

UNDP Country Office Cambodia

Thematic Poverty Evaluation

Final Report

**David F Abbott
International Evaluation Specialist**

**Sopha Chan
Evaluation Specialist**

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Abbreviations

ACES	Association of Councils Enhanced Services
ALGA	Association of Local Government Agencies
CDPO	Cambodia Disabled People's Organisation
CEDEP	Cambodia Export Diversification and Expansion Programme
CO	Country Office
CMDG	Cambodia Millennium Development Goals
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CSES	Cambodia Socio-economic Survey
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPPS	Country Programme Performance Summary
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DRIC	Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HDI	Human Development Index
LDC	Least Developed Country
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAPU	Mine Action Planning Unit
MIC	Middle Income Country
MTR	Mid Term Review
MOP	Ministry of Planning
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MSME	Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises
NCDD	National Council for Democratic Development
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PWD	Persons with a Disability
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
ROAR	Results Oriented Annual Report
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SNEC	Supreme National Economic Council
ToC	Theory of Change
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	US Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

Introduction and the UNDP's Theory of Change

In the last decade Cambodia has achieved significant reductions in the incidence of income poverty amongst the population, these reductions in income poverty have been accompanied by improvements in the nation's Human Development Index (HDI) rankings. However, despite these gains there is still a high level of poverty, especially in the rural areas, as measured by the multidimensional poverty index (MPI).

In response to these developments UNDP has adopted a new approach to its assistance to Cambodia. Firstly, it has brought together the previous multiple-thematic "clusters" into a single unified thematic poverty-reduction programme, that now gives greater focus to UNDP's assistance. Secondly, the current 2016-2018 country programme has adopted a more "policy-based" approach to programming, where programmes are developed in line with an on-going policy dialogue with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). Thirdly, UNDP has introduced a "Theory of Change" (ToC) which underlies the new approach; the ToC holds that *"if Cambodia is to sustain its gains in poverty reduction, efforts should focus on building assets, protecting assets, and increasing the returns to the assets of the poor and vulnerable"*. Within the framework of the ToC, the policy-based engagement and supporting capacity development interventions, the country programme would be intended to promote the upgrading of value chains, sustain development finance, build resilience, and strengthen the voice & participation of women, persons with a disability (PWD) and other marginalized and vulnerable groups.

UNDP recognises that the situation in Cambodia is evolving rapidly. In July Cambodia graduated to lower middle-income status and has set its sights on reducing the rate of poverty by at least one-percentage point per annum for the next five years and to graduate from least developed country (LDC) status within five to ten years.

In such a dynamic environment UNDP recognises that it must be ready to adapt and evolve to meet the changing needs of the nation. This Poverty Thematic Evaluation of UNDP Cambodia's country programme was therefore commissioned by the UNDP country office with the objective of *"initiating the process of testing and validating the theory of change through lessons of actual development practice, taking as its starting point the 2011-2015 Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)"*.

The findings of the evaluation are expected to assist UNDP in contributing to *future programme design, portfolio decision-making, and strengthening strategic partnerships*. The evaluation may also contribute to an update or revision of the underlying theory of change and serve as an input into updating the current Country Programme Document (CPD) and/or contributing towards the foundations of the next CPD post 2018.

Evaluation Methodology and Scope

The evaluation was carried out in July and August 2016 and included two in-country missions by an international evaluation specialist, very ably supported by a national specialist. The team conducted a ten-day field trip between 7th to 17th July, during which time the team visited five provinces and undertook four case studies of programmes/projects identified by UNDP. In Phnom Penh the team received initial briefings from UNDP and conducted consultations with government officials including from the Ministries of Planning, Women's Affairs, and Economy and Finance, Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC), National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), as well as with the Cambodia Disabled People's Organisation (CDPO), Association of Sub-national Administration Council, Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, USAID, Australian DFAT, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Swiss Development Agency. The team also met with NGOs, in particular with a selection of commune-level disabled peoples organisations (DPOs); as well farmer associations, programme beneficiaries and cassava processing companies. A full list of people met is provided at Appendix II.

In undertaking the evaluation, the team considered the relevance of the various programmes to the ToC; has the ToC been effective in guiding the poverty reduction focus of UNDP's programmes, has it been efficiently implemented such that the impact and sustainability of the programmes have led, or are leading to lasting poverty reduction outcomes. The evaluation included desk reviews of a wide range of documents relating to the implementation of the 2011-2015 CPAP, including project evaluations, the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the 2011-2015 CPAP and the UNDP Global Poverty Thematic Evaluation 2014. At the direction of UNDP, the evaluation focused on four programmes to provide case-studies on the way in which the ToC has been applied in practice. These four case-studies were: Cambodia Export Diversification and Expansion Programme – Cassava component (CEDEP); Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia (DRIC); Association of Councils Enhanced Services (ACES) project and Clearing for Results III: Mine Action for Human Development. The evaluation benefited from the full cooperation of national authorities, programme partners and the UNDP country office staff.

Development Context

Despite the significant improvements in basic-needs poverty rates and the HDI, these gains have not benefited everyone and indeed, have tended to foster greater inequality between the urban and rural areas. The challenge remains that the pathways out of poverty have not been accessible to everyone and consequently poverty levels amongst the rural poor have not been reduced to the same extent as in the urban centres. Moreover, even in the urban centres there appears to be an increasing degree of inequality between those in formal employment and those in the informal economy. Cambodia has the highest employment to population ratio in Asia, and whilst many of those in employment are engaged in the informal sector they are nevertheless in productive employment, albeit that many might also be classified as working poor.

The growth model underpinning the achievement of the high rate of reduction in income poverty has been built on attracting high levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to take advantage of Cambodia's inexpensive, low-skilled, and abundant labour. Consequently, the main drivers of economic growth have included garment manufacturing, tourism, construction and to a lesser extent agriculture (rice and cassava). However, this growth model may not be sustainable in its present form as Cambodia's competitiveness is gradually eroded in the medium to long term. The industrial sector of the economy needs to move up to a higher value-added base with higher skill levels among the labour force, while the rural and agricultural sector needs to improve production, productivity and competitiveness if rural livelihoods are to be improved. Resilience to external shocks, including the impacts of natural disasters and climate change, as well as the sustainability of resource exploitation, also need to be factored into the policy framework.

Findings and Conclusions

Theory of Change

The primary purpose of the evaluation has been to review and test the Theory of Change in the context of UNDP's country programme and its focus on poverty reduction within the multidimensional poverty space.

Given the broad range of possible interventions that fall with UNDP's mandate in addressing multidimensional poverty in Cambodia, a ToC should therefore be both broad, while at the same time, should be sufficiently specific that clear *transmission mechanisms* can be identified to illustrate the logic of the interventions and that clear *outcomes, linked to the targeted MPI deprivations*, can be defined.

UNDP's ToC is very specific in its proposed interventions, focusing on improving the returns to the assets of the poor, and is thus quite direct in its intended transmission mechanism to achieving poverty reduction. But the linkages between the ToC and the four priorities of the CPAP (building resilience, strengthening voice and participation, upgrading value chains and development finance) are not strongly linked to the ToC. Further, the outcomes identified in

the UNDAF and the UN global strategy are more general, with less well-defined direct links or transmission mechanisms and have more focus on “soft” interventions and cross-cutting issues. There are therefore three, or possibly even four sets of programming criteria to be followed and they are not clearly integrated.

The UNDP’s theory of change provides a good starting point to address multidimensional poverty in Cambodia, but fails to set out a clear change pathway that is carried through to the country programme and the CPAP. Having stated the theory of change, and for it to be successful as the basis for the CPD, it is essential that it is then made central to the programmes and that linkages across and between all programme components are clear.

If a theory of change approach is taken in future, it is therefore essential that a clear change pathway is identified with mutually supporting cross-programme linkages and transmission mechanisms.

Funding Sources for UNDP Programmes

Another programming dimension for UNDP is the availability of funding for its desired programmes. With limited core-funding UNDP needs to partner with funding agencies which may not share the same philosophy as the ToC or the other criteria. Agency agendas will therefore be a factor in whether the ToC can be effectively applied as UNDP’s underlying approach to poverty reduction in Cambodia. UNDP should therefore engage at a high level with RGC to develop a framework within which RGC would be a direct cost-sharing partner with UNDP in the provision of policy support as identified by RGC itself. This would serve to make UNDP’s support more demand-driven.

Transmission Mechanisms from Policy to Poverty Reduction

Understanding the transmission mechanisms, industry/sector dynamics and drivers of poverty reduction is essential to achieving a continued reduction in the rate of poverty in Cambodia, especially a reduction in the level of multidimensional poverty that has so far proved the most difficult to realise in practice. Future interventions should focus on those policy areas where the links between policy support and the transmission mechanisms to poverty reduction are both strongest and most easy to define. The success of a ToC rests on the transmission mechanisms, or the change pathway, being clearly outlined with intermediate steps and outcomes.

Case Studies and the Theory of Change

The evaluation team found that, in general, only one of the four case studies met the underlying criteria of the ToC; that being the mine clearance programme. The other three programmes did not have clear links/transmission mechanisms from the interventions to the desired poverty reduction outcomes. The links in these other programmes were all indirect and rather tenuous. None of the other programmes could demonstrate any measurable poverty reduction impacts. A similar situation was found to exist in the case of the 2016-2018 CPD.

Policy Engagement

UNDP should aim to be more pro-active in engaging at the most senior levels of government on policy issues; UNDP should endeavor to find resources that could be put on the table and with these invite government to indicate its needs; through this type of approach it might be possible to encourage government to cost-share; a new cost-sharing partnership should be developed with RGC to enable greater flexibility in the way that requests for support can be sought by RGC, and the way in which UNDP is able to respond.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that in moving forward in its new multidimensional poverty-reduction and policy-focused approach UNDP should:

- compile a policy-support-matrix identifying which partners and agencies are currently providing policy support to RGC and in which sectors; such a matrix would assist UNDP to identify where gaps in high-level policy support might exist, and where UNDP's best entry points for future policy support might be, particularly in UNDP's focal area of poverty reduction and within the framework of the ToC, (e.g. in the national planning ministry; in developing a comprehensive social protection system for the most vulnerable, including those people with a disability; and in non-rice farming systems, including for cassava growers);
- use proposed policy-support-matrix to identify gaps in poverty reduction policies, and, on the basis of these gaps and within the framework of a ToC, build, a menu of poverty reduction policy interventions; these interventions should be fully interlinked and coordinated within the framework of a ToC, which is itself built of an understanding of the drivers of poverty reduction, such that UNDP's efforts would be more focused; thus with a clearly defined, comprehensive and focused set of poverty reduction policy interventions to offer;
- on the basis of the forgoing menu of policy intervention options, engage directly at a high level with RGC to secure ownership and potential co-financing of the programme; this could lead to a cost-sharing framework that would enable UNDP to be more responsive to RGC's identified needs and less dependent on sourcing external and third-party funding;
- should also actively seek funding, through direct development partner negotiation, for the poverty reduction programme outlined in the previous recommendations and for a pool of discretionary funds to be directed quickly in support of emerging needs; this could be initiated within the context of the Goal 1 of the SDGs, securing such funding could enable UNDP to invite government to indicate any additional or other emerging policy support needs and reduce UNDP's need to source third-party and external funding;
- with discretionary funding available UNDP should: a) aim to provide demand driven support to government; care should be taken that projects/programmes are clearly driven by government's needs and should not be driven simply by available sources of finance or/and donor agendas or preferences; and b) should take a more positive stance in its programming with RGC, in the manner of stating, for example, that: *"at the request of government UNDP will mobilise support for policy analysis and development in the critical areas of (for example) SDG integration, trade, investment, social protection etc.; the objectives of UNDP's support in these areas would be to assist the RGC to reduce multidimensional poverty and inequality, promoting gender empowerment and equity, and to ensure that the most vulnerable, including those living with HIV/AIDS and/or a disability, are supported"*; in support of the forgoing approach UNDP should:
- ensure that if a ToC approach is taken in future that: a) it clearly identifies and documents the understanding, links and transmission mechanisms between the interventions and the desired poverty reduction outcomes along a change pathway, and that it be periodically reviewed and updated; b) that where/when there is consensus with government on elements of the TOC, the updated understanding of the ToC be reflected and directly linked to the identified programmes, throughout the CPAP and CPD; and, c) a small number of targeted and measurable performance indicators directly related to the identified poverty reduction outcomes are included in

the M&E framework to measure progress at both the intermediate and final outcome stages of the pathway;

- develop brief, easy-to-understand advocacy materials on the current and future CPAPs and provide these to stakeholders to foster engagement in UNDP's activities; in future simplify, as far as possible, the documentation for the CPAP to make clearer the links between, any future ToC and the CPAP, UNDAF, UNDP Strategic Plan, and the national development priorities;
- provide capacity building in evidence-based policy analysis that is based on a structured use of data and sound principles of mutually reinforcing policy wherever possible; such capacity building should be undertaken across all key economic and social sectors, as well as high-level policy agencies within government; and where appropriate support could also be provided to academic institutions and think-tanks, to support policy development and improve decision-making.

1. Introduction

1.1. UNDP in Cambodia

UNDP has made poverty eradication and the reduction of inequality and exclusion its stated Vision for the 2030 global development agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In furtherance of the realisation of this Vision UNDP Cambodia, in consultation with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), has recently developed a Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2016-2018 that continues and builds-on the poverty reduction focus of its predecessors.

The 2016-2018 CPD builds, in particular, on the findings and recommendations of the 2014 Mid-Term Review of the 2011-2015 Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), and the bringing together of UNDP's previous multiple thematic "clusters" into a single unified thematic poverty-reduction programme. The current country programme now aims to adopt a more "policy-based" approach to programming, where programmes are developed in line with an on-going policy dialogue with the government. This approach recognises that if poverty-reduction interventions are to be sustainable, the development policies that are recommended and supported by UNDP must assist in ensuring that the "right" institutional, governance and market-based mechanisms are put in place, and are working both efficiently and effectively to deliver the desired outcomes.

Underlying this revised policy-based approach to the country programme is a "Theory of Change" (ToC)¹ which holds that *"if Cambodia is to sustain its gains in poverty reduction, efforts should focus on building assets, protecting assets, and increasing the returns to the assets of the poor and vulnerable"*.

More particularly the ToC has as its objectives that:

- **The poor should move-up the ladder of well-being and the gains achieved are resilient to economic, social, environmental, climate shocks; such that:**
- **Poverty escapes are sustained through** the expansion of employment & livelihood opportunities of better quality;
- **Impoverishment is halted through** expanded access to social & market provisioning and of ecosystems under sustainable management arrangements
- **Chronic poverty is tackled through** incentives and opportunities to invest in human capital and transform subsistence agriculture.

It is stated that the ToC was developed in response to Cambodia's rapidly evolving development situation and the challenges being faced. Within the framework of the ToC and UNDP's mandate, the policy engagement and supporting capacity development interventions outlined in the CPAP are intended to build resilience, strengthen the voice & participation of women, persons with a disability (PWD) and other marginalized and vulnerable groups, promote the upgrading of value chains and sustain development finance. These are the four "priority" areas but they are not explained in the context of the ToC, which at its narrowest would appear to be primarily directed at reducing income and asset poverty in the multidimensional poverty space.

¹ UNDP Country Programme Document for Cambodia (2016-18), paragraph 13 & Appendix 2, Paper DP/DCP/KHM/3, 9 June 2015

If UNDP's programme for Cambodia is to be policy-focused and framed on the basis of the ToC, then the proposed programmes and actions in the CPAP should all have a direct link to the ToC. There needs to be a tangible and quantifiable link in the programme narrative. The evaluation will assess whether this has occurred in practice. From a UNDP corporate perspective it is also necessary that the CPAP programmes are framed within a broader context, not just of the ToC, but also the UNDAF and the UNDP global Strategic Plan, while at the same time being relevant to Cambodia's national priorities. As will be discussed in the evaluation this may not be easy to achieve in the sense of trying to serve several masters at the same time.

1.2 Outline of the Report

Section 2 below sets out the scope and purpose of the evaluation; this is followed in Section 3 by a brief summary of the socio-economic and poverty context of Cambodia as a backdrop to UNDP's poverty reduction programmes; it highlights the core development issues and priorities of RGC that the UNDP country programme aims to support. Section 4 provides details of the evaluation approach and methodology and Section 5 outlines the findings and conclusions of the evaluation, including summaries of the four case studies. Section 6 provides a summary of the recommendations of the evaluation. Appendices set out: (I) Terms of Reference; (II) List of People Interviewed; (III) Summary Findings of the CPAP MTR 2013; (IV) Field Visit & Case Study Reports; (V) Documents Reviewed & References

2. Scope and Purpose of the Thematic Poverty Evaluation

The UNDP CO commissioned this Thematic Poverty Evaluation to initiate the process of testing and validating the theory of change through lessons of actual development practice, taking as its starting point the 2011-2015 Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)². The full Terms of Reference for the Thematic Poverty Evaluation are attached as Appendix I.

