complied during the first bi-annual period of 2015 while four recommendations are in the process being implemented. It was mentioned that there has been no action on the recommendation related to the amendment to the disability law as UNDP believed that it is the responsibility of the MoSVY and not of the DAC which is the partner of the UN agency. The Programme Coordinator further explained to the board that in the capacity of the Technical Advisor he has advised UNDP that DAC by virtue of being a coordination body as envisaged under article 06 of the national disability legislation can still initiate consultation process to seek amendment to the law and prepare the ground for the nodal ministry to take it forward.

Responding to the question from Mr. Paul Keogh related to recommendation 08 and 09, the Programme Coordinator informed that these recommendations required additional resources and therefore are not being considered due to limited funds available under programme. Continuing the discussion further, Mr. Paul Keogh while congratulating the agencies for completing most of the activities planned also mentioned that there has been a delay in implementing some of key recommendations as they are largely depending upon the decisions of the government and resource allocations that need to be made by the government. He further mentioned that this would be looked into during the mid-term review of the programme and also if this has something to do with the resource allocation for the government, the programme perhaps has to review this along with the role and responsibilities of the disability related institutions to make sure much of the resources go to delivery of services to persons with disabilities. Agreeing to the point made, the Co-

Chair and UNRC suggested that the PCT and PMG will continue to monitor the recommendations of the functional analysis report and inform the board about the progress in the next meeting.

Decision: PCT and PMG to monitor and report on the recommendations of the Functional Analysis report in the next board meeting.

Agenda #2: Presentation from the Programme Coordinator on the progress recorded for the reporting period Jan –June 2015

The Programme Coordinator on behalf of the implementing agencies presented the mid-term progress report of the programme for the reporting period January to June 2015. In the course of his presentation, he highlighted the progress achieved collectively by the programme in realizing the intermediate outcomes apart from highlighting some of the advocacy and communication initiatives of the programme. The presentation covered aspects such as generation of qualitative and quantitative data during the reporting period on the basis of the M and E frame work. The Programme Coordinator informed the board about the risk that was flagged-off during reporting period pertaining to decrease in funding on account of currency fluctuations and the steps initiated to mitigate the same. The key challenges and lessons learned were highlighted from mid-term progress report as concluding part of the presentation apart from providing an over view of the performance of the programme on the financial front.

In response to the report presented, the Co-Chair and UNRC mentioned that it is good to put the progress achieved within the time horizon of the programme and in terms of active operation of the programme we are actually considering the period June 2014 to June 2015. She also expressed her personal views on the importance of providing access in public places. Co-Chair H.E. SEM Sokha in his response congratulated the Programme team for the submission of the report and said that he is in agreement with the issues mentioned in the report. He suggested that the board members should visit the projects at the field level. The Co-Chair mentioned that amendment of the disability law is needed and the provisions of the legislation has to be examined to ensure which are the articles in the law that has to be amended. Further, he mentioned that it takes time for the law to be enforced effectively as there has to be corresponding sub-degrees and executive order that should give effect to the law. The role of the MoE and MoSVY in promoting education for children with disabilities was also emphasized by the Co-Chair. Elaborating further, the Co-Chair stated that all the provisions of the law needs to be implemented effectively before embarking on amendments to the national legislation and suggested that it could wait till the 10th anniversary of the law coming into force. He further added by saying that his ministry will be asked by the council of ministers or the national assembly to explain why the national disability law needs amendment at this point of time.

In his comments H.E. Yi Veasna suggested that the report should provide more details in the case of component 04 which could be in the form of a matrix showing the geographical area of work of the CDIDF

grantees. He also expressed his concern about advocacy at the local community level and the report should show number of communes that have been targeted for advocacy of the rights of persons with disabilities. He further referred to the communication tools developed by the PCT and suggested that this should be used extensively in influencing the NGOs to support disability rights which are more than 5000 in number.

Acknowledging the comments from the Co-Chair, Mr. Paul Keogh stated that there are huge challenges in realizing inclusive development for persons with disabilities and that this is beyond the DRIC programme with its limited resources. Further, he referred to the component 04 disbursement of funds under the CDIDF and also suggested that as the programme has an M and E frame work, in the next board meeting it would be relevant to review the progress against the M and E frame work. Referring to the Programme Coordination Team, Mr. Paul Keogh gave an example of another programme funded by DFAT in the health sector which has a programme coordination team and a Programme Coordinator and the three partner NGOs are making use of the expertise of the Programme Coordinator very well. He further mentioned that the same is expected within the DRIC programme. Continuing his comment, Mr. Paul Keogh said that the PCT is an expensive and a significant component within the programme and it has been reiterated in the past as well by the board to make use of some very relevant expertise available within the PCT by the three agencies and that there should be some kind of assurance that he would like to receive about the disability expertise being extensively used under the programme. Mr. Paul Keogh sought clarification from UNICEF and WHO as to how they have been utilizing the expertise of the Programme Coordination team and said that the programme should receive more disability inputs from the PCT that should go into the operations of the components. He conclude his remarks by thanking the implementing agencies for the good work done.

