



FUTURE ROLE OF INGOS IN CAMBODIA



OXFAM

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ACRONYMS

CCC	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DfID	Department for International Development
GPP	Good Practice Project
ICT	Information Communication Technology
INGO	International Non-government Organisations
LNGO	Local Non-government Organisations
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD-DAC	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee
NGO	Non-government Organisations
SAF	Social Accountability Framework
UN	United Nations
US/USA	United States/United States of America

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally, international non-government organisations (INGO) have grown in number and diversity over the past 65 years, expanding their role from humanitarian relief to include social and economic reform. In more recent times they have increased accountability standards, worked to demonstrate aid effectiveness principles in their work, and in the future respond to projected mega trends¹ to thrive and survive. INGO priorities may include exiting middle income countries to focus on fragile states, human rights, building affiliates by nationalising, local NGO (LNGO) partnerships, scaling-up emergency response, prioritising specific at-risk populations, sectors or cohorts; or institutional strengthening. As well as incorporating global considerations in planning, it is timely for Cambodia-based INGO to reflect upon their future role.

Cambodia has received aid assistance for 35 years, LNGO are establishing regional and global networks, demands by established People's Organisations² are increasingly being heard; and recent political, social and economic changes in Cambodia need to be considered by INGO in future planning. In mid-2014 Oxfam³ commissioned a review of the 2012 Discussion Paper⁴ that identified INGO roles as generating knowledge, convener and global networker. Respondents in 2014 identified similar themes: 1). INGOs review their future role and develop an Organisational Development Plan; 2). Facilitate an enabling environment with inclusive partnerships that build bridges between CSO, government and Development Partners for sustained collaboration; 3). Increase CSO knowledge, skills and strategies to leverage international networks and apply successful global experiences; and 4). Improve INGO coordination, communication, cooperation. As in 2012, respondents agreed if in 20 years, there exists a robust, vibrant civil society that effectively engages with government and this leads to their development, then INGO efforts would be successful. Oxfam prioritises this goal, which is central to this Discussion Paper.

Many respondents identified the need for INGO to challenge themselves to step back and support strong, accountable civil society organisations (CSO)⁵ if they are to facilitate a civil society characterised by resilient communities and a responsive government. Irrespective of whether INGO change their current operating model, it is important INGOs have a vision of what

¹ increasing urbanisation (UN estimates by 2050 of the estimated 9 billion people living on the planet, between 6-6.5 billion people will be living in urban centres in <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/un-predicts-near-doubling-city-dwellers-2050>), ageing populations (Globally, the number of older persons (aged 60 years or over) is expected to more than double, from 841 million people in 2013 to more than 2 billion in 2050, in <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WorldPopulationAgeing2013.pdf>), climate change (Projections of future climate change suggest further global warming, [sea level rise](#), and an increase in the frequency and severity of some [extreme weather events](#) in IPCC, "Synthesis report", Sec. 6.2 Drivers and projections of future climate changes and their impacts, in IPCC AR4 SYR 2007), resource scarcity (Resources might increase their costs at 9% a year) and shift in economic powers (In 2009, the total gross domestic product (GDP) of the E7 – the world's seven leading emerging nations – was about two-thirds that of the G7, their developed counterparts. By 2050 these positions will be reversed, with the E7's aggregate GDP rising to almost double that of the G7 in <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/megatrends/shift-in-global-economic-power-silas-yang.jhtml>)

² People's Organisations are those that are membership based including farmers groups, disability groups, indigenous communities

³ Oxfam America, henceforth referred to as Oxfam

⁴ "Future Role of INGO in Cambodia, 2012" by Marchal, Mary and Ngo Sothath for Oxfam America

⁵ CSO are all non-government agencies including INGO, LNGO, People's Organisations

"success" looks like for them and conditions that need to exist to trigger their "phase out". Phasing out can mean graduating a province or program, partnership programs, "phasing over" service delivery functions, establishing affiliates or exiting Cambodia. Over the past 10 years INGO have begun to shift from service delivery models and some have exited Cambodia.

Whatever model is endorsed at the global level by INGO, any application in Cambodia must be relevant and prioritise improving the lives of those social groups who have not equitably benefited from Cambodia's past 15 years sustained economic growth. INGO must hold themselves to high accountability and transparency standards through reflection, peer reviews, social audits and impact assessments.

INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Cambodia in mid-2014 is characterised by changes in its political economic and social context including its donor landscape. The ruling party is aware of the need to increase its supporter base, increase investor interest and retain or increase global reputation and has commenced a reform agenda⁶ while at the same time progressing draft laws likely to reduce civic engagement and centralise decision-making. It is important within the context of Cambodia's opportunities and challenges and history of INGO engagement, for INGO to consider their future role and development model in Cambodia to effectively contribute to its development.

Looking at the role of INGO in Cambodia in the next 5, 10 or 15 years poses the question each INGO must answer: what is the legacy we wish to leave behind and how will we reach the "Phase Out" stage on the development continuum? "Phase Out" as noted below (*Figure 1*) is likely to be defined differently by each INGO and may not constitute exiting Cambodia.