The 2011-2015 CPAP had an explicit commitment to address gaps in the realisation of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs) and to help Cambodia address those MDGs in which it was falling behind target. Poverty reduction and inequality, the focus of this evaluation, were two among the six outcomes that UNDP had committed to address in the 2011-15 CPAP³.

Further, as indicated in the ToR and in line with 2016-2018 CPD, the evaluation adopted multidimensional poverty as the working definition for poverty, and in testing the achievement of UNDP's projects and programmes for poverty reduction. In accordance with the ToC, deprivations experienced by the poor are seen as a result of how the assets of the poor and vulnerable are managed, built and protected and how the returns to the assets of the poor can be increased.

² The evaluation also drew on the findings and recommendations of the 2013/14 Mid-term Review of the CPD/CPAP and the 2016-2018 CPD.

³ OUTCOME 1: By 2015, national and sub-national capacities strengthened to develop more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy.

OUTCOME 2: By 2015, National and local authorities, communities and private sector are better able to sustainably manage ecosystems goods and services and respond to climate change

OUTCOME 3: By 2015, effective mechanisms for dialogue, representation and participation in democratic decision making established and strengthened

OUTCOME 4: By 2015, sub-national administrations have capacity to take over increased functions

OUTCOME 5: Enhanced capacities at national and subnational levels to develop and monitor policies, plans and budgets that are evidence-based and geared towards the attainment of the MDGs by 2015.

OUTCOME 6: By 2015, gender disparities in participation and economic growth reduced.

The findings of the evaluation are expected to contribute to future programme design, portfolio decision-making, and strengthening strategic partnerships. The evaluation may also contribute to an update or revision of the underlying theory of change and serve as an input into updating the current CPD and/or contributing towards the foundations of the next CPD post 2018.

Given the time available the evaluation has undertaken case-study assessments of four specific projects/programmes currently being implemented by UNDP; these are continuations of programmes implemented in the 2011-2015 CPAP. In addition, the evaluation has reviewed and assessed the overall rationale and outcomes of the 2016-2018 CPAP in relation to the ToC.

In undertaking the evaluation, the following general criteria have been applied:

- the relevance of the portfolio of programmes to the stated outcomes;
- the impact in terms of measurable benefits and impacts on poverty reduction amongst the target groups; and
- the sustainability of the UNDP programmes, how far did the previous CPD programme, and how far does the new programme meet the expected outcomes of poverty reduction.

The scope of the evaluation has taken due account of the multidimensional concept of poverty and the MPI used by UNDP. The evaluation has also taken account of the nature of the programme and other activities undertaken by UNDP Cambodia in order to promote the goal of poverty reduction⁴. The MPI addresses deprivations in education, health and standards of living as measured primarily by housing conditions, access to certain standards of essential services and ownership of assets. It does not directly include an income measure of poverty although having a certain minimum income is an important factor in determining standards of living, and for many households, access to education and health services.

For the purposes of the evaluation the poor are therefore deemed to include those people falling below the multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI) threshold and those vulnerable to slipping back into poverty, with a special focus on women, youth, and persons with a disability (PWD). Persons living with HIV and indigenous peoples have also been considered a focus where appropriate.

It is arguable that while not explicitly indicated in the MPI, the level of income poverty is nevertheless, a key indicator for measuring standards of living and asset ownership. For those with high incomes, health and education services and the beneficial outcomes derived from these services, can be bought. But for the poor and vulnerable, who rely on government for the provision of health and education and other basic services, gaps and weaknesses in the quality and provision of basic services can indeed lead to significant deprivation. Poverty reduction must therefore, first and foremost, focus on improving incomes and livelihoods; catering to basic-needs is a necessary but not sufficient condition for poverty reduction. This is the basis for UNDP Cambodia's theory of change.

Activities towards achieving the ToC have been taken to include downstream interventions in the areas of governance, participation, rights and gender, as well as giving special attention to people with disabilities and those suffering from HIV/AIDS. These do not, however, have direct links or transmission mechanisms to poverty reduction. At the other end, upstream

⁴ Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and UNDP <
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi>>

activities involve providing high-level policy advice, including support to the mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the national development planning and budgeting systems, and other policy areas that are primarily expected to address the deprivations identified in the multi-dimensional poverty space. Similarly, many of these interventions do not have clear and direct links to the desired poverty reduction outcomes.

What is required in both cases is a well-defined and logical framework to demonstrate how the intervention will result in a reduction in a component of multidimensional poverty. The need for such clear links is highlighted in the UNDP's global evaluation of its contribution to poverty reduction.⁵ This global evaluation states that *"that trickle-down processes that assume that the benefits of generalised economic growth will percolate down to the poor in small doses will not be sufficient to make a significant dent in the level of multi-dimensional or poverty. The report argues that it would not do to depend policies on the simplistic ground that 'the poor benefit from them too'. Further the evaluation advocates that "policies must be formulated with a conscious pro-poor bias so that the poor benefit significantly from them. This does not mean that reliance should be placed solely on targeted programmes directly aimed at the poor; even macro and meso-level policies must be infused with elements that can ensure that a disproportionate amount of benefit goes to the poor. A policy regime with such deliberate pro-poor bias will necessarily face serious economic and political challenges. How effectively these challenges are overcome will determine to a large extent the pace of poverty reduction...."*

With this global insight in view, the evaluation reviews and assesses four case-study programmes from the portfolio of projects and programmes that were formulated and implemented in the last programme cycle and which have continued into 2016. These four case studies are:

- Cambodia Export Diversification and Expansion Programme (CEDEP)
- Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia (DRIC)
- Association of Councils Enhanced Services (ACES) project
- Clearing for Results III: Mine Action for Human Development

Through an assessment of these four programmes the evaluation seeks to determine whether the theory and practice of the development initiatives set out in the 2011-2015 CPAP (and as continued in the 2016-2018 CPD) were synergized, or whether gaps exist between the policy theory in the ToC and the programme practice. Based on the MTR the evaluation also considers how the lessons learned from the past cycle have been translated through to the ToC and into a potentially more effective modality in the current programme cycle.

Although some projects have been rolled-over into the 2016-2018 CPD/CPAP (including the four case studies) it is noted that the new projects are no longer implementation-focused, but are being addressed at the upstream policy level. This fits the new approach but poses the challenge of identifying the links between policy and the M&E indicators at the level of the MPI, how can these links be better described and monitoring/ performance indicators be identified.

3. Socio-economic & Poverty Context

With an average annual growth rate of around 7.5% over the past decade years Cambodia transited from a Low Income to a Middle-Income Country (MIC) in July 2016. The relatively

⁵ UN-Wide Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Poverty Reduction, UNDP Evaluation Office, 2013

high and sustained rate of economic growth has been accompanied by significant reductions in the levels of both extreme and basic-needs poverty and in improvements in the kingdom's human development index. Improvements in the headcount index may be seen across different measures of poverty, see Table 1.

In the last ten-years the proportion of people living below the national basic-needs poverty line fell from an estimated 47.8 per cent in 2007 to 18.6 per cent in 2013. Whilst the rural poverty rate (at about 20%) has remained higher, the level of inequality improved slightly, with the Gini coefficient falling from 0.35 in 2004 to 0.32 in 2011. Rates of poverty incidence declined due to higher agricultural prices (notably for rice), expansion in urban-based employment and increases in wages/salaries. However the World Bank has noted that a small income shock, through loss of employment or the impact of natural disaster could very quickly lead to a doubling in the poverty rate. The recent declines in both rice and cassava prices may indeed have put many rural families back below the basic-needs poverty line. The experiences of farmers interviewed during the evaluation are described in the case studies.

In terms of the multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI), while 33.0% of the population are estimated to fall below the MPI threshold, a further 21.6% of the population are estimated to be just above the MPI threshold, but remain vulnerable to slipping into poverty; this makes a total of 54.6% of the population either below or only just above the MPI poverty threshold.

Table 1:			
Poverty Headcount Index according to different measures			
Year	National Poverty Line (RGC)⁶	US\$1.9/day (WB)⁷	Multidimensional Poverty Index (OPHI)⁸
2005	35.1	32.0	52.0
2010	20.5	8.9	45.9
2014	13.5	6.2	33.0

Economic growth has generally been relatively inclusive. In human development terms, between 1995 and 2013 Cambodia saw significant improvements across all components of the human development index. Life expectancy at birth improved from 57.9 to 71.9 years. Expected years of schooling increased from 6.8 years to 10.9 years. Notwithstanding this, the UNDP's 2015 Human Development Report showed Cambodia as having a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of 33% for 2015, down from 46.8% in 2010. Thus, while the basic monetary aspect of poverty has been improving, the quality of life and level of deprivation experienced by many people remains a major challenge.

Through its various national strategy documents, including National Strategic Development Plan, Rectangular Strategy Phases I, II & III and Vision 2030, the government set a goal of continuing to reduce the incidence of basic-needs poverty by more than 1 percentage point annually and it is estimated that the nation has the potential to emerge from least developed country status within five to ten years. The challenge will be how best to sustain the recent high growth rates and build a more education and skill-based society which will ultimately reach down to both the rural and urban poor and reduce the MPI. While extreme poverty may no longer be a major concern, the high levels of vulnerability, deprivation in terms of basic

⁶ Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2014 National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning Phnom Penh, Cambodia October 2015

⁷ Cambodia Poverty Assessment 2013, World Bank, (presentation February 2014)

⁸ Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI); www.ophi.org.uk; Oxford Department of International Development; Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford OPHI Country Briefing Dec 2015: Cambodia

services, and the levels of inequality continue to be of relevance to UNDP's poverty reduction mandate.

For example, Cambodia's Human Development Index (HDI) for 2014 was estimated at 0.555 however, when the index value was discounted for inequality, the HDI fell to 0.418, a decrease of 24.7% due to inequality in the distribution of the three HDI dimensions. In the three dimensions of inequality (education, health and income) the education dimension recorded the greatest inequality discount factor (28.3%) while income had the lowest factor at 20.3%⁹. This high level of deprivation-inequality can be seen in the gap between the level of income poverty at about ten percent and the MPI poverty incidence of around 47%¹⁰.

The very significant gap between the urban and rural poverty rates (approximately 5% and 22% respectively¹¹) is of considerable concern in terms of economic and social stability and sustainability. Reducing the aggregate poverty rate does not necessarily mean that the poorest and most vulnerable will benefit, if the growth is primarily generated in the urban centres.

However, despite the significant improvements in basic-needs poverty rates and the HDI, these gains have not benefited everyone and indeed, have tended to foster greater inequality between the urban and rural areas. The challenge remains that the pathways out of poverty have not been accessible to everyone and consequently poverty levels amongst the rural poor have not been reduced to the same extent as in the urban centres. Moreover, even in the urban centres there appears to be an increasing degree of inequality between those in formal employment and those in the informal economy. Cambodia has the highest employment to population ratio in Asia, and whilst many of those in employment are engaged in the informal sector they are nevertheless in productive employment, albeit that many might also be classified as working poor.

Recognising the need for continued efforts to reduce poverty and vulnerability the government, in the national development strategy, aims to further reduce the average level of poverty by one-percentage point per annum; for the medium term Cambodia has set its sights on becoming an Upper Middle Income Country by 2030.

The growth model underpinning the achievement of the high rate of reduction in income poverty has been built on attracting high levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to take advantage of Cambodia's inexpensive, low-skilled, and abundant labour. Consequently, the main drivers of economic growth have included garment manufacturing, tourism, construction and to a lesser extent agriculture (rice and cassava). However, this growth model may not be sustainable in its present form in the medium to long term, as Cambodia's competitiveness is gradually eroded through increasing wage rates and the emergence of new competitors.

The industrial sector of the economy therefore needs to move up to a higher level of productivity and a higher value-added base that is built on higher skill levels among the labour force. Together these will help to sustain Cambodia's competitiveness and attractiveness to investors. In addition, the rural and agricultural sectors also need to improve production, productivity and competitiveness if rural livelihoods are to be improved. Raising education standards and build skills across both industry and agriculture is essential. The economic and social benefits to be achieved through better education must be actively promoted and children and youth encouraged to achieve higher levels of educational attainment.

With approximately 65 per cent of the population under the age of 30, an estimated 300,000 young people enter the labour force each year. With both a labour force participation rate and an employment to population rate of over 80%, Cambodia ranks amongst the very highest in

⁹ UNDP Human Development Report 2015, *Work for human development, Cambodia Briefing Note for countries on the 2015 Human Development Report*

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ Cambodia Poverty Assessment 2013, Where have all the poor gone? World Bank Presentation, February 20, 2014, Phnom Penh

these categories in the Asia-Pacific region. While the current labour force participation rate and the employment-to-population ratio are high, it is seen that a high proportion of the labour force is employed in low-skill, low-wage and/or informal employment. The 2014 socio-economic survey¹² reported that almost 50% of workers are classified as being own-account or self employed, with only 44% being recorded as in formal employment. These low-skill, low-wage types of employment are vulnerable, insecure, and poorly regulated. Many of those in these types of employment may be included in the working poor. In addition, there are very many Cambodians who are employed as migrant workers in Thailand and other neighbouring countries; it is estimated that these migrants contributed around \$176 million in remittances (equivalent to about 1% of GDP) in 2013. These workers, like many in the domestic economy, are also engaged in low-skill, low-wage and unregulated employment putting them at risk of exploitation and sudden loss of income.

Notwithstanding the low-quality of the jobs being created, the core reason for the high growth rates and significant reduction on the poverty rate in Cambodia has been the increase in employment. The ability to continue to generate sufficient jobs for those young people entering the labour force, and especially to generate the higher quality and sustainable jobs that will help to sustain a high rate of growth and raise incomes into the future, depends on diversifying the economy and improving the value-added components in manufacturing and employment. This in turn requires a higher level and broader range of both education and skills.

An additional and emerging challenge is that Cambodia is ranked among the top ten countries in terms of vulnerability to climate change. The rural poor have a high level of dependence on agriculture, with a significant proportion of the population residing in lowland and flood-prone areas. It may also be noted that an estimated 90% of agricultural land is owned by farmers and some 80% of farms are less than one hectare in size. Forty-three per cent of communes are vulnerable to climate-induced floods and droughts. In 2011 and 2013, floods are reported to have affected 20% of rice lands and 14% of the population. However, at the national level there is deemed to be limited capacity to cope with major climate-related disasters and the socio-economic costs.

Presently the government lacks strong, evidence-based policy-making capacity and it is this gap that UNDP seeks to fill in the future through its ToC, and the overarching poverty reduction thematic approach. It is against these socio-economic and governance factors, and the need to ensure that UNDP's contribution is delivering within this framework, that the evaluation is to be conducted.

4. Evaluation Methodology and Findings

4.1 Methodology

The evaluation was conducted through consultations with stakeholders in UNDP programmes in Phnom Penh and five provinces: Kompong Cham, Prey Veng, Siem Reap, Pailin and Battambang. The team held consultations with provincial administrations, provincial Mine Action Planning Units, local communities including people with disabilities and beneficiary households, key government ministries and other related partners; see Appendix II for the schedule and list of persons interviewed. The consultations enabled the team to gather information on the programme delivery experience, outputs delivered and outcomes achieved and the perceptions of the success of the four UNDP programmes assessed amongst the various groups consulted.

In Phnom Penh the team met representatives from the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD), National Committee for Democratic Development (NCDD), and key government Ministries including Economy and Finance, Planning, Women's Affairs, Industry, Labour, Commerce and Environment. The

¹² Cambodia Socio-economic Survey 2014, National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia October 2015

team also meet with development partners in UNDP programmes including USAID, SIDA, EU, GIZ, Swiss Development Agency and DFAT Australia.

The evaluation team was guided by the UNDP CO team as to the four programmes to be assessed in the case studies and the most appropriate consultations to undertake in Phnom Penh and in the provincial centres.

The evaluation used the following criteria to assess performance through using the evidence gathered from the four case studies and project/programme-level evaluations.

- Were the desired poverty reduction outcomes of UNDP interventions: a) directly linked to the components of the MPI; b) clearly defined in relation to poverty reduction; and c) measurable
- Were the outcomes sustainable after the completion of UNDP's support

Taking the 2011-2015 CPAP as the starting point for the evaluation the team considered the principal findings and recommendations of the MTR – a summary of these is at Appendix III for information - and sought to determine how far these appeared to have been incorporated into the new CPAP. The evaluation team is in full agreement with the recommendations of the MTR and will not reiterate them except to add weight or emphasis where necessary.

