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Cooperation Committee  
for Cambodia

Comité de Coopération  
Pour le Cambodge

# Strategic Plan 2009-2013

December 2008

*CCC wishes to acknowledge the contributory Technical Assistance of Ms. Louise Coventry to CCC through the Australian Business Volunteer (ABV) to develop the CCC 2009-2013 Strategic Plan*

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# CCC STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2013

## OVERVIEW

A strategic plan explains an organisation's vision for the future, the contribution that the organisation can make to that vision and the actions and steps that will be taken to make that contribution. Making clear plans for the future helps to keep an organisation focussed and can help it assess whether it is making the difference it seeks to make.

A good strategic plan is informed by a solid understanding of what is happening around us. Strategic planning is a tool that helps us to respond to our environment, capitalising on our strengths, overcoming our weaknesses as well as taking advantage of the opportunities that exist and managing the threats we face in the environment.

This document outlines the strategic plan of the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia for the period 2009-2013. It is supported by a range of additional documents: a financial strategy (forthcoming), a human resource strategy (forthcoming), a communication plan (forthcoming) and an information technology strategy (forthcoming).

## PROCESS

Preparing a strategic plan for the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia involves making a serious commitment to following an inclusive and collaborative process. In many respects, the process of strategic planning is more important than the plan itself. The process is what helps to ensure that all of CCC's stakeholders can contribute to the plan and develop a sense of ownership over it. To be effective then, the process needs to be authentic and reasonably exhaustive.

A further consideration for the process of strategic planning in this instance was capacity building. An important part of the brief of the volunteer advisor engaged to support the strategic planning process was to ensure that the organisation's capacity to undertake strategic planning in the future is significantly increased.

The steps that were followed in developing a strategic plan were:

- Recruitment of a volunteer strategic planning advisor
- Development of a background paper for circulation to Executive Committee members and staff
- Survey of staff
- Survey of Executive Committee members
- Survey of all CCC members
- Hosting of an all-day visioning workshop involving Executive Committee members and staff
- Three day staff retreat
- Individual consultations with government officials, board members, peer organisations and some ordinary members
- Small group work involving senior CCC staff
- Presentations to members' meetings and Executive Committee meetings
- Drafting and redrafting

These steps were each documented, partly because transparent and extensive documentation was regarded as important for building organisational capacity for strategic planning and partly because documentation of important events in the life of an organisation represents good practice. Reports of each step may be made available on request from CCC. Also available is an analysis of the environment in which CCC works (based on surveys of staff, Executive Committee members and ordinary members), and a detailed report of the views of CCC members. Available documents are listed in Appendix 1.

## VISION

**The Cooperation Committee of Cambodia's vision is for a strong and capable civil society, cooperating and responsive to Cambodia's development challenges.**

## MISSION

**As a professional association of non-government organisations in Cambodia, the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia provides high quality services to civil society and influences Cambodia's development partners with our collective voice.**

## VALUES

Everything that the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia does is informed by the following four values:

<b>Integrity</b>	<b>Cooperation</b>
<b>Responsiveness</b>	<b>Quality</b>

These values will also form the basis of a customer service charter to be adopted by CCC in 2009.

## GOALS

To achieve our mission, CCC has adopted four strategic goals. Each goal relates to a sub-clause of our mission.

- **Strengthen the collective voice of civil society**
- **Enhance effective cooperation across civil society**
- **Influence the thinking and practice of Cambodia's development partners**
- **Deliver high quality services appropriately responding to the true needs of non-government organisations**

The goals adopted by CCC represent a significant modernising of CCC. A wide range of information exchange activities will continue: Information exchange is a key benefit of membership, and overall, the most valued aspect of CCC. However, as more and more members access information remotely, CCC will move more of its communication online and ensure that electronic communication continues to meet the high standards already set by CCC. Furthermore, CCC will seek opportunities to add extra value to information received and sent. This involves more strategic analysis of issues and increasing proactivity from CCC.

Over the next five years, greater resources will be invested in working with Cambodia's development partners and creating opportunities for member consultation and input in developing

mandates for change, consistent with members' expectations for stronger leadership. A focus of this work will be institutional advocacy which we understand as creating an environment which enables and supports the professional practice of all NGOs, rather than advocating for development issues as such. CCC is the only mandated professional association of NGOs in Cambodia, whereas advocacy for development issues is already effectively undertaken by other membership-based organisations in Cambodia.

Finally, in recognising the opportunities for acting in solidarity and being part of a community that CCC represents, CCC is committed to championing the collective strength of the NGO community and enhancing its status as the third pillar of society. Whilst clearly consistent with our role as a professional association of NGOs, CCC has not previously highlighted this aspect of our work.

## OBJECTIVES

A series of objectives links to each strategic goal.

### **For goal 1 – to strengthen the collective voice of civil society, our objectives are :**

- Objective 1.1: Increase and diversify our membership base
- Objective 1.2: Enhance the status of non-government organisations in Cambodia
- Objective 1.3: Develop the capacity of non-government organisations in Cambodia

### **For goal 2 – to enhance effective co operation across civil society, our objectives are:**

- Objective 2.1: Establish and manage mechanisms for addressing members' emerging concerns about institutional and professional matters
- Objective 2.2: Forge long term relationships with coalitions and networks of non-government organisations
- Objective 2.3: Work with relevant institutions for effective coordination and dissemination of research and other NGO achievements

### **For goal 3 – to influence the thinking and practice of Cambodia's development partners, our objectives are:**

- Objective 3.1: Reinforce effective partnerships between civil society organisations and development partners
- Objective 3.2: Create spaces for dialogue between non-government organisations and development partners regarding institutional and professional issues
- Objective 3.3: Develop an enabling environment for professional non-government organisations

### **For goal 4 – to deliver high quality services appropriately responding to the true needs of non-government organisations, our objectives are:**

- Objective 4.1: Promote and encourage good organisational practice across civil society
- Objective 4.2: Model quality program management and service delivery to civil society organisations
- Objective 4.3: Strengthen effective and timely sharing of information about development challenges

The activities, outcomes and indicators which are linked to each objective and will help to reach these goals are shown in the following plan. It is important to note that, whilst timelines are not specifically nominated, the plan contains both short term and long term commitments, depending on agreements made with donors and our knowledge of changes in the external environment. It is also important to note that this plan directly informs the work of CCC staff. Staff teams accept responsibility for developing more detailed annual action plans containing outputs, indicators of success and methods of verification.

**PLAN:****Goal 1: Strengthen the collective voice of civil society**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<b>VERIFICATION</b>
1.1. Increase and diversify our membership base	1.1.1. Conduct needs assessment of existing members and potential members  1.1.2. Investigate opportunities for developing new services for new categories of members	More CCC members represent more diverse types of institutions CCC has more advanced understanding of the differing needs of civil society organisations throughout Cambodia CCC has improved capacity to customise its services to meet different member needs	Membership list and profile Need assessment Service profile
1.2. Enhance the status of non-government organisations in Cambodia	1.2.1. Raise public awareness of NGO code and certification system  1.2.2. Exchange lessons with other nations experienced in NGO code and certification system development  1.2.3. Present research findings and lessons learnt in analysing development issues at public gatherings  1.2.4. Plan for collection and publication of information about NGO achievements	NGOs' contribution to Cambodian society and economy is more widely understood and appreciated NGOs' capacities are widely acknowledged Good governance practices of NGOs meet international benchmarks	Media campaigns Donor feedback

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<b>VERIFICATION</b>
1.3 Develop the capacity of non-government organisations in Cambodia	<p>1.3.1. Conduct basic courses , advanced courses and community courses in analysing development issues</p> <p>1.3.2 Introduce and promote professional standards and good practices to NGO regional networks and sectoral groups</p> <p>1.3.3. Provide direct support for applicant NGOs enabling them to meet the standards in the Code</p> <p>1.3.4 Investigate the viability of establishing a group purchasing scheme for members</p> <p>1.3.5 Institute an annual training calendar for member development</p> <p>1.3.6 Work towards the establishment of a ‘centre for NGO excellence’</p>	<p>Critical thinking skills of NGOs are increased</p> <p>Research capacity of NGOs is increased</p> <p>Good governance practices are more widely adopted among civil society</p> <p>Financial capacity of NGOs is increased</p> <p>Training and development opportunities for NGOs are increased</p>	Member/ participant feedback

## **Goal 2: Enhance effective cooperation across civil society**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<b>VERIFICATION</b>
2.1. Establish and manage mechanisms for addressing members’ emerging concerns about institutional and professional matters	<p>2.1.1. Conduct surveys regarding emerging topics of concern to members, as required</p> <p>2.1.2 Host quarterly member director forums</p> <p>2.1.3 Host members’ meetings, as required</p> <p>2.1.4 Develop capacity for creating clear mandates for action</p>	<p>The diversity of members’ views is captured and respected</p> <p>Points of convergence are identified and used</p> <p>Emerging issues are appropriately addressed</p>	Member feedback
2.2 Forge long term relationships with coalitions and networks of non-government organisations	<p>2.2.1. Strengthen partnerships with NGO Forum and MEDiCAM</p> <p>2.2.2 Lead efforts to consolidate various databases of the NGO community held by government and NGOs throughout Cambodia</p>	<p>Strong, robust relationships exist</p> <p>CCC is perceived as proactively cooperative</p>	<p>Memorandum of understanding/ other agreements</p> <p>Peer feedback</p>

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<b>VERIFICATION</b>
2.3 Work with relevant institutions for effective coordination and dissemination of research and other NGO achievements	<p>2.3.1. Provide a resource base for researchers interested in civil society functioning</p> <p>2.3.2 Share research findings with Cambodia's development partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research into civil society is supported by CCC</li> <li>• Research findings are effectively shared</li> <li>• CCC is perceived as proactively supportive of research initiatives</li> </ul>	<p>Acknowledgements in research publications</p> <p>Feedback from researchers</p>

### **Goal 3: Influence the thinking and practice of Cambodia's development partners**

<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>	<b>VERIFICATION</b>
3.1 Reinforce effective partnerships between civil society organisations and development partners	<p>3.1.1. Ensure that discussion forums involving members and government representatives are increasingly strategic in their focus</p> <p>3.1.2. Facilitate access to support from development partners enabling NGOs to meet standards of good governance</p> <p>3.1.3. Exchange lessons amongst national CSO coalitions/networks about good organisational practice and engage donors and government in appreciating the implications of the NGO Code and the Certification System for them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships are diverse, strong and effective</li> <li>• CCC's capacity for leadership is acknowledged</li> </ul>	<p>Memorandum of understanding</p> <p>Minutes of meetings</p>
3.2 Create spaces for dialogue between non-government organisations and development partners regarding institutional and professional issues	<p>3.2.1. Contribute proactively to development of an annual NGO statement to the Cambodian Development Cooperation Forum and representation of member views at the Forum, in collaboration with NGO Forum and MEDiCAM</p> <p>3.2.2 Actively engage in high level discussions of issues affecting NGO operational capacity (eg aid effectiveness and decentralisation and deconcentralisation)</p> <p>3.2.3 Engage provincial non-government organisations and their networks in relevant national debates</p>	<p>Opportunities for meaningful dialogue between NGOs and development partners increase</p> <p>Quality of discussions and debates improve</p> <p>Diversity of participants in debates increases</p>	<p>Contributions to annual NGO statement</p> <p>Records of events and meetings</p>



OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	VERIFICATION
3.3. Develop an enabling environment for professional non-government organisations	<p>3.3.1. Facilitate constructive and critical engagement of NGO community in the government's development of an enabling environment for NGOs (eg. legislative reform affecting NGOs)</p> <p>3.3.2 Publish research reports about development issues in both Khmer and English and support others in implementing recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy agenda is clear and supported by members</li> <li>• NGOs are well-prepared to participate in advocacy campaigns</li> </ul>	Records of events and meetings

**Goal 4: Deliver high quality services appropriately responding to the true needs of non-government organisations**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	VERIFICATION
4.1. Promote and encourage good organisational practice across civil society	<p>4.1.1. Develop tools and materials related to the NGO Code and NGO Certification System for NGOs in Cambodia</p> <p>4.1.2 Receive and review applications for certification and approve and award NGOs which meet the standards.</p> <p>4.1.3 Ensure the ongoing relevance of the code and certification system to contemporary needs of NGOs</p>	<p>Awareness of good governance is increased</p> <p>Number of NGOs complying with the voluntary code of conduct increases</p> <p>Number of NGOs seeking and securing certification increases</p>	<p>Certification documents</p> <p>Application register</p> <p>Member feedback</p>
4.2 Model quality program management and service delivery to civil society organisations	<p>4.2.1. Ensure CCC's ongoing compliance with voluntary code of conduct for NGOs</p> <p>4.2.2. Ensure that local staff are recruited, resourced and ready to take full responsibility for the strategic direction and management of all CCC projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated.</li> <li>• Management processes are sound and withstand scrutiny.</li> <li>• Reliance on expatriates is reduced.</li> </ul>	<p>Organisational policies and procedures</p> <p>Minutes of management team meetings-</p>
4.3 Strengthen effective and timely sharing of information about development challenges	<p>4.3.1. Digitalise resource centre</p> <p>4.3.2 Secure support for the establishment of a national clearinghouse of NGO resources</p> <p>4.3.3 Develop the capacity of NGOs to maximise appropriate use of IT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shift towards producing more strategic information is apparent</li> <li>• Members are offered more choices for virtual engagement in CCC's work</li> <li>• Information is published according to schedule</li> </ul>	<p>Information products</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Newsletters</p>

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	VERIFICATION
	<p>4.3.4 Deliver high quality information products to members, including a biannual salary survey, annual agency listing, biannual international NGO and Cambodian NGO directory and biannual provincial network directory, biannual funding and partnership directory</p> <p>4.3.5 Upgrade website and ensure all content are current and relevant</p> <p>4.3.6 Experiment with online communication resources including d-groups and newsgroups</p>		

## **REVIEW**

- CCC will use this strategic to formulate annual action plans for the next 5 years.
- CCC will conduct quarterly review at senior management level at 6 monthly intervals with the Executive Committee.
- CCC will budget and contract an independent assessor to conduct a mid term review of the proposed strategic in July 2011.

# **Annex 1**

## **Background Paper: Development of CCC's 2009-2013 Strategic Plan, June 2008**

## Background Paper: Development of CCC's 2009-2013 Strategic Plan

Louise Coventry  
25 June 2008

The Cooperation Committee of Cambodia's current strategic plan 2004–2008 is due to expire in December 2008. CCC has recruited an Australian Business Volunteer, Louise Coventry, to lead the formation of a new strategic plan covering the period 2009 to 2013. An important part of Louise's brief is to ensure that the organisation's capacity to undertake strategic planning in the future is significantly increased.

This paper provides background information for the development of a new strategic plan. It starts by providing contextual information and canvassing the issues that will likely need to be considered in the development of a new strategic plan. The paper continues by outlining the proposed process for developing a new strategic plan including how the various stakeholders of CCC (that means you!) can be involved. There are several reasons for canvassing issues and documenting the strategic planning process in full at an early stage:

- It enables all stakeholders to prepare themselves for making a contribution to the plan, and to understand when, how and in what form their contributions may be sought
- It helps to frame discussion on the most important or controversial issues, so that time is not wasted on talking about things that are less important or are already agreed
- It makes it easier for stakeholders to envisage how they could conduct a similar process themselves at a later date. Accordingly, it contributes to the capacity building agenda of the ABV volunteer.

### CONTEXT

The Cooperation Committee of Cambodia's vision is cooperation by NGOs leading equitable development in Cambodia.

The mission is as follows:

CCC operates as a recognised membership organisation to promote the activities of NGOs for the benefit of the people of Cambodia, by:

- Facilitating cooperation and supporting members on issues of common concern for NGOs
- Providing current information service relevant to NGOs
- Strengthening relationships with the Royal Government of Cambodia, to effectively influence policy and practice related to aid and development
- Collectively representing NGOs to influence donors

Four core values drive the work of CCC: cooperation as the model for the way we work, respect and equity in our relationships, quality and efficiency in our work and openness.

The 2004-2008 strategic plan contains five priorities for action as follows:

- Relationship of cooperation and respect with the Royal Government of Cambodia
- Voice to the donor community
- Information and communications services
- Supporting development of the NGO sector in a changing environment
- CCC organisational development

A mid term evaluation of the strategic plan was conducted in 2007. Key findings and recommendations from the evaluation were that:

- CCC is recognised as a reliable source of information. Published directories and surveys are widely used by stakeholders.
- CCC provides important and highly valued training and capacity building through the Analysing Development Issues (ADI) project and the NGO Good Practices Project (NGO GPP). Increasing the professionalism of the NGO community and the quality of service delivery are commonly agreed as critical for enhancing performance and improving accountability within the NGO sector in Cambodia.
- CCC maintains a reputation as a key network organisation that can build cooperative bridges between the NGO sector and the government.
- Members have high expectations to CCC as a 'peak body' for the NGO sector in Cambodia and believe that there continues to be an important role for the CCC to play.
- CCC is criticised for not being strong enough in its dealing with the government and other stakeholders, failing to pro-actively update on political trends (and/or emerging external factors) in a coordinated and structured way and not managing to bring members together on important issues of common concern.
- CCC is suffering from a lack of active involvement from its members. Senior management is rarely participating in the regular and specialised fora established by CCC, thereby influencing the level and quality of discussions and hampering the power of being a large network organisation.
- Operations of the Executive Committee are constrained by the fact that members are only elected for one year terms and that no guidelines exist about the positions that Executive Members should assume within the organisations they represent.

The summary statement which concludes the mid-term review is as follows:

- *It is decidedly recommended to initiate an external evaluation by the end of this strategic period in order to identify future mandate and direction of CCC. An external evaluation would create a strong foundation for a focused and visionary new strategic plan that should lead CCC into a new phase in an environment where the dynamics between government and NGOs are changing, where there is an increasing focus on aid effectiveness and harmonisation, where there is an increasing trend for international NGOs to seek local partners and nationalising senior management positions, where sectoral groups are getting stronger and more verbal, and where information flow from all fronts is increasing.*

## ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Strategic planning involves reflecting on

- why we are here,
- what we want to achieve,
- where we are now and
- how we can get from where we are now to where we want to be.

The point of planning is not to be right, but to be ready to respond to the challenges and embrace the opportunities that we face in the future. Accordingly, it is important to think about a wide range of issues when planning for the future. After all, a plan is only as good as the information on which it is based. The issues that merit consideration include, at the very least, the following:

1. The organisation's vision, mission and values were last updated in 2004. However, the social and political context in which CCC operated is likely to have changed since then. The opportunity to review the vision, mission and values now exists.
2. Similarly, the organisation's own internal context appears to have shifted in recent times, and certainly, since the completion of the mid-term review in 2007. New elements of the organisational context include:

- The introduction of new ideas to the organisation concurrent with the appointment of a new Executive Director
- A growing realisation that current income is insufficient to meet the costs of our current staffing structure, with the exception of project based staff
- Increasing collective awareness of the difficulties in budgeting and planning ahead, when the organisation is heavily reliant on annual membership fees
- Embracing of new technologies within CCC
- Turnover of senior staff and difficulties experienced in replacing the operations manager

3. In terms of specific issues, some of the issues identified in the mid-term evaluation, like the review of CCC's charter and bylaws, have been addressed; others have not. Discerning which of the issues that have not yet been addressed remain as current priorities is an important issue for discussion.

4. Finally, there are some specific projects, such as the development of an NGO handbook, which were identified as priorities in the 2004-2008 strategic plan and which have been recommended for carrying over into the new strategic plan. The priority to be allocated to such projects also needs to be reviewed.

Please note that the above list of changes in both contexts and issues is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, it is intended to spark discussion and reflection and highlight how analytical thinking skills could be brought to bear on the strategic planning process.

## **THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

There is no one right way to develop a strategic plan. For the purposes of developing a plan for 2009-2013, a method has been chosen that (we think) best suits the context in which we are working, the time and resources that are available, the organisation's development needs and the values to which we subscribe. This paper provides information about the values that will inform the strategic planning process, a list of identified key stakeholders and a summary of the consultation opportunities that exist. More details about the exact steps involved in undertaking a planning process will be provided at a later stage.

The values that drive the strategic planning process are:

- Transparency of communication
- Maximising of opportunities for participation
- Inclusion and valuing of diverse voices
- Honesty
- Constructive engagement
- Reflection and mutual learning

These values are consistent with the broader values of CCC.

The stakeholders in the CCC strategic planning process have been identified as follows:

- ✓ Executive Committee members
- ✓ Executive Director and the senior management team
- ✓ Staff
- ✓ Members
- ✓ Potential members i.e. organisations who are eligible to join CCC but have not done so
- ✓ Recently departed members
- ✓ Donors
- ✓ Government officials
- ✓ Peer organisations eg. NGO forum, sector-based peak bodies, etc

The strategic planning process will contain, at a minimum, four distinct opportunities for consultation and input: an initial workshop to which all staff and Executive Committee members will be invited, a survey of members, individual meetings with key stakeholders and a staff retreat.

A table illustrating stakeholders by consultation opportunity is included as attachment 1.

The final responsibility for the development of a strategic plan rests with the Executive Committee. However, in practice, the senior management team will undertake most of the analysis and development work.

If you have any questions in relation to the strategic planning process, please contact either Mr Lun Borithy ([dir@ccc-cambodia.org](mailto:dir@ccc-cambodia.org)) or Louise Coventry ([louise@ccc-cambodia.org](mailto:louise@ccc-cambodia.org)).



## **Annex 2**

**Strategic Planning Surveys -  
A summary of feedback about vision,  
mission and expectations, July 2008**

## **Strategic Planning Surveys – A summary of feedback about vision, mission and expectations**

### **July 2008**

Responses to the survey were received from 19 staff and 2 Executive Committee members.

