



DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION (DPA)

PARTNERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY REPORT



TEAM LEADER: LIANA BIANCHI

**2006– 2007 Luce Scholar
The Henry Luce Foundation**

Team Members:

LAY Sophea

KUY Sophal

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I. Introduction

1. Partnership

As international and local development organizations seek to improve their effectiveness in reducing poverty and improving livelihoods, many are adopting more participatory methodologies based on community participation and partnership. A “partnership” is often a joint venture between two companies in business defined by a contract. Partnership can also refer to “a relationship between individuals or groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility, as for the achievement of a specified goal.”¹ Development organizations have adopted the term in this sense, referring to cooperation. The term is used loosely to refer to inter-organizational relationships in a variety of contexts including participation in networks, project implementation, capacity building, and funding.

Among development organizations, partnership could refer to official, contractual relationships, or something less formal involving regular information exchange. As major international organizations and donors adopt partnership terminology, it may also often be used to describe grantor-grantee relationships, with varying degrees of real, non-financial ties. Local partners may adopt the terminology as an attempt to insist on a greater level of equality with donors. Thus local and international organizations working in development use many different specific definitions of partnership, making the term somewhat ambiguous in practice.

While volumes of research have been conducted on the overall effectiveness and impact of development aid by prominent economists and institutions such as the World Bank, comparatively less research has been conducted on the effectiveness of partnership as a vehicle for development intervention. Moreover, little research has been conducted specifically in Cambodia, a country with historically high levels of foreign aid and a high number of both international and local NGOs. Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) thus asked 2006-2007 Luce Scholar Liana Bianchi to assist them in conducting a survey of the effectiveness of their partnerships with local organizations. The objectives of the survey were to:

1. Assess the understanding of effectiveness of partnership from partner organizations and from DPA Partnership Department staff.
2. Gather evidence from partner organizations on current practice and experience working in partnership.
3. Use the evidence to develop a charter of partnership operating practices and principles ensuring that partnerships become more of a two-way process.

A Survey Committee was established to advise the Team Leader comprising DPA Executive Director MAM Sambath, Partnership Program Manager LAY Sophea, ICD Manager KHIM Sarin, and FAD Manager CHEA Dara. Team Members working directly on design and implementation of the survey questionnaire included Team Leader Liana Bianchi, PD Manager LAY Sophea, Partnership Program Officer KUY Sophal, and Partnership Assistant SRENG Phyrum. Translation assistance was provided by ICD Support Officer NHM Vannayouth. Logistics and further support was also provided by Partnership Assistants KOL

¹ American Heritage Dictionary, accessed online at <http://www.bartleby.com/61/98/P0089800.html>.

2. Development and Partnership in Action (DPA)

Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) is the local organization formerly part of international relief and development network Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité (CIDSE). DPA aims to bring about sustainable improvements in the quality of life of the rural poor, especially the poorest or the poor and marginalized. Since 1994 CIDSE/DPA's work has been structured around two departments: the Integrated Community Development (ICD) department, and the Partnership Department (PD). The Integrated Community Development (ICD) programme works directly with poor rural communities to address issues such as food security, natural resource management, access to education and better health and sanitation.

DPA has adopted the Community Organizing (CO) and Rights-Based Approaches (RBA) and applies them to ICD programme design, building the capacity of local communities to identify and address their own development needs. Programme activities include working with Commune Councils, designing and implementing special projects for the very poor, and local and national level mediation and advocacy on issues such as land rights and illegal logging. DPA also currently supports a third unit, Development, Education and Advocacy (DEA) which assists the ICD and PD departments to raise awareness of communities and partners, research and compile documents, networking to share information with concerned persons and organizations, provide education on development concepts, and lobbying powerful persons and government authorities. DEA focuses on advocacy and network building on land issues, logging, gender, local governance, and decentralization.

3. DPA Partnership Department (PD)

DPA's second department and the focus of this survey is the Partnership Department (PD) which aims to strengthen civil society in Cambodia by providing small grants and organizational capacity building support to a select group of local partners. Partners are generally small, relatively new Cambodian NGOs or recently established community-based organizations. Key elements of the programme include the promotion of organizational values, institutional capacity building, strengthening of relationships between civil society and the Commune Councils, and advocacy and networking support to partners. The six PD staff currently work with 25 local organizations in 10 provinces, 19 Cambodian NGOs and six emerging Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). In addition to the 253 direct beneficiaries as of December 2006, PD indirectly benefits approximately 110,271 persons (43 percent of who are women).

DPA developed their own definition of partnership during an activities outline workshop with local partners in August of 2006:

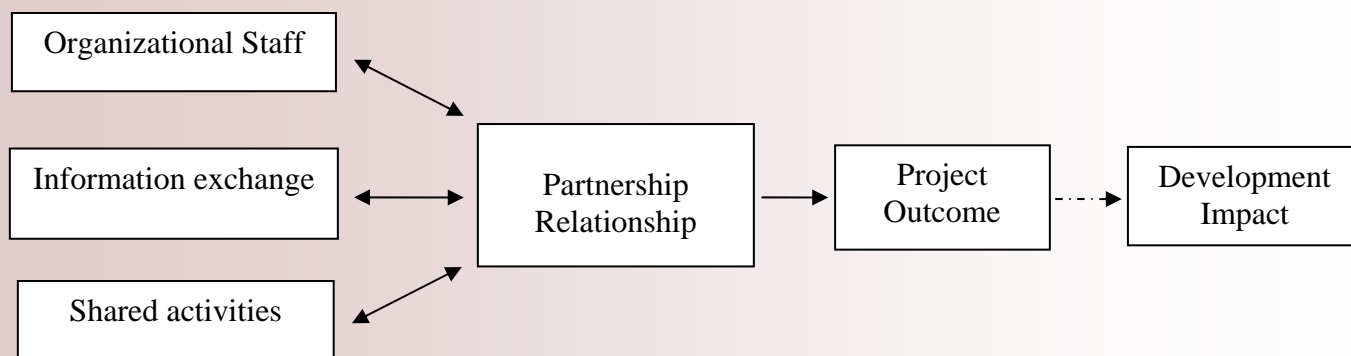
Partnership is a joint action and two-way process of equal respect, equality, and equity in order to reach a common goal through good communication, learning from each other, partner organization and vice-a-versa, partner-to-partner learning and internship, trust building and constructive criticism, ownership, accountability and transparency, and value creativity and indigenous knowledge.

DPA's current 25 partners include CBOs that were created during ICD programming in Svay Rieng and Muk Kampoul, as well as independently established organizations working on diverse issues including fisheries, HIV/AIDs, agriculture, and micro-credit. These partners were chosen according to selection criteria including structure, issue orientation, values and relative poverty of beneficiaries. PD provides the selected partners with small grants of (\$6000-\$16,000) that can be used for project administration costs, depending on the specific partnership agreement. In addition to funding, PD staff provide regular coaching, monitoring visits, capacity building workshops and networking opportunities.

Partners provide DPA with information specific to their location and context, as well as sometimes serving as trainers for specialized skills such as negotiation and facilitation, advocacy on land and logging issues, and local governance. The survey sought to examine the nature and efficacy of the relationship between DPA, specifically the Partnership Department, and these local, community-based partners.