4.2 Theory of Change

Given the broad range of possible interventions that fall with UNDP's mandate in addressing multidimensional poverty in Cambodia, a ToC should be both broad while at the same time being sufficiently specific that clear *transmission mechanisms* can be identified to illustrate the logic of the interventions and that clear *outcomes linked to MPI deprivations* can be defined.

In measuring its impact and contribution to poverty reduction UNDP is faced with the need to find a way to separate or disaggregate its activities and contributions to poverty reduction from the contributions of the many other development partners and agencies that are frequently operating in the same development and poverty reduction space in Cambodia; how is it possible to attribute a particular and measurable poverty reduction outcome specifically to UNDP, especially when UNDP itself is working in partnership with other agencies. The 2015 IMF Article IV report records that approximately thirty-percent of the national budget is financed through external grants or loans. UNDP's direct contribution to this is small and clearly points to the need for UNDP to be very specific in its activities so that it can, as far as possible, stand-out from the crowd.

This is where the ToC could play an important role in ensuring focus to the programme. However, it is important that within the framework of the ToC that programme activities clearly identify a causal link between the ToC and UNDP's planned interventions and activities; further the ToC must lead clearly towards the actual development change and the consequent poverty reduction desired. It is essential that the 'transmission mechanisms' from the ToC to the desired outcomes are understood and documented; in other words, how will UNDP's interventions lead to the desired outcomes. Box 1 provides brief guidelines on the theory of the "Theory of Change" and how a ToC should be developed and narrated.

As already noted an additional challenge for the UNDP CO in basing its programmes on a specific ToC is that the CPAP programmes must also be framed within the context of the UNDAF and the UNDP Global Strategic Plan, while at the same time being relevant to Cambodia's national priorities. Further the CPAP identifies four priorities (building resilience, strengthening voice and participation, upgrading value chains and development finance) which are not directly linked in the narrative to the ToC. There are therefore three, or arguably four sets of programming criteria to be followed and they are not clearly integrated. It is therefore not easy to achieve a coherent change pathway in the narrative given the diverse agendas of the different criteria. The ToC itself is quite specific in its proposed interventions, focusing on improving the returns to the assets of the poor, and is therefore quite direct in its intended transmission mechanism to poverty reduction. The four CPAP priorities, the UNDAF

and the UN global strategy have less well defined direct links or transmission mechanisms to actual poverty reduction. They have more focus on “soft” or indirect interventions and cross-cutting issues which do not necessarily lead directly to reducing poverty.

Another dimension for UNDP is the availability of funding for its desired programmes. With limited core funding UNDP needs to partner with funding agencies which may not share the same philosophy as the ToC. Agency agendas will therefore be a factor in whether the ToC can be effectively applied as UNDP’s underlying approach to poverty reduction in Cambodia. A large component of UNDP’s funding comes from various climate-related sources. These tend to give a particular climate-bias to the design of interventions and programmes which may not address the real issues of the poor, which tend to focus on the “now” aspect of livelihoods. For example, and as discussed in the case-studies, to build resilience poor cassava farmers need, as a priority, better extension services to assist them in improving farm management and cultivation practices. But extension services are not included in the climate-biased programmes or in CEDEP.

Box 1 A Note on the Theory of “Theory of Change”
<p>A “Theory of Change” (ToC) should not simply be a stand-alone statement of intent. It may also be argued that in many respects a “theory of change” is not a theory at all; it is more properly like a roadmap which provides a logical/process framework to describe how a desired outcome will be realised through a set of incremental, intermediate interventions and actions, it should attempt to explain the dynamics and various linkages in the set of actions or initiatives leading to the desired outcome.</p> <p>The incremental steps and actions identified are normally mapped as a “change or outcome pathway” showing each intermediate step/outcome in logical and dynamic relationship to other parallel, supporting or consequential steps/outcomes. The links between the various incremental steps or intermediate outcomes should be accompanied by brief statements of the dynamics between the steps; why each step is expected to contribute or lead to the next step along the pathway.</p> <p>Thus the desired final outcome needs to be stated – in the UNDP case “A reduction in Multidimensional Poverty” – at the outset and the theory of change should then identify the interventions and actions that need to be put in place, together with their (hopefully) mutually reinforcing linkages for this overall desired outcome to be achieved. The change pathway should be mapped with each intervention contributing directly to the achievement of the outcome.</p> <p>The theory of change should therefore be at the centre of the CPAP programmes, actions and interventions. Each programme or activity in the “change pathway” should be tested to determine how it fits into, and would contribute to the next step in the framework and along the pathway to poverty reduction. The problem with the ToC in the CPAP is that: a) it is not explicitly mentioned or stated in these terms, b) it does not explicitly link to the four programme areas mentioned, and c) it does not provide such a pathway/framework for the achievement of the multidimensional poverty reduction outcome. The steps and programmes/interventions are not interlinked and do not all follow the same pathway. In the context of a ToC the four programmes should all lead along the same pathway.</p> <p>The issue, as the evaluators see it, is therefore that: a) the theory of change in the CPAP is not complete (it is not explicitly mentioned), it does not present a change-pathway that is then followed throughout the CPAP, the four programmes do explicitly not refer to the theory or a change pathway; b) the CPD is guided by the UNDP global strategic Plan and the UNDAF which do not share the same “theory of change” approach; c) the programmes in the CPAP are not clearly linked and/or mutually supporting (at least not in a clearly expressed way); and d) many programmes do not have direct links to poverty reduction but could be steps on a change pathway if such a pathway was clearly constructed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Steps to Create a Theory of Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a long-term goal/outcome; as in the Reduction in Multidimensional Poverty (MP), but since such an outcome is multidimensional the specific components to be achieved within MP should be quantified; what is to be achieved and how is it to be measured. • Next a “backwards-mapped” change-pathway needs to be constructed; this should start at the desired outcome and should identify and map-backwards the steps/intermediate outcomes necessary to achieve the long-term outcome – this requires an understanding of the dynamics of how the outcome can be achieved and the intermediate interventions linkages that will need to be put in place in order for the outcome to be achieved. • The specific progressive intermediate interventions are identified that will be required in the various programmes along the change-pathway.

- Indicators for each intermediate step that will be used to assess the performance of the interventions should be identified, and finally;
- A narrative should be developed that summarises the logic and the dynamics of the change process in the overall theory leading to the achievement of the outcome of MP reduction.

Source: Adapted from <www.theoryofchange.org>

See also: Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development; Vogel, April 2012, UK Department of International Development

4.3 Drivers of Poverty Reduction and the ToC

Achieving a reduction in multidimensional poverty is likely to be a gradual process: it begins with direct support (possibly through social protection or other direct measures) to assist poor households to cross the threshold of extreme poverty; next comes a stage of building resilience and beginning to address the secondary levels of multidimensional poverty, including improved housing & living conditions and the acquisition of assets, leading to better nutrition and health, and finally ensuring sustainable intergenerational pathways out of poverty. The starting point of UNDP's ToC was the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Chronic Poverty Report of 2014¹³. Building on this, the ToC should therefore clearly define the process and pathways envisaged in getting from a state of chronic poverty to the desired improved poverty status.

Understanding the transmission mechanisms, industry/sector dynamics and drivers of poverty reduction is essential to achieving a continued reduction in the rate of poverty in Cambodia, especially a reduction in the level of multidimensional poverty that has so far proved the most difficult to achieve. For example, building resilience needs a detailed understanding of the vulnerabilities and risk-probabilities being faced by the targeted poor and interventions need to target the most critical factors.

Examples of both "hard" and "soft" drivers of poverty reduction in Cambodia include the following¹⁴:

- **Improving the Return to the Assets of the Poor and Building Resilience**
 - Rural smallholding farmers and those dependent on other rural-based livelihoods are amongst the poorest and most vulnerable in Cambodia; for these groups building resilience should focus on agricultural policies to support improved productivity and production, including strengthening extension services, measures to reduce input costs and ensure better market information and market access; these "hard" interventions should be supported by activities to build sustainability and resilience against external weather and climate shocks;
- Trade, investment and employment enhancing policies for non-farm rural-employment and the promotion of medium, small and micro enterprises (MSME) in the areas in which the poor live, building skills, supporting women, youth and people with disabilities to boost their livelihood options (both urban and rural), and assisting to reduce rural-urban-overseas migration are required to create the enabling environment in which the poor have the confidence to invest in their assets to build their own pathways out of poverty;
- Ensuring secure land rights, developing a secure transactions framework and improving financial literacy and access to affordable credit and financial services are essential to enable the poor to make better use of their assets; lack of these factors discourage and inhibits the poor from investing in improving their land and hinders their ability to leverage their assets to improve their livelihoods;

¹³ The Chronic Poverty Report 2014-2015: The road to zero extreme poverty; Chronic Poverty Advisory Network; Overseas Development Institute 2014.

¹⁴ See also Cambodia Poverty Assessment 2013, World Bank, (presentation February 2014)

- Strengthening policy to improve rural economic infrastructure and transport to support the economic activities of the poor also help to build confidence and act as a catalyst and driver of poverty reduction;
- **Voice & Participation:**
- Empowerment, voice and participation are also catalysts to socio-economic advancement and are important factors in reducing multidimensional poverty; these conditions are built on improving all aspects of education and knowledge including technical and vocational training policy and outcomes; supporting education policy, especially for raising skills and enhancing opportunities for sustainable employment; however once voice and participation have been built (and rights have been advocated) there needs to be further follow-up in terms of livelihoods since these “soft” poverty reduction measures do not provide a pathway out of poverty for those who have very few assets in the context of the ToC
- Support to social protection policies; there are many persons living with a disability in Cambodia, many if not most of the causes of disability result either directly or indirectly from the conflicts of the past; those with land-mine injuries or polio are amongst the poorest and most vulnerable; support to strengthen social protection policy and implementation would make a material impact on poverty reduction;
- Building local governance structures to support the advancement of the poor can also be an important indirect driver of poverty reduction; and
- Other cross-cutting areas where support to better policy could have indirect, yet still very positive implications for reducing multi-dimensional poverty include the role and status of women in society including gender equity in education, better primary health-care services and access in urban and rural areas, empowerment of the most vulnerable; and in building capacity for climate-change preparedness and disaster risk reduction and resilience.

In monitoring progress of interventions, the time-frame over which interventions might lead to the desired poverty reduction outcomes needs to be understood. Development outcomes, and particularly poverty reduction in the multidimensional poverty space do not generally happen quickly. In many cases the link between an intervention by UNDP and an actual change in the poverty status of individuals and families occurs over a long period.

For example, empowering women or people with a disability, or improving the access to technical education for girls and the rural poor may undoubtedly lead to a reduction in aspects of deprivation and a reduction in MPI poverty. But over what period are such successes to be measured. In such cases the results of empowerment and improvements in technical education may take many years to have an impact at the individual level. In these circumstances, it may simply be sufficient to assess whether the interventions have an internal consistency and, if they were to be successfully and sustainably implemented, they were likely to lead to a reduction in the targeted deprivation.

Thus, from an evaluation perspective the issue is not so much whether UNDP’s interventions have directly brought about a change in the lives of individual poor families, but rather the extent to which interventions undertaken by UNDP have had a clear transmission mechanism to the poor, and one which would be sustainable over a reasonable period enabling it to contribute positively towards reducing the targeted deprivations. In other words, would the ultimate success of the UNDP programme lead to a positive change in the lives of the poor?

A fully documented ToC, with a clear change pathway would identify intermediate outcome/output indicators that, if-and-when realised, would point towards the successful achievement

of the ultimate-goal over a longer-term horizon. Progress indicators should follow SMARTER¹⁵ criteria wherever possible and by doing so contribute to ensuring that the ToC provides a logical, and achievable change pathway to the ultimate outcome.

4.4 Case Study Assessments

Taking the above factors together with the recommendations of the CPAP MTR into consideration; the following section provides brief assessments of the issues raised and identifies the findings of the evaluation team on the 2011-2015 CPAP and four programmes visited; detailed case study reports on the case studies are at Appendix IV.

A review of the 2011-2015 CPAP, based on the Country Programme Performance Summary (CPPS), found that the high-level policy support reported the highest level of success in delivering desired outcomes. Although the outcomes were not necessarily directly measurable in terms of actual poverty reduction the direct links from policy measures to poverty reduction can be identified. These links include increased trade, employment and investment, as well as stronger management and regulation of forest resources for the benefit of landowners. The mine clearance programme, which is discussed in detail in the case studies, also falls into this category.

Programmes in the 2011-2015 CPAP that were less successful, or where progress could not be adequately measured, mainly included those with “soft” or indirect links between the intervention and measurable poverty reduction impacts or outcomes. The Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia (DRIC), also discussed in the case studies, is a case in point. There is no doubt that the project has helped to improve knowledge and understanding of individual rights (amongst the limited number of participating groups), but there is a disconnect between imparting knowledge and providing practical measures to reduce poverty for the individuals in these groups. “Soft” or indirect interventions should, wherever possible, be supported by “hard” or direct measures that directly target incomes, assets or the other components of the MPI.

The evaluation team found that in general that only one of the four case studies met the criteria of the ToC; that being the mine action programme. The other three programmes did not have clear links/transmission mechanisms from the interventions to the desired poverty reduction outcomes. The links in these other programmes were all indirect and rather tenuous. None of the other programmes could demonstrate any measurable poverty reduction impacts.

A similar issue is observed in an assessment of the 2016-2018 CPAP, see following matrix. The identified programmes do not generally demonstrate clear transmission mechanisms from the intervention to the poverty reduction outcome. This is not to say, of course, that the programmes are not worthy in their objectives or not successful in delivering the actual outcomes achieved. But they do not, in the evaluation teams view, fit with the ToC; if a ToC is to be the guiding philosophy, then the programmes need to be framed around it.

The lessons to be learned by UNDP from this evaluation echoing those of the CPAP MTR may be summarised as follows:

- High level policy engagement delivered the greatest level of success, especially when the policy transmission mechanism down to the poor could be clearly identified; as in trade, employment and investment;
- A more focused and coordinated programme, centred around a ToC if that is the desired approach, and built on mutually supporting “soft” and “hard” poverty reduction interventions is likely also to be successful in the future;

¹⁵ Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; Time-bound; Evaluable and Reviewable.

See also <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/psm-fpfm/learning-apprentissage/ptm-grt/pmc-dgr/smart-eng.asp> for an example from the Government of Canada

- Greater national ownership of UNDP's interventions would likely lead stronger high-level influence and would assist in building UNDP's reputation and standing with RGC, and would, in turn, assist in supporting UNDP's ability to mobilise co-financing with RGC.