Fifteen (16) respondents indicated that we are clear about our mission

Four (4) respondents indicated that we are not clear about our mission

One said they were not sure.

Overall, respondents had very diverse views of our mission. Four respondents thought that our mission could best be summarised as a combination of the below options two, three and four.

Two said our mission is a combination of three and four.

One said our mission is a combination of two and three and one said it is a combination of two and four.

Respondents selecting only one option selected as follows:

1. We are here to do whatever the members want. (1)
2. We are mostly interested in building the capacity of (or professionalising) the NGO sector in Cambodia. (4)
3. Our most important role is to be the bridge between donors, government and NGOs. (4)
4. We are mostly interested in information exchange and coordinating the NGO sector in Cambodia. (3)

Finally, one respondent said our mission is best characterised by option four but it should move towards option two.

My conclusion from this analysis is that we are not as clear about our mission as we may like to think we are.

The outcomes from the strategic planning process that respondents wished to see fall into two broad categories because the question was interpreted differently by different respondents. Some respondents answered on the basis of what they wanted to achieve as a result of participating in the process of developing a new strategic plan. Others responded on the basis of what they wanted the plan to achieve for them.

## CATEGORY 1: OUTCOMES OF PROCESS

We want:

To revisit our mission and the role we play with CSOs. Does CCC represent only NGOs or CSOs as a whole? CCC plays an important role not only in information exchange and coordination amongst NGOs, government and donors but we should also promote the quality of voice to donors and government to influence them for better policy development and implementation.

1. More focus and an achievable strategic plan
2. Better definition of institutional structure
3. The strategic plan must be closely related to CCC's capacity to mobilise resources.

This is important because a good plan is a plan that can be implemented not a plan that will stay on the shelf. It is also important to have collective ownership of the plan by all staff.

CCC needs to develop an implementation plan along with the strategic development plan.

We need clear direction, prioritisation with realistic & **measurable** objectives

We need a vision that will move CCC into the next stage as a professional organisation that will demand respect for their services.

We need an honest reality check for all staff about areas of strength and weakness and a commitment to change.

We need an increase in strategic thinking and planning skills across all levels of the organisation. This is more important than the plan itself, because the plan is unlikely to endure for 5 years given the current pace of change in Cambodian society/economy. Increased capacity for strategic thinking on an organisation-wide basis will help to ensure that the organisation can adapt better in future to the changes and challenges that it faces.

We need for staff to become re-energised about CCC and clearer as to our mission but also comfortable and fully aware of the role that they/we will play (both in the planning process and the implementation of the plan over the next five years).

We need the strategic plan as the big guide to help us to do with the work we have to do to achieve our goals, vision and mission.

I hope that the strategic plan will help our organisation to work on the straight way. If we do the correct strategic plan, it looks like we will have the way for a long time.

The most important outcomes that I would like to see emerging from the strategic planning process are: workshop, survey, retreat, discussion, meetings. The workshop can help staff to improve our organisation's aim, activities and goals. The retreat will give time for the director to show us about the outcome of our organisation's activity and what we need to improve more for the next year.

We need to have a clear and easy to understand document for most if not all staff and it should also point out as to how CCC can develop an annual implementation plan based on the strategic one. This will help all of us to plan out activities and reach expected outputs well in advance.

## **CATEGORY 2: OUTCOMES OF PLAN**

I would like to see CCC recognised by all sectors related to NGOs, donors' community and government and private sector as playing an important role in capacity building of the NGO sector. I think this is very important, because it can help CCC to become more sustainable.

CCC needs to get new members. We should aim to have 70% of all registered NGOs as members (say 500 members). This is important because this it will support the survival of CCC and help NGOs to have a stronger collective voice, strong enough to influence donors and government.

I would like to see CCC recognised as a serious force for information exchange and coordination of the NGO sector in Cambodia. I think it is important because it can help CCC become a well-known and leading NGO in Cambodia.

CCC must stand as a 'Civil Society' representative with the capacity to bring a collective voice to the government. CCC would be the bridge (and voice) sharing between NGOs and government.

A good outcome would be a secure funding source for CCC core activities.

We should get a good practice certificate because we will become a model NGO and widely trusted. We need to increase our projects, membership, CBO engagement and donors because this will help us become more sustainable.

We need good collaboration with the private sector and with government.

The most important outcome that I would like to see emerging from this strategic planning process is getting more projects or funds to strengthen CCC. The reason I think like this is because CCC doesn't have any donors for core activities but it has funds from the members so that means CCC can stay alive if it has more members or more donors.

I want for CCC to be strengthened and be able to take the lead in getting the voices of NGOs heard. I want for CCC to build strong relationships with government and donors for a better working environment. This is important to help government to see NGOs as true development partners and to build trust between us and the government.

## EXTRA INFORMATION

**Some members say that CCC is not providing needed services, so we should understand their needs very well.**

The very survival of the CCC as a vibrant membership coalition is at stake. ADI and GPP could spin off from CCC as the Gender and Development Project did in the past. Without a strong plan that will attract donors and renewed interest of members, the CCC secretariat could end up as a one room office staffed by one or two people.

Some NGOs perceive that CCC should play role as intermediary body in receiving funds from donors and then providing grants to other NGOs. This could be done alongside NGO GPP and used as the extra motivation for NGOS to apply for certification.

We need national platforms on specific issues related to good practice and professionalism in the areas of IT, organisational development, program development, resource and revenue management, community development, human resource management and others.

Exchanging information and bridging the local community and national community, especially in regard to national policies and other strategies of the government and donors, must be in our hands and we must be able to share what we learn with our NGO community and other related communities.

We should look beyond where we are now to see in what way CCC can play a role to facilitate the sectoral groups/networks and provincial networks to have a collective voice for successful advocacy.

- Some trainees said CCC should provide capacity building to small NGOs as and when required.
- CCC should have spread its services on staff recruitment and membership more widely because most people live far away from CCC and cannot access the information.
- Provide pre-project monitoring evaluation to small NGO
- Provide pre consultant
- The NGO voluntary certification system could be officially recognised by donors and government

CCC should make the existing structure of NGO networks run more effectively and in a more beneficial way.

CCC should update its website as well as make it to be more attractive. Frequently, it should provide information about various forums and the discussion between government and NGOs

Most NGOs do not see the relevance of the CCC as they did in the past. For whatever reason, CCC has failed to evolve over the past 10 years in the same way as the NGO Forum. In the past CCC was the driving force in developing the NGO statements to the Donor/Government Country Group Meetings. This is no longer the case. CCC also provided opportunities for sectoral groups to come together. Now the NGO Forum is the focal point of NGO networking. Country directors rarely come to CCC meetings. While the CCC provides a structure for NGO to come together in times of crisis it has little relevance in the day to day activities of most NGOs. CCC will survive as an NGO coalition but what will it look like?

CCC has a strong history and reputation in Cambodia over the period of its operation, much of our support comes from those that have been engaged for significant periods of time. I tend to think it is turnover of senior level of NGO representatives that leads to NGOs questioning the value of membership and potentially leaving. CCC needs to engage these new senior reps ASAP. We should be more proactive in marketing, selling and promoting our strengths. Perhaps tap into the supporters of old to find out what was the secret back then and how we remodel that for the current environment.

We would like have more focus groups and CBOs.

I think that there is already too much of a reliance on Westerners and a submission or blindly following of Western values and processes in the NGO sector here through a lack of confidence as well as the fact that it's just easier to nod and smile than to argue (and of course the fact that donors generally dictate the direction that NGOs take). I think that CCC should (somehow?!?) encourage CNGOs to forge their own path and contribute towards development on Cambodia's terms, rather than aim to 'professionalise' NGOs. It's a difficult issue and I am not saying that there is no need for Western thought and input (and realistically there has to be), but it's too much at the moment and CCC should be trying to 'nationalize' Cambodian development and encourage Cambodians to take charge of Cambodia's development.

*We have to share with donors as the (CCC members) to let them know well what we're doing and where we're struggling.*

MoI: opportunity provided by CCC, especially 2 meetings a year, field visit and NGO GPP meetings, enables the staff of the department to experiment the work of NGOs at grassroots level. This event helps them to take appropriate measures to assist NGOs and give advice to new registered NGOs on how to make themselves a good NGO.

- Feedback from members that our topic is not important to them (monthly meeting)
- People don't understand how membership work (mailbox, fees)

The information that I think is important to share in the strategic planning process is information from some of the CCC members. Some of the members said that the payment of membership fees every year do not get them any benefits, but what I experience I understand that some of NGOs are not interested with the monthly meeting, and some staff that join in the staff meeting are not reporting all the subjects to their boss, so I think that the information is lacking.

Some of the Directors until now still not interested in the membership paid every year; they encourage the finance people to pay but not sure about the purpose of membership fees.

- Use of volunteers to enhance program & personnel capacity

## **Annex 3**

Summary of 'SWOT' as per surveys  
completed by CCC Staff and Executive  
Committee members, July 2008

## **SUMMARY OF 'SWOT'**

As per surveys completed by CCC Staff and Executive Committee members  
July 2008

This document contains lightly edited information provided by CCC staff and executive committee members in response to a survey. The survey asked for information about the strengths and weakness of CCC and the opportunities and threats it faces. The survey also asked what challenges CCC has met well in the past and what challenges have been met poorly. Responses to the survey were received from 19 staff and 2 Executive Committee members.

### **CHANGES IN THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Economic**

- Dramatic increase in inflation
- Donors shifted their priorities to new geographical areas. This change has occurred because donors now regard Cambodia as a stable country.
- Inflow of foreign direct investment; increase of price (gasoline, foods and other necessary basic products).
- Gasoline was increased price during last year until now, so it's really affected to any commodities such as foods, daily stuffs used...etc. Consequently, it would influent to daily living of staff supported caused of this inflation.
- Reduction of supporting funds from various NGOs: there were shift in financial support of donors to the most Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) rather than on the countries where economic growth performance is nearly two digits. This case impacted members of this organization whose budget is limited so they have to take out some activities (i.e. membership fee)
- Economic changes: fuel, rice, land, food was increasing (because of open market)
- Climate change has impacted the price of oil and the price of food, drastically increasing the cost of living in Cambodia. This impacts CCC because the entire NGO sector is experiencing upward pricing pressures and is looking for assistance to mitigate this.
- Cambodian people were living under poverty line: Cambodians become poorer and poorer because they cannot earn enough money to support themselves and so the community is at risk of not staying in peace.
- People have better living conditions because of their business and land selling, so they have not well participated with NGO activities.
- Inflation have occurred lately so NGO face problems in managing resources.
- The government has become a member of World Trade Organisation (WTO) and promoted free market and labor markets were available for Cambodian people. However, the working environment was not up to the standard and many graduate students were unemployed. The economic was increasingly growth year by year while the inflation also increased and this contributed to the cost of living and morality of the employees. Again, number of new NGOs were established and viewed that some of them formed for the economic reasons rather the promotion of the professionalism and good practice within its sector.
- Rising costs of land due to speculation and high costs of food prices also are factor for concern in our work as people are losing advantage to outside speculative factors.