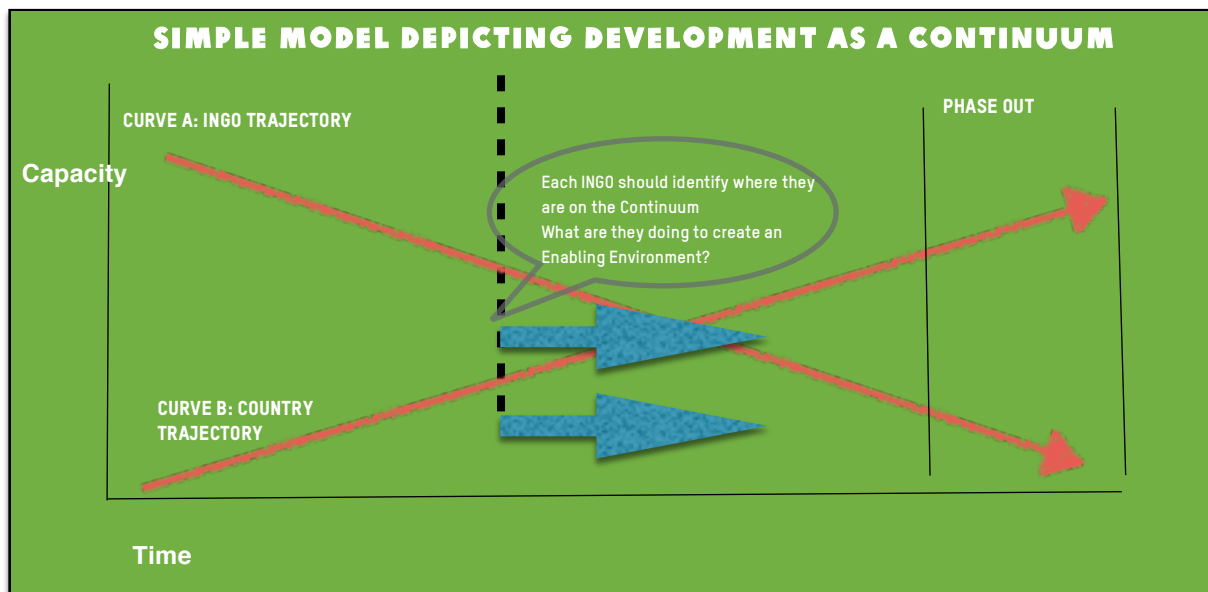


Figure 1: Development as a Continuum

Development occurs when there is a functioning compact between citizens and state and is promoted when the goal of all development actors is to strengthen the voice of poor people and state responsiveness.

⁶ Oxfam, Political Economic Analysis of Civic Space in Cambodia, Challenges and Opportunities for Active Citizenship, Synthesised Report, Carol Mortensen 2014 drawing on work by Dennis McMahon and Kem Ley

OBJECTIVES

In September 2014, Oxfam commissioned an update of the February 2012 Discussion Paper that explored the effectiveness and possible future roles of INGO in Cambodia. The objectives in 2014 are to look at the changing political, economic and social landscape in Cambodia, identify what is next for INGO, changes INGOs seek to influence, key advocacy issues, the policy space available and the advocacy means, vehicles and strategies to achieve active citizenship.

This Discussion Paper highlights key points from meetings with stakeholders; deepens the understanding of existing key opportunities, challenges and constraints associated with the dynamic nature of development; and provides recommendations INGOs need to consider for the future.

METHODOLOGY

Representatives of Development Partners, United Nations (UN) agencies, INGO and LINGO were consulted and a literature review conducted within the constraints of people's availability and consultancy timeframe. Consultations were held with 28 persons in individual meetings, one focus group meeting with 3 participants; and attendance at a global panel discussion hosted by Cooperation Committee of Cambodia (CCC): *Roles of CSO in Responding to National Strategic Development Plan, Development Cooperation and Partnerships Strategy and new Post 2015 Development Goals*.

Respondents who participated in the 2012 consultations were not deliberately targeted in 2014 and it would have been difficult to do so, given the mobility of many development actors. Amongst INGO respondents all but one have had a formal presence in Cambodia of at least 7 years. As well, the author has spoken outside the scope of this Discussion Paper with INGOs not currently registered to work in Cambodia, who support LINGO efforts in Cambodia and amongst other considerations may establish a future presence in Cambodia.

This Discussion Paper does not provide one road map for all INGO but identifies general issues that need to be considered in INGO future planning. It will contribute towards discussions being initiated by Oxfam to understand how to support active citizenship in Cambodia, how to respond best to the changing operating environment at country, regional and international level; and how to measure organisational "success".

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES IN CAMBODIA

SERVICE PROVISION

In 2014, Cambodia is at a significant turning point in its political, economic and social development. For the past 15 years Cambodia has entered a period of sustained high annual economic growth, although this is overshadowed by observations that the benefits of growth have not been equitably shared amongst all social groups. At this time Cambodia does not have an active and vibrant civil society and many citizens are negatively affected by food insecurity, non-diversification of household economies and a high prevalence of shocks⁷. Limited access to quality public services, vulnerability to market fluctuations, corruption, disasters, land alienation and the impact of climate change⁸ limit citizen efforts to significantly improve their lives and have increased choices and opportunities.

Since 1979 Cambodia has relied on external support to establish and maintain essential social services on behalf of Cambodian people. INGOs have been an important part of the international aid community, establishing a presence in Cambodia from mid-1980's. Many respondents noted that any sudden withdrawal by INGO from service delivery functions could "punish the poor" but that it is important for INGOs to facilitate and support an enabling environment that promotes more sustainable outcomes for Cambodia. INGO must not compete with LNGOs, they must consider handing over implementation of activities to CSO partners with a planned transition approach. INGOs who want to support service delivery functions currently being implemented by LNGO should strengthen the local entity instead of joining the same platform. There may be areas where insufficient resources exist or where services are especially weak that require INGO to provide services for a longer time before they are fully replaced. Selecting appropriate partners and developing their capacity and commitment is core to good development. All NGO should use field-based experiences, evidence, research and lessons learned to influence duty-bearers in policy and implementation.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Cambodia's dependency upon foreign development assistance is long-standing although the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) landscape is changing. Western Development Partners since early 1990s regularly linked aid to governance reforms and democratic processes, openly agreed by the Cambodian Government. Subsequent adherence to compliance standards and donor responses have varied. Today China provides increasing aid, loans and investment which has raised concerns about future compliance standards, but incentives remain for Cambodia to maintain positive relationships with all donors if only to retain market access. Respondents discussing the impact of China on INGO had mixed responses: some felt the impact could be negative, others felt that the impact should not be overstated; but there is need to also consider the role Korea and Japan play in Cambodia as significant donors. The changing ODA landscape in Cambodia's is reflected not only in the total support by country, but the type of

⁷ www.foodsecuriyatlas.org/km/country/access/livelihoods

⁸ World Bank Governance Index: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index/asp>

support provided: the Department for International Development departed in 2011⁹ but continues to support specific sectors; and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) phased out of Cambodia in 2012 but has continued to support CSO institutional strengthening, through Dan Church Aid and DanMission.

RECENT POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL CHANGES IN CAMBODIA

Results of the 2013 National Assembly elections surprised many and demonstrated mass mobilisation of citizens, particularly youth, voting for change. The coming years are anticipated to be characterised by Government efforts to increase popular support, improve Cambodia's investment climate and seek to maintain or reduce national or international dissent. A reform agenda, evidenced by the Government call to reduce corruption, appointment of capable Ministers and staff, the recently drafted Social Accountability Framework and focus on Grade 12 final exams should be monitored. Respondents noted the need to use a range of advocacy strategies if key messages are to be communicated from citizens to Government and policy and implementation change achieved, including promoting a "middle path" to influence citizens to move from polarised positions and take a more nuanced view,¹⁰ identify champions and change agents.