Summary Evaluation Assessment of the Four Case Study Programmes				
Case Study Programme	Cassava Export Development Programme	Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia	Mine Action Programme: Clearance for Development Results	Local Governance (ACES)
Evaluation Criteria				
Links to ToC and Reducing MPI	<p>Intended to boost incomes of farmers through formation of Farmer Associations to strengthen negotiating power over exports and export prices.</p> <p>If successful, the associations would have resulted in higher incomes for cassava farmers</p>	<p>Programme links to MPI by targeting the most disadvantaged but does not clearly link to the ToC in terms of enhancing the return to the assets of the target group.</p>	<p>The programme has very clear links to both the ToC and MPI. It aims to enhance the use of the land assets of poor rural farmers and through this to improve their standards of living.</p> <p>The programme has very clear benefits in terms of both economic and social impacts.</p>	<p>The direct links to ToC and MPI poverty reduction are not clear although it was argued that implementation of the commune development plans contributed indirectly to enhancing aspects of livelihoods and thus to poverty reduction.</p> <p>As with the DRIC programme the links are indirect and not well defined.</p>
Were Outcomes clearly defined	<p>Outcomes were identified as supporting poverty reduction but the actual measurement of the poverty reduction was not quantified.</p>	<p>The outcome of the programme, empowering people with a disability through enhancing their rights' knowledge is only indirectly linked to poverty reduction.</p> <p>The outcomes are not clearly defined and are hard to measure in a quantifiable way. As noted by the beneficiaries the rights knowledge is useful but it does not help to boost livelihoods directly.</p>	<p>The outcomes are quite clearly defined and the new emphasis on monitoring the results of the cleared land on household production and incomes will enable the outcomes to be measured</p>	<p>The project outcomes were associated with strengthening local governance structures and, in particular, the Association of Sub-national Administration Councils, into an effective representative of local voices for democratic development.</p> <p>But there were no clearly defined poverty-reduction indicators in the monitoring framework.</p>
Were poverty reduction outcomes measurable	<p>The link from the associations to increased incomes was indirect and did not factor the impact of industry dynamics. Including the influence of non-Cambodian traders, the changing sourcing patterns of the ultimate end-users</p>		<p>The MAPU monitors the use of the land after clearance and handover and data is compiled, although it is not well analysed.</p> <p>More attention could be given to longer term monitoring of the land-use to provide a clearly picture of</p>	<p>Standards of governance were reportedly improved by the programme and it was noted there had been a significant increase in the participation of women in local council matters;</p>

	in China and the declining yields of Cambodian cassava producers.		the benefits being derived by the beneficiaries.	It was not clear that any measurable poverty reduction had actually been, achieved although it was commented that the Commune Development Plans supported through the programme, could have led indirectly to potential poverty reduction outcomes.
Was the programme sustainable	<p>It is unfortunate that the programme appears to have been badly timed, just as the market and prices for cassava were beginning to decline. Consequently the associations have struggled to be either viable or relevant.</p> <p>The project also appears to have been one in which the original development partner that provided the funding did not then meet the second part of the conditions to provide the market for the product. UNDP appears to have taken the role of implementer and then found that the programme is not sustainable.</p>	<p>The CDPO provides very small amounts of support and assistance to a small number of DPO at the community level.</p> <p>The programme is currently only sustainable at a low-level of coverage; there is a need for more structured and secure funding and ownership by government.</p>	The programme is co-financed between RGC and development partners and will be sustainable at current levels provided external support continues.	<p>It was stated that UNDP's involvement was quite essential to sustainability;</p> <p>However, the programme has no funding from/through the National Council for Democratic Development (NCDD), which has sizeable pool funds (including from government, SIDA, SDC and EU) for support of subnational democratic development.</p> <p>For long-term funding sustainability, the team suggests that the local government associations could perhaps be more integrated with the NCDD funding process.</p>
Findings and Conclusions	<p>The biggest challenges for farmers are declining yields and high input costs: if the programme is to be successful future support is needed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) extension services to raise productivity, quality and production; b) reducing input costs; and c) providing affordable credit and financial services – these are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Longer term secure funding is needed for the programme to enable greater coverage of those in need and more support to individual DPO. b) Social assistance to people with a disability should be mainstreamed and coordinated through the programmes of both government and non-government actors; c) The ID poor system should be strengthened to enable those people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Data generated by the PCM reporting form, both as a baseline and six months after the land is cleared and released, should be better utilized for analysis. It appears that this wealth of data has been under-utilized for policy development. b) Consideration should be given to revisiting the cleared land two years after release, since only one-visit after 6 months is considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Although evidence for assessing this programme is from only one province it is the one with the most advanced capacities in terms of subnational and local democratic governance. b) Based on the assessment of this province the team found that currently the sustainability of the network is questionable. It is therefore recommended that the need for funding by the

	<p>areas where UNDP could play a role in influencing agricultural policy towards cassava producers, and other agricultural and rural communities.</p> <p>The programme seeks to address an institutional constraint to cassava farming through building farmer associations; the programme provides “soft” poverty reduction measures but does not address the underlying “hard” constraints faced by the farmers. It has not therefore been successful in reducing poverty amongst the target group.</p> <p>The lesson to be learnt here is that attempting to fix one aspect of a range of constraints is unlikely to be successful, unless that particular issue is a binding constraint.</p> <p>Future programme design should ensure that all factors that might come into play in the success of the intervention are clearly understood, and are addressed as part of an overall coordinated programme.</p> <p>If support to cassava farming is to be continued it is therefore recommended that an updated and thorough analysis of the industry be undertaken. This needs to assess the whole industry structure and likely future direction of the industry and what role Cambodian farmers are likely to be able to play in such an</p>	<p>living with a disability to be clearly identified;</p> <p>d) A national register of those living with a disability should be compiled so that social protection services can be targeted to those most in need;</p> <p>e) Innovative sources of low-cost finance need to be investigated for people living with a disability so that they can obtain affordable credit to build assets and livelihoods;</p> <p>f) The DPOs need support to network with potential funding partners, including the private sector, to assist the DPOs to provide greater support to livelihood promotion;</p> <p>g) Social media, being the most cost-effective advocacy tool, especially for rights awareness for those living with a disability, should continue to be used wherever possible.</p> <p>The DRIC programme has made an important contribution to building knowledge, confidence and self-esteem amongst some of the most disadvantaged in Cambodian society. But, as with the CEDEP programme, it has not delivered measurable poverty reduction. The very poor and disadvantaged need hard measures to assist them to build their livelihoods.</p> <p>The lesson to be learnt for future programmes is that “soft” measures need to be supported by “hard” interventions that directly address livelihood issues to reduce poverty.</p>	<p>time-short a time-period to establish the case as to what has happened to the land.</p> <p>This programme has evolved into something of a “model” for poverty reduction in the ToC framework; it targets the poor and their assets (land); it results in improved access to the asset and enhances its productive value while at the same time reducing the social risk of injury to the landowners.</p> <p>It therefore demonstrates clear transmission mechanisms from intervention to poverty reduction, it also has measurable performance indicators.</p>	<p>associations should not be excluded by government or from the pool of funds from NCDD. However, it is rather a question of functional independence of the network. It is still doubtful if normal state funded officials can be independent just by networking with one another.</p> <p>c) A bigger question centres on the actual achievements of the associations of councilors at all levels. It is important to establish measurable outputs and outcomes of the associations so that their worthiness can be assessed in terms of voice, participation and governance. This will provide a basis for determining appropriate support for the future.</p> <p>The 2015 CPPS found that this programme was either off-track or progress could not be measured.</p> <p>A lesson to be learned for future programming is the need for realistic and measurable indicators to be identified or developed. For some “soft” programmes, like this, it may not be easy; the CPPS records lack of data on four of the 16 indicators.</p> <p>If an intervention cannot be easily or readily measured its success or otherwise cannot be adequately assessed.</p>
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	industry. It would need to consider all aspects of productivity, production costs and competitiveness for both raw and dried cassava, as well as for value-adding through processing.			
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4.5 Findings & Lessons Learned: How Does the Design of the CPAP 2016-2018 Respond to the MTR and the ToC?

In this section the evaluation assesses how far UNDP has responded to the findings and recommendations of the MTR, and whether these have been reflected in the draft CPAP for 2016 – 2018.

The following matrix attempts to put this into context. The first column identifies the narrative of the CPAP while the second links that narrative to the country programme outputs in the RRF. The third column presents the evaluation teams comments in the context of: a) both the MTR and the ToC; and b) the following observations taken from the consultations undertaken by the team:

- The complexity of the M&E framework. It is noted that many of the “Outcome Indicators” in the CPAP are in effect “output (or in some cases even input) indicators” and are not directly related to UNDP’s stated MPI poverty reduction outcomes in either the UNDAF or the UNDP Strategic Plan. Further there may be too many indicators to monitor effectively, and many of the indicators are very qualitative and will be difficult to measure in practice. Fewer, but more quantifiable indicators, would serve the purpose much more effectively. It would also be very useful if SDG indicators were used in the M&E framework wherever possible.
- In relation to the ToC it was noted by the team that in general the poorest and most vulnerable have very few assets on which to build their livelihoods and to find a genuine pathway out of poverty. Further the land that they have is often insufficient to provide for their needs; they are unable to increase production or productivity because of a combination of low-levels of production and productivity, a lack of agricultural extension services, poor access to markets and low market prices, high costs of transport and other inputs and the high cost of credit (from MFIs) for investment. Many such people in Cambodia are also those living with a disability. As described in the case studies, only one of the four programmes visited could be said to directly support poverty reduction, and even then it was not necessarily the very poorest and most disadvantaged who were in receipt of the greatest benefits.
- It was noted that few of the UNDAF/CPAP outcomes or outputs directly address the multidimensional components of the MPI (as the stated base indicator) – education, health and standards of living - as measured by housing conditions and asset ownership which tend to be directly related to and functions of household income.
- The previous cluster/thematic practices as existed under the 2011-2015 CPAP have now been brought together under the single over-arching multidimensional poverty reduction theme with programmes to be delivered in line with the ToC; this together with the policy-based approach to UNDP’s programmes aims to eliminate the previous, sometimes narrowly defined focus and often compartmentalised, cluster-based projects which did not always generate synergies between the various UNDP practice teams. While this may provide a stronger theoretical framework, the narrative in the CPAP does not fully capitalise on the potential synergies by drawing clear cross-linkages between the various programmes. This leads back to the lack of a strong programming narrative in the ToC.,
- The team is of the view that, in principle, these new approaches are generally sound and have been framed to be in line not just with the ToC, but more broadly, have taken due account of the findings and recommendations of both the CPAP MTR and the UN-Wide poverty thematic evaluation; however, a

challenge for UNDP in implementation is the level of control over deployable resources given that UNDP's core funding covers less than one quarter of the amount required to deliver the current CPD and CPAP. Many of the projects seem to flow more from the availability of funding sources, and may not necessarily fall neatly into the framework identified by the ToC. For example, there is a very strong emphasis in the CPAP on climate change, primarily because this is where the funding is most readily available, rather than because this area of activity is most likely to contribute to poverty reduction or to the fulfilment of the objectives of the ToC.

- The team observed an increased emphasis on the M&E framework and staffing, along, with the move towards the poverty thematic approach. However, it remains to be seen how the results of the CDP and CPAP can be robustly measured and attributed to UNDP in the broader of goal of poverty reduction, which is contributed to by many actors and donors. This is also due, in part, to the fact that some projects are designed to intervene at the policy level, with no on-the-ground implementation activities (such as those in the Climate Change portfolio), whereas some are designed to intervene on the ground (i.e. mine clearance) without clear links to intervention at the corresponding policy level;
- It is noted that there are many UN Agencies and other development partners working toward the same objective of poverty reduction, but UNDP is often the "go to" partner when policy support is required by the government; UNDP with its clearly mandated role in poverty reduction therefore has a leading position in terms of coordination and is able to leverage its policy role with government; at the project level, on the other hand, in some cases it seems rather unclear how UNDP has, or would in future take part or more importantly, take-the-lead in a multi-stakeholder programme when it has limited capacity and resources.

The evaluation team concludes that the CPAP 2016-2018, while attempting to integrate and be based on the objectives of the ToC, found it difficult to achieve this in the context of also having to be compliant with the UNDAF and the UNDP Global Strategy. The team also concludes that the need to source funds for programme implementation can compromise UNDP's ability to pursue the objectives of the ToC when the funding source has a different agenda.

Funding for climate change activities is a case in point. The umbrella of climate change adaptation and/or mitigation is now used to cover a very broad range of development related interventions. Many of the activities being implemented under this umbrella could be much more clearly defined, and could achieve more easily identifiable poverty reduction benefits, if they were promoted on their own merits. However, they are only able to obtain funding if they are framed around climate change. UNDP's ToC could provide a much sounder basis for poverty reduction interventions if it could be implemented without having to pay service to policies that have less direct and weaker links to quantifiable and shorter-term poverty reduction measures.

There are many agencies involved in supporting economic and social development in Cambodia; it is a crowded field. UNDP is seeking to focus its interventions on poverty reduction framed around the ToC, but poverty reduction is also a focus of many other agencies. But which agencies are supporting the various aspects and components of poverty reduction policy, and how is not entirely clear. The evaluation team was informed that there is some coordination between development partners, but this does not appear to be formalized, in so far as there is no clear picture of which agency is doing what and how. This applies to the provision of poverty reduction policy advisory assistance as well as to other interventions across a wide spectrum of policy areas. For example, and as noted in the previous paragraph, climate change is now tagged to many interventions, this often serves to lead to unclear poverty reduction priorities and outcomes. The evaluation team is therefore of the view that it

would be useful if UNDP took a lead in compiling a comprehensive schedule of what different agencies are providing in the way of policy advisory support to RGC and its line ministries. Having a clear picture would enable gaps in core poverty reduction policy and advice to be more easily identified, and would therefore enable UNDP to more clearly identify entry points in its preferred policy areas focused on poverty reduction.

The foregoing assessment suggests that the current CPD is not easy reading, and is not especially user-friendly for a reader who might be wanting a succinct summary of what UNDP plans to provide, and what precise outcomes might be expected from UNDP's interventions. It is therefore recommended that a simple user-friendly "one/two-pager" summary be developed to highlight succinctly what interventions UNDP aims to provide, and what outcomes it aims to achieve through its interventions. In the evaluation team's view this could serve a dual purpose of; a) providing a brief stakeholder guide to UNDP's programmes, and b) could also to serve to provide UNDP itself with an internal consistency check for its programmes - are they interlinked and mutually supporting, are they all aimed at the desired poverty reduction outcomes, are they all soundly based on the ToC and a clearly defined change pathway.

Assessment of the CPAP 2016-2018 in Relation to the MTR & ToC		
CPAP 2016 – 2018 Proposed Programme Narrative	CPAP Results and Resources Framework	Evaluation Team Comments
<p>Overall Programme Narrative</p> <p>The programme will support Cambodia to build pathways out of poverty and expand the scope for public action.</p> <p>Seven provinces have been identified on the MPI and will be the focus for policy evaluation, poverty assessments and data collection. The impact of policies will have to be greatest in these provinces and among the targeted poor population if poverty reduction is to be sustained. Women and youth will be given priority to help them harness their unrealised potential.</p>	<p>Under UNDAF/CPAP Outcome 1, only one of the four outcome indicators relate directly to poverty reduction.</p> <p>The other three indicators focus on climate change and environment</p>	<p>The CPAP RRF includes only one output with direct poverty reduction focus in line with the ToC, that is for the mine action programme. This programme fits well into the frame of the ToC, the poor have the assets, land & labour, and the programme enhances the productive capacity of the land by making it safe for the farmers.</p> <p>Other than this there are no explicitly identified programmes that would directly contribute to building pathways out of poverty.</p> <p>There are no specific programmes focusing directly on support to policy advice or policy development to reduce poverty, the ToC-defined pathways out of poverty would need direct action in the short-term as well as longer-term indirect measures through climate and environment interventions.</p> <p>The overall CPAP programme narrative does not therefore build from the ToC to the multidimensional poverty reduction goal.</p>
<p>Value Chains</p> <p>UNDP will support public action to capture the gains from expansion of global value chains and to adapt to the changing development finance landscape. The focus will be on upgrading value chains, financing development sustainably, building resilience and fostering participation.</p> <p>UNDP will work with the government to foster a policy environment that encourages a sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The aim is to help the country move up global and regional value chains, upgrade the skills of the young work force and invest in backward linkages.</p>	<p>No outcome for direct poverty reduction through value chain interventions is identified in the RRF.</p>	<p>The success of the ToC hinges on building and improving the productivity of the assets of the poor; however, the CPAP RRF does not include outputs that directly support these objectives.</p> <p>Value chains are primarily built by the private sector; the role of governments is to provide the enabling environment for the necessary investment to occur. This requires interventions in education and skill building as well as in agriculture, trade, investment, industry and governance policies.</p>

<p>UNDP will provide policy and capacity development assistance to coordinate sectoral policies and public investments in human capital development, industrial policy, foreign direct investment and trade strategy.</p> <p>UNDP will contribute policy advice for the development of sectors with the potential to go up the value chains, expansion of skilled employment and development of rural livelihoods and micro and small enterprises through backward linkages. Women stand to benefit from this transformation, as they are in vulnerable employment and make up much of the manufacturing work force, half of agricultural employment and most of the micro-enterprise sector.</p> <p>As part of trade sector development and triangular cooperation, UNDP will assist in upgrading the cassava value chain, with a focus on the priority MPI provinces.</p> <p>These efforts will require collaboration with government ministries responsible for industrial and trade policy, agriculture and education and vocational training, and with the private sector.</p> <p>UNDP will also seek collaboration with the UNICEF and the UNESCO to address declining completion rates in lower secondary education. This will build on the cross-sectoral dimensions of human capital development, industrial policy and trade strategy since 2011.</p>		<p>These “hard” policies areas have the greater power to make positive contributions to poverty reduction than “soft” institutional interventions.</p> <p>The concern for the evaluation team is that there is a disconnect between the ToC and what is expressly included in the CPAP as the “action document” for the CO.</p>
<p>Building Resilience to Climate Change and Disasters</p> <p>UNDP will provide policy advice and capacity development assistance to strengthen the coordination of public policy, investment, social and market provisioning for poverty reduction, resilience and environmental management.</p> <p>UNDP will reframe its assistance to mine action from a focus on the number of hectares cleared to strengthening of rural livelihoods and provision of disability assistance.</p> <p>UNDP assistance to national mechanisms will focus on fostering closer coordination of public investment and social provisioning among national and subnational authorities.</p> <p>This will include coordination in the rollout and financing of social protection schemes, livelihood and extension support, disaster risk reduction and early warning systems.</p>	<p>Output 1.1: Establishment and strengthening of institutions, coordination mechanisms and policies for sustainable management of natural resources, ecosystem services.</p> <p>Output 1.2: Scaled-up action on national programme for climate change adaptation and mitigation across sectors that is funded and implemented, targeting the most vulnerable poor populations.</p> <p>Output 1.3: Climate- and disaster-responsive social protection policies are in place that provide protective, preventive and promotive solutions for poor, climate-vulnerable people.</p> <p>Output 1.5: Institutional measures are in place to strengthen the contribution of the</p>	<p>Building resilience is the largest component in the programme and has an overarching focus on climate change and the environment.</p> <p>Under UNDAF/CPAP Outcome 1 three of the five outputs relate to climate change or DRM, one focuses on HIV and only one, for mine action has a direct link to poverty reduction.</p> <p>Whilst the CPAP narrative incorporates proposals for building sustainable livelihoods the programme outputs are focused on institutional and legal frameworks that are unlikely to impact directly on the poverty status of the poor, except in the longer term.</p> <p>It is not clear therefore how these outputs will lead to a reduction in poverty and/or inequality in the short-term. The measures envisaged are more directed at mitigating the risk of individuals and communities falling back into poverty</p>