II. Partnership Effectiveness

As noted above, “partnership” can mean many different things. How then to assess the effectiveness of a partnership or a partnership program? This question doesn’t have a single or a simple answer. Rather, the effectiveness of a partnership depends on the sum of many inputs, actions, people, and exchanges that constitute the relationship between two organizations which results in outputs of each that are directly and indirectly impacted by that relationship. In the case of international development, the difficulty in attempting to measure partnership effectiveness is in understanding the mechanisms through which a successful inter-organizational connection influences project outcomes and impact at the community level.



In theory, for a comprehensive assessment, one would need to define and measure a successful relationship according to the inputs, assess program impact at the grassroots level, demonstrate correlation between the two, and then analyze the causal link. Unfortunately there is very little quantitative impact data collected by DPA, partners, or most development organizations in general. Evaluations usually rely on comparing expected with real outcomes related to planned activities and assessment of participant understanding and knowledge. Thus rigorously proving impact as a result of any particular intervention is difficult.

As discussed in methodology section below, DPA’s 25 partners are diverse in size, location, project intervention, organizational maturity, and duration of relationship with DPA. Thus comparison of the partnership relationship with a comprehensive impact assessment as outlined above was not possible given the scope and timeframe of this survey. Instead, the Survey Committee chose to document DPA and partner staff’s understanding and perceptions of the partnership, while asking them to enumerate examples of successful partnership characteristics according to DPA’s definition. This survey is thus an assessment of the effectiveness of the partnership *relationship* between DPA and local partners, rather than an impact assessment of specific partners’ program effectiveness.

III. Survey methodology:

1. Sampling design


As noted, DPA works with a total of 25 partner organizations, located throughout Cambodia in 10 provinces. The Survey Team decided that a sample of between 20-30% would be sufficient, given time and budget constraints.

Consideration was also given to the qualitative nature of the survey, which would potentially produce a large amount of data to be transcribed and translated. A total of seven partners were chosen in a stratified purposive sample to obtain a cross-section of organizations, because the total population was relatively small with diverse characteristics such as big or small, old or new, and nature of project intervention. The Survey Team felt that the stratified purposive method achieved representation from random selection within small strata, rather than a small random sample of a small population which would not necessarily capture the high level of population diversity.

2. Respondents

The seven partners were drawn from three distinct geographical areas, representing about a third of DPA partners' total geographic locations.

Partner	Location	Established	DPA Partner since	No. of staff	Main activities
Association Cooperation Economic for Development (ACED)	Borvel Commune, Battambang Province	1996	1998	4	Support village association credit, savings, and rice bank groups; agricultural training, irrigation; access to health care; improve working relationship between community and CC members; community representative capacity building;
Christ for Development Kampuchea (CDK)	Prek Preah Sdach Commune, Battambang Province	1997	2006	4	Local government decentralization support; human rights awareness; improve health care and access;
Family Economic Development Association (FEDA)	Kampong Chamlong Commune, Svay Rieng Province	2003	2003	9	VDC and village volunteer capacity building; agricultural training and strengthening credit and savings; improve health care and access; improve education awareness and access;
Leukstouy Chivapheap Kaksekor (LCK)	Svay Ampear Commune, Kandal Province	2004	2004	9	Organizational development; improve health care and awareness; village development planning;
Pou Thom Elderly Association (PTEA)	Maream Commune, Svay Rieng Province	1994	2000	10	VDC capacity building; community forestry management; improve education awareness and access; HIV/AIDS awareness; reduce domestic violence; credit and material support for the poorest households;
Rural Development Association (RDA)	Chroy Sdau Commune, Battambang Province	1993	1995	8	Facilitate villager participation in development planning with VDC; agricultural training; capacity building for village development actors;
Youth for Peace (YFP)	Toukork, Phnom Penh	1999	2003	10	Building youth conflict management skills; discussion forums; youth leadership and trust-building; peace building; cultural exchange;



Two of the partner organizations sampled (LCK and FEDA) are Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that were established following CIDSE/DPA's Integrated Community Development programs in Kandal and Svay Rieng Provinces. Of DPA's total 25 partner organizations, six are CBOs, thus the sample proportion (28%) reflects the approximately the total proportion of CBOs to local NGOs (24%). The program intervention areas of the sampled partners reflect the diversity of partner projects, including rice and animal banks, scholarship programs, agricultural training, natural resource advocacy, education, local governance, and capacity building.


The Survey Team chose to interview the director of each organization, as survey questions covered the history and nature of partnership with CIDSE/DPA, and the organizational head was most likely to have in-depth knowledge of these topics. In any case where the organizational head was not available, or had very recently joined the organization, a junior staff member with longer history with the organization was chosen.

Since the number of DPA staff involved in the partnership program is limited, the Survey Team did not find it necessary to sample within the small number, and rather interviewed as many as time permitted. Six DPA staff members were interviewed including Executive Director, ICD Program Manager (former PD staff member), Partnership Department Project Officer, and Partnership Assistants. One Partnership Assistant was not interviewed because she joined DPA only a few months ago.

3. Questionnaire design

Given the small sample size and the subjectivity inherent in researching relationships, the Survey Committee decided to design and implement a qualitative, rather than quantitative survey. Quantitative data might later be drawn from the results, such as number of times a partnership term was used by respondents, or number of examples listed for each partnership term. To study the effectiveness of partnership and recommend improvements to DPA's partnership program, it was necessary to concurrently document the understanding of "partnership" and its characteristics by both DPA staff and staff of DPA partner organizations. Thus the survey had two objectives and two types of questions. The first type of question asked respondents to describe strengths and weaknesses in current partnership practice, and the second type of question asked respondents to define the terms and characteristics included in DPA's own definition of partnership, whether they thought these characteristics existed in the partnership between DPA and partners, and to provide examples of when those characteristics were demonstrated during the partnership. It was hoped that by asking respondents to provide examples of partnership characteristics that the survey would assess whether DPA's partnership relationship with these local organizations embodies these characteristics.

The questions in the survey related to partnership understanding were designed for three purposes. The first was to assess the depth of understanding of key characteristic terminology used by DPA in relation to partnership. The second objective was to enhance existing definitions of these terms for use by DPA in documenting partnership principles. The terms themselves often refer to abstract concepts or characteristics that would be demonstrated through very diverse actions, depending on the context. The third aim of the understanding partnership section was to document partnership practice and to begin



to define concrete actions or relationship interactions that can be measured to assess partnership effectiveness. It was hoped that by asking for specific examples of the terms in the context of an organization's relationship with DPA would yield such indicators.

The survey Team Leader relied on her experience as a Research Assistant for the Partnership Effectiveness Research Project (PERP) in drafting the survey. Previous research by Interaction's Africa Liaison Program Initiative (ALPI)² also provided background and another example of a Partnership Assessment Tool. The strength of ALPI's assessment tool is that it can produce quantitative data in the form of a "score" relating to demonstration of positive partnership characteristics including understanding, loyalty, joint action, ownership, etc. The weakness of this method is that these terms and characteristics are pre-defined by ALPI; they do not take into account the possibility that partners may define partnership differently, or understand the concepts differently. A second weakness of the tool is that the assessment exercise is conducted with two partners present. Where the partnership includes transferring funds, such as where one organization is a donor, and a second is a recipient, it is likely that bias is possible and the recipient partners will be more inclined to want to prove that the partnership is effective, so as not risk losing funding.