The need for INGO to engage with social media, leverage networks outside Cambodia, stand beside citizens and CSO during times of tension, and understand Cambodia's cultural context and complex political relationships that exist within Government amongst Cambodian People's Party and Cambodia National Rescue Party; were cited as important mechanisms to promote change. Several respondents identified that People's Organisations have greater legitimacy than LNGO in Cambodia, and needed to be supported but not overwhelmed, allowing them to retain their mandate and constituency. Concerns were expressed about the progression of draft laws without citizen or CSO input, the likely reduction in Cambodia's civic space and the need for INGO to continue to advocate for improved processes: Associations and NGO, Cyber Crimes, Trade Union and Agricultural Land Management Laws in particular.

PARTICIPATION AT NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL LEVELS

This study reiterated the findings of a 2014 political economic analysis¹¹ that relationships at sub-national level hold the greatest promise for constructive and meaningful civic engagement between CSO and Government but there is an important role for INGOs to play at the national level to strengthen relations. It was widely acknowledged that demands during the 2013 National Assembly elections by citizens for inclusion in decision-making cannot and will not be reversed; INGOs need to provide strategic support to civil society to support active citizenship, at the same time work with Development Partners, Government and private sector to increase information sharing, mutual trust building and CSOs role in agenda setting.

⁹ <http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/countries/KH/>

¹⁰ Oxfam: "Political Economic Analysis of Cambodia" by Carol Mortensen which draws on research and consultations of Dennis McMahon and Ken Ley.

¹¹ As noted above

KEY INGO CONSIDERATIONS

Oxfam and all INGOs need to clearly articulate the changes they seek to influence, key advocacy issues, policy space available; and the means, vehicles and strategies of advocacy to achieve active citizenship. It is also important to understand the increased focus Cambodia is attracting in the international arena and the role that Information Communication Technology (ICT) can play in increasing global support for key issues and ensuring that issues that affect a small group of people are linked to the bigger picture.

HISTORY OF INGO IN CAMBODIA

EMERGENCE OF INGO GLOBALLY

By the start of the third millennium, an increasing number of INGOs have adopted ambitious goals and sought greater resources to affect national and international public and private sector decision making¹² evidenced by influencing domestic and international policy agendas and paradigms associated with INGO: pluralism, collective social action, transnationalism and global governance.¹³ INGOs have increased focus on the international human rights framework, women, environment, climate change and global health through international campaigns: Make Poverty History, Jubilee Campaign; and directly with institutions such as the WTO, G8/G20.28 and Post-Millennium Development Goals (MDG) efforts. As well, INGOs have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 17 times between 1901-2013, initiated self-regulatory bodies to improve accountability and transparency standards: 2003 Humanitarian Accountability Partnership and 2006 INGO Accountability Charter; however, not until the 2011 Busan Aid Effectiveness Forum was a comprehensive framework agreed. Responding to emerging global, regional and country trends requires INGOs to be flexible, responsive and relevant; some INGO may cease operations or join larger global Alliances.

INGO AND AID EFFECTIVENESS

Building on three aid effectiveness forums at Rome, Paris and Accra which were "disappointing" and with the 2015 MDG deadline giving a sense of urgency to development actors, Busan's Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation was developed. For the first time, a framework for development co-operation embracing traditional donors, South-South co-operators, BRICS¹⁴, CSO and private funders was agreed.

In an ideal world INGO would coordinate all efforts, monitor impact, work collaboratively and communicate openly across, down and up; however, we do not work in an ideal world: INGO may aspire to be global leaders in a niche area and they will be competing for funding. Multiple examples exist of INGO establishing federations, nationalising, or building strategic Alliances to maximise impact and the demands for INGOs to demonstrate their value is evidenced by a review

¹² Developing An Effective Role For INGOs In Democratic Global Governance; Judith Grummon Nelson; Consultant To Not-For-Profit Organizations, Washington, for UNESCO-ELOSS 2012

¹³ Bob Reinalda, 2004 in nccur.lib.nccu.edu.tw/bitstream/140.119/33686/8/53003108.pdf suggests three major paradigms: pluralism, transnationalism, and collective social action. In the pluralist paradigm, NGOs are pressure groups representing their interests through lobbying and consultation; in the transnational paradigm, NGOs are private actors trying to influence politics through participation in the entire policy-making process; and in the collective social action paradigm, He thinks that in each paradigm, NGOs take specific forms as actors with their own ends and means.

¹⁴ BRIC is a grouping acronym that refers to the countries of Brazil, Russia, India and China, which are all deemed to be at a similar stage of newly advanced economic development

of online INGO publications. Globally Oxfam has prioritised the establishment of independent affiliates in many countries to achieve a balance of interdependent affiliates from both north and south. At present only two of the 17 “Oxfams” are from developing countries: Mexico and India established in 2008 and 2011 respectively¹⁵ but more affiliates will be established in the future. To be functional, it is important for affiliates to have skills and expertise to establish their brand, market programs locally, compete externally for funding without relying on previous relationships, have a realistic assessment of, and continue to build their organisational skills and capacity.

INGO IN CAMBODIA

Today, there are approximately 3,492 registered NGOs and associations with an estimated 1,350 being active¹⁶; of these around 450 are INGO; NGOs contribute an annual expenditure of USD 600-700 million¹⁷ comparable to Government expenditure on social services.¹⁸ There are also a number of small unregistered Cambodian associations working informally at the grass-roots level who do not register their presence with authorities.¹⁹ INGOs working in Cambodia are diverse and multi-faceted and the scope of their work is as broad as their interests and operations may be local, national, regional, or global. INGOs may focus upon issues, be task-oriented or driven by ideology: some have a broad public-interest perspective, others a private and narrow focus, budgets vary and INGO may operate individually, form networks or fund partners.²⁰

In 2014, INGOs continue to establish a formal presence in Cambodia while others exit. Initially, INGOs supported Cambodia's rehabilitation and reconstruction post-1979, then transitioned to development. INGOs over the years established a presence in Cambodia for many reasons: to expand a Mekong focus, respond to donor imperatives, have greater input in partnership planning, respond to funding opportunities or after visiting Cambodia and touched by the poverty, feeling compelled to raise funds for Cambodia. As well, since 2010 when South Korea acceded to the Overseas Economic Co-operation Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), Korean agencies have shown greater interest in working in Cambodia.