Responding to the comments, Ms. Sun-Ah Kim agreed with H.E. Yi Veasna that the future reporting should include detailed information about the Communes and particulars about the Self Help Groups supported under the component. She further said that the UNICEF has been working with the MoI to create enabling environment and supporting NGOs at the community level and building the capacities through trainings to make sure disability related aspects are included in the decision-making process. Regarding the challenges in terms coordination, she further informed the board that this is the challenge faced at the moment and UNICEF acknowledges it. It was informed to the board that the PMG members held a meeting with the Battambang Governor to talk about the coordination mechanisms and stated that while there are many areas which need improvement, there are areas noticed where the mechanisms are in place. The key point to communicate to the board was that there is lot of work that needs to be done at the district level in bringing the national and sub-national level agencies to work together. The field visit in her view was to advocate with the Governor of Battambang about the role of the Governor's office in ensuring effective coordination amongst the agencies at the district level.

Related to the slow disbursement of the grant, Ms. Sun-Ah Kim explained that there were 9 partners identified last year and currently UNICEF is processing 6 grants and explained the process of disbursement to the partners is done on a quarterly basis so the financial implementation rate appears low. She further said keeping in view the disbursement procedures, UNICEF will not be in a position to disburse 500,000 USD upfront and the funds are disbursed quarterly. Clarifying further, Ms. Sun-Ah Kim said that UNICEF has an internal deadline on activity implementation and that is by July the new NGOs eligible for the grant to be identified. In terms of programmatic work plan, she informed the board that UNICEF is on track and there is a slight delay this year in terms of the time line for the new grant partners.

Responding to the issue raised by Mr. Paul Keogh on utilizing the expertise of the Programme Coordinator and the PC team, Mr. Steven speaking on behalf of the WHO Representative stated that being aware of the disability expertise available within the PCT, the components would be dead in the water if it is not utilized adequately. In other words, he expressed the importance of the PCT expertise to the three implementing agencies and further stated that WHO will ensure that they will use the PCT for advocacy/strategic planning to include disability under the Urban Poor ID card distribution through the Ministry of Planning and also to advocate with the Asian Development Bank for disability inclusion are part of their projects.

In her comments, Ms. Chantey Heng informed the board that the awareness on disability law and CRPD especially among the health sector staff is lacking in the provinces where she is currently working. She thanked the Health Secretary present for signing one of the PRAKAS that make health services accessible to the poor free of charge. The member also informed the board that out of 20 persons with disabilities only one uses the public health facilities and they are not aware of the PRAKAS that guarantees free of charge services. She requested the WHO which is supporting the referral hospital in Kampot district to provide a wheel chair in the hospital as there is none at the moment.

The Co-Chair and UNRC requested the members to discuss the issue of amendment to the disability law as it is a policy issue in the perspective of the comment made by H.E. SEM Sokha. In response, Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki informed the board that the amendment to the disability law is within the purview of outcome 01 which involves UNDP and according to the project document, there are 5 results to be achieved by the government and one of the result pertains to the amendment of the disability law. If it would take 10 years for the government to amend the law, this would impact the project activities and we would like to know what kind of result need to be shown by the end of 2017 and if there is no result to be shown on this front until 2019 she would rather agree with DFAT to allocate the funds elsewhere.

Reacting to the point made by Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki, Mr. Paul Keogh seconded the suggestion of Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki and further suggested that the PCT should come with a recommendation keeping in view

the implication that it would have on the programme in the event of delay in amending the disability law and what adjustments need to be made. Agreeing to the point made, the Co-Chair and UNRC suggested that the board will be informed out-of-session through email on the implications. In addition to this Mr. Paul Keogh, suggested that it is necessary to track the services delivery under the component 04 and that in the next board there should be an update on the progress achieved and also the progress report to include this area of work under the programme. So also on the agenda for the next board meeting, there should be a discussion on how the three agencies are making use of the Programme Coordination Team and coordination amongst the three implementing agencies. The Co-Chair /UNRC in response to the point made stated that the Programme Management Group (PMG) has been doing good work and especially on the advocacy front and the work done by the PMG should be part of the next progress report.

Decisions;

1. Provide more detailed information about the work done under the CDIDF scheme in the next report.
2. PCT shall revert back to the board out of session with the information on the implications of eventual delay in suggesting amendments to the national legislation and seek their endorsement as way forward on the issue of amendment of the disability law.
3. Utilization of the disability expertise of the PCT by the three agencies to be included in the progress report for discussion in the next board meeting.