The drafting of the questionnaire itself began with DPA's definition of partnership. A small focus group with Partnership Department staff and Survey Team members was conducted to discuss survey topics and revealed that diverse understanding of the characteristics enumerated in the definition existed and in some cases the meaning was very different from what was expected. This reinforced the idea that these terms have many meanings, and many people understand them differently. It was clear thus that asking respondents whether qualities such as "mutual respect" and "trust-building" existed in the relationship between their organization and DPA would be insufficient. Data would not be comparable if respondents answered such questions based on different definitions of the terms. Hence the Team's decided to build the survey around asking respondents for their own (or their organization's) definitions of these terms, and then to list examples that demonstrated these qualities. Whether or not the survey generated consistent definitions of terminology, it would at least inform DPA on the how partners understood the definition and how these qualities were manifested in partnership according to their perceptions.

The survey was written first written in English, to be translated into Khmer by DPA staff. A pilot-test of the survey was conducted prior to the final translation in Phnom Penh with DPA partner Working Group for the Reduction of Weapons (WGWR). All interviewers participated in the pilot-test and a short debriefing was held to discuss the pilot and techniques to minimize interviewer error. The pilot-test demonstrated that the survey was too long, thus some questions were removed to shorten the length of the survey to about two hours, which the Team deemed a more reasonable amount of time for partner staff to allocate to the activity. The terminology definitions and examples questions were broken into three sections interspersed throughout the survey, as one long section became somewhat repetitive and boring. The survey was then finalized and translated into Khmer prior to interviewer training and implementation.

²Further information and assessment tool available online at <http://www.interaction.org/alpi/>.

IV. Implementation

The Survey Team Leader initially recommended using interviewers not affiliated with DPA or partner organizations, however, given time, training, and budget constraints, the Survey Team decided to recruit four staff from partner organizations who had not been sampled to be interviewed. While this was not ideal, these interviewers were acquainted with partnership terminology and DPA as an organization, which made them well-prepared to clarify and ask follow-up questions. These staff members worked as volunteer interviewers to conduct the survey with other partner organizations. A half-day training session was held to clarify the objectives and meaning of the questionnaire, as well as basic interview techniques and concepts including confidentiality, bias, and probing.

The survey was conducted during one week in three separate locations by the interviewers. According to feedback, interviewers did not encounter any significant problems in the field, and felt that respondents from partner organizations answered honestly and openly and understood most of the survey questions. The Survey Team Leader conducted interviews of the DPA staff members in English and English with Khmer translation during the same week field interviews were conducted. She also did not encounter problems with the survey or interviews.


Following the survey week, DPA staff members translated the survey from Khmer to English so that the Team Leader could analyze the results. Response rates to all questions were 90% or above. Data cleaning consisted of clarification in regards to translations and coding responses from throughout the questionnaire that pertained to partnership terminology. A brief presentation of preliminary results and discussion was held following initial data analysis. This report builds upon feedback received during the discussion and expands data analysis.

V. Limitations

As noted, it would have been preferable to further limit bias by using independent interviewers for both partner organization and DPA staff members. The compromise of recruiting non-sampled partner staff had to be made in light of budget and time constraints, given the specific, focused subject of research. The lack of complete interviewer independence was addressed during training as best as possible.

The survey also faced the problem of informant and researcher bias, as the Survey Committee and Team are all staff and/or volunteers of DPA, and interviewees were all partner organization staff. It is assumed that some informants would demonstrate expectation bias: to respond with what they thought DPA want to hear, to not criticize DPA, and in general modify their answers because their organization receives funding support from DPA and would like to continue to do so in the future. On the other hand, this very survey sought in part to demonstrate that the partnership relationship is in fact more than an exchange of funds. Interviewers confirmed that they felt that respondents answered truthfully and openly.

As noted in the introduction section, this survey does not assess the impact of partner programs, which is the final and most important result of partnership. We hypothesize for the moment that there is a link between a successful partnership relationship and positive impact of partner projects in beneficiary communities. It is hoped that this current research will contribute to more robust impact assessments by DPA of partner programs in the future to support this hypothesis.



Caution must be exercised when generalizing from the findings of this research because of the small sample size and diversity of local partner organizations. The partners vary in size, structure, organizational maturity, duration of relationship with DPA, and field of intervention. Case studies would be an appropriate research method to supplement the current survey, and to document the differences in partnership across organizational differences. The survey used open-ended questions in order to capture as much diversity as possible and to avoid leading interviewee responses in regards to partnership definitions.

Finally, the translation of the survey and the data collected may have introduced bias or error. It would have been ideal to utilize an independent translator for these activities, but that was unfortunately not possible due to budget constraints. Due to the nature of the research, it was necessary to include technical words related to development which were at times difficult to translate into Khmer, or perhaps not familiar to all respondents. Pilot-testing and interviewer training sought to minimize this error and to ensure that interviewers were able to accurately clarify questions to respondents when this problem arose.

VI. Results

1. Meaning of partnership

The answers to questions regarding the meaning of partnership were the most diverse in the survey. Eighty-five percent of interviewees mentioned at least one of the terms listed in DPA's partnership definition. Of the terms mentioned, most frequently cited included working together, equality, transparency, cooperation, understanding, respect, and learning. About a third of the total, noted that a partnership was not like the relationship with a donor. It was primarily DPA staff interviewees who made this observation. None of the interviewees mentioned money or grants when asked to describe what partnership meant to them. When describing the impetus for partnership, almost half of the partner organization interviewees cited grants, but all respondents also cited additional reasons including capacity-building, common vision and values, the needs of the community. It is clear therefore that both DPA staff and partner organization staff view partnership as something beyond a financial, contractual relationship. PD staff also enumerated many partnership activities not directly related to grants: advocacy information exchange, assistance with proposals, data collection for surveys and evaluations, best practices, and building a credible reputation for the organizations.