#### **Environmental**

- Natural Resources in particularly land issues affecting members while CCC provides coordination but CCC can not support and stay behind them.
- There were emerging issues pertinent to 'land speculation and exploitation of natural resource'. Some NGOs turned their interest into a specific sectoral network (Resettlement



Action Network initiated by NGO forum) in order to respond to those issues effectively land was damaged, natural decrease,(disaster: flood drought ..etc.)

- Environmental management and use: the global climate change including global warming, natural disasters and natural resource depletion. The government is exploring its oil and gas and the revenue from it will be increased and it is predicted that the government will no longer listen to donors and/or NGOs.
- Many countries in the world face disasters such as floods and earthquakes, whereas Cambodia is stable, and the country is more developed. So, majority of funds from donors have been allocated to those other countries instead.

### **Political**

- The government excuses the human right organization
- **Cambodia is moving to become a 1 party state and CCC still maintain too close relationship with Government through its YES SIR approach while other CSO grouping fight against all odds to maintain CSO space.**
- The forthcoming election represents a time of instability and potentially, violence. This increases the fear of local employees, constrains travel in some provinces and contributes to a culture of uncertainty. This impacts CCC because we are creating a long term plan in the midst of such uncertainty.
- Threats of political instability and upheaval are remote.
- Cambodia receives more aid from China and there is an entrenchment of power in the hand of one political party (economic, social and political interconnectedness). These 2 factors make it harder for NGOs to have influence on the government because the traditional donors to Cambodia do not have as much power as before and the NGOs who worked closely with the donors have to re-strategize in light of these factors. The private sector is also beginning to play a bigger role and NGOs must and should work with this group to ensure social accountability.
- The government is trying to promote decentralization and deconcentration in the country. However, the participation of civil society organisations and community people sometime were not respected and values. The true decentralization was not yet since the decision generally made from the central in term of resource (financial) management. The government provided spaces to CSOs participated in national platform to discuss about the policies and strategies for the countries while the CSO representatives sometimes were unable to influence the govt to take into account on the issues seen by the people or the invited spaces were not publicly used or informed. Another view was that some of NGOs were established by government or parties to support their policies and act against NGO will. At the same time, donors have changed their funding strategies to fund not only to NGOs but also to government. This made NGOs faced insufficient resource to ensure the quality of their work.
- In the past three years, Cambodia did not have a good political environment that make the whole society meet a lot of difficulties such as social and ethical morality value fall down.
- Governance is an issue within government and NGO sector in Cambodia. There was no corruption law and the law on NGO. Some other necessary laws such as law on access to public information, civil law, etc were not passed.

### **Technological**

- IT World keeps expanding but it seems we are not responding to in the timely manner.
- **IT in CCC is used conventionally not progressively (or strategically) to serve itself or the membership**
- Modernisation of networking system (i.e. internet, email, telephone, network).

- **As the technology is flowing help to people using such as internet, most people able to send message or access to get information easily and quickly rather than we used mail box or stick announcements as CCC do.**
- Technological developments occur almost at the speed of light these days. Cambodia is a candidate for skipping entire phases of technological development eg as in the move from no phones to widespread use of hand phones, as compared using landlines as an intermediate step. Developments in social media are also being embraced albeit slowly. CCC may be slightly ahead of the game on this front eg some staff are Facebook users, Borithy has supported Louise's blog, etc. The speed and breadth of technological change will have a significant impact on CCC given that CCC has traditionally specialised in information management.
- More NGOs now have improved communications and access to information (email, internet, phone, increase in libraries and information centres)
- *The Resource Center no longer needs hard copies of publications, because users can access information on internet by themselves. Moreover, now World Bank (WB) has the Public Information Center (PIC) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) has Learning Resource Center (LRC) both of them allow free access to the internet and borrowing books without issuing the card.*
- **More NGOs now have internet, improving their own ability to communicate with each other so that is the technological change that impact our work.**
- Access to information and technology has increased significantly
- New technologies have recently been introduced to Cambodia. People need knowledge and skills to use and manage these.

### Social

- Groups of NGOs networks increasingly. I observe that the group of NGO's networks can represent some of their members and provide support for any issues.
- **CCC has not established "win win" relationship with the growing and now very efficient private sector to reap value added benefits for itself and its membership.**
- Profile of NGO sector is shifting from big INGOs to smaller CNGOs. In addition, the prevalence of I-C partnerships is increasing.
- Private sector is developing – should we/NGOs be working close with them?
- NGOs in Cambodia increasingly interact more directly and independently with government counterparts. International NGOs continue to localize and downsize their funds. Coordination takes place among groups in the same sectors and around specific issues.
- The importance of an apex NGO coalition like the CCC is still appreciated although the rationale for NGOs making large contributions to the CCC is questioned.
- Representative bodies have become stronger voices in their respective sectors
- Large NGOs now acting as partners to more local NGOs.
- There is a stronger focus on working with government. C
- Changing profile of civil society organisations (introduction of CBO's, localization etc)
- Trend for farmers to not crop
- Competencies (NGOs, Govt. and Private sector)
- Government institutes are more structural and effective in implementing projects, whereas more and more NGOs are having problems within their internal structure. This makes it more difficult for NGOs to raise funds.
- Many and many more NGOs have been established and competed with each other in fund raising.
- The education facilities have been increased from day to day. The quality of education is still in question. This was because of poor curriculum development and available resource for this sector. The training and education within NGOs were also recognised as the chronic

diseases and not much improvement within the organisation. It was remarked that the quality of advocacy and policies influence to the government were also weak.

- Both communicable and non-communicable diseases including HIV/AIDS, TB and others were epidemically spread through out the country. A lot of resource was spent to prevent and care of these diseases while at the same time the quality of productivities of the works were also need resources to do so.
- Increasing number of transportation means which have contributed to increasing number of traffic accidents and casualties.
- Influence of NGO's & donor community diminishing due to;
- Increase in untied aid from China
- Discovery of oil & gas reserves
- US resuming bilateral aid to Cambodia

## THREATS

- Maintaining position as the peak representative body
- Delivering what members want
- Sourcing regular/adequate funding, diversifying funding sources
- There is a challenge to NGOs to keep operation costs low as well as balancing that with having to increase staff salaries because of higher cost of living.
- Government is smarter than before and has become more powerful while NGOs need to catch up in terms of power and capacity.
- There is a need for NGOs to get more support from its public — the general population and those from wealthy groups, in particular, have to see that NGOs are important to the development of the country. NGOs need to reach out to the rich of Cambodia too and encourage the rich to play a role in social development.
- CCC risks becoming obsolete as much of what we did provide NGOs they can now provide themselves (information seeking, disseminating and networking) through improved communications such as email, internet and phones as well as the opportunity of local NGOs to partner with an INGOs or donor
- Inflation
- Despair in the community associated with inability to make a living
- Limited access to funds
- Decrease in donor interest
- Transfer of available funds to government (by donors).
- More competition for fund-raising
- Decline in membership (and therefore in funding base)
- Some members close their office in Cambodia, cut funding and activities
- No perceived benefits of membership, other membership organizations are perceived as being more active and innovative (MEDiCAM, NGO Forum, NEP, KHANA)
- CCC is not perceived as being helpful
- CCC's competition is more sophisticated and has a stronger track record in advocacy eg NGO forum
- Some members still misunderstand CCC's work
- Globalisation
- Climate change
- Change in donor strategies (and in an increasing focus on competition, efficiency and effectiveness)
- Diversification and expansion of NGO sector. The presence of NGOs of varying quality (poor service delivery and low professionalism) can weaken the NGO sector
- Demand from public, beneficiaries, government and donors to improve performance of NGOs and support good practices and increasing professionalism.
- Representing membership as a whole with such a diverse range of members (size, capacity, sectors, etc) and such a diverse range of expectations and needs which will continue to differentiate. 'ie. Can't satisfy everyone'
- Limited spaces to hear the voice of NGOs and community people
- Difficulties of working collectively to influence Government to change their policies, strategies and programs.
- Difficulties working with government. For example, the MoFA/IC seems not to like CCC. They think that CCC makes trouble for them. As such they don't want to meet CCC and don't even allow CCC to disseminate minutes of meetings.
- Bridges to government built by CSOs are still not solid
- Staff turnover

- Political environment
- Losing CSO recognition as a peak body
- Reduction in financial support from various donors
- Establishment of too many NGOs networks which results in ‘mis-coordinating’ of NGOs, creating difficulty to develop a common/consensus voice from NGOs as ‘civil society actors’
- Corruption in government
- Member participation is limited, especially when we need them to involve them in activities, such as responding to requests related to our publications. It is even more difficult to get non-members to respond. As such, some publications need to be delayed.
- Mail box is not functioning any more
- Violation of copyrights law can reduce income from CCC products
- Engagement from senior representatives of the NGO community to enable services to move from information collection and dissemination to decision making and influence
- Representation bodies and recognition of their willingness to advocate for change will continue to grow, resulting in lack of respect for CCC and questioning of CCC’s purpose
- Some members and NGOs complain about our work and we don’t have good relationships with them
- Inadequate opportunities for civic participation
- Inadequate use of information technology
- Members complain that CCC not useful for them.
- Some members think CCC is just a big NGO.
- Government complains that it looks like CCC ‘makes a cake with no flour’. i.e. promises things that it can’t deliver.
- Not enough money to support staff.
- CCC cannot survive on membership contributions alone. CCC will need to raise funds from external donors in the very immediate future. It has yet to be seen whether CCC can interest donors to fund its core programs in information sharing and networking. Without this support the viability of the CCC is threatened.
- Competencies (NGOs do not pay attention between NGOs, government and private – lack of communication)
- Donors are transferring funds and focussing on food security in the community
- NGO Law: although we now know what we have to do, the strong objection of some NGOs made it difficult to make a decision. These NGOs are unlikely to listen, and will likely say, regardless of what we do, that CCC has initiated the idea of an NGO law.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Build on the reputation of CCC programs
- As CCC’s is the sole accreditor of NGO GPP accreditation, promoting further participation in accreditation can enhance CCC’s reputation & influence with donors
- We should take advantage of the thirst for knowledge of the youth and the increasing wealth of the upper middle class and use these energies for the sake of development.
- We should take advantage of the many voices of NGOs to find a forum for them to be united on a common agenda.
- We can use our good reputation and sound management practices to generate financial resources from members, donors and others.
- Government seems to be more open to listen to NGOs voices and concerns in particular at provincial level
- Donors are interested in specific issues of development in Cambodia. It would be nice if CCC can be open to new development.