<p>Learning from its evaluation of community-based adaptation work, UNDP will explore how to introduce restoration of ecosystems and strengthen the vulnerability risk assessment methodology.</p> <p>UNDP and the UNCDF will explore sustainable implementation of public services transferred from central to subnational authorities.</p> <p>UNDP will contribute to strengthening environmental services and the system of forest management and protected areas, including mangrove forests critical for fisheries.</p> <p>In collaboration with relevant ministries, UNDP will help to strengthen the forest-dependent livelihoods of rural households and indigenous peoples' communities and contribute to long-term food security.</p> <p>In collaboration with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNDP will work at the policy level to improve market access to affordable antiretroviral drugs. UNDP will also support efforts to mainstream measures to help people living with and affected by HIV into national social protection systems.</p> <p>Assistance from UNDP and the UNCDF will be key to making financial services accessible to poor communities.</p>	<p>national mine action programme to the human development of poor communities.</p> <p>Output 1.4: Inclusive policies in place to ensure protection for people living with HIV and people with disabilities.</p>	<p>over-time as a consequence of climate change or disaster impacts.</p> <p>Strengthening institutional capacities and systems for mainstreaming climate change and DRM in national/sub-regional and sector planning and budgeting, will contribute to building resilience and contribute to poverty reduction in the longer term.</p> <p>For these results to be achieved, clear transmission mechanisms from national interventions, including the M&E system for climate change monitoring and the National Climate Change Financing Framework, to individual communities and households will need to be put in place.</p>
<p>Voice & Participation, Gender Empowerment and Mainstreaming</p> <p>To expand the scope for public action, UNDP will focus assistance on public institutions for poverty reduction and resilience and on strengthening voice and participation.</p> <p>UNDP will support efforts to strengthen mechanisms for realizing commitments to poor people, women and people with disabilities. This will take place by helping them make their voices heard, as a means to inform policies and ensure their implementation.</p> <p>Given how protracted illnesses devastate poor rural households, UNDP will also explore opportunities to address non-communicable diseases.</p> <p>UNDP will help to strengthen the leadership of gender mainstreaming mechanisms to foster accountability for implementing economic, social and governance priorities set out under the Five-Year Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (Neary Rattanak IV).</p> <p>UNDP will also promote gender-responsive decision-making processes and work to increase the number and capacity of women in leadership and decision-making positions in the civil</p>	<p>Output 2.1: Mechanisms and channels for government-citizen dialogue exist that establish long-term accountability relationships</p> <p>Output 2.2: Mechanisms to increase percentage of women in leadership and decision-making are more effective.</p> <p>Output 2.3: Capacities of government institutions and civil society organizations strengthened to comply with obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>Enhancing voice and participation are catalysts that, if supported by more direct livelihood building measures, can contribute to poverty reduction.</p> <p>Programmes in these “soft” policy areas therefore need to be backed-up by support to “hard” livelihood building interventions.</p> <p>Social protection measures are usually seen as being essentially passive, in that they provide support to the poor and vulnerable, rather than actively assisting to build pathways out of poverty.</p> <p>The narrative indicates that UNDP will be engaged in many gender-focused activities, but the relevant CPAP Output does not include and reference to gender</p> <p>The CPAP programme narrative and the Outputs are both in accordance with the recommendations of the MTR of the previous CPAP. The important point here is to ensure that the advocacy for transformative change actually occurs. This is likely to be most successful where the demand for the change has come from RGC itself.</p>

<p>service, national and subnational government offices, and the National Assembly.</p> <p>UNDP will participate in the dialogue with the National Assembly on priority human development issues.</p> <p>UNDP will not only communicate development results and success stories but also strengthen advocacy and knowledge management to bring about transformative change in the identified four key areas – inclusive and sustainable development, building resilience, financing development, and voices and participation.</p> <p>Government efforts to transform the country's legal framework from a primary focus on commercialization of natural resources to their sustainable management will be supported.</p> <p>UNDP will also explore opportunities to strengthen public participation in sectors such as public services delivery, environment and natural resource management.</p> <p>UNDP will continue its support to the media on human capital and disability.</p>	<p>Output 3.4: Mechanisms in place to generate and share knowledge about development solutions</p>	<p>These are important activities and can be classified as being those where UNDP should have a role in supporting those policy areas and initiatives amongst the more difficult to resolve as identified in the CPAP MTR.</p> <p>However as found by the evaluation team the greatest challenge for those living with a disability is not so much their rights and their voice, important as these may be, but rather their ability to engage in productive livelihood activities. In this regard they require access to finance & credit, and micro-business skills, see case study.</p>
<p>Financing Development Sustainably</p> <p>UNDP will collaborate with the ministries responsible for national planning and statistics to translate the SDGs into the country context.</p> <p>UNDP will also collaborate with UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and other United Nations agencies to explore ways to assist in strengthening the national statistical system.</p> <p>UNDP will focus on the policy and capacity development assistance needed to maximize available development assistance grants, while building national capacity to finance development requirements from domestic sources, foreign direct investment and non-traditional development assistance. In order to maximize available development assistance, UNDP will continue its support for the Busan development effectiveness agenda. This will involve respecting alignment with national development plans; transparency and accountability; and strengthening national institutions.</p> <p>To access non-traditional development assistance, UNDP will help build the country's capacity to access, manage and monitor climate change financing. UNDP will actively explore opportunities for triangular and South-South cooperation across the country programme priorities.</p>	<p>Output 3.1 the National Strategic Development Plan incorporates and localizes the post-2015 agenda and Sustainable Development Goals priorities.</p> <p>Output 3.2: National data collection measurement and analytical systems in place to monitor progress on the post-2015 agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>Output 3.3: Institutional mechanisms in place to manage the transition in composition of official development assistance and to expand access to other sources of global development financing.</p>	<p>The direct link between the ToC and the CPAP narrative and Outputs is indirect and the poverty reduction impacts will be small, certainly in the short-term.</p> <p>Ensuring the integration of the SDGs into the national planning will enable UNDP to identify those policy areas where interventions can be most directly linked to poverty reducing outcomes.</p> <p>A direct link could be obtained by incorporating an output to provide policy support to setting Cambodia on the path to achieving specific poverty reducing SDGs.</p>

The final paragraphs in this section provide a summarisation of issues and findings on the topics of: UNDP's focus and performance as a partner to the government and donors; the potential for increased cost sharing with the government and future directions.

4.6 Findings: UNDP's Focus and Performance as a Partner

The evaluation team held consultations with government agencies, development partners and implementation partners to gauge their views on UNDP's role and focus, and where possible on the relevance of the theory of change. The following summarises the general findings of these consultations:

- UNDP was regarded as a trustworthy and independent partner by the government and other development partners;
- UNDP has a strong brand with government, especially as it was seen as being instrumental in assisting the government and people to recover from the war;
- The problem is now that UNDP has transitioned from a major player in the early years to a small player (in financial terms) in the congested development assistance field;
- Government agencies, and donors, were mostly aware of UNDP's financial constraints and the restructuring that had occurred to bring the previous "clusters" together under the overarching "poverty reduction" goal; this considered as an attempt to bring about greater synergies across UNDP's programme and to make delivery more cost effective, this was supported by all who provided comments;
- It was therefore suggested UNDP should not be too ambitious in its programmes in the future, more focus was perhaps needed, UNDP had limited funds and needed to put their support where it could make the biggest contribution – high-level policy – many small-scale activities do not make any material impact on poverty reduction unless there is strong government ownership and a clear exit and sustainability plan fully supported by government;
- It was not always clear to development partners or to government agencies how UNDP defined the links between high-level policy through to action/impacts at the household poverty level; the feeling was that UNDP was doing too many small things that had positive but often extremely limited impacts; some programmes had a narrow focus and/or consisted of small-scale pilot activities which did not have clear exit/sustainability or scaling-up strategies and perhaps lack real government ownership; it was better to focus on high level policy advice and demonstrate, through evidence-based research and analysis how such policy could be translated into realistic and implementable programmes;
- It was noted that this might present a challenge for UNDP to attribute actual poverty reduction outcomes/development impacts/results specifically to UNDP high-level interventions; UNDP support is small and many other factors influence outcomes; it is considered better to focus on high-level policy but have a clear idea of how such policy advice and resulting decisions can lead to development impacts over time; this can be done through presenting strong

and clearly argued evidence-based policy; capacity building was needed within government for this;

- It was also commented that UNDP should try to possibly simplify the documentation for the CPAP; at present it is rather difficult for the casual reader to follow the links between the national development priorities, the UNDP Strategic Plan, the UNDAF and the CPD and CPAP documents. For example, the CPAP outputs in Annex I are not mentioned in the narrative of the CPAP itself, indeed Annex I is not explicitly mentioned in the CPAP narrative. The Country Programme M&E Plan, Annex II of the CPAP is cited in Part VII of the CPAP document but this contains different indicators to those in Annex I, and further appears to introduce outputs and outcome and output indicators from the UNDP Strategic Plan, the UNDAF and the CPD. It is therefore not clear which of these two Annexes in the CPAP takes precedence in terms of results, resources, and/or M&E;
- UNDP therefore needs to focus on its comparative advantage – providing high-level policy advice backed-up by global experience and knowledge of best-practice elsewhere; it was noted that UNDP had supported trade and industrial policy development both of which had been very useful to government; the implementation of these policies would have significant poverty reduction benefits, initially on greater employment and then in incomes and through higher incomes would lead to reductions in other areas of deprivation in the MPI;
- UNDP needs to be more pro-active in engaging at the most senior levels of government on policy issues; it must somehow find resources to be able to put these on the table and invite government to indicate its needs; through this type of approach it might be possible to encourage government to cost-share;
- Therefore, UNDP should aim to provide demand driven support to government; care must be taken that projects/programmes are clearly driven by government's needs and should not be driven either through source of finance or donor agendas or preferences;
- Coordination and synergies between UNDP and other UN agencies, was still seen as mixed with some agencies still having their own agendas/mandates which overlap even within UNDAF framework. Such situations were reportedly observed between UNDP and FAO, UNEP, UN Women and UNFPA.

In achieving its objectives of moving towards programmes that have more emphasis on higher-level policy-focused interventions, which are directly aligned to a ToC, UNDP will need to consider the staffing implications. Such an approach is likely to require more of the UNDP staff and/or consultants to have high-level credibility and strong communication skills to be able to communicate direct with and influence policymakers. This approach is likely to work best where the policy-support has been demand driven by RGC and is directly supportive of national development strategies. Targeting higher-level policy interventions may reduce the need for procurement and administration, but will likely require strengthened capacities and speed of response in selection processes to meet the needs of policymakers in a timely manner.

4.7 Findings: Cost Sharing Opportunities Between RGC and UNDP

The possibility of cost-sharing with government exists in principle, it was noted that government is already required to make contributions to ADB/WB loan projects, so the general principle of cost sharing is not new, just new to UNDP for technical assistance and policy advisory activities. It was noted that the SIDA educational facility improvement programme now also included a large government contribution alongside the SIDA funding, an example of where government has recognised the benefit of the programme and taken ownership.

It was further noted that cost-sharing might also be possible under the new programme budgeting system to be introduced in 2017; MOWA & MOP both indicated interest in pursuing this possibility. Gaps in available policy advice to RGC need to be identified; these would provide UNDP with suitable entry points; it was, for example, reported by the Ministry of Planning that the ministry was receiving economic policy advice through UNFPA TA consultants. This would seem to be a particular area where UNDP should have a strong comparative advantage.

UNDP should raise this matter at a high-level programming consultation with RGC in the context of finalizing and/or reviewing the 2016-2018 CPAP. Engaging with RGC on such a cost-sharing basis would enable UNDP to pursue programmes that are more directly focused on poverty reduction in line with the ToC. Cost sharing would enable UNDP and RGC to tailor policy-advisory interventions directly to RGC's perceived needs and would not then be dependent on securing external third-party funds where the donor agenda might not be in harmony with the real needs of RGC or UNDP.

4.8 Findings: Future Directions for Policy Advice to Government

During the consultations with government agencies and UNDP staff, possible areas for future high-level policy advice and capacity-building support were identified including:

- Development of long-term 2050 Vision, with evidence-based analysis and assumptions; Cambodia is developing rapidly but there are widening gaps between the dynamism of the urban economy and the slow pace of change in much of the rural economy; there will be very profound changes in demographics within fifty years and planning for these needs to commence now;
- Support to SDG localisation and linking to NSDP; already included in the draft CPAP; policy inputs here would assist in ensuring that government policies are targeted at reducing all aspects of multidimensional poverty, and setting the frame for the Vision; it also provides entry points for UNDP policy interventions in key development areas;
- Capacity building for evidence-based policy analysis; support to policy development must be accompanied by capacity-building for evidence-based analysis that is based on a structured use of data and sound principles of mutually reinforcing policy wherever possible; such capacity building should be undertaken across all key economic and social sectors, as well as high-level policy agencies within government;
- In addition to the policy areas identified above as drivers of poverty reduction, UNDP could provide assistance in the analysis of yet to be identified policy

issues on an “as demanded” basis by the government where internal capacity is inadequate or there is a need for independent analysis; this could tie-in with the development of UNDP-RGC cost-sharing arrangements;

- To build broad-based policy capacity in Cambodia the evaluation team suggests that UNDP should develop a long-term partnership programme with key policy making institutions such as SNEC and MoP – in the latter ministry the team was informed that UNFPA and UNICEF have advisers in place and these are being used to provide economic policy analysis and advice, a role that should preferably be with UNDP. For UNDP, this could include a strong training and capacity building component, as well as strengthening policy consistency and institutional memory/ trust; it would help to build a cadre of senior Cambodian staff with experience and good mentoring working on policy formulation for the long term;
- Social protection/social policy analysis, especially comparative analysis of various forms of social insurance and social assistance; this would provide links to supporting poverty reduction amongst the most disadvantaged, and particularly those living with a disability;
- Social housing policy is complementary to social protection, and housing conditions (including access to clean fuel and power, safe water and improved sanitation) comprise five of the ten components of the MPI; assisting in the development of housing policy and the availability of affordable housing credit for both the urban and rural poor would have direct poverty reduction benefits;
- An updated cassava sector strategy study, taking account of the current state of the sector and leading to better data on the sector, improved availability of extension services and demonstration farms would be useful in the context of national agricultural policy; the cassava sector is second only to rice as a rural income source but it suffers from a lack of policy attention from the ministry of agriculture; a new sector study is required to initiate more support for cassava farmers to either improve their performance or seek alternative crops if the cassava industry is expected to continue to be depressed;
- Gender audits in line ministries; there are still many areas of gender inequality in Cambodia, gender audits would help to identify where specific policy interventions could be made and would enable clear links to be determined between such interventions and reduced inequality.

Cambodia is currently receiving considerable amounts of support across many sectors from many development partners and agencies. It is not always easy to identify clear gaps in policy support where UNDP has a clear comparative advantage. The areas of SDG integration and support to national planning are two such areas which are highlighted. But in such a rapidly developing environment as exists in Cambodia the need for short-term policy support in specific areas is a constant need. UNDP could fill these needs and could draw on its global knowledge base to assist in identifying policy options and best practices.

It would be useful, therefore, for UNDP to take a lead in compiling a policy-support-matrix identifying which partners and agencies are currently providing policy support to RGC, and in which areas. This would greatly assist in identifying where the gaps in policy support might exist (and where duplication or overlap might also exist). It would also enhance harmonization amongst development partners and promote development effectiveness. UNDP's role as a

coordinating agency across the UN system and development partners could assist in facilitating such an exercise. It would not be without its difficulties but it would certainly be very useful as a tool for identifying where UNDP's best entry points could be.