Agenda # 03; Discussion on the anticipated programme funding for the period 2017-18 and resource mobilization to the extent of unfunded budget.

The Programme Coordinator informed the members of the board about the funding for the year 2017 as assured by DFAT and also highlighted what could possibly be the target for resource mobilization in order to fund the programme for the year 2018 on the basis of the programme document which included the deficit in the funding on account of currency fluctuation. The Co-Chair and UNRC informed the board that there are two decisions that the members may have to arrive at and they are extension of the Standard Administrative Agreement (SAA) and enabling DFAT to finance the programme till the end of 2017 and the second decision pertains to the conduct of the Mid-Term Review of the programme which should commence before the next board meeting.

Responding to the point made by the Co-Chair, Mr. Paul Keogh requested the Chair to be permitted to provide the context for an early mid-term review. He stated that the programme has been operational for a relatively short period and after discussion with the delegates it is now decided to go beyond 2016 and up till December 31st 2017 to provide more time for the programme to demonstrate the desired results. Therefore, the decisions to extend the programme beyond December 31st 2016 and also to conduct a mid-

term review earlier than anticipated will balance each other. Regarding the phasing of the payments he said that DFAT may need more time and expressed his anticipation that the board will agree for a cost extension of the agreement. On the same issue, Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki informed the members that the board can only recommend to the MPTF in the UNDP headquarters but has no authority to extend the agreement. She further added that it is up to MPTF to look at the legality of the extension and would contact DFAT for further action. It was finally agreed by the members to recommend for the extension of the agreement.

The Secretary of State from MoH provided an historical perspective to the services provided in the health sector and assured the members that the points raised by the member representing the civil society on health issues will be considered by the ministry and any future funding for the programme should be allocated to the delivery of services to the Khmer people. Taking the discussions further, H.E. SEM Sokha informed the board that he is happy to hear about the work done by UNICEF along with the MoI under the small grant scheme and said that he is not sure if the implementing agency has good relations with MoI and that there should be clear letter of instructions in this regard. He further requested UNICEF to include dissemination of the disability law in their activities and reiterated the importance of CBR within the programme. The Co-Chair and Secretary of State informed the board that some of the international NGOs will close their operations and that he will impress upon the government to increase financial allocation to the disability sector. He further appealed to WHO to support the government in accurate data collection on persons with disabilities. Concluding his remarks, H.E. SEM Sokha, thanked the Programme Coordinator for highlighting the importance of the Disability Rights Administration Office and requested UNDP to support the government in strengthening this office within MoSVY.

The Co-Chair and UNRC requested the agencies to include a synthetic narrative in the future reports especially from component 04 and on CBR which would enable the board to understand the progress on the basis of the results frame. She further requested the members to succinctly comment on the timing, and the scope the proposed mid-term review. Responding to the request from the Co-chair, Ms. Sun-Ah Kim said that there should be concept note prepared that will include the terms of conditions and as far as the timing is concerned, February 2015 should be ok. The WHO representative mentioned that they are in agreement with UNICEF on the issue of MTR. The Co-Chair and UNRC informed the board that the time line for the MTR will be from June 2014 to January 2016. Mr. Paul Keogh informed the board that they are flexible in terms of the time and it could be held any time during the first quarter of 2016. It was agreed that the board in its February 2016 meeting will take stock of the preparation/work done related to the MTR. The members suggested that the PCT should prepare the terms of reference which will be circulated along with the concept note. The scope of the review, it was agreed by the board to be multi-partner with the participation of DFAT. Regarding the funding for 2018, it was suggested by Co-chair and UNRC that this

should be tabled before the board in the Feb 2016 meeting by which there would be more financial information available as for the 2016 budget and the funding available for 2017. The next board meeting was proposed to be held during the 3rd week of February 2016 and PCT will in consultation with the board members will finalize the date.

Decisions;

1. The board agrees on recommendation to MPTF for the extension of the SAA till December 31st 2017.
2. Future reporting to have a synthetic summary of the key issues raised by the board today such as CBR by WHO and the commune –wise details of the work done under component 04.
3. The Mid-term review will be in the 1st quarter of 2016 and PCT to decide on the exact dates.
4. PCT to prepare and circulate the concept note along with the ToR of the MTR to the board members for their comments and approval. The PMG members to review the documents before being circulated to the board members out of session.
5. Programme funding for 2018 to be discussed during the February 2016 board meeting.
6. DFAT to provide schedule of payment for 2017 at a later date.

Both the Co-chairs thanked all the board members for their participation and as a final comment the Co-Chair and UNRC said that it is evident from this board meeting that the programme is progressing and reaching increasing altitude which is very encouraging. The board also acknowledged the contribution made by Ms. Sun-Ah Kim and Mr. Paul Keogh who will not be part of the next board meeting as they are both assuming new roles in their respective organizations.