OXFAM IN CAMBODIA

Oxfam has provided development assistance to Cambodia for more than 30 years, from post-conflict emergency relief in 1979 to long-term community development with an increasing focus

¹⁵ www.devex.com/news/oxfam-looks-south-for-next-generation-of-affiliates-83564

¹⁶ <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/cambodia.html> updated 25 October 2014

¹⁷ Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2012: CSO Contributions to the Development of Cambodia

¹⁸ Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2013, “Assessment of the Enabling Environment for Civil Society - Country Report - Cambodia”

¹⁹ Cord Cambodia 2011, *Busan and Beyond: Accountability and an enabling environment for civil society in Cambodia*, Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, NGO Forum on Cambodia and Medcam Phnom Penh, Cambodia

²⁰ Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood* 1995

on advocacy. Taking an evolving process to meet priority needs of Cambodian people means that Oxfam is considering their future role in Cambodia and how they can promote and support a vibrant civil society. International development cooperation globally is changing as civil society becomes stronger and it can be argued INGO failure to change in response could hinder the development of an enabling environment in Cambodia. The Development Continuum (*Figure 1*) is a consistently accepted space to discuss the future role of INGO.

The Meaning of Citizenship

Oxfam invests in programs to help people assert their right to improve their lives thus enabling active citizens to promote effective states. Among Oxfam partners "Active Citizenship" is both a right and the responsibility of citizens to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural life of nations, ensuring they are informed and their voice reflected in decision-making affecting livelihood and rights. There is an overall sense this is done through education and developing citizen capacity to organise, critically think about issues and broader actions, and find creative opportunities for engagement. Oxfam believes development is ultimately about active citizens and effective governments reaching agreement on shared priorities to improve communities and bringing their respective skills and resources to bear in order to achieve that vision and keep each other accountable along the way. In Cambodia to promote active citizenship it will be important to build coalitions and develop capacity, facilitate accountable pro-poor public spending; and protect and expand civil society space.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE ROLE OF INGO IN CAMBODIA

The 2014 Human Development Report makes it clear that increasingly the agenda for all development actors in Cambodia is about its ability to overcome vulnerabilities and need to build future resilience.²¹

KEY POINTS FROM THE MEETINGS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Respondents noted that there is widespread appreciation of INGO aid and development efforts in Cambodia after 1979, INGO presence increases donor trust; and identified four key areas for INGO consideration:

Respondents identified the following key directions:

1. Review future role and develop an Organisational Development Plan
2. Facilitate an enabling environment with inclusive partnerships that builds bridges between CSO, government and development partners for sustainable collaboration
3. Increase CSO knowledge, skills, strategies to leverage international networks and apply successful global experiences
4. Improve INGO coordination, communication, cooperation

1. REVIEW FUTURE ROLE AND DEVELOP AN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Key Reflections

Nearly all respondents identified the need for INGO to evaluate their role in the current context of Cambodia. Initially, INGO service provision met the unmet needs of Cambodia but in 2014²² the World Bank identified that further efforts to increase revenue and efficiencies in spending will allow increased social spending and public investment; reflecting their 2011 findings that "...efficient purchasing of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies could generate savings equal to a third of the 2010 health budget, or nearly 0.4 percent of GDP".²³ INGOs have a continuing role in Cambodia with the caveat that after 35 years providing assistance they need to review the operating space, CSO skills and capacity; and identify their future development model.

It is important for INGOs and all development actors to identify their vision for the next 5, 10 or 15 years in Cambodia and what "phase out" (*see Figure 1*) will mean to their agency. "Phase out" may mean graduation from a community, province or program; nationalising; "phasing over"

²¹ Reducing vulnerabilities plus building resilience, Oxfam America internal Discussion Paper

²² Clear Skies Cambodia Economic Update, World Bank October 2014

²³ Integrated Fiduciary Assessment and Public Expenditure Review Cambodia 2011 World Bank.pdf

activities to CSO, Government or communities or exiting. Each approach will require a transitional plan, stakeholder consultations, change management strategies and active leadership to facilitate an enabling environment that prioritises inclusive partnerships and builds bridges between all development actors. The impact of Cambodia's history of war and conflict upon communities means INGO leadership are likely to need to manage staff fears throughout any transition phase: fears about losing their job, not having the skills to contribute to the INGO in the future, or fear of change itself.

Over the past 10 years many INGOs have reviewed and changed the way they work in Cambodia, often incorporating an advocacy focus to their work, which may be the foundation for their future "phase out" or "phase over"²⁴ approach. Globally Oxfam are questioning whether the *"old model of mobilising resources in the north to solve problems in the south"*²⁵ is relevant and this will impact on their Cambodia planning. INGOs exit with varying commitments: 2011, Save the Children Australia and Norway continued commitments when Save the Children International was established; 2013 CONCERN Worldwide departed without any commitments; and agencies have nationalised: 2011, CCC with on-going donor commitments. Even INGO without a formal presence in Cambodia need to consider their future role: 12 months, LNGO have won competitive USAID contracts; as well CSO may choose to crowdsource their own funds.

Respondents identified niche areas in Cambodia that exist without adequate resources that would benefit from continued INGO support: legal aid related to land evictions, mental health, disability and prison health services; however even in these areas INGO were advised to build LNGO capacity rather than implement activities themselves or support social work graduates to identify their role across these sectors. Experience must inform INGO planning about "phasing over" service delivery: exit strategies must have dates, targets, milestones and perhaps a phased financial and human resource commitment to test commitment and will of institutions that will take the lead for the "phased over" services.

INGO in Cambodia have diverse roles and responsibilities but should build on shared values and commonality to have a more joined-up approach. INGO should test innovations, disseminate research, be evidence-based and hold themselves to high accountability standards.