Such a policy-support-matrix would, for example, help to identify gaps in policy support for multidimensional poverty reduction (and SDG mainstreaming and achievement) within the framework of the ToC, e.g. in the national planning ministry; in developing a comprehensive social protection system (including for social housing as indicated above) for the most vulnerable, including those people with a disability; and strengthening policy support for non-rice farming systems, including for cassava growers). Building and sustaining livelihoods is the most important factor in poverty reduction. Supporting policy developments that target livelihoods, especially for the poorest is the where the greatest poverty reduction gains can be made; policies in these areas could also include building financial literacy, providing access to affordable and innovative micro-credit and enhancing livelihood-skills development. As narrated in the case-studies a lack of financial literacy, the highest cost of credit and other small-scale enterprise inputs, a lack of extension support and a lack of skill training were cited by the people themselves as being amongst the biggest constraints to poverty reduction.

The drivers of poverty reduction in Cambodia have been discussed above, and the ToC provides a framework for targeted and focused poverty reduction interventions. With gaps in policy support identified, and a clear understanding of the drivers of poverty reduction, UNDP should be able to develop a poverty-reduction-based set of policy interventions that would serve to meet the needs of RGC and to attract funding support from other development partners or co-financing from RGC.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings presented in the preceding sections the evaluation team has identified a set of recommendations that would support UNDP's transition to a more policy-focused poverty-reduction framework. These recommendations are aligned with those made in the CPAP MTR and which are strongly supported by the findings of the evaluation. In particular, it is recommended that *"the transition to the new vision and programming logic should begin now if UNDP is to position itself as an increasingly credible and sought-out partner for policy reforms and their implementation. This view is entirely consistent with UNDP's senior management guidelines to country offices for effective implementation of the organization's strategic plan, 2014-2017"*¹⁶.

In addition, UNDP's current funding situation suggests that a new cost-sharing partnership needs to be developed with RGC to enable greater flexibility in the way that requests for support can be sought by RGC, and the way in which UNDP is best able to respond.

It is therefore recommended that UNDP should:

- compile a policy-support-matrix identifying which partners and agencies are currently providing policy support to RGC and in which sectors; such a matrix would assist UNDP to identify where gaps in high-level policy support might exist, and where UNDP's best entry points for future policy support might be, particularly in UNDP's focal area of poverty reduction and within the framework of the ToC, (e.g. in the national planning ministry; in developing a comprehensive social protection system

¹⁶ Mid-Term Review of UNDP Country Programme Action Plan for Cambodia, 2011-2015, UNDP Cambodia Country Office, March 2014

for the most vulnerable, including those people with a disability; and in non-rice farming systems, including for cassava growers);

- use proposed policy-support-matrix to identify gaps in poverty reduction policies, and, on the basis of these gaps and within the framework of a ToC, build a menu of poverty reduction policy interventions; these interventions should be fully interlinked and coordinated within the framework of a ToC, which is itself built of an understanding of the drivers of poverty reduction, such that UNDP's efforts would be more focused; thus with a clearly defined, comprehensive and focused set of poverty reduction policy interventions to offer;
- on the basis of the forgoing menu of policy intervention options, engage directly at a high level with RGC to secure ownership and potential co-financing of the programme; this could lead to a cost-sharing framework that would enable UNDP to be more responsive to RGC's identified needs and less dependent on sourcing external and third-party funding;
- actively seek funding, through direct development partner negotiation, for the poverty reduction programme outlined in the previous recommendations and for a pool of discretionary funds to be directed quickly in support of emerging needs; this could be initiated within the context of the Goal 1 of the SDGs, securing such funding could enable UNDP to invite government to indicate any additional or other emerging policy support needs and reduce UNDP's need to source third-party and external funding;
- with discretionary funding available UNDP should: a) aim to provide demand driven support to government; care should be taken that projects/programmes are clearly driven by government's needs and should not be driven simply by available sources of finance or/and donor agendas or preferences; and b) should take a more positive stance in its programming with RGC, in the manner of stating, for example, that: *"at the request of government UNDP will mobilise support for policy analysis and development in the critical areas of (for example) SDG integration, trade, investment, social protection etc.; the objectives of UNDP's support in these areas would be to assist the RGC to reduce multidimensional poverty and inequality, promoting gender empowerment and equity, and to ensure that the most vulnerable, including those living with HIV/AIDS and/or a disability, are supported"*; in support of the forgoing approach UNDP should:
- ensure that if a ToC approach is taken in future that: a) it clearly identifies and documents the understanding, links and transmission mechanisms between the interventions and the desired poverty reduction outcomes along a change pathway, and that it be periodically reviewed and updated; b) that where/when there is consensus with government on elements of the TOC, the updated understanding of the ToC be reflected and directly linked to the identified programmes, throughout the CPAP and CPD; and, c) a small number of targeted and measurable performance indicators directly related to the identified poverty reduction outcomes are included in the M&E framework to measure progress at both the intermediate and final outcome stages of the pathway;
- develop brief, easy-to-understand advocacy materials on the current and future CPAPs and provide these to stakeholders to foster engagement in UNDP's activities; in future simplify, as far as possible, the documentation for the CPAP to make clearer the links between, any future ToC and the CPAP, UNDAF, UNDP Strategic Plan, and the national development priorities;

- provide capacity building in evidence-based policy analysis that is based on a structured use of data and sound principles of mutually reinforcing policy wherever possible; such capacity building should be undertaken across all key economic and social sectors, as well as high-level policy agencies within government; and where appropriate support could also be provided to academic institutions and think-tanks, to support policy development and improve decision-making.

Appendix I: Thematic Poverty Evaluation Terms of Reference

Cambodia: Thematic Poverty Programme Evaluation

With an average annual growth rate of 7.4% Cambodia is rapidly transiting from a Low Income to a Middle-Income Country (MIC), over the decade. The economic growth has been accompanied by poverty reduction and improvements in the human development index. So much so that Cambodia has set its sights on becoming an Upper Middle Income Country by 2030. This improvement in the headcount index is seen across different measures of poverty.

Despite these gains, the challenge is that the pathways out of poverty have not brought the poor too far: a significant proportion of Cambodians have incomes just above the poverty line. In MPI terms 21.6% of the population may be over the MPI threshold, but remain vulnerable to slipping to poverty – for a total of 54.6% of the population either below or just above the poverty threshold.

Table 1: Poverty Headcount Index according to different measures

Year National Poverty Line (RGC) US\$1.9/day

(WB) Multidimensional Poverty Index (OPHI)

2005 35.13% 32.0% 52%

2010 20.50% 8.9% 45.9%

2014 13.50% 6.2% 33.0%

There are a number of factors contributing to this condition. Despite a high employment-to-population ratio and labour participation rates, vulnerable employment is still the norm. Decent employment needs to be expanded particularly for women and youth. In the face of declining private returns to education, incentives to invest in human capital need to be improved if Cambodia is to take advantage of its demographic dividend. With financial markets currently servicing only 20% of the rural population, steps to improve financial inclusion is required.

Many Cambodians are still dependent on subsistence farming and fishing, and the continued viability of forests and the Tonle Sap and the Mekong. There are concerns that these ecosystems critical for these livelihoods and a range of ecosystems services (e.g. biodiversity, watershed functions, soil, species habitat, food, etc.) are increasingly under threat from economic activity. These economic activities would include illegal logging, dependence on fuelwood, Economic Land Concessions (ELCs), Social Land Concessions (SLCs), hydropower dams, mining, and road construction. Being among the countries most vulnerable to climate change, Cambodians will have to contend with rising average temperatures, declining crop productivity, sea levels rise, changing rainfalls patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events (i.e. floods and drought).

While public spending on education and health have increased considerably, at 6% of GDP, overall public spending still remains relatively low. Based on international experience, social programs are needed to build resilience, accumulate human capital, and crowd-in private sector investment. In Upper Middle Income Countries in East and Southeast Asia, public spending averages 14-15% of GDP. The fact that Cambodia is among countries most vulnerable to climate change makes additional public investment in adaptation and disaster risk reduction necessary. The challenge is that if decent employment and social programs are to expand, the economic and social upgrading of Cambodia's economy and exploiting opportunities offered by regional value chains is necessary.

A UNDP Cambodia response

In response to this situation, UNDP Cambodia has a poverty-focused 2016-2018 Country Programme Document. Underlying the CPD is a Theory of Change: if Cambodia is to sustain its gains in poverty reduction, efforts should focus on building assets, protecting assets, and increasing the returns to the assets of the poor and vulnerable. And that these require policy engagement and capacity development interventions in terms of upgrading value chains, sustaining development finance, building resilience, and the strengthening voice & participation. The CPD comes at a time when

UNDP has made poverty eradication and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion as its stated vision.

In terms of modality, building on the 2014 Mid-Term Review of the CPAP, the current Country Programme adapts a “policy-based” approach to programming, where programmes are developed in line with on-going policy dialogue. If poverty interventions are to be sustainable, the policies are needed to ensure that the “right” institutional, market, and governance mechanisms should be in place, and working.

The purpose of this Thematic Evaluation

In all likelihood, a gap between a theory of change and the actual practice will exist. This gap is not so much a problem, as an opportunity to validate or (if need be) to revise one’s theory of change. Gaps are opportunities to improve one’s understanding of the problem and the solution. As a theory, a TOC can and should be constantly tested and periodically updated based on new analytical understanding, empirical evidence, and the lessons of actual development practice. While one could wait for the results of the periodic monitoring and evaluation of the CPD, the other is to learn from the past programme cycle. Or one can jump start the process of testing the theory.

This Thematic Poverty Evaluation will initiate the process of testing and validating the Theory of Change through lessons of actual development practice, taking as its starting point the 2011-2015 Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). The CPAP had an explicit commitment to address gaps in the realization of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs), i.e. to help Cambodia address those CMDGs it was lagging behind. As such, Poverty was only two among the seven (7) outcomes that UNDP committed to address.

The findings of the Thematic Poverty Evaluation will be used for: programming, programme design, portfolio decisions, and strategic partnerships. It could potentially be used to update or revise the Theory of Change. It could also serve to update the current CPD or contribute towards the foundations of the next CPD that starts in 2019.

(1). Expected Outputs and Deliverables:

The work will begin with a meta-analysis of available documentation. It will be followed by the preparation of an inception report reflecting the evaluators proposed approach. Once the inception report is approved, the evaluator will conduct of field work and approach key informant interviews, as and when necessary. Based on the results of the desk review and field work, the evaluator(s) will then consolidate into a draft synthesis report for comments and discussions, before finalization.

Below are expected process and final outputs and deliverables:

1 Preliminary Desk Review and data collection method: Duration: 3 days. The Target Due Date: 2nd week April 2016

2 Prepare an inception report on how they intend to undertake the task of addressing the questions raised, for approval: Duration: 3 days. The Target Due Date: 3rd week of April 2016

3 Analyze available information, undertake field work and interviews as and when necessary. Duration: 16 days. The Target Due Date: 2nd week of May 2016

4 Synthesize into a draft report for comments and discussions: Duration 5 days. The Target Due Date: 2nd weeks of June 2016

5 Final Draft submitted: Duration 3 days. The Target Due Date: 4th week of June 2016

Total number of days: 30 working days

(2). Institutional Arrangement:

Overall management for the implementation of the Thematic Evaluation will be the responsibility of the Deputy Country Director for Programme & Operations, through the Management Support Unit. While this Thematic Poverty Evaluation is to be conducted with autonomy and independence on the part of the Evaluator(s), it will be subject to quality assurance of the UNDP Cambodia Country Office. In this regard, a panel consisting of the Country Director, Deputy Country Director, and the Senior

Policy Advisor will engage the Evaluation team at key intervals of the process, from inception to draft and final reports. Colleagues from the programme and policy units may participate as resource persons, as required.

(3). Scope of the Thematic Evaluation:

In principle, in line with 2016-2018 CPD, the Thematic Evaluation will adapt Multidimensional Poverty as its working definition, i.e. poverty as a result of deprivations across different dimensions of well-being. In line with UNDP's theory of change, the deprivations are seen as the result how the assets of the poor and vulnerable are managed, i.e. building, protecting, and increasing the returns to their assets. By poor we include people below the MPI threshold and those vulnerable to slipping back into poverty, with a special focus on women, youth, and Persons with Disabilities. Inclusion of Persons living with HIV and Indigenous Peoples may have to be carefully considered.

In this regard, the Thematic Evaluation will cover a portfolio of projects and programmes that were formulated and implemented in the last programme cycle, spanning 2011-2015. This includes:

- Projects that rollover into the 2016-2018 programme cycle;
- Projects that ended in the 2011-2015 programme cycle but could continue under a new phase under the 2016-2018 Country Programme Document (CPD) cycle; and
- Other cross-cutting of the Linking Policy and Practices (MDG1) and or the CPD.

(4). Duration of the Work:

Completed final report in English that should, at least, include the following contents:

1. List of Acronyms and Abbreviations
2. Executive summary;
3. Introduction
4. Evaluation Scope and Objective
5. Evaluation Approach and Methods
6. Data Analysis
7. Development Context: The Challenge of Sustaining Poverty in Cambodia
8. Findings and Conclusion
9. Recommendations
10. Lessons Learned

Appendix II: List of Persons Met

List of persons met

Name	Position	Institution
Unclassified		
H.E. Khim Chamroeun	Secretary of State	MOWA
H.E. Sak Setha	Secretary of State	Mol
H.E. Dr. Tin Ponlok	Secretary General	NCSD
H.E. Mey Kalyan	Senior Advisor	SNEC
Mr. Arjun Bisen	Second Secreatry	Australian Embassy
Mr. Simon Junker	Deputy Country Director	SDC
H.E Tuon Thavrak	Secretary of State	MOP
H.E. Nguon Sokha	Secretary of State	MEF
H.E. Ros Seilava	Undersecretary of State	MEF, SNEC
Ms. Kristina Kühnel	Counsellor/Head of Development Cooperation	Embassy of Sweden
Ms. Sandra Stajka	Acting Deputy Mission Director	USAID Cambodia
H.E. Sann Vathana	Deputy Secretary General	CARD
H.E. Chhun Heng and four colleagues	Deputy Secretary General	CRDB/CDC
CEDEP		
Mr.Chhieng Pich	Director	DICO, MOC
Mr. Chan Thona	Manager	Neang Pov-exporter of cassava fresh roots to Vietnam
Mr. Ek Sun Sokha	Owner/Manager	Long and Sokha Export Co. Ltd
Mr. Khoun Tola	President	Damber Cassava Association, Damber district, Thbong Khmum
Mr. Yehonatan Issahary	Chief Officer	Green Solutions, Phnom Penh
Okna Thai Tino	Owner	Battambang Agro Industry (BAI)
Mr. Ni Kan	President	Cassava Association, Sampov Loun
DRIC		
Ms. Ty Rojanet	Programme Manager	CDPO

Mrs. Som Sokhorn	Director	Women and Children with Disability Forum, Porean District, Prey Veng
Mr. Som Leap	Facilitator	
Mr. Leak Khan	Facilitator	
Mr. Kim Sovann	Director	True Khmer Selfhelp Disability Organisation, Siem Reap
Mr. Sao Rith	Group Leader	
Mr. Keo Bunlong	Group Leader	
Mr. Norng Sokhom	Group Leader	
Mrs. Sieng Sokchan and 8 colleagues	Director	Women & Children with Disability Forum, Battambang
10 beneficiaries	Self help group	Sandan village, Pek Snaeng commune, Angkor Thom district, Siem Reap
12 beneficiaries	Self help group	Chub Som village, Pek Snaeng commune, Angkor Thom district, Siem Reap
Mine Action		
H.E. Ly Thuch	Senior Minister	CMMA
Mr. Noum Chhay Roun	Chief	MAPU, Battambang
Mr Samat Chan	Field Officer	MAPU, Battambang
Mr. Teng Saman and 5 beneficiaries	Village Chief	O Trav Chou village, Serey Mean Chey Commune, Sampov Loun District, Battambang
Mr. Chhim Sambath	Chief	MAPU, Pailin
Mr. Mao Sam Oeun	Village Chief	Boyakha village, Sangkat Boyakha, Kong Pailin
Ms. Eang Srey Pov	Mine action beneficiary	Boyakha village, Sangkat Boyakha, Kong Pailin
Ms. Lay Mei	Mine action beneficiary	Boyakha village, Sangkat Boyakha, Kong Pailin
ACES		
Mr. Pok Sokundara	Secretary General	ASAC
Mr. Sieng Sok Chan	Vice President	Provincial association of district, municipality, commune and sangkat councils, Battambang
Ms. Phoeun Phos	Treasurer	
Ms. Tao Unanda	Member of Council	

Mr. Soun Ram	Member of Council	
Mr. An Moeurt	Chief of Council	
Ms. Mu Channy	Member of Council	
Mr. Pring Phorn	Community Officer	
Ms. Los Nimol	Chief of Council	
Focus Group Discussion		
Mr. Tuy Serey Vathanak	Country Director	FFI
Ms. Teng Rithiny	Programme Manager	WCS
Ms. Mak Molika	Programme Manager	CDPO

Appendix III: Summary Findings of the CPAP MTR 2013

Summary of the Findings and Recommendation of the

2014 Mid-Term Review of the 2011-2015 Country Programme Action Plan

1. **UNDP should articulate a clear identity and role for itself**, based on the notion that its value addition is increasingly less related to its role in resource mobilization and increasingly more dependent on its ability to access the best international expertise and knowledge, and in line with the organization's corporate priorities defined in the UNDP strategic plan for 2014-2017.
2. **UNDP should make the most of its human-development approach and know-how to articulate its programme and develop new initiatives in Cambodia** to ensure programme coherence, cross-thematic synergies and sustainable results. A "results-based" development concept needed to be applied to achieving improvements in people's wellbeing, and that human development should guide the programming cycle from the design to the evaluation stages, and be used to assist the government in the evaluation of public-policy implementation, effectiveness and impact.
3. **The observed gap between the strategic directions defined in the CPAP and the fragmentation observed in the implementation of the CPAP should be bridged**; the MTR implied that priority should be given to outcome orientated programming and taking full advantage of potential synergies within and across outcomes. To this end, the MTR identified that a new type of engagement between UNDP, government and development partners was needed that gave priority to summoning the knowledge and experience required to address key development challenges, to depth over breadth of interventions so as to maximize relevance and impact, and to national requests for UNDP support focusing on the country's uppermost priorities and UNDP's areas of strongest expertise and experience.
4. **As Cambodia becomes better equipped to address its own development challenges, UNDP should increasingly concentrate on those issues that prove the most difficult to resolve**; the MTR noted that in this respect the following areas stood out: fighting rising inequality, reverting environmental degradation, implementing increasingly complex governance reforms and improving resilience when faced with external shocks, together with addressing the "unfinished agenda" with respect to the MDGs and now the SDGs..
5. **National ownership of UNDP-supported initiatives needed to be strengthened**; where traditional donor-recipient relationships were still found to exist between UNDP and its programme partners, a rapid transition to equal partnership needed to be implemented.