All partner organizations reported that they had discussed and understood organizational values, purposes and priorities with DPA, and vice-a-versa, prior to establishing the partnership. Although all partners have signed partnership agreements, none of them have partnership principles. The partnership agreement itself is in fact a contract detailing the terms of the grant each organization receives, but with no mention of responsibilities or principles unrelated to the funding. When asked to describe the respective roles of DPA and their organizations, all interviewees described capacity-building as a primary role of DPA, and most mentioned program implementation for the local partners, as well as responding to community needs and organizational development. None of the partner interviewees described DPA as a donor when discussing organizational roles. According to DPA staff surveyed, important non-financial contributions that DPA makes to partnership include networking opportunities with other local organizations as well as other potential donors and advice and information exchange, while

partners provide sectoral expertise and regional context. The most frequently cited non-financial contribution by DPA that partners cited was training. In fact, in applicable cases partner interviewees distinguished DPA, saying that partnership with DPA was different because DPA provided capacity building and organizational development in addition to funding.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of partnership

“DPA's role is to provide technical support in strategic planning to local partners so that they are strong enough to remain independent and don't become donor-driven; it's important to maintain the grassroots integrity of civil society.” – DPA staff member

The survey asked both DPA and local partner staff to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership relationship between them in general terms and specifically in regards to communication. All local partner interviewees cited good communication as a strength of the partnership, including activities such as formal reports, informal reporting through telephone contact, sharing information about problems and advice. About half of DPA PD staff interviewed however, mentioned that partners don't always submit reports and proposals according to deadlines, or strictly adhere to the partnership agreement. Thus it appears that some local partners may be unaware of seriousness of meeting DPA deadlines and requirements. Partners did indicate that they felt time and distance hindered communication, and that in particular, they felt that DPA staff did not have enough time to dedicate to each individual organization. PD staff echoed the concern about the ratio of personnel to partners, saying for example, “PD staff capacity is limited by staff changes and staff workload; each staff [member] may be responsible for too many organizations. Time management of PD staff could be a weakness because so far grants to local partners have been under spent.” A few partner interviewees suggested that time-management and communication weaknesses could be overcome through clear planning, more frequent DPA staff attendance at partner field meetings, and stricter monitoring.

A strong theme that emerged from responses to several questions was the added benefit of learning through partnership. Partner interviewees and DPA staff described both formal and informal learning regarding organizational development and technical skills. One DPA staff member explained, “Learning from each is the point of partnership, it demonstrates partnership.” The fact that so many partner interviewees noted capacity building and learning in regards to their partnership with DPA indicates that this is a strength of DPA's partnership program.

The manner and perception of communication was frequently mentioned (54% of respondents) as key to a strong partnership. This seems particularly important in a Khmer cultural context where verbal and non-verbal communication defines respect. Interviewees indicated that the way DPA was perceived, as a “partner” vs. a “donor”, depended highly on the way DPA staff talked and acted towards local partner staff, and vice-a-versa. Some PD staff requested that DPA assist them in improving communication and facilitation skills so that they could better handle inter-organizational relationships, although based on the partner interviews, local partners do in fact view DPA as a “partner” already.

3. Partnership terminology

As noted in the introduction, although DPA established a working definition of partnership during a workshop in 2006, PD staff and partners differ in the way they understand the terms contained in the definition. Interviewees were asked to define each term, whether they felt it characterized the relationship between DPA and their organization, and if so, to provide examples that demonstrated the characteristic. Following is a summary of recurrent themes in answers to these questions for each term.

(i) Equal respect

According to partner interviewees and DPA staff, equal respect is defined by perceived power and status of two partners, and this power and status manifests in communication. Again, interviewees mentioned the difference between a donor (or employer) and a partner, in particular that a partners showed equal respect by listening to each other's ideas, criticisms, and each organization's ability to recognize its own weaknesses, and understanding and forgiveness in problem solving. One interviewee described partners who "Consider [each other] as brother and sister, no low or high status, and understand and forgive each other." Examples that demonstrated equal respect in partnership included, participatory consultation, advising rather than directing partners, inviting partner staff to facilitate or train other partners or DPA staff specialized skills (such as human rights or negotiation), and patience with proposal and report drafting and submission.

(ii) Equity


It seems that interviewees had trouble differentiating equity from equal respect or equality. None of the survey participants mentioned "impartiality," "fairness," or "justice"—words that are typically used to define "equity"—in their descriptions or examples. In the context of international development, "equity" often refers specifically to *gender* equity, but only one interviewee answered that the term meant "...men and women are in equal positions, with equal salaries and benefits; labor standards are defined according to law." Other responses included, "equal opportunity," lack of "superiority/inferiority," and "equal voice and power," with little similarity between interviewees. Examples related to mutual learning, equal status during project activities, and perceptions of power—quite similar to the examples listed for "equality." Thus there seems to be little agreement between DPA staff and local partners on the meaning of equity.

(iii) Good communication

This was also a difficult term to define for most interviewees, likely because they had used these words to define other partnership aspects. Responses ranged from "...two-way, polite, frank, honest information sharing," to "relationship through equal respect." Thus a consistent definition across interviewees did not emerge. Among examples provided demonstrating good communication however, about a third of interviewees discussed an instance related to report or proposal submission or organization of a field visit. Interestingly, none of the respondents mentioned the frequency of communication or whether contact was by phone/email or fact-to-face.

(iv) Accountability

The common theme that emerged from responses about accountability is that it is related to funds and financial matters, as well as reliably carrying out planned activities. One answer that seemed to summarize many responses was, "Responsibility both in implementation of activities and budget management." Twenty-three percent of respondents linked their definition or example of accountability with "discussion" in some form, demonstrating that a significant number of interviewees related communication to accountability. It seems logical



that open, clear communication would facilitate accountability. About a third of interviewees also described an accountable partnership as one that lacked “corruption,” “cheating,” or “serv[ing] political parties.” Given the high level of corruption in Cambodian society, accountability would seem to be of fundamental importance to any partnership.

(v) Trust-building

Interviewees most often described trust-building in ways that can be summarized as following through on commitments. As one respondent explained, “It’s a long-term process based on experience and transparency...the quality of work and contribution to the community...staff relations impact program quality.” Surprisingly, few other interviewees also noted time as a necessary component to trust-building, though perhaps this was implied. Rather, respondents referred to activities in the process of trust-building such as DPA recommending a local partner to another funding partner, trusting partners to represent DPA publicly, respecting the partnership agreement, and staid in regards to finances.

(vi) Constructive criticism

Several questions in the survey related to constructive criticism, both its definition and whether constructive criticism took place both ways between DPA and partners. Whatever form criticism takes, many respondents commented that the discussion should aim towards organizational improvement. About a quarter of interviewees mentioned that criticism should not take place in public. This could be particularly important in a Khmer cultural context where it is very offensive to “lose face.” Over half of DPA’s local partners reported that they had given DPA constructive criticism; this indicates a high level of equality and mutual respect. The fact that local partners feel comfortable giving constructive feedback to DPA indicates that they don’t feel threatened and that they view DPA as more than a donor. The term “two-way” is often used in regards to partnership, but not all aspects of a partnership relationship can in fact be two-way. Constructive criticism however, serves as a good indicator of partnership development as well as other characteristics such as trust, respect, and equity.

(vii) Ownership

Sixty-three percent of respondents mentioned accountability and/or responsibility when describing what “ownership” meant to them. Although not mentioned directly in the definitions, partners frequently cited organizational independence and self-management in their examples, such as partner involvement in strategic planning, partner-initiated projects, stakeholder participation, and problem-solving. One respondent’s definition emblematic of the spirit of self-sufficiency was, “local partners follow policy and implement not for DPA, but for themselves.” The concept of ownership is key to DPA’s Rights-Based Approach and Community Organizing development paradigms. It is also key to differentiating partnership from other grantor-grantee relationships and to the sustainability of local organizations. As evidenced by the diversity of responses, ownership is difficult to measure. Actions, such as participation in decision-making may indicate the opportunity for ownership, but fundamentally ownership also encompasses the way staff feel or think in regards to their organization and partner. Other possible indicators emerging from the ownership question would include projects initiated and funded by the partner, delegation of decision-making, and community empowerment.