- CCC's current programs in information sharing and networking will need to be reinvented and professionalised to attract donor support and sustained membership interest.
- Donor support to CCC programs will depend on the ability of CCC to deliver quality outputs. ADI and GPP indicate that this can be done.
- CCC should have ideas to find funds from other projects
- IT support services should be more responsive to the needs of members such as sharing emerging/hot issues rather than regular information sharing.
- Many NGOs are still not part of CCC and could be encouraged to join
- The government today has changed its strategies for working with service provider which means it opens up for all sectors to involve themselves in the development of the country. It increases the civic engagement in the process of policies and program formulation. Thus, NGOs are more likely to be regarded as a development partner with government and across various sectors.
- Several mechanisms exist to promote governance, accountability and good practice within all forms of organisation. Coordinating the sharing of lessons learned is in progress and being promoted through the donor, government and development partner consultation meeting. CCC NGO GPP has established the NGO Code and certification system to endorse professionalism and good practices within NGOs. Donors, government and community are now promoting all these issues. We can see that our system is continuously given buy in from different stakeholders, so that we can leverage our system to sell more services to them. Consultancy service should also be considered along with this project.
- Compromising across sectoral lines to create a strong voice for NGOs in order to build image of CCC, in government and donors' view, as an organization to represent all NGOs in Cambodia.
- Latest information technology can be used to facilitate participation from members, non-members, donors and government. Also, can make income and reduce operational costs.
- More common issues happen to NGOs are an opportunity of CCC to work on it to inspire more members. The need of services to outreach to members is an opportunity for CCC to make more income.
- Promote better use of information technology within NGO sector.
- Use marketing on our website to generate new resources or income streams
- Publicise advocacy issues through media or website. Learning also can be done through web site. E based resource centre and information exchange can be promoted within the organisation.
- Get trust from donors, NGOs and stakeholders
- Defining and introducing smarter and more cost effective ways to deliver products and services by fully maximising information and communication technologies
- Defining new market niche for CCC based on its true capability
- Make the link to various donor and NGOs, effective coordinating activities through networking system.
- The organisation should take 'hot' or 'new emerging' issues into consideration seriously and make effective responses. (collectivisation of voice as representation of civil society, keep following up what have been done)
- Revise 'promotion' strategy and update networking system (through internet, email and other forums)
- CCC could conduct an annual survey of NGO member to assess their needs in order to revise CCC activities.
- CCC could efficiently promote our own activities to gain more members.
- Advances in information technology provide a strong opportunity for CCC to reinvent itself as an NGO coalition dedicated to information sharing and the capacity building of the NGO sector.

- Government, bilateral and multilateral donors, policy institutes and the press recognise the important contribution of the NGO sector to the development of Cambodia. Historically CCC was seen as the voice of the NGO community in Cambodia. More recently the NGO Forum on Cambodia has emerged as a more relevant voice partly because CCC has abdicated its role in this area.
- Use technology to upgrade services and avenues for service delivery
- Engage organisations working in partnerships with local NGOs and CBOs to promote good practice, capacity building and other services for the partnership networks
- There is an opportunity for us to provide services to not only NGO sector but other sectors (ie. Private or government)
- We have the invitation from government to participate in development of NGO law and represent the views of members in same
- There is an opportunity to work as part of a coalition of peak bodies and sectoral groups. This is important not only to promote more effective representation of the diversity of the NGO community, but also as for the vicarious learning and professional development that comes from working alongside sophisticated peers.
- There is widespread interest in promoting good governance among the NGO sector
- Lonely Planet's guide to Cambodia refers to CCC as a leading organisation that can assist potential volunteers to find an organisation with which to volunteer. Almost every tourist that comes to Cambodia would have or have read a copy of this guide. We can make better use of this free publicity.
- Learn from partners who worked with CBO, NGOs, Govt. and Private. (Training course+ cross visit in and outside country)
- Need to reach out more to local and especially provincial NGOs and NGO networks – these are growing (in numbers and sizes) and bigger INGOs and bilateral agencies are increasingly partnering with CNGOs. If CCC's presence in this sub-sector is stronger there maybe more of a need for us from both sides of the relationship. In the past, CCC provided a service that NGOs could not provide themselves – now with improved communications such as phone, email and internet this service is becoming redundant. Also the trend of INGOs and CNGOs working together means that they are doing their own networking and communication. We need to provide CNGOs with something they need. Obviously we can't give them funding but we can link them up with other CNGOs and CNGO networks.
- Piggy back on the excellent training and capacity building reputations of ADI, NGO GPP and FSSP and develop towards becoming a training organisation for individuals and organisations
- As major donors and INGOs seek partnerships with CNGOs, we can provide information and advice to them regarding NGO activities in certain locations, sectors and encourage GPP certified NGOs to be used.
- NGO law – if we adopt a different approach is it possible to make this a positive experience, rather than the 'same old same old' attitude towards the government. This can also enhance NGOs' faith in us as a real coordinating body working towards improving relations with the government.
- Strengthen CCC by creating new projects and getting more funds from other donors
- Strengthen by getting more international members and local NGO members
- Work closely with the Ministries (MoI, MoFA, CDC and CoM)
- Members can share experience among each other to gain good ideas to support their organisations.
- The Resource Centre could expand and improve access to online documents through CCC website (by following the link to the Resource Centre).
- Set up new projects to focus on different topics or sectors
- Publish the up-to-date directory
- Make stronger links between donor and NGOs

## STRENGTHS

- Strength of program delivery
- Information dissemination
- We have members who are waiting to receive information and looking to CCC for leadership and guidance on certain government policies. We can reach out to members. The NGO Accountability project is a strength that can be used for certification of NGOs and to give credibility to NGOs.
- CCC is a membership organisation with good reputation in Cambodia as a representative of the NGO community. It is widely recognised by the NGO community, government and donors.
- Our services, especially the two existing projects, have a good reputation among the NGO community and other communities.
- Staff are well equipped
- We have variety of products to offer to people
- We have active support from ExComm members
- We have good communication among staff, NGO members, donors and other key stakeholders
- Respect and solidarity
- Staff are qualified
- High capacity/knowledge of the staff
- Different policies are in place for us to follow
- Good team work
- Staff know their role and responsibility (clear job descriptions)
- CCC has a clear governance and management structure to ensure good practices within the organisation.
- CCC has many donors who give funds
- Our products and services are unique and invaluable,
- There is no competition from other organizations to deliver our core services.
- Well structured staffing manual and policies, financial manual and policies, charter and by-laws, vision, mission and values and strategic plan of CCC.
- Good cooperation and relationship amongst staff, members, donors and stakeholder
- Good service delivery
- Even though their participation is limited, the members still support and value our activities CCC is recognized by NGO community in general and community members seek to cooperate with us and each other.
- Long established organization
- We possess the most comprehensive NGO database in Cambodia
- We are reasonably knowledgeable about NGO affairs
- CCC has a resource centre which is accessible
- CCC has its own publications (although monthly newsletters are not widely distributed)
- We publish research which is used as a point of reference by others
- CCC's historic role as the voice of the NGO community in Cambodia gives it credibility with government and donors. However much of this capital has been squandered in recent years and needs to be revitalised. At major conferences it is the Executive Director of the NGO Forum who is asked to speak on behalf of the NGO sector, not the Executive Director of the CCC.
- Diversity of staff with a range of experiences and views and the ability to be able to discuss or challenge these in a safe environment.
- Strong projects making a difference at the grass roots levels
- Strong history and networks within the NGO community



- Our track record of success, especially in information management and capacity building initiatives
- The recent injection of new talent into the organisation eg executive director
- Stability of membership
- CCC is one of the better run NGOs in Cambodia and has a flawless reputation in this regard – by extension, our stamp of approval is worth something
- CCC enjoys an excellent reputation, especially with those that have been in the development community for a long time
- Our projects (ADI and GPP) are good and could be an opportunity for future development of CCC as an entire organization
- Nobody does what we do – cross sectoral information sharing and gathering with INGOs and CNGOs, also relationships with NGO networks, government and donors
- The strength of CCC is management structures because CCC has regular meetings of staff and SMT
- Member increase (Even though CCC faces the challenge of declining membership, a lot of NGOs still want to become members of CCC)
- CCC has good information sharing by the member meeting every two months
- CCC has a role as building relationship
- CCC management has good understanding of the Cambodian context
- Staff implementation of the financial system and policy and personnel policy.
- Voice to donor
- Good cooperation with government
- Group of NGOs
- Staff have good relationships and they are always responsible for their work.
- Staff provide good service to all of the projects and to the CCC members. We have good communication and we share information with members about government and provincial issues that they need to know and understand. We also provide technical support on tax or finance system.
- NGO GPP and ADI support on training or work shop to NGOs for good implementation on their activities.

## **WEAKNESSES**

- No measurable impact from relationships with the government
- Lack of on-going long term guaranteed funding source
- Lack of clear voice on big issues
- Too many voices that cannot be unified because of varied interests. Our hesitation in taking the leadership role for fear of not being representative. Funds can be an issue.
- Membership withdrawal has caused CCC to face a financial burden. As such, some activities have been reduced, even the ones funded by donor, as money was spent on other activities.
- CCC is still very dependent on CCC membership fees
- We do not treat CCC members well enough. They are the people to whom we are accountable. Therefore we have to be responsible to communicate to members more politely and respectfully
- CCC role to bring voice from NGOs to Government seems to be inactive
- CCC publications are just regularly sharing information (hot issues and job announcement should be included in CCC information centre and CCC website)
- CCC website should be regularly updated and designed, CCC mail box is not functioning any more, many publications are left over
- I think that the capacity of staff members needs to be improved and built to respond the need of CCC members, NGO Community, and key relevant stakeholders.

- Most of CCC members are INGOs which sometime are not fully representative of Cambodian needs. Local NGOs should be invited to be members of CCC.
- CCC budget relies more than 50% on its membership fees. Membership needs to develop (increase) or we need to establish additional projects or services to generate sufficient income for CCC.
- Service delivery is still limited
- Information sharing is still limited
- We face funding constraints
- Lack of schedule sharing among the project
- Budget deficit – income is difficult to find to complete the services and products and meet operational costs
- High expectations from members for CCC services makes it difficult for CCC to find solutions for them, and increases the workload of CCC staff. Eg: solutions in response to law implementation, CCC does not have staff with that expertise.
- Lately staff turn over rate of CCC, make CCC got to the restore point.
- Messy workload to CCC Information Unit, make CCC fail to respond to information needed by members, and late in finishing CCC publications.
- Staff turn over
- Lacking fund to support the organization
- CCC institutional structure is unfit to serve its business profile
- CCC outreach to donors and civil society is weak
- CCC institutional credibility at its lowest ebb
- Service: promotion of CCC activities still limited
- CCC is not efficiently fulfil members' needs (i.e. the updated directory book as in annual it would be old strategic to be provide contacting list news for the member and it's also costly charge in the budget.
- Low levels of critical thinking skills, strategic planning skills and initiative are endemic across the organisation. This contributes to a sense of stuckness and fear sometimes resulting in catatonia.
- CCC has a strong strategic plan for 2003-2008. But it lacks an implementation plan on how to realise this strategy. This is the major weakness. CCC needs to develop a strategic plan for 2009-2013 with an implementation plan as an integral element. Staffing and management structures will follow the implementation of the plan. I am somewhat concerned at the present time about efforts to revitalize the present management structure before the new programs are in place.
- Weak organisational structure leading to management operating in a very operational fashion and lack of unity
- Lack of commitment to make hard decisions (or decisions at all) at all levels of the organisation
- Lack of creativity, foresight and willingness to try new things
- Staff are not clear as to how they can play a role in the broader organizational goals and objectives. There is a lack of initiative but I don't think it is necessarily through not wanting to doing things, but rather a product of poor management and information sharing in the org and a lack of awareness of where we are going and how we plan on getting there
- Poor governance eg limited decision making capacity of SMT, insufficient ownership by Executive Committee, absence of succession planning, absence of board development programs, poor integration of activities – persistence of 'federation' model
- We fail to promote (well) all the good stuff we do!!! INCPP, MLG, RC (not sure about GPP and ADI – think they are promoted and well known but maybe not?)
- Resources not enough (equipment )
- Internal community (limited sharing information)
- No place for readers