²⁴ when an agency hands over activities to a community, CSO or Government

²⁵ <https://www.devex.com/news/oxfam-looks-south-for-next-generation-of-affiliates-83564>

Key recommendations

5. INGOs conduct rigorous reviews of partnerships, their impact, organisational and partner capacities and skills, review the operating environment and define "success" to inform future planning
6. INGO who adopt a change model, develop a plan mutually agreed between headquarters and country: vision, triggers, timeframes, targets, communication, partnerships and change management strategy
7. INGO senior leadership influence staff about "successes", transition plans and "phasing out" if applied
8. INGO activities to be "phased over" to Government, CSO or communities should be tested in advance to determine the commitment and political will to continue services at an acceptable standard

2. FACILITATE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT WITH INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS THAT BUILDS BRIDGES BETWEEN CSO, GOVERNMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS FOR SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATION

Key Reflections

In broad terms, an enabling environment for civil society refers to "...conditions within which civil society works,"²⁶ premised on respect for, and upholding of, fundamental human rights that allow people to organise and participate in development.²⁷ Supporting an enabling environment in Cambodia requires INGO to acknowledge 35 years of aid and development assistance, capacity building efforts, increasing global role of CSO and changes in the Cambodia operating environment. There was general consensus that INGO should step back and let the agenda be set by Cambodia, support CSO institutional development, create bridging opportunities between development actors' and engage with the private sector. While INGOs cannot create an enabling environment alone they have an important role to play. Today some LNGO are considering social enterprise models: micro-finance, sponsorships, livelihood development, fee-paying volunteers or research; to reduce funding vulnerability. Being less dependent on donors is positive but these initiatives make it more important for LNGO to have strong governance structure including an active Board to ensure the highest standards of governance and corporate social responsibility (CSR) standards.

Agenda setting: INGOs have the responsibility to reinforce universal standards such as gender equality and human rights but it is important that neither INGO or back donors influence LNGO decision-making, although this can be difficult when LNGO rely on external funding sources. Many LNGO in Cambodia have been established by INGO in contrast to countries like Philippines and Bangladesh where LNGO generally rose from a passion for social justice. Cambodia's LNGO

²⁶ https://civicus.org/eei/downloads/Civicus_EEI%20REPORT%202013_WEB_FINAL.pdf

²⁷ Assessment of the Enabling Environment for Civil Society - Country Report Cambodia, Cooperation Committee for Cambodia December 2013 prepared by Ms Louise Coventry, Ms Menh Navy and Ms Alison Hillis.

history may explain why many INGO are focused on "maintaining the status quo", or are willing to accept any funding opportunity, even if the activity is outside their mandate or skill set. CSOs contribute to sustainable citizen development, evidenced in Bangladesh when improvements in the Human Development Index were identified as being unable to be attributed only to the State.²⁸ Cambodia's civil society is deemed weak but there is promise in the rise of membership-based People's Organisations whose voice can be heard on issues raised by their constituents. INGO and Development Partners have been encouraged²⁹ to support People's Organisations, but with a "light touch" to reduce influencing their decision-making. As well Cambodia's future agenda-setting should include youth and women: the demand for change by youth during the 2013 National Assembly elections and observations of increasing leadership roles by women about community issues, make them positive change agents.

Organisational capacity development: INGO were encouraged to "celebrate" their success in building INGO capacity over 35 years or acknowledge they could have done better. Organisational development requires individuals and CSO to critically analyse power structures and values, develop the ability to build consensus, build strong governance standards, network, influence, negotiate and fundraise to increase sustainability and resilience. Many CSO reflect the hierarchal and autocratic environment of Cambodia, decision-making power often rests with the director who may not invite or encourage feedback and participation. Facilitating effective organisational development is complex and requires trainers to have specific skills: they must listen deeply, understand cultural norms and challenges; and be capable of facilitating transformational learning for individuals operating outside cultural norms³⁰. Social justice, empowerment and gender equity policies may exist but not be "owned" by the CSO or its staff. Capacity building strategies such as mentoring or providing technical inputs to build CSO capacity were identified as positive; some INGO have focused upon CSO institutional strengthening without providing funding however this model is difficult to sustain if INGOs rely on external funding. Any agency that funds a CSO as well as providing capacity development needs to be sensitive to the dynamics of power; and all 'capacity development' needs to be analysed to determine if the focus is to strengthen institutions or train individual staff to carry out project functions more efficiently. DANIDA, which as early as 2011 recognised "*...Donors cannot "do" community development. They can promote and support endogenous efforts*"³¹ was identified by several respondents for supporting CSO institutional development. Today DANIDA supports capacity building: participatory communication for improved engagement with communities, organisational assessments, humanitarian response, gender assessments and gender sensitisation action planning, advocacy plan development, learning exchanges.

²⁸ <http://www.dhakatribune.com/long-form/2013/sep/16/what-bangladesh-can-teach-world>

²⁹ Oxfam America, Political Economy Analysis of Civic Space in Cambodia, Challenges and Opportunities for Active Citizenship, Carol Mortensen 2014

³⁰ Krom Akphiwat Phum, Moira O'Leary and Meas Nee: Learning for Transformation - a study of the relationship between culture, values experience and development practice in Cambodia, 2001

³¹ DANIDA Technical Advisory Services, Addressing Capacity Development in Danish Development Cooperation, Guiding Principles and Operational Steps, 2011

Handover of service delivery: General consensus was INGO have to facilitate future CSO opportunities to take responsibility for service delivery and INGO should not compete with CSOs. Respondent feedback for this Discussion Paper also reflected expectations that "...providing assistance through LNGO is more cost-effective than INGO, builds staff capacity and ensures active community participation in projects...".³² Importantly, some respondents noted LNGO may have to yield space to emerging People's Organisations operating at the grassroots and this shift will have its own tensions. INGO could have a role linking LNGO and Phnom Penh umbrella agencies CCC and NGO Forum, with the more confrontational membership organisations and build alliances. Many respondents noted that with the right of CSOs to lead service delivery comes with the responsibility for CSOs to demonstrate accountability standards, and INGO and Development Partners should require CSO partners to be accredited through CCC's Good Governance Project (GPP) or be registered and committed to achieving this accreditation. Today, around 32 LNGO have GPP accreditation although this includes LNGO whose accreditation is "pending" until an investigation is finalised or they meet governance standards. One reason for delays in LNGOs achieving accreditation was the need for Boards to be strengthened; this is an entry point for INGOs to support LNGO development.

Impact of handing over service delivery for INGO: INGO who seek to receive funds from donors and sub-contract to a CSO are required to demonstrate their added value, beyond simply managing the contract. Technical inputs may be one approach but inputs must be contextualised, appropriate and endorsed by CSOs. The Cambodian Government values service al delivery support; any INGO who transitions to a new model away from service delivery will have to identify new entry points to strengthen its relationship with the Government. LNGO are being awarded competitive contracts by USAID despite concerns by LNGO that they are unable to compete with INGO and managing contractor project design specialists; at least one Cambodian LNGO contract has sub-contracted an INGO for inputs which reverses the usual relationship.