To achieve this the MTR went on to suggest that UNDP should **begin to reposition itself** in Cambodia in order to enhance the effectiveness of its contribution. Among the measures to be applied, it was recommended that UNDP should:

1. **Engage in policy-driven programming built around the "policy cycle"** and move from project-driven policy support to policy-driven projects with a well-

established link to national policy and as instruments for building evidence, fostering policy dialogue and enhancing policy design and effectiveness.

2. Use clear selection criteria to guide policy-driven programming, including (a) what is perceived to be the most strategic priorities, (b) UNDP's comparative advantage and capacity to deliver, and (c) those areas which the Government considers to be of highest priority *and* to which its commitment to reform is strongest. The MTR found that, on the basis of available evidence, UNDP should focus on (a) skills development; (b) human development and social inequality, and (c) governance, in particular judiciary, electoral and parliamentary reforms, as well as on the cross-cutting issues of climate change and environment.

3. Take advantage of the new reform processes and graduation of Cambodia to lower-middle-income-country status, in which UNDP should strive to engage with higher-level authorities of RGC to dialogue on key priority issues, so as to identify where it can contribute best.

Finally taking the forgoing steps and suggestions for repositioning into account, and Recognising UNDP's changing role and approach, the MTR proposed that UNDP and the government should agree to promote both the policy-driven programming logic and greater flexibility, so as to enable the partnership to respond rapidly to emerging issues and new initiatives.

To this end, **five recommendations** were made by the MTR:

1. UNDP and RGC should engage in a high-level dialogue to develop a common understanding of the new directions suggested for the programme. This process was seen as essential to provide the necessary political support for the implementation of the changes proposed by the MTR.

2. For 2014-15, ongoing projects that required adjustments in either resource allocation, scope or focus should be revised jointly by UNDP and government partners. Such revision was regarded as a prerequisite to addressing the resource mobilization gap and supporting the transition to a policy-driven programming approach. Outputs for which no work was carried out in 2011-2013 and no pipeline exists should be dropped from the CPAP.

3. Priority should be given to those areas that will be most strategic for the repositioning of UNDP and activities should be refocused within each outcome to facilitate the transition process.

4. A key objective to be achieved in the process of formulating the new CPAP was seen to be the building of a well-designed project pipeline focusing on a few strategic initiatives.

5. The "policy cycle" programming logic and the ToC methodology should be used to strengthen the coherence and vertical and horizontal integration of the programme as well as to improve synergies with relevant UN agencies. Human resources should be redeployed to ensure that the policy support function is delivered effectively and becomes the core engine of the programme.

Appendix IV: Case Studies

Case Study 1:

1. Name of Project/Programme:

Cambodia Export Diversification and Expansion Programme (CEDEP) II – Cassava component

2. Expected Poverty Reduction & Other Outcomes:

The Programme seeks to improve and formalize cassava exports.

Poverty reduction is not explicitly stated as an objective or outcome.

3. Agencies Consulted

Name of Organisation Consulted	Neang Pov-exporter of cassava fresh roots to Vietnam	Long and Sokha Export Co.Ltd	Bamber Cassava Association	Green Solutions	Battambang Agro Industry Co. Ltd. Battambang	Sampov Loun Cassava Association
Number of HH/ members of organisation (where applicable)	1	1	1	1	2	2
Size of village: HH/pop	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Location	PNH	PNH	Bamber district, Thbong Khmum province	PNH	Kamreang district, Battambang	Sampov Loun district, Battambang
Persons Consulted	See Appendix for List of Persons Consulted					
Summary of background	Exported about 50,000 tons of fresh cassava roots and 20,000 tons of dried chips per year to Vietnam CEDEP for 2 years.	Operated since 2008 in sourcing dried chips from several provinces and selling them to Vietnam and other processors. Worked with CEDEP for 2 years.	4 months-old association. 80 members, 50 of whom farmers. Participated in CEDEP activities a few times including in Thailand	Green Solutions, an Israeli company selling technologies, is mother company of Cambodian Cassava Company that trade cassava but has not brought any cassava yet.	Set up starch production factory in 2012, producing from 12,000 tons to 20,000 tons in 2015/16 to export to EU. Claimed to have lost \$5 million in operations costs. Not work with CEDEP.	14 months-old association. 126 members, 3 of whom traders. Participated in CEDEP activities a few times including in Thailand
Summary of Core Activities Undertaken by Organisation	Buy and export cassava to Vietnam	Buy and export dried cassava chips to Vietnam	Network cassava farmers and traders	Sells drip irrigation system	Processes cassava into starch to export to EU	Network cassava farmers and traders

		and processors in Cambodia				
Summary of Primary Outcomes Achieved	Improved awareness of cassava markets but no significant outcome due to low price of cassava.	Improved awareness of cassava markets but no significant outcome due to low price of cassava.	Improved awareness of cassava markets but no significant outcome due to low price of cassava.	Improved awareness of cassava markets but no significant outcome due to low price of cassava.	Provided small market for cassava producers. Currently low price means that processing is operating at a loss	Improved awareness of cassava markets but no significant outcome due to low price of cassava

4. **General summary of characteristics and issues identified** in the consultation relating (where appropriate) to UNDP's:

a. Performance in delivering the particular programme

This project appears to have been one in which the original development partner that provided the funding did not then meet the second part of the conditions to provide the market for the product. UNDP appears to have taken the role of implementer and then found that the programme is not meeting its objectives and is sustainable.

UNDP provided very good networking among cassava traders and equipped them with more information about global market. All the traders interviewed appreciated the assistance provided by CEDEP. The notice beforehand of the fall in the cassava price helped traders understand and perhaps avoid making greater losses. However, one trader felt that more active discussion between actors along the value chains was needed. Most Associations of farmers and traders of cassava are not presently active due to the current low price and depressed market for cassava.

b. Focus on its objectives of poverty reduction and reducing inequality

Given the low price of cassava and reducing yields, no significant impact on poverty reduction among farmers was reported; on the contrary, many cassava farmers have been in a worse situation due to both the fall in price and drought.

Farmer associations have been useful in boosting information, but it has not been a good time for farmers with cassava prices so low and yields per hectare falling, El Nino drought conditions have made planting costly in the last couple of years, and weak market demand have all conspired to make cassava production only marginally economic for farmers and traders, and largely uneconomic for processors; Cambodia is a marginal supplier of cassava in the global market and thus farmers, even with associations, have very little influence over farm-gate prices;

c. Theory of change

Upgrading value chains is part of the theory of chain. The attempt by CEDEP to improve value chains in the cassava industry has been limited and was

unfortunately taking place at a time of falling cassava prices and declining yields. It seems that simply “upgrading value chains” is not sufficient; it is essential to understand the dynamics of the whole industry and its marketing chain to identify where value-adding interventions can be made.

Processors and traders, in particular, felt that UNDP had not fully researched and perhaps did not fully understand the real drivers of poverty reduction in the agricultural sector in general and the cassava sector in particular; as stated to the team these drivers were prices, production and productivity; it was also noted that the cost of credit from MFIs was very high and could become a heavy burden for farmers if they borrowed for planting material, fertilizer or machinery; many farmers (and their families) went to Thailand to work for at least part of the year to provide income and pay-off debts;

Similar comments were made about the knowledge/understand of the dynamics of industrial processing and value chains; value chains only work if the product is competitive in the primary and secondary markets; one critical issue here was the cost of inputs in Cambodia including transport, power, and other inputs – seeds/seedlings & fertilizers – some farmers reported having to replant three times this year due to the drought conditions, this had put them in debt;

What farmers need is practical advice, extension services and low-cost credit; these are not being provided by the ministry of agriculture, this was noted as a major weakness in the sector; some extension services and demonstration farms are provided by traders and processors on a limited basis;

5. Main observations/findings/conclusions of the consultations:

a. Issues and challenges identified

Assistance to traders, who are price takers from Vietnam and Thailand, may have minimal impact on farmers. Associations call for assistance in improving productivity among farmers. It was reported that for many farmers cassava yields per hectare had declined by more than fifty-percent over five to eight years. It was reported that agricultural extension support in the form of demonstration farms is what many farmers needed.

b. Outcomes achieved – what worked, what did not

Good exchange of information among participants in workshops and study tours organized by CEDEP. However, this seems to have done very little to assist in improving the income of cassava producers; yield has been declining, while prices have also been falling. The issue is not lack of buyers of cassava, as it is widely accessible by traders from Vietnam and Thailand. There is a lack of sound information about the cassava industry; exports to Thailand and Vietnam are reportedly not fully documented. The agriculture ministry provides little or no support to cassava growers but such support in terms of extension services to improve yields, better recording of production and exports are essential for a complete understanding of the dynamics of the industry. Farmers would be better served, at least in the short term, by greater support from the agriculture ministry.

c. Linkages to theory of change, poverty reduction and reducing inequality

No positive results directly attributable to CEDEP in terms of poverty reduction and/or reducing inequality were reported or observed and there would appear to have been little impact on value-chains; commodity price factors beyond the control of Cambodia have been the biggest issue for farmers and processors alike.

According to all those consulted including farmers, traders and processors, the programme has had very little impact on poverty reduction amongst cassava growers so far; the underlying structural issues in the cassava industry need to be addressed.

6. Recommendations

Poverty is prevalent among farmers, while traders tend to be better off. CEDEP was formulated with the underlying assumption that farmers deserve better prices offered by more competitive traders, especially if they are more coordinated. This theory could not be tested as the prices of cassava have been depressed by lower demand from China, almost the only major end-use consumer of cassava. It was reported that China was now using relatively more corn than cassava for ethanol manufacturing; corn had become more plentiful and cheaper in the US.

Going forward, it is imperative that farmers should be supported to improve their cassava yields if they are to improve their income from growing this crop. Even with assistance from CEDEP, traders in Cambodia appear to have had no effect in improving the prices of cassava for farmers, thus severely limiting profitability and chances for poverty reduction.

The evaluation makes the following recommendations:

- a) Agricultural extension services to cassava growers should be improved; this is an area where UNDP, perhaps in conjunction with FAO, could provide policy support to the ministry of agriculture.
- b) An improved system of recording cassava exports should be instituted so that the full scale of the industry and its economic impact in Cambodia can be better understood; this could be part of UNDP's support to improving the statistical system.
- c) An updated structure-analysis of the cassava industry is needed in the light of the current low prices; what is the long-term future of the industry, and what value-adding options might be viable for Cambodia's cassava producers.

Case Study: 2

1. Name of Project/Programme:

Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia (DRIC)

2. **Expected Poverty Reduction & Other Outcomes:** People with disability have increased opportunities for participation in social, economic, social and political life through effective implementation of the National Disability Strategic Plan. (No poverty reduction is mentioned in the Outcomes of the programme)

3. Agencies Consulted

Name of Organisation Consulted	CDPO	Women and Children with Disability Forum, Prey Veng	Women and Children with Disability Forum, Battambang	Ensure Khmer Disabled Assistance Organization, Siem Reap
Number of HH/members of organisation (where applicable)	2 management staff	3 management staff	3 members of organization and 4 beneficiaries	4 members of organization and two groups of beneficiaries
Size of village: HH/pop				
Location	Phnom Penh	Porieng Commune, Porieng District, Prey Veng Province	Battambang provincial town	Siem Reap town and Sandan village, Perk Snaeng Commune Angkor Chum district
Persons Consulted	See Appendix for List of Persons Consulted			
Summary of background	Large NGO in existence for more than two decades	4-year-old NGO with three staff/management dependent on \$1400 a year from CPDO only	2-year-old NGO with three staff/management dependent on \$700 a year from CPDO only	Experienced self-help NGO with four staff/management. Engaged with CDPO only for 3 months, with \$1500 per year
Summary of Core Activities Undertaken by Organisation	Network and promote the rights of people with disability	Network and promote the rights of people with disability	Network and promote the rights of people with disability	Network and promote the rights of people with disability
Summary of Primary Outcomes Achieved	Supports 25 DPOs in 25 provinces. Advocate rights of people with disability through legal means and public media. Reached 16,000 direct beneficiaries. Promote savings in self-help groups for livelihood promotion.	Mobilized 147 people with disability in four villages in Porieng commune. Provide them with awareness on equal rights of people with disability. Set up saving scheme in self-help groups.	Set up two self-help groups, each in one village. One group has 20 members and another has 15 members. Provide them with awareness on equal rights of people with disability.	Mobilized 63 people with disability in five villages and set up one self-help group per village. Held meetings with them to better understand equal rights and discuss needs. Set up saving scheme in self-help groups.

4. General summary of characteristics and issues identified in the consultation relating (where appropriate) to UNDP's:

a. Performance in delivering the particular programme

The programme was well delivered in terms of rights promotion. It reaches out to every province, though given the limited funding, not to every district or commune. The radio programme in particular provides a very good service in awareness-raising on the rights of people with disability.

The DRIC programme appears to have been most successful through the media advocacy which is able to reach a wider audience than the DRIC support to rural DPOs; the small number of participating DPOs had very limited funding and were unable to do very much, all of those visited had self-help savings-schemes, but there had been few loans to members as yet as the funds available were still very small;

b. Focus on its objectives of poverty reduction and reducing inequality

The focus on poverty reduction was thin and indirect. Savings in self-help groups are the only way of addressing the needs for capital to assist in income-generating investments by people with a disability. However, since those involved are amongst the very poor they have very little savings to put into the self-help funds and thus the amount of savings being generated does not seem significant enough to make a meaningful contribution to poverty reduction amongst the groups.

It was commented to the team that there was a need for development partners (including UNDP) to better understand the real needs of the people and not what agencies think they should need, e.g. the DRIC project was mentioned as being useful in a general sense of providing information, raising empowerment and self-esteem, but the people said having knowledge of their rights does not pay the bills or feed the family; what they said they really need is access to low-cost finance (not high-cost MFIs) so that they can acquire productive assets including such things as sewing machines, cows, chickens, mushroom sheds etc.) through which they could generate income;

It was suggested that there was also a need for more research and understanding of the dynamics of the HH sector, including the poor and people with disabilities; in particular the basic-needs and coping strategies of these groups and what factors influence the choices of poor HH – including migration, increasing debts, and rising dependency ratios in the rural areas;

It is difficult to measure the poverty reduction benefits of the DRIC programme within the MPI framework. It is certainly true that rights advocacy, which has been undertaken effectively through the radio programs over the past couple of decades, has been quite effective in awareness raising, but there is a need to do more practical things for the target groups. However, livelihood support may be costly but if such support can be embedded within other types of poverty reduction activity (as is being done with gender mainstreaming) this could be effective. For example, the term social inclusion is now imbedded in many projects and that should include special attention to people with a disability.

c. Theory of change

Improving the right of people with a disability has only a very limited, and indirect impact on poverty reduction or the reduction in inequality.