- I think sometimes that CCC focuses on justifying its existence (and what it is already been doing) rather than seeing how it can be a worthwhile organization (what it can be doing and what it no longer needs to be doing)
- Budgetary constraints at both a conceptual and technical/operational level eg absence of funding reserves and assets (operational), and low financial literacy and understanding of unit costing, full cost recovery etc (conceptual)
- Members do not join the members meeting and they don't understand clearly about CCC's work and they think the topic of the meeting is not related to their organization's work
- Member know more about the NGO Forum than CCC
- Monthly meetings are mainly attended by staff members who come with no decision-making power
- Short term funding – we are very dependent on the one year membership fees
- Too much focus on the Phnom Penh and not enough on the provinces
- Unclear structure: eg. receptionist and publication assistant – it needs to be reviewed
- Financial constraints as we mainly depend on the membership fee and we have a lack of experience in fund raising – especially CCC core group. This affects some of CCC's activities.
- Lack of coordination between projects – it seems one project = one organisation.
- CCC does not have sufficient ability to get money from donors
- Communication between CCC and projects can improve

## CHALLENGES MET POORLY

I don't know that we can really say that we have effectively influenced policy & practice related to aid & development. I query whether key activity impact/outcomes were evaluated against the strategic priorities

- **CCC members are not increasing in number because we work from distance and we don't understand their needs well enough.**
- **CCC has not been responsive to rising inflation which affects the living condition of the CCC staff**
- **We should encourage more projects within CCC structure to support CCC which will increase the chance of not relying too much on members**

CCC failed not to represent NGO community even its members. It was observed that there was no increase number of its members, especially local NGOs. This because marketing promotion of benefits in participating as members of CCC was limitation and the membership fee was seen too high for local NGOs. Update on interest or needs of its members or NGO community was not regularly done.

- Some of the participants NGO are still not able to conduct organisational development in their organisation.
- Some of NGOs in Cambodia still don't know about CCC-NGO GPP

High expectations from members for services and solutions in relation to government regulation; CCC cannot meet their requirements. Eg: 1) MoU renewal, members still need to pay unofficial money - this is what members need to see changed. We fail to meet because of over capacity of CCC staff expertise and unofficial expectation from government officials.

1. **Cost recovery policy was poorly developed**
2. **Activity planning were over ambitious**
3. **Core activities and staffing costs of CCC were largely funded from membership.**
4. **Support services and management oversight of CCC projects were not adequately cost recovered.**

**Many directory books were left in the stock. The reason may cost of the price, user able take to copy with less price and our directory has no copyright provisions to prevent shared ownership.**

**Some new NGOs may not reach the promotion of CCC activities that our activities would be let them beneficiary.**

In the past 10 years CCC has failed to evolve as an NGO coalition. The former Executive Director played a key role in the wake of the political disturbances in 1997 but in retrospect a new Executive Director should have been hired in 2000. Greater efforts should also have been made to ensure a dynamic ExCom.

1. Staff development – lack of staff progression in development in many areas, still needing to rely on external sources time and time again. Result of lack of planning and narrow view of development as formal training courses
2. Have not delivered or lost ground in several areas relating to government networking. Ie. NGO handbook, some MLG, NGO Forum now leading NGO statement. Takes time, persistence and strong character.

3. Have not capitalised on several emerging themes or opportunities that could have provided some leadership to NGO Community ie. Social accountability, aid harmonisation etc

We have failed to grow and reinvent ourselves at times when it was most needed. I think this was likely due to a combination of factors including poor governance (ie board not recognising or embracing its role in setting the strategic direction, inadequate recognition that times were changing fast and that a five year timeframe for strategic planning is inappropriate in this context), loss of enthusiasm by management (eg. former executive director overstaying) and rapidity of external change.

No funds and difficult to work with govt.

I think that we have failed to be clear as to our Vision, Mission and Values or our role in the NGO sector and in communicating this to our members as well as the development community in general. Members seem to have unrealistic expectations of us and seem to think that CCC can fill any gap or provide the solution to any problem. I am not saying that none of members' criticisms are unwarranted, but rather that they are not clear about what we are doing, partly because we are not clear, so don't know what are the correct things to refer to us, what we can help with and what we cannot help with.

**The challenges have we failed to meet in the past couple years is the MOU renewal. Because when we renewal the MoU the ministry ask for the money and didn't give back the receipt that is the wrong policy of our organization.**

*CCC Annual General Meeting (AGM), some of our members sent their staff to attend not fit to make the decision during the meeting.*

Fail to ensure financial security for CCC because of lack of strategies to do fund raising. We sometimes think that raising fund would mean competing with our members.

Network study: we decided to postpone it because of lack of funding support.

- Members withdraw. Because some of our members think that CCC is not important for them. CCC just publishes the books.

## Challenges met well

We have been able to bring NGOs together in the AGM particularly to discuss the NGO LAW.

### **There has been downwards trend of paid participants but we have been able to raise fund from sources other than the current donors and cost sharing of cooperating NGOs**

CCC publications and resource centre are big achievements. Two existing projects also were well implemented. These went well because of continuous support from NGO community and donors and good internal governance and management structure.

- shortage of funding, in the master plan we plan to have three level of Focus Group members with 45 NGOs and 18 workshops in two year project but we can't do it.
- To solve this problem, we have changed our strategic from 3 level of FG member became 2 level with 45 NGOs and reduce the number of workshop but the topic of workshop is remain the same.

CCC finally hired a new Executive Director in 2008, a necessary precondition for the survival of the CCC. ADI and GPP have managed to recruit and retain highly qualified staff which have resulted in the recognised quality of these programs.

The two projects (ADI and GPP) have been important successes of CCC. They have high credibility, are well received by donors and members alike and they function as cash cows for CCC. They do, however, dilute the purpose of CCC in that they are not exclusively for members.

## **Fund**

Perhaps not so relevant to the strategic planning process, but I think the staff should be commended for the transition period (which is still going on) with the change of the ED. Most staff had only ever worked under the old ED and I think that some were dreading her departure, but the staff have responded well to the new ED (and I am not discounting his role in this process as I think he has done an excellent job about being clear about the new direction he wants CCC to go in and giving staff new challenges).

### **The director changed so we have a new director**

Some challenges that have been met well have been met by accident eg localisation.

*NGO Communication and Sharing information through workshop on how to use e-mail and checking or searching information by internet.*

MLG: from meeting based on issues to meeting regularly twice a year and field visits and exactly dialogue in the future. (Previously the government complained that they could see the face CCC whenever it had problem/complaint)

NGO communication: conduct training on effective use of email and internet

NGO law: conduct a study, conduct a member survey and develop CCC NGO Law position paper

Voice to donor community: collaborate with NGO Forum and Medicam to produce NGO statement.

New project FSSP

CCC has maintained a good relationship with existing members. MoI, CDC, and CoM. This is because of commitment of CCC staff to work together in response to members' need.

## **Annex 4**

Evaluation of CCC Strategic Planning  
Workshop held Thursday 17 July 2008

## **EVALUATION OF CCC STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP**

held Thursday 17 July 2008

Information for this evaluation has come from

- a. feedback received during the workshop
- b. debriefing immediately after the event
- c. informal conversations with many workshop participants after the event
- d. personal reflections

### What worked well:

- The objectives were achieved; there was consensus about this
- The facilitation was shared; many people had an opportunity to practice a new style of facilitation
- The prizes and jellies were a success
- Participants had a positive attitude about the future
- The mixing of Executive Committee members and staff worked well
- We had fun!

What didn't work so well:

- There was too much paper – it was a bit overwhelming
- Not everyone understood everything that was said – using only English meant that we did not realise this until the end of the day
- The exercises about the vision and mission became tangled up
- The contributions from participants were unequal and uneven
- It was really difficult to get commitments from participants at the end of the day

### Recommendations (to build on what worked and deal with what didn't work):

#### A. General:

- Continue to write (and circulate) clear objectives at the beginning of our events so we can check to see if they have been met
- Remind everyone to ask questions if they do not understand and/or cannot make a contribution
- Summarise in Khmer at the end of each session so we can be sure of participants' ongoing understanding
- Keep using prizes as incentives for participation
- Keep having fun!

#### B. Specific:

- Untangle the vision and mission (NB: This has now been done!)



## **Annex 5**

### **Strategic Planning 2009-2013: A Report of the Views of CCC Members, August 2008**

# **Strategic Planning 2009-2013**

## **A Report of the Views of CCC Members**

Louise Coventry, Volunteer Advisor  
August 2008

### **Purpose**

This report outlines CCC members' views of CCC, noting particularly their views about the future strategic direction of CCC.

### **Background**

The Cooperation Committee of Cambodia's current strategic plan 2004–2008 is due to expire in December 2008. CCC has recruited an Australian Business Volunteer, Louise Coventry, to assist in formulating a new strategic plan covering the period 2009 to 2013. The views of CCC's 104 members are critically important to understanding the strategic direction in which CCC should head.

### **Method**

In July 2008, all 104 members of CCC were surveyed via email about their views of CCC and its strategic direction. Recognising that a mid term review of the expiring strategic plan was conducted in early 2007, the survey was specifically designed to build on information already to hand and fill gaps in CCC's knowledge of members' needs.

A total of 24 members responded to the survey (representing a 23% response rate). However, not all respondents answered every question. Further, some respondents answered in ways that were not intended or expected and, as a result, these responses could not be included in some data analysis. Nonetheless, every effort has been made to use all information collected from members.

In addition to the survey responses, three members provided additional information about the strategic direction of CCC in individual meetings with CCC's volunteer advisor. Four new members of CCC were also informally consulted when they attended CCC for a briefing about the benefits of membership.

Information collected from surveys provides the basis for this report; however, comments from individual members and new members are used when needed to assist interpretation of findings.

### **About the Survey Respondents**

Respondents had been members of CCC for varying lengths of time; from 1 month to 18 years. Three respondents had been members for one year or less; eleven (11) respondents had been members for 2 to 6 years, and ten (10) respondents had been members for 10 years or more, including three (3) who identified as founding members of CCC.

With one exception, senior staff responded to the survey. Most commonly, respondents were country directors/managers/representatives or executive directors. These titles are what we would expect the most senior staff of international NGOs and Cambodian NGOs respectively to be called.