Working with Government and private sector: In December 2013, CCC noted³³ if dialogue is a focused and intentional conversation it will promote a space of civility and equality in which those who differ may listen and speak together if an environment is fostered in which preconceptions, fears and need to win can be set aside. While "dialogue" is useful, it must be with an end result in mind. It is widely thought multi-stakeholder processes embracing civil society actors, political actors, government representatives, private sector and individuals are critical when defining, assessing, and improving the enabling environment for civil society. Key is the assumption that enhancing this environment is the joint responsibility of both state and non-state actors, and that despite challenges, experiences can be positive and understanding strengthened.

³² Vision 2018 Governance Hub Program (GHP), Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2013

³³ Enabling Environment National Assessment report - CCC December 2013

Many respondents identified true partnership and collaboration between civil society actors and state actors as an essential precondition if a more peaceful and democratic society is to emerge and flourish. In an environment where agencies with a human rights or governance agenda are considered "Opposition" supporters", significant efforts must be made by INGO, UN and Development Partners to build bridges, promote trust building and mutual respect; and bring other actors, particularly CSO, together in informal settings. In the absence of UN or Development Partner leadership, INGO can lead "the middle path". Building alliances and providing appropriate advisors on request of the Government were thought to be effective mechanisms although success depends on political will, counterpart staff, budget and resources.

Engagement between INGO and private sector must go beyond seeking funding or promoting social responsibility amongst wealthier Cambodian citizens; engagement must build and improve corporate compliance standards. Efforts being made to increase private sector engagement with communities affected by large-scale economic or agricultural activities, publish environmental and social assessments and report upon them can be increased. Greater efforts must be made to engage with private sector formally and informally to expand understanding and compliance to international corporate social responsibility (CSR) standards, and increase private sector awareness of risks to their international reputation for poor practices.

Key recommendations

1. INGOs invest in strengthening staff and CSO partner staff facilitation skills
2. INGOs reassess their approach to decision-making and agenda-setting, actively listen and facilitate citizens and CSOs to take the lead in their own development
3. INGOs commit to moving from training to CSO institutional strengthening; realistically assess their internal capacity to take the lead and commit to mobilise external resources if necessary
4. INGOs work with CSOs and jointly agree on the desired result of organisational development; as well as strategies, timeframes, resources, staff commitments and how the process will be reviewed
5. INGOs commit to providing CSOs with organisational development strategies by mutual agreement: including technical inputs, coaching, mentoring and INGO staff participation on CSO Boards
6. INGO recognise the importance of membership-based People's Organisations who represent citizens, and identify mechanisms to provide support without influencing their agenda
7. INGO require CSO partners to have GPP accreditation; or support CSO partners to register and work through compliance standards to achieve accreditation
8. INGO staff learning platforms include partners, Government, change agents and stakeholders

9. INGOs expand and deepen private sector involvement in extractive industry and related working groups, INGO seminars, forums and 'think tanks'
10. INGOs create, facilitate and nurture opportunities for CSOs to meet with Government, Development Partners and UN in less-formal environments: share learning, promote trust building and mutual respect; modelling "the middle path, holding all parties to equal account and promoting a more nuanced thinking
11. INGOs harness the potential of youth and women as change agents, providing them with opportunities to be leaders and have their voice heard
12. INGOs identify champions amongst citizens and development actors, promote active citizenship and social accountability
13. Development actors should "follow the money" to build Government adherence to transparency and accountability standards of investor and aid payments and Government expenditure

3. Increase CSO Knowledge, Skills and Strategies to Leverage international Networks and Apply Successful Global Experiences

Key Reflections

Respondents identified several ways that CSOs benefit from INGO knowledge: INGOs can introduce CSOs to international network, citizens and experiences to scale-up national advocacy campaigns and increase global awareness about issues experienced by Cambodian citizens; introduce strategies that have worked in critical situations in other parts of the world and improve the efficiency of communications.

Access to international networks: CSOs appreciate access provided by INGO regional and global networks: which international media should be targeted, how to nuance messages and who should participate in lobby tours. Respondents noted that these lived experiences provided valuable learning opportunities, built networks and provide links that will be leveraged in the future. Social media can be powerful, Cambodian citizens or CSO who do not access the internet were unaware of the strong international support "Free 23" campaign was generating, and its potential influence in influencing the messaging of garment manufacturers in communications with Cambodian decision-makers. Many respondents identified INGOs have access to Embassies and Government officials in Cambodia and that INGO headquarters can tap into networks in the home-country to increase advocacy effort but not all INGOs agreed that these networks can be leveraged, saying access depends upon the issue, agency, its organisational mandate and the Government Ministry.

Introducing successful strategies: Bringing successful global experiences to Cambodia does not mean transposing a program or project tool from outside, although these may have their place; rather it means bringing into Cambodia's learning platform an understanding of

experiences: at which point of the process was dialogue with duty bearers the most effective, or providing CSO and citizens with opportunities to visit like-minded communities inside Cambodia, regionally or internationally. Including social media could be an important tool in broadening CSO and citizen awareness of global success strategies, but with very limited internet access outside urban centres, low education attainment and a culture where personal relationships are important, learning may be more effective through seeing, hearing or experiencing.

Increase efficiency of communications: An example was provided about the value of CSOs communicating a message to one INGO member of a network operating both inside or outside of Cambodia, and having them inform the rest of the group, thus reducing the need for multiple conversations to be held by the CSO and increasing efficiency. While coordination groups do not always work well and there is the danger of messages being distorted, it is an interesting reflection.

Key Recommendations

14. INGOs prioritise linking citizens and CSOs to international networks and facilitating CSO leadership
15. INGOs build citizen and CSO social capital through learning forums, national and international study tours
16. INGOs encourage CSO partners to understand and utilise social media effectively; and
17. INGOs facilitate information sharing by the Cambodian diaspora living in Australia, France and United States to increase understanding of youth and women about dual political processes, democracy and active citizenship

4. Improve Cooperation, Communication and Coordination

Key Reflections

Many respondents noted that effective development in Cambodia requires INGO to increase cooperation, communication and coordination with all development actors, including other INGO. INGO must actively participate in formal and informal networks, increase understanding of one another; and share strategic plans, compensation policies, research, work plans and program models at national and sub-national level.