(viii) Transparency

Broadly defined, transparency could mean openness in regards to all areas and activities of an organization. When asked to describe transparency, 37% of partner and DPA staff interviewed mentioned funding, budget, or finance in their answer, and 82% of respondents described a situation or activity related to money in their example of transparency in their organization's relationship with a partner. PD staff consistently mentioned during various points in the interviews how important it was that partners be open and honest with DPA about all of their funding sources. Transparency is as important to a partnership as to other organizational relationships. DPA and its local partners clearly understand transparency primarily in financial terms, but transparency could be extended to other areas as well, such as Human Resources.

(ix) Valuing creativity

The final two terms that respondents were asked to define and describe in regards to their organizations' partnerships were "creativity" and "indigenous knowledge." Almost one third of interviewees mentioned "initiative" in their definition of "valuing creativity," and about a quarter mentioned "support." One definition that included both of these ideas was, "...partners shouldn't force each other to do something, rather they should be creative and take initiative; creativity helps avoid dependency, and valuing creativity of local partners demonstrates equal respect." As with some previous terms, responses were diverse, but the examples cited highlighted common themes. In this case themes included creative problem solving, support for partner-initiated projects, and flexibility. Like "ownership," creativity would be difficult to measure or quantify, as it is by nature a subjective concept. Possible indicators of creativity could include instances of problems solving, independent projects or activities, and activity or policy change in response to partner feedback.

"In Svay Rieng partner PTA, which is headed by a monk had a tradition of creating a sand hill during Khmer New Year. PTA decided to create a rice hill instead for poor people so they wouldn't have to borrow from lenders. DPA provided training to the *adja* (laymen) who became responsible in the villages for the rice banks created." –PD Staff member

(x) Valuing indigenous knowledge

Local community understanding, knowledge, and/or experience was the predominate way respondents defined "indigenous knowledge." Examples cited included DPA support to partners assisting traditional community groups established for savings and ceremonies, handicrafts, and documentation of indigenous agricultural practices. One respondent linked use of indigenous knowledge to program sustainability. "Indigenous knowledge," while crucial to development, is not typically included in definitions of partnership. The term may be particularly important to DPA and its partners because they work frequently with indigenous, non-Khmer tribal peoples in several provinces in Cambodia. The term is also important to partnership in terms of respect—incorporating partner or community knowledge into projects demonstrates respect. Similar to "creativity," indicators of indigenous knowledge would be highly subjective; possibilities could include examining the history of project development, participation by beneficiaries, and the impact of beneficiary feedback on project design and implementation.

4. Benefits of partnership beyond financial

A major focus of partnership research is identifying the comparative advantages of partnership; if partnership is an effective method of delivering development assistance, there should be notable benefits beyond a basic donor-grantee relationship. The survey asked participants questions about how their partnership relationship with DPA was different than other relationships, non-financial benefits, and unexpected results of the partnership. Three major advantages were highlighted by DPA and partner staff: networking, advocacy impact, and best practices and technical skills.

(i) Networking

Of the advantages of partnership cited, networking is the most concrete. The fact that DPA works with 25 local partners focusing on capacity building in addition to grants necessitates regular trainings, workshops, and other meetings where partners interact not only with DPA, but also with each other. These opportunities facilitate informal networking and have in some cases precipitated more formal regional networks. DPA staff and partners described exchange visits, internship stays, information exchange, as well as phone consultations that took place outside of interactions planned directly by DPA. DPA partners in Battambang have formed a provincial network there, as have the CBOs in Svay Rieng and Muk Kampoul provinces. Local partner Star Kampuchea created a thematic network involving some other DPA partners on land issues. According to interviewees, these activities were initiated by the local partners themselves, inspired by fruitful exchange during DPA capacity-building workshops. DPA has recently supported these networking activities by allowing partners to dedicate surplus funding to exchange visits or travel to network meetings, and some networks such as Star Kampuchea's land group, are receiving funding from outside sources.

In answer to whether the group of DPA's partners as a whole form a network, DPA staff interviewees had mixed opinions. Half of the respondents said that the partners did constitute a "network" while the other half felt that as a whole they were not. One respondent commented that although networking was taking place, the local partner organizations were not yet mature enough to participate in networks, and should rather be focusing on organizational development and program implementation. While the existence of official networks is debatable, it is clear from the partner and DPA staff responses that networking is taking place between the partners, though perhaps on a small, localized scale.

While the impact of information exchange through such networking would be difficult to quantify, a consistent theme in the responses gathered was that partners exchange information regarding grant proposals and donors, which has helped them to access further funding resources outside of DPA. DPA itself was a networking resource in this sense to the partners. Both DPA and local partner staff reported discussion and exchange regarding other international partners and grant application opportunities. A high percentage (76%) of DPA's local partners has currently obtained funding outside of DPA's partnership grant. Interviewees also frequently mentioned that DPA could serve as an organizational reference when they applied to outside agencies for funding, and that DPA assisted them in preparing proposals.

(ii) Advocacy impact

About a third of survey participants mentioned advocacy as an important role of local partners in partnership, while 86% cited capacity building in advocacy as among the most important topics provided by DPA to partners. About one third of interviewees also cited advocacy activities as examples of partnership terminology (valuing creativity and indigenous knowledge, ownership, etc.) they defined.

Partnership's effect on advocacy impact is related to networking. Information exchange and solidarity are particularly critical to two of Cambodia's most crucial advocacy issues, land-grabbing and illegal logging. Typically, small groups of people are powerless against corrupt government officials and/or large corporations who are seeking to exploit natural resources.

Although these crimes often take place in extremely remote, rural parts of the country, information exchange and dissemination to the media attention to the injustice. Small, local have an advantage in context, access, and credibility with local communities. They

“Cambodia needs a united, mass civil society movement cooperating with the government to improve the country...” –DPA partner staff


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sometimes insurmountable challenges however, in effecting change for these communities because they lack the necessary leverage to influence government or economic actors. Although large International NGOs tend to have greater clout with governments and may have more channels to influence multi-national companies, they often lack the local knowledge and community trust necessary to mobilize sustainable change. Partnership between large national or international NGOs and local NGOs or CBOs makes combines the advantages of each, while minimizing their weaknesses, to achieve a greater overall impact of advocacy work. Advocacy work through partnership amplifies the voice of grassroots civil society in Cambodia; as one respondent explained, “...the community is also a partner, not just NGOs.”

(iii) Best practices and technical skills

The final theme in partnership benefits mentioned frequently by DPA and local partner staff interviewed could be characterized as “sharing best practices and technical skills.” Responses related to this category were made throughout the survey in relation to terminology, effectiveness, and networking questions. Respondents often highlighted the two-way nature of partnership with DPA, providing examples of practice and skill transfer not only from DPA to the local partners, but vice-a-versa.

Drawing from the interviews conducted, DPA has much technical expertise to contribute based on more than a decade of Integrated Community Development (ICD) programming in Kandal, Svay Rieng, Kampot, Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri, and Stung Treng provinces. The ICD program has evolved during this time period with recommendations from evaluations leading to change in methodology and implementation. Because the ICD intervention encompasses health, education, water and sanitation, governance, and advocacy, the best practices and lessons learned from ICD are useful for many of DPA's local partners, who intervene in these areas. As a DPA staff member described, “DPA also implements ICD programs, partners can visit ICD programs to learn from successes; DPA's knowledge and practical advice from ICD is an advantage over a partner who only gives grants.”