### **Findings**

Respondents were encouraged to nominate four reasons for joining CCC. Key reasons for joining CCC were to access and share information, to participate in advocacy, for networking and, more intangibly, as an act of solidarity with others.

Nineteen (19) responses reflected that a key reason for joining CCC is the desire to be well-informed about development issues in Cambodia. Some (9) responses focussed on receiving (access to) information, whereas others (10) focussed on sharing or exchanging information. Enthusiasm for the collective voice of civil society and the advocacy opportunities that this can create was a reason for joining CCC expressed by twelve (12) responses. Six (6) of these responses referred specifically to the importance of advocacy to government. Nine (9) additional responses nominated opportunities for networking as a reason to join CCC.

For many respondents (8), joining CCC was an expression of their commitment to the very idea of cooperation among civil society organisations – an act of unity or solidarity, perhaps. For most respondents who nominated solidarity as their concern (7 of 8), this was their primary (first mentioned) reason for joining CCC.

Six (6) responses focussed on relationships with government as a reason for joining CCC, however, this was not in any respondent's top two reasons for joining CCC. Six (6) responses also nominated opportunities for learning and participation as a reason to join CCC. Examples of this type of response are: to learn from CCC and other member organisations, build on a common learning for the development of Cambodia and participate in fora for discussion of topics relevant to NGO management.

Three (3) responses about securing access to CCC resources – specific mention was made of the salary survey, other publications and the library. Additional reasons for joining CCC tended to be highly specific to the individual respondent.

The vast majority of respondents (18) agreed that the benefits of membership were as they expected. One respondent reported that the benefits were not as expected, and three reported some hesitation about this issue.

Overwhelmingly, respondents nominated information as the key benefit of their CCC membership. There were 31 separate responses drawing attention to the benefits for members of receiving and sharing information relevant to NGOs in Cambodia. Some responses were highly specific but the majority were generic.

*We are kept informed of CCC work and developments, particularly in the development of the Good Practice Project. We receive the agency contact listing annually which is very useful.*

Other benefits received as expected by members were opportunities to meet, participate in decision making processes and/or coordinate and network with each other (15 responses), advocacy work (6 responses) and benefits linked to government liaison activity such as advice on dealing with a Ministry and assistance in negotiating a memorandum of understanding (6 responses).

While most respondents received the benefits they expected, a small number of respondents were still able to point to some benefits that they had expected but had not received. Expected benefits which were not received were mostly linked to advocacy (10 responses). Respondents indicated that they wanted more attention to be given to influencing development partners (3 responses) and more effort invested in consulting members and representing common concerns, especially as some voices are not heard as easily as others eg local NGOs (3 responses). Some respondents wanted a better relationship with government that would enable CCC to have a stronger voice in influencing national plans (2 responses). Following advocacy work and related issues, the next most common benefit not received as expected was about participation opportunities (6 responses). Respondents wanted more networking opportunities (3 responses). It was noted, for example, that most meetings are in English which limits involvement by local NGOs and that many local NGOs are based in

provincial areas restricting their ability to participate. More support, of various kinds, was also not received as expected (5 responses).

*I expected support for local NGOs (LNGOs) to ensure equitable relationships with international NGOs (INGOs). INGOs set operational and overhead costs at “international” rates but expect LNGOs to operate at a fraction of their costs including salaries. Competing for human resources with INGOs or United Nations programs is virtually impossible given the funding constraints faced by LNGOs.*

Members were asked how familiar they were with CCC’s mission and vision. Most respondents (15) thought they knew CCC’s mission. Seven (7) were confident that they were very familiar with it. One respondent reported not knowing CCC’s mission. Similarly, most respondents (15) thought they knew CCC’s vision. Five (5) were confident that they were very familiar with it. Five (5) reported that they did not know CCC’s vision.

Members were asked what they most value about CCC, and prompted to nominate up to three things that keep them involved as a member. Again, overwhelmingly, respondents noted that information provision was the most valued aspect of CCC’s work (24 responses). Also valued was advocacy work (10 responses), especially advancing relations with government (7 of 10 responses), opportunities for participating (8 responses) – often in specific events like the human resources forum, networking (6 responses) and capacity building work (4 responses). In addition, seven responses focussed on the very essence of CCC as a membership organisation as its most valued aspect. This was expressed variously as feeling like a member of a ‘community’ which works together for Cambodia’s development and valuing the commitment from members to work together as part as a network.

There was little agreement among respondents about the most significant areas for improvement for CCC, with the exception of advocacy issues. Advocacy was nominated nine (9) times as a significant area for improvement – often as the first listed area for improvement. Relationships with government were singled out by five (5) responses. Beyond this, responses varied dramatically: Arguably, the most consistent element of the nominated areas for improvement was the style of improvement required, not the area of work that needed to improve. Stylistically, members are looking for improvements in CCC’s capacity to analyse issues strategically and focus on the issues that really matter; they are looking for increased strength of leadership, more proactive support and greater responsiveness to members’ needs and they want a stronger and more diverse support base for CCC.

Services most often used by respondents in the past twelve months were the directories of INGOs and CNGOs, the agency contact listing and the salary survey. Services seldom used by respondents were the resource centre and government and donor liaison activities.

Table 1: USE OF CCC SERVICES IN PAST TWELVE MONTHS

Members meetings	Often 12	Seldom 8	Never 2
Resource centre	Often 4	Seldom 16	Never 2
Information products			
a. Directory of international NGOs	Often 21	Seldom 3	Never 0
b. Directory of local NGOs	Often 22	Seldom 2	Never 0
c. Funding agency and partnership directory	Often 14	Seldom 3	Never 5
d. Directory of provincial networks	Often 10	Seldom 12	Never 2
e. Salary survey	Often 19	Seldom 5	Never 0
f. Agency contact listing	Often 19	Seldom 5	Never 0

g. Directory of membership, networking and sectoral groups in Cambodia	Often 11	Seldom 10	Never 2
Government or donor liaison activities	Often 6	Seldom 13	Never 5
Member development projects eg GPP or ADI	Often 9	Seldom 9	Never 4
Other member support services eg jobs board, mailroom, etc	Often 14	Seldom 7	Never 2

Fifteen (15) respondents indicated that their use of CCC services tends to be more remote eg reading emails than face to face eg attending meetings. Four (4) indicated that their use of CCC services tends towards more face to face contacts. Three indicated an even split. On average, 67% of the use of CCC services by respondents is remote and 33% of their use of CCC services is face to face.

Of CCC's services listed in table 1, the ones that respondents would like to see more of are:

- Information products (10 responses). These respondents requested updates and maintenance of annual directories and donor/agency contact lists.
- Salary survey (6 responses). Further to the above, these six respondents specifically requested more work on salary surveys. One requested more detailed information on the cost of living and other working conditions.
- Members meetings (5 responses). One respondent requested more meetings in the style of the HR Forum.
- Government or donor liaison activities (4 responses). One respondent specifically requested more activities in which local NGOs can engage.
- Member development projects (4 responses). These respondents requested more projects in the style of GPP and ADI and/or more training for members.
- Resource centre/Research documents (3 responses)
- Information exchange and networking opportunities (2 responses). One respondents requested more information for members on hot and emerging issues.

Several reductions in service were suggested, but no service was nominated for reduction by more than one respondent.

Four (4) respondents indicated that they would like to see a continuation of current services but three of these offered some qualifications eg. to deliver services in a more systematic, user friendly way or otherwise make changes or improvements.

Respondents were given a list of potential areas of focus for CCC and asked to put them in order of priority. Respondents' priorities for CCC's work are as follows:

1. To facilitate information sharing among members of the NGO community
2. To represent members' views to donors
3. To conduct training and research to benefit members
4. To represent members' views to government
5. To improve the governance of NGO members
6. To facilitate access to resources for members eg. supplies, consultants, volunteers, etc
7. To critique government and donor practices on behalf of members and advocate members' interests
8. To build the capacity of members
9. To coordinate members' activities

Several additional comments were made by respondents in regard to their priorities, some of which warrant special mention. One respondent noted that training activities should not duplicate services offered by other organisations, one noted that the agenda for advocacy work must be agreed in

advance with members, and one suggested that working with the media should be the highest priority for CCC in future.

In terms of the top three tasks that respondents think that CCC should complete in the next three years, advocacy is first on the list. Sixteen (16) responses nominated advocacy as an important task, including thirteen (13) mentions of government relationships, seven (7) mentions of donor relationships and several comments specifically regarding the importance of negotiations regarding an NGO law for Cambodia. Nine responses related to information products and activities, and five responses related to capacity building projects.

## **Summary**

Analysis of the views of CCC members suggests that information exchange is not only a primary reason for joining CCC but it continues to be a key benefit of membership, and overall, the most valued aspect of CCC. In short, members support a continuation of a wide range of information exchange activities. Accessing information remotely is the norm for many members and CCC needs to continue to develop strategies to ensure that information can be communicated electronically to the highest standards.

Advocacy, whilst also highly valued, would seem the highest priority area of improvement for CCC, especially in regard to relations with government. Members are seeking more strategic analysis of issues, increasing proactivity and leadership from CCC and continuing opportunities for consultation and input in developing mandates for collective action.

Whilst information and advocacy may be the 'big ticket' items for members, the intangible benefits of membership cannot be underestimated. The very being of CCC is valued by members as it offers opportunities for acting in solidarity and being part of a community. More work is required to ensure that CCC can be a mission-driven organisation, championing the collective strength of the NGO community and enhancing its status as the third pillar of society.

## **Annex 6**

Evaluation of Staff Retreat held 23-25  
July 2008, September 2008

# EVALUATION OF STAFF RETREAT HELD 23-25 JULY 2008

Louise Coventry  
10 September 2008

## INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines

- a. what participants learnt from the staff retreat
- b. how this wisdom can and will be captured and maintained
- c. how the retreat experience promoted or mitigated against effective learning
- d. how future events of this type could be improved.

The paper is based on the reflections of facilitators and management, and it incorporates the views of staff, as provided at the retreat and in feedback forms submitted in the week following the retreat.

## BACKGROUND

All staff employed by the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia (with one exception) attended a three day staff retreat in Kompong Som from 23 to 25 July 2008. The theme of the retreat was strategic planning, and the objectives for the retreat were nominated as follows:

- Confirm CCC's vision, mission, values and strategic goals
- Build individual responsibility for organisational success
- Begin securing agreement on key objectives and actions required to implement the strategic goals and the resources required for this
- Raise awareness of our interdependence as team members
- Agree next steps to complete strategic plan

The expected outcomes of the retreat, which comprise evidence that the objectives were met, were:

- We better understand how we are accountable (individually and collectively) for the organisation's long term success
- We agree on the organisation's vision, mission, values and strategic goals
- We commit to supporting the implementation of CCC's strategic plan and can begin to see how implementation is going to work
- We are clear on our roles and what we need to do next

## EVALUATION PROCESSES

In the final session of the retreat, a facilitated reflection of the learning from the retreat was conducted. Three questions were asked of participants:

- What did we all learn?
- What was most important thing YOU learnt?
- How will you act on this (as of Monday)?