Cooperation and coordination mechanisms do exist amongst INGO however they need to be strengthened. INGO do not have a common mandate but can identify commonalities to increase cooperation and find a common agenda, however it is observed INGO come together when they are being affected, or may be affected by an issue: Association and NGO Law; when they are seeking funding: 2003-14 Global Fund submissions; or when required by a donor to build on different organisational strengths and experiences to design a program: 2012 Australian

Government "Partnering to Save Lives" which is a partnership between the Governments of Australia and Cambodia and three INGOs. INGOs do come together without personal benefit: including 2014 informal nutrition working group, 2009 Child Helpline Cambodia planning and existing Eye Health program which should be built upon.

The difficulty of establishing an open and communicative work environment is experienced in many institutions and communities globally: *"Knowledge sharing is often one of the most troubling issues facing employers and they keep trying to develop effective ways to encourage employees to share what they have learned on their jobs. It remains a difficult goal"*.³⁴ INGO leadership should model positive collaborative behaviour to increase staff commitment to inclusive partnerships with other development actors, even with today's challenges: INGOs must coordinate and be coordinated; INGOs compete against one another for limited funding; many INGO staff are recruited from Government, private sector or LINGO where cultural norms may be prevalent; and more than one headquarters may want country-based INGO to take the lead.

Coordination efforts need to be authentic and sustained once ad hoc situations that brought INGO together have passed. Consideration should be given by INGO to formalise networking into job descriptions and appraisal systems to promote greater collaboration, communication and coordination. INGO leaders must identify successful strategies to strengthen staff understanding that a culture of collaboration promotes opportunities; and influence organisational attitudes to change behaviours. It was also requested that INGO coordinate CSO reporting requirements to reduce CSO needs to submit up to 10 different report formats; INGO could take model this initiative and utilise the experience to advocate donors to do the same.

Cambodia could learn from the coordination efforts of Myanmar and Nepal although formal mechanisms should not be a prerequisite to effective INGO collaboration. The Association of International NGO in Nepal (AIN) with 114³⁵ INGO members and Myanmar's INGO Forum, a loose grouping of 78 INGO³⁶ both aim to increase awareness of the contributions INGO play at the country-level, generate strategic discussions and influence government and Development Partners. Forum representatives also attend national coordination and working groups with UN and Government across sectors, Technical Strategic Groups, Humanitarian Country Team, Humanitarian Coordination in Kachin and Rakhine; and donor fora, including 3MDG Senior Consultation Group.

³⁴ <http://www.management-issues.com/news/3122/knowledge-sharing-knowledge-hoarding/>

³⁵ <http://www.ain.org.np/cms.php?i=15> accessed 3 November 2014 from Member List

³⁶ As at September 2014 from <http://ingoforummyanmar.org/en/about-us>, accessed 3 November 2014

Key recommendations

1. INGOs support effective coordination mechanisms at the country level - formal and informal
2. INGO senior leadership model positive behaviours and coach staff to increase collaboration, communication and coordination
3. INGOs in-country and at headquarters should be open to being a coordinator and being coordinated
4. INGOs work with Development Partners to increase multi-agency program development to promote sharing of responsibilities, mutual learning and reduce overlapping service provision

RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY ISSUES TO INFLUENCE

Some respondents gave the example of South Korea which transitioned from being a recipient country to developed nation and member of the OECD-DAC, having similar development indicators and history as Cambodia today. While this was not endorsed by every respondent and there are also enough differences that may preclude Cambodia from achieving a similar transition by 2064; it is important that development actors highlight critical issues and try to influence sustainable outcomes for vulnerable and marginalised communities in Cambodia. Policy-making is not an entirely rational business, it is necessary to understand key people and master the complex processes that lead to change. Governments may not have the resources to gather detailed information and develop a ground-level understanding of issues, which is where INGO can play a role. The relationship between those advocating for change and duty bearers, can have areas of mutual collaboration, but the relationship is often fraught and even hostile, and frustration and mistrust may abound on both sides.³⁷ Respondent identification of the key issues INGO should seek to influence reflected the breadth of agencies who participated in discussions.

Key issues included:

- *Macro-issues:* shrinking civic space, corruption, governance and economic policies
- *Citizens:* facilitate the Cambodian voice in setting development agenda, build youth and women leaders, strengthen adherence to Decentralisation and Deconcentration program
- *CSO:* LINGO institutional strengthening and support, participate in collective advocacy on governance and human rights,, bring global success factors into planning, participate in existing co-ordination groups
- *Development partners:* encourage donors to work together on overlapping agendas and shared values
- *Government:* hold them accountable, track reform agenda, act as human rights watch dog, provide technical inputs, encourage more refined/strategic projects, continue work on draft laws, implementation of laws, increase CSO role of TWG, strengthen RGC relationships and reduce tension, "follow the money"
- *Regional:* build on existing structures look to establish regional projects, build regional advocacy activities

Issues identified directly relate to strengthening the enabling space in Cambodia which in broad terms for civil society refers to "*the conditions within which civil society works.*"³⁸ INGO were recommended to increase their ability to influence policy by establishing a common agenda and platform with Development Partners before participating in Government workshops, strategy planning and Technical Working Groups to have greater success in influencing policy and direction.

³⁷ Ben Shepherd, The Guardian, Friday 28 June 2013

³⁸ Enabling Environment National Assessment report - CCC December 2013

Policy Space

The term 'policy space' in its current meaning appeared in about 2002 in the UN Conference on Trade and Development documents, and acquired its first official status in the São Paulo Consensus of 2004 when it was defined as *'the scope for domestic policies, especially in the areas of trade, investment and industrial development'* which might be *'framed by inter-national disciplines, commitments and global market considerations'*.³⁹ Respondents identified that INGO access to policy space is dependent upon the INGO itself and policy being discussed: social sector matters have a better opportunity to be discussed; human rights, governance and economic policy are more difficult. It was thought that INGOs have influenced technical policy rather than public policy: vaccination guidelines, reproductive health checklists and minimum standards for alternative care centres. While INGO are unlikely to influence financial policies, specific Development Partners might be able to.

INGO are widely considered to have greater access to policy space than CSO but this will depend upon the relationship the INGO has with the relevant Government Ministry. It is also important to clarify that when reference is made to the ability of INGO to influence public policy, what is being discussed is often INGOs advocating for policy reform. Access to policy space might require the INGO to caucus for support; align messages to global commitments: MDG and Post-Beijing platform, regional or global human rights forums; or take issues to high-level committees and individuals such as UN Special Rapporteur for Cambodia.