DPA is also itself a “localized” entity which built staff and organizational capacity before becoming independent from CIDSE. DPA is thus well-suited to advise partners on the process of organizational development, as staff are familiar with the transition to greater independence and responsibility. Fifty-seven percent of partner staff interviewees named organizational management and planning among the most important areas of capacity building DPA has provided. Several interviewees also mentioned financial management, values, and proposal writing as important skill building areas. Staff further explained that this capacity building had been used to improve governing board structure, writing proposals for additional funding, “echo” training for community stakeholders, and to improve working systems and structure. One partner staff member explained, “Obstacles in project implementation were removed and improved...and [we] changed some projects that did not respond to the real needs of the community.”

The partnership knowledge transfer is two-way as well, as when DPA invites local partner staff to conduct workshops on specialized skills such as negotiation and facilitation, human rights, and . Frequently cited examples included workshops by Vigilance and Star Kampuchea; “... staff from the human rights partners are invited to facilitate or present because they have expertise in this area. This shows that DPA respects and learns from partners.” A DPA staff member also cited the example of partner RDA’s scholarship program for poor children which DPA will extend to other areas as a project model. Two-way knowledge and skills transfers were often cited as examples of how equal respect is demonstrated between DPA and local partners.

5. Sustainability

The survey questioned respondents regarding the prospects for partnership in the future. Both DPA and local partner staff uniformly answered that partnership would be possible in the future, even in the absence of grants, and would be of mutual benefit. Interviewees cited many of the non-financial benefits of partnership in their answers to how they envisioned partnership in the future:

“DPA can act in an advisory role, provide information and help connect [local partners] to other funding agencies.”

“[The partnership] will continue by asking DPA to provide technical support and monitor implementation. [DPA] can assist in raising [a local partner’s] profile at the national and international levels.”

“DPA should move to non-funding relationship with mature organizations and create sectoral working groups. DPA can link partners with foreign donors and should assist partners in meeting Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) standards.”

“Yes, DPA [will] only provide technical inputs, be an advisor or consultant, an information provider and facilitator, linking YFP to new partners. DPA can still help strengthen financial management, proposal writing, and provide advice.”

The key theme in these responses is communication and information exchange. Both members in the partnership relationship can continue to benefit from sharing information, but effort will be necessary to maintain good communication in the absence of contractually obligated reports, evaluations, and proposals.

In the very long-term, DPA and partners will have to face the question of relevancy in a country saturated with local and international NGOs coupled with fast economic growth. It is likely that oil exploitation and other sectors fuelling growth may lead international donors to reduce aid to Cambodia. Promoting civil society development through support of grassroots NGOs is a worthy cause, but where will funding come from for the eventual proliferation of local organizations? Survey participants offered a few ideas in this regard, that NGOs could transition to become consulting firms, offering technical services to rural communities and the government, that the Cambodian government will fund NGOs in the absence of international funding, and that local partners will draw operating costs from projects for which start-up capital has already been provided, such as rice or livestock banks.

VII. Recommendations

A few recommendations are detailed below based on the findings of the survey. Following the recommendations, a draft outline of partnership principles is suggested. Given the nature of the partnership program, these recommendations and principles are intended as a starting point for action, rather than an action plan. DPA should work in concert with partners to debate, revise, and implement them.

1. Partnership definition and terminology

The survey clearly revealed diversity in the understanding of DPA's partnership definition and terminology. Responses to the terminology questions also highlighted the interrelation between partnership characteristics because interviewees often used the terms to define each other. Given this interrelation, DPA should consider revising the partnership definition to make it more concise. All of the concepts expressed in the definition proved important to survey participants, but some of them could perhaps be better expressed in partnership principles, rather than the definition.

As for strengthening understanding of the terminology, DPA could dedicate some time at an upcoming training or workshop where all partners are invited to a group exercise brainstorming definitions. The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) is also currently undertaking an NGO Good Practice Project (NGO GPP) which includes basic definitions of terminology including transparency, equity, and accountability, which could serve as guidelines. Far more important however, than definitions of partnership, is how this terminology translates into *practice*. DPA should conduct an annual participatory partnership assessment exercise attended by staff and partners. The focus would be on partnership SWOT analysis and identifying practical examples of these important characteristics of partnership, or reflecting on how to better implement them in cases where few examples existed. The assessment would also be an opportunity for mutual constructive criticism and feedback.

2. Strengthening partnership

The survey demonstrated that DPA has already achieved strong, successful partnerships with many of its partners. To build on this success, DPA should seek to address weaknesses and capitalize on strengths identified by partners in the survey:

- (a) DPA staff to partner ration: some local partners and DPA staff felt that more PD staff are needed to provide adequate attention to each partner. DPA must consider increasing PD staff, given budget and planning constraints.
- (b) To address perceptions of “donor” rather than “partner”, DPA should seek to ensure feedback and constructive criticisms are genuinely two-way by institutionalizing a mechanism for regular feedback from partners regarding the partnership; this could be as part of existing reporting.
- (c) DPA should continue to strengthen integration between PD, ICD, and DEA departments to promote information exchange with partners on best practices and lessons learned in project implementation.
- (d) The consequences for partners who don’t submit reports and proposals according to deadlines should be firm and clearly communicated.

3. Networking

Given that both DPA and local partner staff identified networking as one of the most important benefits of partnership, DPA should continue to support networking at all levels. Local partners should be encouraged to exchange information and expertise independent of DPA-organized activities. A local partner-wide network (all 25 partners) does not seem at this stage necessary or feasible given partner diversity, but small, partner-initiated networks based regionally or thematically should be bolstered. DPA could dedicate extra time available at capacity-building or other workshops to network activity to facilitate these networks. DPA should also seek to incorporate thematic networks into the Development Education and Advocacy (DEA) Unit activities to strengthen local and national advocacy efforts. Local partner networks could be both a resource and a tool for advocacy.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

While building a robust and active civil society in Cambodia is one goal of the partnership program, another goal is to positively impact the livelihoods of Cambodia’s poor. DPA requires independent evaluation of partner projects to which DPA partnership funding is dedicated. The evaluations adequately assess program outcomes--how many workshops were held, how many beneficiaries attended training, the number of tree planted or rice banks established--but they do not go far enough in assessing the impact of program implementation. That is to say, the evaluations do not necessarily assess poverty reduction as directly related to project implementation.