Empowerment of people with a disability is undoubtedly an important rights-based impact but it does not, of itself, impact on poverty, at least in the short to medium-terms.

5. Main observations/findings/conclusions of the consultations:

a. Issues and challenges identified

The funding resource is spread too thinly; each DPO is provided with a little funding and is required to do heavy reporting and comply with complex accountability. DPO staff and management in-the-field are poorly paid, while CDPO appears to be quite well staffed; it was reported that CDPO staff pay monthly visits to provincial DPO; the costs of such monthly visits may amount to more than the annual budget for DPO to carry out their activities with the people. Most people with disability expressed gratitude for the improved knowledge of their rights but primarily expressed their needs to have support for their livelihoods. DPO need to be integrated in the process of other organizations doing livelihood activities so that they can mainstream the support for people with disability. It was noted in Battambang, for example, that some younger members of the DPO who were active in a basketball team, received grants for establishing small businesses from other agencies, while the older and perhaps more needy members were unable to access any such support.

It was commented to the evaluation team that there was a need for development partners (including UNDP) to understand the real needs of those people living with a disability, and not what it is thought they should need, e.g. the DRIC project was mentioned as being useful in a general sense of providing information, raising empowerment and self-esteem, but the people said having knowledge of their rights does not pay the bills or feed the family, what they really need is access to low-cost finance (not high-cost MFIs) so that they can acquire productive assets including such things as sewing machines, cows, chickens, mushroom sheds etc.) through which they could generate income;

b. Outcomes achieved – what worked, what did not

Awareness raising on equal rights of people with disability has been achieved. Legal framework for this has been in place. The most cost-effective way to improve advocacy seems to be public media and social media.

c. Linkages to theory of change, poverty reduction and reducing inequality

It is not feasible to draw any conclusion to the theory of change. However, it can be inferred that the programme contributes little, if any, to poverty reduction and reducing inequality. In order for the theory of change to contribute it is necessary to support access to and the availability of low-cost finance for those with a disability to assist in building livelihoods.

The poor need practical support and social protection; some ex-soldiers get pensions but those ordinary individuals injured by mines or war-wounds or those suffering from polio as a result of not being vaccinated during the war-years often get nothing; while the programme was proving useful advice to people with disabilities for raising self-esteem, reducing discrimination and strengthening empowerment these did not necessarily lead to poverty reduction outcomes, knowledge of one's rights does not lead directly to an increase in income;

6. Recommendations

After many years of promoting rights awareness-raising, it is suggested that CPDO shift its focus to:

- a) seek mainstreaming and coordination of social assistance to people with a disability through the various programmes of government and non-government actors;
- b) advocating for government to compile a national register of those with a disability so that social protection services can be targeted to those most in need; strengthen the ID poor system to enable those people with a disability to be clearly identified
- c) investigate possible sources of low-cost finance for people with a disability so that they can obtain credit to build assets and livelihoods;
- c) support DPO to network with potential funding partners, including the private sector, to assist the DPO to provide greater support to livelihood promotion;
- d) continue to use the most cost-effective advocacy tools, especially social media, for rights awareness for those with a disability.

Case Study 3:

1. Name of Project/Programme:

Mine Actions for Human Development (Clearing for Results)

2. Expected Poverty Reduction & Other Outcomes: The project seeks to support the government in the holistic approaches that could maximise mine action results for human development.

3. Agencies Consulted

Name of Organisation Consulted	MAPU Battambang	MAPU Pailin	FGD in Battambang	FGD in Pailin	CMAA
Number of HH/members of organisation (where applicable)	10	5	8	7	
Size of village: HH/pop	N.A.	N.A.	557 households/ 2376 people	110 households/ 407 people	N.A.
Location	Battambang	Pailin	Ta Trav Chou Village, Serey Mean Chey Commune, Sampov Loun district, Battambang	Boyakha village, Sangkat Boyakha, Krong Pailin, Pailin province	Phnom Penh
Persons Consulted	See Appendix for List of Persons Consulted				
Summary of Core Activities Undertaken by Organisation	Executive mine action plan for the province, involving local authorities and operators.	Executive mine action plan for the province, involving local authorities and operators.			
Summary of Primary Outcomes Achieved	Mine cleared and land released for holders and public work; more safe farm land.	Mine cleared and land released for holders and public work; more safe farm land.			

4. General summary of characteristics and issues identified in the consultation relating (where appropriate) to UNDP's:

a. Performance in delivering the particular programme

Clearing for Results has improved the efficiency of mine clearance at the localities served. Integrating the process of identifying landmines and prioritising the clearance through the local planning system is sound. MAPU in both Battambang and Pailin could describe very well the 9 step process. The cost-effectiveness has also been improved by the open bidding by operators. Authorities are hopeful that landmines will have been cleared by

2025 as planned. In Battambang and Pailin it was stated that about 85% of the land being cleared is for agriculture use, the rest either for infrastructure or public areas.

This was overwhelmingly seen, by government, development partners and beneficiaries, as a highly successful programme having a wide range of social and poverty reduction benefits, including in terms of income boosting, through the increased production from access to additional farm land, and social benefits in reducing the risk of death or injury to farmers and their families;

b. Focus on its objectives of poverty reduction and reducing inequality

Since 2010, emphasis has been placed on documentation of utilisation of land to be cleared and that has been cleared of mines. Mine clearance in public areas for infrastructure projects or otherwise is attributable to reducing casualties among people collecting firewood and other forest products, who tend to be among the poor.

It is understood that under the new UNDP results-based approach a more robust M&E system is being implemented. In this context it is suggested that follow-up post land-release surveys could be done more than once and, more importantly, the socioeconomic data collected in CMAA should be verified, utilized and reported in a more systematic manner. The evaluation team got the impression that CMAA have a very considerable socioeconomic survey database that is not fully analyzed yet - the use of the CMAA database is not mentioned in the CPAP M&E framework.

c. Theory of Change

Addressing the landmine problem is directly improving core asset of farmers as well as safety of people, which is second to nothing in terms of importance. Unfortunately, having secure land alone does not suffice for improving livelihoods of the landholders. As noted in the cassava programme there is a need for support to agricultural extension to assist farmers to sustain productivity.

5. Main observations/findings/conclusions of the consultations:

a. Issues and challenges identified

The programme has been very much government driven with a significant government investment in the programme alongside donor partners' contributions, a large proportion of which were successfully and efficiently managed by UNDP. This is a good example of government ownership and involvement.

There is no doubt saving lives and limbs contributes to reducing poverty and inequality. Also, removing landmines raises the value of land, and thus even if owners have to sell it, it is for a better price. It was estimated that about 10-15% of the farmers had to sell their land after it was cleared of mines. This was reportedly in part a consequence of failure in cropping due to the falling crop prices, including cassava.

Currently, once land is cleared follow up interviews are conducted one time only, generally six months after the land has been cleared and released to the

holders, although in some cases the exercise is conducted in one year, instead of six months. It could be more useful for monitoring outcomes if a second visit could be conducted two years after the land is cleared is released.

A considerable volume of very useful data is being generated from the post-clearance monitoring and this could be better analysed and published for information of government and to guide future mine-clearance activities.

b. Outcomes achieved – what worked, what did not

Large areas of land have been cleared of mines and casualties reduced significantly. The cost effectiveness has also improved following the introduction of Clearing for Results in 2010. Overall, the majority of beneficiaries keep the land cleared of mines and make use of the land, although this does not necessarily mean they are better-off as a result.

c. Linkages to theory of change, poverty reduction and reducing inequality

Improving the value and utilisation of land assets is at the core of poverty-reduction for farmers. Unfortunately, however, farming does not always make sufficient income for farmers. Drought, price falls and reduce yields can make farmers poorer. Still, landmine clearance is critically important, at least in preventing farmers from becoming casualties.

As noted in relation to the cassava programme other factors are required in addition to land availability, to bring about improvements in farm incomes and reductions in rural poverty.

Notwithstanding these caveats the mine action programme clearly fits the theory of change in enhancing the value of the assets of the poor.

6. Recommendations

Data generated by the PCM form both as a baseline and six months after the land is cleared and released should be better utilized for analysis. It appears that this wealth of data has been under-utilized for policy development.

Consideration should be given to revisiting the cleared land two years after release, since only one-visit after 6 months is considered time-short a time-period to establish the case as to what has happened to the land.

Case Study 4:

1. Name of Project/Programme:

Association of Councils Enhanced Services (ACES)

2. **Expected Poverty Reduction & Other Outcomes:** Aimed at turning the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils into an effective representative of local voices for democratic development. (there is no poverty word in the stated outcomes. it is all about improving local governance).

3. Agencies Consulted

Name of Organisation Consulted	Association of Subnational Administration Councils (ASAC)	Provincial Association of District, Municipality, Commune & Sangkat Councils, Battambang
Number of HH/members of organisation (where applicable)	20	8(?)
Size of village: HH/pop	N.A.	N.A.
Location	Phnom Penh	Battambang
Persons Consulted	See Appendix for List of Persons Consulted	
Summary of Core Activities Undertaken by Organisation	ASAC has four projects, one of which is ACES. Based in the Senate Compound, ASAC's core activities are to develop capacities of the sub-national administration councils and advocacy activities to advocate for their interests. In addition to sub-national forums of councilors are the most relevant and tangible activity organized by ASAC provides coaching, training and advisory services to councilors.	Founded in 2006 but did little until support from ACES in 2015. In the past two years, working with most of the districts and communes in form of receiving complaints and organizing public forums.
Summary of Primary Outcomes Achieved	Strengthened National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils and National League of Local Councils for Districts, Municipalities, Khans and Commune/Sangkat and Provincial Associations of Local Councils.	Gathered councils at commune, district and municipal level to raise voices and improved public services for people.

4. General summary of characteristics and issues identified in the consultation relating (where appropriate) to UNDP's:

a. Performance in delivering the particular programme

This programme was welcomed by those local government agencies involved, and it was noted that UNDP's involvement was quite essential to sustainability;

In Battambang, it was reported that most of the commune councils held meetings at the district level and voiced their concerns and exchanged many ideas for mutual understanding and solutions. The council offices could also have the means to visit most of the communes to solicit their concerns and complaints. Forums were then organized at the district level for all the councils from the communes to participate. The remaining issues that cannot

be addressed or resolved at the district level are passed up to the provincial level, where forums are also organized to resolve them with participation from relevant technical line department at the provincial level. The whole process was reported to have been fruitful and completed smoothly. District councils are also included but are not provided with per diem; this creates some difficulties and tensions in attendance as some district councilors live far away from the district office. However, the per diem rule is set by NCDD, not by ACES.

b. Focus on its objectives of poverty reduction and reducing inequality

It is plausible that when public services are better provided by the commune councils, districts and provincial authorities, that the livelihoods of the people are improved. The issues raised and addressed are pertinent to local services in rural roads, schools, healthcare and general administrative services. Specific issues for women received special attention through the gender conscious programme. It would be important to have ACES activities include the exchanges between commune councilors on how to better prepare the commune development plans that target poverty reduction and reduce inequality.

c. Theory of change

Improvements to local government and standards of governance provide an indirect link to the theory of change and to poverty reduction. It is arguable that improved public services, improvements to roads and healthcare may be considered as contributing to poverty reduction.

5. Main observations/findings/conclusions of the consultations:

a. Issues and challenges identified

Sustainability of the network in terms of funding is still questionable. The lack of per diems for district council members to attend workshops is clearly an important issue at the “grass-roots” level. Further there is a question about the sustainability of the network/association, which is mostly externally funded. In Battambang province (the only province among the 12 provinces with ACES in 2016 visited for review by the evaluation team), the reduction of funding from \$20,000 in 2015 to \$12,816 in 2016 saw activities cut back from 44 to 19 communes. In 2017, it is expected ACES will be expanded to all the 25 provinces but the level of funding for activities is unlikely to be increased.

It is doubtful therefore if officials are allowed to be independent in their network. The intention of having no funding from NCDD is that the associations need to be independent of the Ministry of Interior apparatus. Yet, it is doubtful if this is realistic. The current structure is similar to a professional society of doctors, engineers and economists, etc., which needs to draw sufficient membership fees from members who seek to benefit individually from the network. Associations of councils are however there to serve public interest, instead. Thus, it might be acceptable that funding from government and/or NCDD be allocated for the networking of councils for the benefits of better services for people.

On the other hand, the view from representatives of the Ministry of Interior is that the associations need to prove their value so that there will be more funding support for them, whether from government or elsewhere. Thus, there appears to be a “catch-22” situation, the Associations need to prove their value before additional funds are made available, but they are constrained for funding and this inhibits their ability to perform.

The evaluation team were informed that ASAC was not directly linked with the National Council for Democratic Development (NCDD), which has sizeable pool-funds (including from government, SIDA, SDC and EU) for support of subnational democratic development. For long-term sustainability, the team suggests that the local government association could perhaps be more integrated with the NCDD funding process.

b. Outcomes achieved – what worked, what did not

It was reported that a lot of issues have been voiced through the forums joined by councilors from various communes and districts. Councilors are believed to better know their roles and responsibilities due to the activities of ACES;

Standards of governance were reportedly improved by the programme and there had been a significant increase in the participation of women in local council matters;

c. Linkages to theory of change, poverty reduction and reducing inequality

It is reasonable to assume that the enhanced capacity of the people’s representatives will better serve the needs of people. However, the link to the theory of change is indirect and not clearly linked to poverty reduction and livelihoods; although it was argued that the implementation of the commune development plans contributed indirectly to enhancing aspects of livelihoods and thus to poverty reduction.

6. Recommendations

It is important to note that evidence for assessing this programme is from only one province, Battambang, although it is one of the most advanced in terms of subnational and local democratic governance and capacity.

Currently, sustainability of the network is questionable. The need for funding by the associations should not be excluded by government or from the pool of funds from NCDD. However, it is rather the question of functional independence of the network. It is still doubtful if such state funded officials can be independent just by networking with one another and if being funded by government/NCDD prohibits the associations from being independent.

A bigger question is actually on the achievements of the associations of councilors at all levels. It is important to establish distinguishable results of the associations so that their worthiness can be assessed and further supported by one way or another.

Appendix V: Documents Reviewed, References & Resources

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_____ : Asian Development Outlook 2015

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_____ : National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018

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_____ : Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2014 National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of National Planning, 2015

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UNDP: 2011-2015 Cambodia Country Programme Results Summary

_____ :_Cambodia Annual Report 2012_

_____ :_Cambodia Annual Report 2013_

_____ :_Cambodia Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016 - 2018

_____ :_Cambodia Country Programme Document 2010-2015

_____ :_Cambodia Human Development Report 2014

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_____ :_Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) Cambodia 2011_

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_____ :_Cambodia United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)_2016-18_Final

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- _____: _UN-Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) Final Evaluation Report
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- _____: _Pipeline Management, December 2013
- _____: _Human Development Report 2015; Work for human development, Briefing note for countries on the 2015 Human Development Report (Cambodia) 2015
- _____: _Establishing Conservation Areas through Landscape Management (CALM) in the Northern Plains of Cambodia; Report of the Terminal Evaluation Mission, September 2012
- _____: _Terminal Evaluation of Cambodia Community-Based Adaptation Programme (CCBAP) 2015
- _____: _Final Evaluation of Clearing for Results Phase II (CFRII), 2011-2015 in Cambodia, 2015
- _____: _Terminal Evaluation of Promoting Climate-Resilient Water Management and Agricultural Practices in Rural Cambodia (NAPAFU Phase2); November 10, 2015
- _____: _Mid-Term Review of the Partnership for Gender Equity Project Phase III (2011-2015) 2015
- _____: _Independent/External Mid-Term Review Report For Strengthening Democracy Programme (SDP), 2013
- _____: _Terminal Evaluation Strengthening Sustainable Forest Management and Bio-Energy Markets to Promote Environmental Sustainability and to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Cambodia, 2015
- _____: _Final Evaluation of The UN-REDD Cambodia National Programme Report Prepared For: Un-Redd Programme, and the Government Of Cambodia, 2015
- _____: _Project Document; Strengthening climate information and early warning systems in Cambodia to support climate resilient development and adaptation to climate change; November 2014
- _____: _Project Document; Cambodia Climate Change Alliance - Phase 2, 2015
- _____: _Project Document; Multi-media Initiative for Youth (MIY), November 2014- March 2016; 2014
- _____: _Project Document; Partnerships for Development Results - phase 2, 2015
- _____: _Project Document; Policy, Communications, and Social Innovations for Human Development Project, 2015
- _____: _Project Document, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ Readiness Project, 2013
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