Some respondents noted that leveraging donor intervention is key to policy development and that INGO have a role to play in getting donors to engage with civil society in aid delivery, however INGO do not always have the power to get donors engaged. At the macro policy level, INGO are involved in Government strategic planning and reviews but need to build consensus with donors on key points before going into meetings. INGO trying to influence policy are recommended to have a strong evidence-base.

Advocacy

Advocacy can be defined as: *"...a political process by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Advocacy can include many activities that a person or organisation undertakes including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research or conducting exit poll or the filing of an amicus brief."*⁴⁰ When looking at the vehicles, means and strategies to maximise the impact of advocacy actions respondents talked about advocacy activities conducted by INGO and LNGO together, and some noted that advocacy in Cambodia was best done by LNGO with INGO providing LNGO access to their international networks, citizens, media and policy makers. Combining national and international networks and campaign messaging has been a powerful strategy in increasing impact of campaigns. Local media and ICT, although the latter

³⁹ Overseas Development Institute, Briefing Paper "Policy Space: Are WTO Rules Preventing Development", January 2007:

⁴⁰ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advocacy>

does not have high national coverage, were identified as mechanisms to share information and mobilise support that was effective during the past 12 months, especially for groups refused access to freedom of assembly. Keeping issues in the media including English newspapers in Cambodia has been useful; some INGO identified that because they are not good at advocacy they support agencies who do it well which built on the similar point in different contexts: need for all NGO to bring in specialist skills or support specialist agencies rather than try to do everything themselves.

Several successful strategies were identified including not expecting a strategy that was successful one time to work every time. It has been noted already that when CSO can access INGO global networks, citizens, policy makers and media; the vehicle is provided to take the message out of Cambodia and into the global arena increasing the effectiveness of CSO advocacy efforts. LNGO do not always have to lead international advocacy efforts, they can activate networks in the international arena and have these groups mobilise their own constituents. Respondents did not think everything has to be done to one master plan as long as the messaging is consistent. CSO engagement with the private sector on issues which may have a negative economic impact upon Cambodia can put pressure on the Government and successfully influence decision-making. Several campaigns: 'Free 23', "Clean Sugar Campaign" have utilised a range of strategies at the same time with donors, banking institutions, external trade unions and garment manufacturers in Cambodia and externally. Some development actors including INGO are establishing programs to systematically lobby multilateral and US State Department on Cambodia issues and utilising other global experiences on the same issue to join up advocacy efforts. Some LNGO identified the value of consulting with international networks for several years to build space and keep Cambodia on the international agenda and the need for all development actors to work together more often to provide comprehensive coverage of issues: Development Partners, UN, LNGO and INGO. Public statements by individual members of international governments about Cambodia were acknowledged as unlikely to influence the Cambodia Government.

Several respondents felt that INGO should be more involved in advocating on specific issues: "following the money" and supporting CSO coalitions to halt land evictions; as well as "joining-up" issues that affect small numbers of people with larger global issues: being broad and specific at the same time. Again, there is no one model, respondents favoured taking a "soft" approach, working constructively to find the middle ground, identifying champions in the Government and building their knowledge about an issue, only being involved in issues directly related to their organisational strategy, taking a "harder" approach and sometimes a mixture of both hard and soft approaches at different times. Getting issues on the national policy agenda often requires both relationship building and lobbying those in positions of power behind the scenes. Several respondents recommended approaching advocacy in Cambodia from a "solutions" model to increase willingness of duty bearers to acknowledge and discuss the issue, as INGO might do in their home country.

A challenge in Cambodia is to get access to the right people during advocacy campaigns, negative feedback is not always communicated upwards so INGO should find mechanisms to have citizen demands listened to nationally. Coalitions can provide protection for all parties involved in advocacy which would respond to a culture more used to collectivism than individualism. INGO can reinforce Government commitments to international protocols, through established complaint and reporting mechanisms.

CHANGES TO ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF INGO

Given the changes in the political, economic and social operating environment and the history of INGO in Cambodia it is important that INGO assess their current operating model to ensure that they are helping, not hindering, the development of Cambodia. To change the role and activities of INGO will not be easy, or endorsed by every INGO.

Key Recommendations

Development of Future INGO Development Model:

1. INGO country leadership works with headquarters to define what "success" is for the INGO, identify where they are on the development continuum, what conditions need to be evidenced to trigger a "phase out", what "phase out" means and document a Development Plan that is clearly communicated to stakeholders
2. INGO leadership influence staff to commit to achieving "Phase Out", celebrating it as a "success"

Facilitation and Support of an Enabling Environment:

3. INGOs move away from ad hoc training activities and prioritise organisational development
4. A transformational learning platform is established in Cambodia that utilises the services of a specialist Organisational Development agency, funded by INGOs, to mentor and build promising CSO leaders and CSOs based on international best practices and positive experiences in Cambodia
5. INGOs ensure that their staff and CSO partners fully understand "power", are adept at facilitating the voice of communities and step away to allow citizens to represent themselves
6. INGOs and Development Partners require partners to have GPP accreditation or be registered and working towards GPP accreditation or all partners; as well INGO achieve accreditation
7. INGOs consider strategies to support CSO development: including Board representation,

leverage volunteers/technical specialists, mentor and coach, accompany them on their learning journey

8. INGOs are committed to giving CSO the space and support to lead Cambodia's development

Build Bridges:

9. INGOs provide protection and security to local partners and use political influence and leverage to help LNGO and People's Organisations to access international media, policies and citizen networks
10. INGOs use global technology better to influence policy change at the international level, expand citizenship knowledge, disseminate information about Cambodia's development

Communicate, coordinate and collaborate:

11. CCC coordinate a formal INGO coordination mechanism attended by Country Directors or other INGO decision makers that meets regularly to: improve coordination across field experiences, share research, sector initiatives, advocacy and campaigns; and jointly work to influence Development Partners and Government
12. INGO senior leadership coach and recognise staff achievements to establish inclusive and collaborative working relationships with development actors and monitor coordination mechanisms
13. INGOs coordinate advocacy, messages and campaigns
14. INGOs take responsibility for coordinating their work across different sectors: not only taking a coordination role but be co-ordinated as well by other INGO or other development actors
15. INGOs collaborate with international advocacy networks and build bridges between each other with a priority to encourage local CSO advocacy efforts
16. NGO consider establishing peer evaluations and social audits of their organisation to understand where improvements can be made

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Oxfam in Cambodia

#94 Russian Blvd, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. P.O Box: 883

Tel: +855 23 885 424 Fax: +855 23 885 452 Website: www.oxfam.org/Cambodia



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