In addition to this reflection, an evaluation was conducted. The objectives and outcomes were again presented to participants, and the following questions were asked:

- Did we achieve our objectives?
- Were the outcomes as expected?
- What worked well?
- What didn't work so well?
- How can we improve future events?

Insufficient time was allowed for both the reflection and the evaluation, and discussion was limited. Because of this, a follow up survey was sent via email to all staff. The survey contained five questions. Essentially, the survey was a shorter version of the questions posed at the retreat. The five questions were:

1. What did you learn from the staff retreat?



2. What can **you** do **now** to keep hold of this learning? (I ask this question because I understand that learning that does not translate into action tends to be lost very quickly!)
3. What worked well at the staff retreat? (Name three things)
4. What didn't work so well? (Name three things)
5. How do you think we can improve future events?

Ten staff responded to the survey.

In addition to the group reflection and evaluation process, informal debriefings of the facilitators occurred spontaneously at various points in time during and after the retreat. These discussions were self-managed. Lessons drawn from these discussions are also included here.

### **COLLECTIVE LEARNING**

Without doubt, participants' understanding of the vision, mission and values of the organisation improved dramatically over the course of the retreat. Most frequently, staff identified learning about strategic planning processes as a result of their participation in the retreat. This learning was expressed largely in terms technical skill eg. how to develop appropriate goals. However, it was also expressed in more personal terms eg. 'I learnt the real meaning of vision and mission'.

Staff also identified learning a lot about teamwork processes. This learning was mostly expressed in a general way eg. we have learnt how to cooperate better amongst ourselves, 'I learnt a lot about working as a team' and 'I learnt about the quality of teamwork'. Some staff expressed their learning about teamwork in technical terms eg. 'I learnt about how to get commitment of staff to achieve the goal' and 'I learnt how to remind staff to remember organisational values'.

Isolated comments from staff showed learning in other ways such as improved understanding of the difference between facilitation and training, improved understanding of the organisation's 'position' in relation to peer organisations and the community of non-government organisations in Cambodia, better understanding of the organisation's finances and the pressures of overhead costs and awareness of how to frame objectives, in that each objective or goal should be just one idea, not two or more.

### **CAPTURING LEARNING**

Learning not captured and reinforced can be learning lost. Organisational learning, in my view, needs to be documented systematically as a matter of good practice. In contrast, personal learning can be captured more flexibly, in a myriad of ways, depending on the preferences of the 'learner'. Strategies for documenting learning from the staff retreat so as to ensure it is maintained are outlined below:

#### Systemic

This evaluation records important lessons learnt from the staff retreat. It is kept on file to help ensure that the wisdom is available to all staff who, from time to time, will be working on developing and implementing planning processes. Further, and at the request of staff, a jigsaw puzzle collectively created as a group exercise during the retreat has been framed and hung in the CCC office, as a reminder of the lessons about teamwork that we learnt together from our participation in the exercise. The written evaluation and the framed puzzle together reinforce organisational learning.

#### Individual

Commitments made by staff to consolidate their personal learning varied enormously. Nominated strategies included sharing knowledge with others (so as to reinforce it in oneself), applying knowledge to a new situation, reading workshop results or other related materials of interest,

reinforcing the vision, mission and values by ensuring that they are constantly visible and including the lessons in an assignment for university.

The facilitator observed that many staff were quick to try and consolidate their learning, in that on the first business day following the retreat, at least one quarter of the staff had – of their own initiative – posted the draft vision, mission and values as a screensaver on their personal computers.

### **THE RETREAT EXPERIENCE**

Overall, the experience of participating in the retreat was very positive for participants. Objectives were mostly achieved, the process was participatory and inclusive, participation levels were high and the extent of pre-planning was obvious to all. Specifically, what worked well in terms of the planning and implementation of the retreat was the participatory processes, the authenticity of the facilitation effort and the widespread ownership of retreat outcomes by participants. An important highlight was a game used at the end of the first day to encourage a spirit of cooperation among participants.

The use of a participatory process was instrumental to the success of the retreat – As staff said, ‘good processes help me to remember’ and ‘good facilitation means each participant owns this process’. In general, the value of equal participation and sharing was observed. Ideas were listened to well and respected. The role of CCC’s leadership in this regard was also acknowledged: Our director is very open even when there are some disagreements.

The authenticity of the facilitation was also a factor in the success of the retreat, in that the facilitators, when stuck part way through day one, explained to staff that they were frustrated and asked for help about how to proceed. The very act of asking participants to propose their own solutions to shared dilemmas brought success. It was at this point in the retreat that participants accepted full responsibility for the retreat outcomes. They agreed of their own volition to work back late and forgo participating in the game. Ostensibly, it was this experience inspired participants to nominate the participation, motivation and commitment of staff as the primary success of the retreat (in terms of what worked well). A sense of pride in the staff’s commitment to participating fully in the process was obvious: ‘We have shown commitment to the things to which we aspire’.

Fortunately, the jigsaw game was still played at the end of day one. The game turned out to be a highlight of the retreat; it was used to reinforce organisational values – And as one staff member said, ‘It would have been very regretful had we not played this game’. Essentially, the game involved four teams being given pieces of puzzle and being asked to make the puzzle. Over the course of the game, teams discovered that they could not complete the puzzle whilst they competed with each other. It was only by sharing the puzzle pieces with each other, that each could succeed.

Other successes in terms of process were:

- Working in Khmer language (well, it worked for staff!)
- Having a ‘parking lot’ where unresolved questions and issues could be ‘stationed’
- Rewarding participation through prizes and jellies

In terms of what did not work so well, staff feedback rotated around three main themes – insufficient time, limited understanding especially given the ambitiousness of the agenda and general participation issues.

The most common complaint was that the timeframe for the retreat was very tight and not enough time was allocated to relaxing and recovering from the intensity of working sessions. Staff also reflected that they were not always able to develop a clear understanding of the issues being discussed. Many felt rushed, and were concerned that the focus was on creating outputs rather than

honouring the process. As a result, not all participants fully understood what each goal or objective meant for them. Compounding matters, some key terminology (such as the relationship between vision, mission and values) was not adequately explained in advance of the retreat.

Many staff also nominated participation as problematic during the retreat. Some staff reported that they or others were scared to make a contribution, that some of those who contributed ideas became attached to seeing their idea adopted by the group impacting negatively on group dynamics and that, despite the promotion of equal opportunity, discussion tended to be dominated by a few key contributors. Over-reliance on voting as a strategy to gain consent to proceed was also problematic. The limitations of voting were that some participants voted without first understanding all of the options and developing the ability to make an informed choice and further, voting effectively dismissed the views of those in the minority.

From a facilitator's perspective, there were additional things that did not work so well:

- Facilitating when you can't speak the language has obvious limitations
- The facilitators neglected to take into account the differing (physical) abilities of staff when planning activities meaning that all staff could not participate equally in all activities
- An 'a-ha' board which was established to facilitate reflective learning was not used at all
- Insufficient time was allocated to complete group reflection

In terms of outputs, the final objective of the retreat ie. ensuring that everyone was clear about their role and about what they need to do next, was not achieved in full.

Again, from a facilitator's perspective, reflections and personal learning from the retreat centre on the following observations:

- I (the facilitator) made assumptions about prior understanding, which turned out to be false. Actually I had anticipated it would be an issue (but I underestimated how big an issue it would be), and I worked with small groups or individually to address it. However, in retrospect I see that picking people off one by one or small group by small group was an ineffective strategy for building sufficient understanding.
- I was inconsistent in the extent to which I was willing to let go of some ideas. Sometimes, I could let go easily. Other matters I tried to influence. I may have made it harder for staff to trust and engage fully in the process by being so inconsistent although I'm not really sure if this was the case or not.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE EVENTS**

For future events, a series of improvements could be made. For a start, timing issues could be better addressed. A less ambitious agenda would be appropriate especially if working in English as well as Khmer. More 'down time' is required to offset the intensity of the work and enable time for reflection and absorption of new ideas. Extra time, at least 20 minutes in my view, is required at the end of the event for reflecting on what has been learnt. This reflection is different from, but complementary to, a more traditional evaluation of the event.

A balance between hard work and games seems important. It should be remembered, however, that games are often most successful when they are carefully designed to reinforce other workshop learning. Having fun does not mean stopping learning.

Ensuring that significant terminology is well-understood by all participants in advance of the event is also clearly important. We are reminded that it is important to provide information about the overall structure of the event at the outset and identify the scope of each discussion when introducing each discussion topic. Finally, in relation to process, using a 'parking lot' to contain and

track tangential issues was a successful strategy for managing the retreat and should be replicated at future events of this nature.

Appointing a good facilitator is essential. In my view, the key criteria for a good facilitator (or facilitation team) beyond the obvious are high levels of self-awareness, personal bravery and knowledge of how to share power. Finally, I recommend that preference be given to securing a facilitator who speaks Khmer. Quite simply, working in English mitigates against effective learning for participants.

Rewarding participation proved important. Whilst prizes and jellies may be substituted by other initiatives, it is nonetheless important to ensure that participation is acknowledged and rewarded at future events. Voting whilst useful in the context of significant time constraints should be used only sparingly and only after it can be confirmed that all participants have a clear understanding of the options and feel capable of making an informed choice. A promising idea nominated by a staff member is to experiment with different ways to ensure all staff members understand the process and outputs such as having participants with high levels of knowledge of the topic being discussed sitting close to participants who identify as needing support. Other feedback from staff about how to improve future events (don't be judgemental of others' ideas, respect the rules, cut down the time of talkative people, etc) suggest that adopting clear ground rules for an event is, on its own, not enough. The rules need to be implemented and enforced, ideally by all participants acting together. It is possible that as the confidence of staff grows in contributing to such events, so too will the ability of staff to monitor compliance with agreed rules. Senior staff have the opportunity to role-model inclusive and respectful practices. A final interesting idea for improving future events submitted by staff is to invite Executive Committee members to attend events of this type in future so that we can hear their ideas too

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that, for future events requiring facilitation:

- Adequate time is allocated, including time for breaks and time for reflection
- Preparation is thorough and every effort is made to ensure that all participants understand the issues to be discussed
- A balance is struck between hard work and games, remembering that the best games are those that reinforce what is being learnt
- Facilitators are engaged who speak Khmer, have high levels of self-awareness and are skilled at sharing power
- Tangential issues are tracked and managed
- Rules are agreed and responsibility is built for group enforcement of these
- Participation is acknowledged and rewarded
- A reflection of the event is facilitated in addition to a more traditional evaluation



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Cooperation Committee  
for Cambodia

Comité de Coopération  
Pour le Cambodge

## VISION

The Cooperation Committee of Cambodia's vision is for a strong and capable civil society, cooperating and responsive to Cambodia's development challenges.

## MISSION

As a professional association of non-government organisations in Cambodia, the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia provides high quality services to civil society and influences Cambodia's development partners with our collective voice.

## VALUES

Everything that the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia does is informed by the following four values:

**Integrity**  
**Responsiveness**

**Cooperation**  
**Quality**

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