Both DPA and local partners should strive to incorporate more substantive impact assessment into evaluations. Impact assessment could include for example, the increase in beneficiary literacy rates in response to education programming, changes in health indicators in response to health programs, or increases in income or decreases in debt in response to income-generation or micro-finance programs. Substantive quantitative impact assessment can be costly and time-consuming, and in particular requires careful attention to program design to include baseline data collection before and after project implementation. Some types of programming don't generate immediate impact, and thus monitoring must be long-term. Despite these constraints, more effort can be made to acquire basic statistics from relevant government ministries, other NGOs, and international databases such as the UN and the World Bank to supplement data collected by DPA and partners.⁵ *Sustainability*

Even given Cambodia's growing economy and the discovery oil, it is unlikely that all international funding sources will dramatically decrease their commitments to local NGOs in the next five to ten years. All NGOs should however place increasing emphasis on income-generation and self-sufficiency. DPA should concentrate on supporting partnership programs related to income-generation, or that are self-supporting, such as rice/pig/cow banks, micro-credit, etc. These projects will benefit from ongoing capacity building but won't necessarily require continued grant funding, which is the vision of future non-funding partnerships that the survey responses outlined.

As current grant partners graduate to non-funding partnership, special attention should be given to institutionalizing regular communication to maintain the benefits of information exchange and expertise. These partners will likely be busy with new partners and donors, thus planning for communication should be part of the funding phase-out process.


VIII. Partnership Principles

In addition to documentation and qualitative research, this survey aimed to provide a foundation for the development of Partnership Principles. These Partnership Principles will become part of DPA's partnership agreement with local partners, in addition to the existing contract related to financial obligations. The Partnership Principles should go beyond contractual obligations in this sense, to include serve as a code of conduct for both DPA and local partners.

Ultimately, Partnership Principles should be finalized in consultation between DPA and local partners. The survey results demonstrated several recurring themes however, that could be incorporated into a final document.

Partners commit to:

1. Build accountability and trust by adhering to mutually agreed deadlines and responsibilities. Ensure that the consequences for not following the partnership agreement and principles are clearly delineated and understood by both partners.
2. Cultivate a culture of mutual respect and equality. Be aware of the power structure and how it influences the partnership relationship, especially staff communication.

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1. An open, honest, and timely exchange of information on activities, finances, and human resources. Decision-making should be a shared process.
 2. Systematically incorporate partner-to-partner learning, both between DPA and local partners and among local partners themselves, into the partnership. Ensure ample formal and informal opportunities to recognize strengths and share respective skills and resources. Partners should be encouraged to look to each other as resources.
 3. Maintain openness to mutual constructive criticism: institutionalize communication mechanisms that require both partners to provide feedback, not only on program activities, but also on aspects of the partnership.
 4. Honor local knowledge, methods, and techniques while seeking to expand available resources and capacity. Seek to find ways to incorporate traditional knowledge into program design.
 5. Respect and protect indigenous cultures, while recognizing the threats and opportunities that outside cultures may offer.
 6. Think ahead to sustainability: consider how the partnership will change over time with and without funding. Plan for regular continued regular communication and exchange beyond grant and capacity-building activities.

This draft of principles should be refined and expanded according to DPA Partnership Department staff and local partner organizations. The principles should be a working document that evolves as partnership between DPA and local partners evolves. Most importantly, DPA and local partners should annually assess whether and how their relationship is upholding the principles, and to address weaknesses.

Appendix I

TERM OF REFERENCE

SURVEY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PD'S PARTNERSHIP

(MARCH 2007)

Rationale

According to the recommendations of the PD evaluation in May 2006, the Partnership Department should define the term “partnership” and produce a charter of partnership operating practices and principles ensuring that partnerships become more of a two-way process. In August 2006, PD organized one four-day workshop to outline activities development with all partner organizations, defining “partnership” as joint action and two-way process of equal respect, equality, and equity in order to reach a common goal through good communication, learning from each other, partner organization and vice versa, partner – to – partner learning and internship, trust building and constructive criticism, ownership, accountability, transparency, and valuing creativity and indigenous knowledge.

In order to achieve this vision of partnership, DPA and PD have decided to conduct a survey on the effectiveness of partnership which will take place from March 19th until the end of May 2007.

Objectives of the survey

1. To assess the understanding of effective partnership by partner organizations and DPA Partnership Department staff.
2. To write a survey report on current practice and experience working in partnership.
3. To use findings to develop a charter of partnership operating practices and principles ensuring that partnerships become more of a two-way process.
4. To change the way PD works with partner organizations based on the recommendations.

Expected Outputs

1. A discussion with the Survey Committee of the methods proposed to conduct the survey including the sampling of a representative cross section of partner organizations. Seven partner organizations (or 28%) will be interviewed. PD staff and DPA Project Intake Committee (DPA-PIC) will also be interviewed.
2. Suggestions and recommendations from the survey will be used to improve working in partnership with partner organizations and vice versa.

Roles of the Survey team and committee

- The survey Team Leader will be DPA's Luce Scholar (Liana Bianchi).
- DPA will use staff from DPA partner organizations (3 or 4) as interviewers and translation will be done by DPA staff from other departments/units.

- The survey committee will consist of the DPA Executive Director, Partnership Program Manager, ICD Manager and FAD Manager. Committee members will be available to the Team Leader for consultation on the general direction of the survey and to address any issues/concerns arising during the exercise.

Survey Work Plan

The survey will begin March 19th and end in May 2007, including report finalization.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Person responsible</i>	<i>participants</i>
March	19	Survey development;	PP	Liana	Sopheha, Sophal, Phyrum,
	20	MC meeting for comments on survey draft; incorporate revisions	PP	Liana	MC, Liana, Sopheha, Sophal
	21-22	Translation of survey into Khmer	PP	Sopheha	Sophal, interviewers
	23	Orientation for interviewers; Pilot test survey with an organization who won't be in final sample; revise survey based on pilot	PP	Liana and interviewers	Sophal, interviewers
	26-29	Conduct survey of partners	PP, MK,BTB, SV	Liana	Liana, interviewers, program assistant staff for monitoring
	26-29	Conduct survey of PIC	PP	Liana	Sopheha, Sophal, Dara, Sarin, Sambath
	27-29	Conduct survey of PD staff individually or as small focus group	PP	Liana	PD staff
April	2-10	Translation of data collected	PP	Sopheha	Sopheha, Sophal, Vannayouth
	14-16	Khmer New Year			
	17-19	Initial data analysis	PP	Liana	
	20	Group analysis of key points	PP	Liana	Sambath, Sopheha, Sophal
	23-30	Report writing	PP	Liana	
May	2	Submission of report	PP	Liana	

Selection of DPA partner organizations for interview and interviewers (Sample size)

No	Name of Partners for interview	Interviewers
1	ACED (CNGO) – BTB	A male staff from CCD – Kratie
2	CDK (CNGO) – BTB	A male staff from SS – Svay Rieng
3	RDA (CNGO) – BTB	A male staff from SS – Svay Rieng
4	PTEA (CNGO) – Svay Rieng	A female staff from GGAC – P.Penh
5	FEDA (CBO) – Svay Rieng	A female staff from GGAC – P.Penh
6	YFP (CNGO) – P.Penh	A female staff from KNT' - BTB
7	LCK (CBO) – Muk Kampoul	A female staff from KNT' – BTB
	Total: 7 DPA partner organizations	4 interviewers

Remarks:

- *CBOs and CDK – PD has been working with them within two years time and the rest five, PD work with more than five years.*

Translators

- Lay Sophea will translate the questionnaire from English to Khmer
- Lay Sophea, Kuy Sophal and Nhem Vannayouth will translate the data collected, from Khmer to English.

