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### Back to Office Report

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Title Regional Stakeholder Engagement Specialist

Date submitted 6 July 2015

1. Practice area: BPPS / Sustainable Development and Resilience Cluster

2. Mission period (incl. of travel days)

From: 23 to: 26 June

3. Type of mission: Technical backstopping

4. Clients

UNDP CO – Chhum Sovanny (Programme Analyst), Ngin Navirak (SGP NC)

PMU – Anupam Bhatia (CTA), Sovanna Nhem (Manager), Lun Kimhy (Coordinator), Nhem Sareth (Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Officer)

5. Purpose of mission

a) Field appraisal of a short-listed CBR+ funding proposal (24 – 26 June);

b) Support the management of the REDD+ Gender Group and Consultation Group (23 June)

6. Documents, materials, resources

7. Mission members

Celina Yong

8. Costs

UNDP/UN-REDD global budget

9. Brief summary of the mission

#### 9.a Background

Cambodia is one of six pilot countries for Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+), introduced to enable local communities to contribute to the national development of REDD+. In September 2014, the CBR+ National Steering Committee (NSC) selected the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) to further develop the Country Plan (CP), a revised version which was adopted by the NSC on 30 January. A total of 30 proposals were received, 19 shortlisted, and 13 CBR+ projects approved, with 2 conditional approvals. This mission visited Rattanakiri, the site for one of the CBR+ projects with conditional approval, submitted by The Democracy Resource Center for National Development (DND). Plans are underway for SGP to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the grantees.

#### 9.b Main Findings

- CBR+

- DND proposes to improve the livelihoods of 2 indigenous communities: Srey Monkul commune focused on community forestry (CF), and Chey Udom commune focused on community protected area (CPA).
- DND has minimal understanding of REDD+, leading to a proposal that has weak linkages with REDD+ and the on-going national REDD+ strategy. However, the problems these communes face are related to illegal logging and encroachment, both related to drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.
- Recommendations following this field appraisal are
  - Revise the goal to state that DND will help the indigenous communities to protect and retain their forests through addressing a key driver of deforestation which is illegal logging and encroachment into community forests and community protected areas.
- The means through which they will accomplish this goal are:
  - Strengthen the organisation and operationalisation of community representation - CF committee in Serey Mongkul and CPA committee in Chey Udom.
    - Produce clear roles and regulations, and CF Management Plan (MP) and CPA MP that are recognised by FA and MOE respectively. Follow up with other partners working with the same organisation, e.g., Birdlife International with Chey Udom communities.

- Consider how indigenous communities' knowledge on forest management can be included in the CFMP and CPA MP.
- Consider how gender participation can be strengthened.
- Help increase understanding of REDD+, particularly the link between climate change and forests, and how that can be a motivation for communities to protect their forests.
- Produce clear feedback systems that the CF and CPA will operate among themselves, as well as with the Forestry Cantonment and MOE, e.g., status of the confiscated logs and chainsaws Chey Udom communities submitted to DOE.
  - Protect the forests through patrolling that will be funded through sustainable generation of income from SHGs, solar panels and increased rice yield.
- An initial monitoring and evaluation mission is planned in October, with invitation to UN-REDD Regional SE Specialist to join.
- Although FCPF PMU was invited to review the CP from December 2014 to January 2015, none of their comments were related to any of CBR+ prioritised 7 geographical districts, identified based on threats conveyed through the regional and national consultations. Since then, the PMU has identified different geographical districts to pilot REDD+ activities. While potentially problematic, CBR+ will be able to provide grassroots lessons from broader areas that are useful to address drivers.
- Other issues
  - REDD+ Gender Group (GG)
    - Barring providing comments for the draft national REDD+ strategy, the GG had completed all awareness raising activities. The next step is to consider the future of the GG since their initial mandate was time-bound and limited to ensuring gender considerations are included in the national REDD+ strategy.
    - The PMU agreed that the gender checklist will be revised once version 3 of the draft strategy is available.
  - REDD+ Consultation Group (CG)
    - Regarding receiving proposals from the CG to ensure it can be more effective, the FCPF PMU agreed to inform the Chair of the CG about the maximum amount of funds that can be supported. The CG's proposals would be reviewed against the activities to build the capacity of IPs, funded through Targeted Support.
    - Selection of an IP representative to replace Nok Ven who had resigned from the PEB and CG was discussed. A few suggestions were to select an alternate, in addition to the new IP representative, as well as a code of conduct.
  - GRM
    - Anupam shared the idea of a combined ToR that will review national PLRs to operationalise GRM, SIS and flow of REDD+ fund. He had identified a national law firm with the expertise to conduct this review, but has not progressed further. He expects to share this ToR soon.
    - FCPF PMU is unclear whether the entire US\$ 200,000 from FCPF is earmarked solely for GRM. Currently, only less than \$60,000 has been allocated for the further GRM activities.
  - Law for Associations and NGO (LANGO)
    - On 1 April 2015, the Prime Minister announced that the draft LANGO will be passed in the near future, without broader consultation. The draft law requires associations and NGOs to declare sources of their funding, under the rationale of national security against terrorist groups. This restricts their freedom of association.
    - The civil society has requested the draft law to be made more publicly available, with limited success. The civil society has turned to the opposition party with their request to defer passing this law without prior and broader consultation. At the time of the mission, there was an impasse in the National Assembly, with a view that the civil society may withdraw their support for the opposition party if they fail in this task.
    - One opinion is that advocacy NGOs will be more affected than development-oriented NGOs, given that Cambodia recognises the roles NGOs play in development. In any case, there will be broad consequences if the law is passed in its current version, with associations and NGOs more vulnerable than ever.

#### 9.d Expected Outputs

- Suggestions for the possible extension and expansion of the GG and CG
- Completed project review form for DND's proposal

#### 10. Key counterparts

- UNDP CO – Chhum Sovanny (Programme Analyst), Ngin Navirak (SGP NC)
- PMU –Anupam Bhatia (CTA), Sovanna Nhem (Manager), Lun Kimhy (Coordinator), Nhem Sareth (Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Officer)

#### 11. Follow up action matrix

Action to be taken	By whom	Expected completion date
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Project review form for DND's proposal	Celina	Completed
Suggestions for future of GG and CG	Celina	10 July
Clarify status of \$200,000 for GRM under FCPF	Celina and Jen	As soon as possible
Prepare a list of IP training topics funded by TS	Celina	10 July
12. Distribution list		
UNDP UN-REDD		