Appendix II

Survey Questionnaire

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DPA/CIDSE PARTNER ORGANIZATION STAFF

SURVEY # _____ DATE: _____

Interviewer name: _____

DPA/CIDSE IS CONDUCTING A SURVEY CONCERNING PARTNERSHIP TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DPA/CIDSE'S PARTNERSHIP WORK. PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME IN CONSIDERING AND ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS, YOUR ANSWERS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO THE RESEARCH. YOUR NAME WILL BE NOT BE ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR ANSWERS IN THE FINAL REPORT, SO PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ANSWER HONESTLY. IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND A QUESTION OR DON'T KNOW HOW TO ANSWER, PLEASE JUST SAY SO. THIS SURVEY IS NOT AN EVALUATION, IT IS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY.

Interviewee Name: _____

Interviewee's email: _____ Mobile telephone number: _____

Partner Organization: _____

Position at Partner Organization: _____

Dates of your affiliation with [partner organization]: _____

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your partnership with DPA/CIDSE. [DPA/CIDSE defines partnership as: joint action and two-way process of equal respect, equality, and equity in order to reach a common goal through good communication, learning from each other, partner organization and vice-a-versa, partner-to-partner learning and internship, trust building and constructive criticism ownership, accountability and transparency, and value creativity and indigenous knowledge.]

1. What does partnership mean to you?

2. How did your organization begin working with DPA/CIDSE?

Follow-up: Can you describe the process, for example, was it a proposal, did you work with the ICD Department, etc.?

Follow-up: Prior to entering this partnership, did your organization and DPA/CIDSE share individual organizational values, purposes, and priorities with each other?

Follow-up: If yes, please describe the process. Did your organization share with DPA/CIDSE, or did DPA/CIDSE share with you, or did both of you share with each other?

3. What was your organization's most important reason for joining a partnership with DPA/CIDSE?

4. Does your organization have partnership principles?

Follow-up: if yes, ask for a copy of the partnership principles?

5. How would you describe your organization's role in the partnership?

6. How would you describe DPA/CIDSE's role in the partnership?

7. What has your organization contributed to the partnership?

8. From your perspective, what has DPA/CIDSE contributed to the partnership?

Follow-up: What else has DPA/CIDSE contributed besides funding?

9. If you work in partnership with other NGOs besides DPA/CIDSE, how are those partnerships different than your relationship with DPA/CIDSE?

10. Can you describe some concrete examples of what your organization's partnership with DPA/CIDSE is besides funding?

Follow-up: Are there actions, activities, and/or communication not related to funding?

Follow-up: What non-financial benefits has the partnership brought to your organization?

11. In what ways do your organization and DPA/CIDSE make good partners?

Follow-up: What are the strengths of communication in your partnership with DPA/CIDSE?

12. Concerning your organization's partnership with DPA/CIDSE, what are the weaknesses of the relationship?

Follow-up: What are the weaknesses of communication in your partnership with DPA/CIDSE?

13. How could the partnership relationship between your organization and DPA/CIDSE be better?

Follow-up: What specific improvements would you suggest?

II. UNDERSTANDING PARTNERSHIP

Now I'm going to ask you to explain your understanding and describe some examples of some terms used to define partnership. These terms come from a DPA partnership workshop held in Battambang in August 2006. Part of the reason DPA is doing this survey is to better understand what these terms mean to our staff and partners.

If you don't understand the terms or don't have any examples, please just say so. You may be unfamiliar with some of the terms, but that is alright. Also please keep in mind that there is not a "correct" answer to these questions, as different people understand these terms differently. I will ask you some questions about these terms now, and also later in the interview.

14.a. What does the term "equal respect" mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

14.b. Do you think there is equal respect in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

15.a. What does the term "equity" mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

15.b. Do you think there is equity in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

16.a. What does the term "good communication" mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

16. b. Do you think there is good communication in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

III. PARTNERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Now I would like to ask you some questions related to the effectiveness of your organization's partnership with DPA/CIDSE. Part of the reason for doing this survey is to improve DPA/CIDSE's partnership work, so please answer the questions fully and honestly. I would like to remind you that this is not an evaluation and the answers to these questions will be confidential and for research purposes only.

17. What does partnership effectiveness mean to you?

Follow-up: what is an effective partnership?

18. What makes partnership different than other types of relationships between two organizations?

19. Does your organization give constructive criticism to DPA/CIDSE?

Follow-up: If yes, please describe examples. If no, please explain why not?

Now I'm going to ask you about partnership terms and examples again for a few minutes.

20. a. What does the term “trust-building” mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

20. b. Do you think there is trust-building in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

21. a. What does the term “constructive criticism” mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

21. b. Do you think there is constructive criticism in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

22. a. What does the term “ownership” mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

22. b. Do you think there is ownership in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

23. a. What does the term “accountability” mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

23. b. Do you think there is accountability in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

There are a few partnership terms I want to ask you about, but first let’s talk about capacity building for a few minutes.

24. Please give some examples of the most important capacity building your organization has received during partnership with DPA/CIDSE. [Please get at least three examples]

25. How has the capacity building you just described been applied by your organization?

26. Can you describe concrete changes resulting from the application of this capacity building? [Be sure to distinguish between outcomes and impacts]

27. Looking toward the future, what are your organization’s most important capacity-building needs?

28. Again, looking toward the future, can you imagine what your organization’s partnership with DPA/CIDSE would be like if your organization no longer received direct funding support from DPA/CIDSE? Please describe what you imagine it would be like. *Follow-up*: What activities would it include?

29. Do you think a partnership with DPA/CIDSE such as the one you just imagined and described can be maintained in the long-term without funding support? *Follow-up*: if yes, how?

Now I'm going to ask you about the last four partnership terms and examples now. After that, there will be two questions about other partnership benefits, and then the survey will be finished.

30. a. What does the term "transparency" mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

30. b. Do you think there is transparency in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

31. a. What does the term "valuing creativity" mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

31. b. Do you think there is valuing of creativity in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

32. a. What does the term "indigenous knowledge" mean to you in terms of a partnership between two organizations?

32. b. Do you think that there is valuing of indigenous knowledge in the partnership between your organization and DPA/CIDSE? [If yes, Please provide examples, if no, please explain why]

Thank you for answering all the questions about partnership terms and examples, we have finished all of those questions now. We are almost finished.

IV. OTHER PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS

33. DPA/CIDSE works with 25 partner organizations, including your organization. Has DPA/CIDSE encouraged you to work with any of their other partners? If so, please describe what activities or contact you have had with other DPA/CIDSE partners.

34. Partner-to-partner learning or internship can mean contact or activities with another organization that is a partner of DPA. I would like to know if you have had any partner-to-partner learning, but in this case we are interested in activities that were not formal, such as a training workshop organized by DPA. Have you had any informal contact or activities with another DPA partner? If yes, please describe.

35. We have now completed the survey. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make before we end the interview?

On behalf of Ms. Liana Bianchi, the Team Leader of the is survey, as well as the Survey Committee and DPA Partnership staff, I would like to sincerely thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. We appreciate your feedback and your comments will help us to improve our partnership work. Thank you.



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