



Project Executive Board (PEB) sets ambitious agenda for REDD+ in 2015

The ninth meeting of the UN-REDD Programme and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Project Executive Board (PEB) was held in Phnom Penh on 24 February 2015. Members of the PEB include representatives of the Forestry Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Ministry of Environment; UNDP; FAO; UNEP; Indigenous Peoples; civil society organizations; representatives of the embassies of Japan and Norway; and development partners such as JICA and EU.

H.E. Dr. Chheng Kimsun, Delegate of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Chief of Forestry Administration (FA), and co-chair of the PEB. In the opening remarks he noted significant progress related to REDD+ activities during 2014. He especially noted progress on the National REDD+ Strategy and was pleased to see that the first draft was already available and a roadmap for consultations and finalization of the REDD+ Strategy had been developed. The PEB set itself ambitious goals and targets that include presenting the National REDD+ Strategy and the reference emission level at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP21 that will be held in Paris in December 2015.

In her remarks, the UN Resident Coordinator and co-chair, Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren supported the consultative process to generate high-level support for REDD+ from all relevant ministries in Cambodia. She stressed that the REDD+ Strategy should ensure that

the voices of forest-dependent poor people, indigenous peoples, women, the elderly and youth are heard in consultations. The PEB approved the annual work plan and budget for the FCPF project, noted the achievements of 2014 and noted the approval of the CBR+ national strategy for Cambodia, and looked forward to its implementation. The PEB took note of the arrangement between UNDP and FAO for the implementation of outcome four of the FCPF project.

The PEB also approved the terminal evaluation of the UN-REDD Programme that will begin in April 2015, and looked forward to reviewing findings and recommendations at the next PEB meeting as an on-going process of strengthening the REDD+ programme in Cambodia.

IPs representation in Cambodia REDD+ readiness process

Indigenous Peoples representatives from thirteen provinces of Cambodia approved its code of conduct that would guide its participation and engagement in the Cambodia REDD+ readiness process. The day-long event also elected Mr. Man Pak as the IPs representative and Mr. Li Lim as an alternate to the Project Executive Board (PEB) of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) project following the resignation of Mr. Nok Ven from the PEB in February 2015.

Over thirty IPs representatives and representatives from the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat, and national and international non-government



organizations also reviewed and made recommendations to improve information flow and feedback mechanisms for REDD+ policies and activities. Observers at the meeting included the NGO Forum on Cambodia, Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA), The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

Dr Khorn Saret, Head of the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat congratulated the elected candidates and noted that the Secretariat of Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce would continue to strengthen the participation of IPs to the REDD+ readiness process.

Mr. Man Pak expressed his commitment to IPs and said that he looks forward to working effectively with IPs members, local communities, government agencies, and stakeholders to contribute to the REDD+ readiness process. The IPs representatives also agreed to review progress and challenges on a regular basis.

Multi-stakeholder consultative meeting held to provide inputs on further development of National REDD+ Strategy

Since January 2015, Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat has conducted series of consultations on the initial draft of the Cambodia National REDD+

Strategy with relevant stakeholders and REDD+ expert team members. The second draft of the National REDD+ Strategy took into consideration comments received from these consultations. On 20 - 21 May 2015, a consultative meeting on the Cambodia National REDD+ Strategy was organized to: present the status of its development; collect technical inputs and general concerns from more than 70 participants and technical experts who are members of the REDD+ Taskforce, technical teams, consultation group, gender group and expert team; and identify issues that need further inputs in order to revise subsequent working drafts.

The meeting served as a platform for relevant stakeholders to provide their technical expertise and general concerns on the strategy. Details of all consultative activities with stakeholders will be documented in the evolving National Strategy Background Document to ensure accountability and transparency of the development process.

The second working draft provides an overview of Cambodia’s forest land management arrangements for the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy, REDD+ safeguards framework and information system, financial management arrangements, National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS),



Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) and institutional arrangements for strategy implementation. The draft strategy stresses the importance of mainstreaming gender, as well as listening to voices from civil society organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities (forestry, protected areas and fisheries).

Ms. Vong Sophana, Deputy Director General of Forestry Administration, highlighted that the Royal Government of Cambodia strongly supports the development and implementation of REDD+ as an option to mitigate the impacts of climate change, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the forestry sector and contribute to socio-economic development. This all contributes to poverty alleviation and achieving environmental sustainability.

Participants were divided into five groups to discuss and provide inputs on the scope and scale of REDD+ implementation, drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and policies and measures (PAM) to implement REDD+ activities.

Training on REDD+ economic and spatial GIS tool development



Economic and spatial analysis work is being carried out to support REDD+ planning under the Cambodia REDD+ National Programme. A group of 15 participants from Fisheries Administration (FiA), Forestry Administration (FA), General Department of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection (GDANCP), and NGOs received introductory training in the use of open source Quantum GIS, and worked with experts from the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WC-MC) to test and further develop a GIS tool that combines economic and spatial data. This training and working session was held in the REDD Building Centre/Forestry Administration, Phnom Penh, June 15-19, 2015.

The five-day session will make an important contribution to the development of the GIS tool, and result in an enhanced understanding of the costs and benefits of different REDD+ options, and how these vary

spatially. The project is also expected to improve capacity to produce, use and apply decision-support tools in REDD+ planning, which is being implemented through collaboration between UNEP-WC-MC and the Cambodia REDD+ National Programme.

The session comprised a series of presentations, discussion activities, quizzes and practice. It specifically focused on the use of Quantum GIS, the new GIS tool, and the development of workflows that will inform the further development of the tool, adapted to the Cambodian context. Through this training and working session, the participants had the opportunity to build their skills in spatial analysis to support their institutions in addressing multiple aspects of REDD+ planning and implementation.

The Secretariat of the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce will complete the Web platform of the National Forestry Monitoring System, which will be activated within the website of Cambodia-redd.org in the coming months.

Mainstreaming gender into the Cambodia REDD+ National Programme

It is important that gender issues are addressed in the National REDD+ Strategy. To achieve this, the Government has emphasised gender in REDD+ readiness. Cambodia has already taken steps to address gender in the forestry sector through REDD+ activities. Building on these positive first steps and making sure that gender sensitivity is incorporated in the national strategy, it was important to build the capacity and raise the awareness of the REDD+ Gender Group.

In August 2014, the REDD+ Gender Group was established with nominees from four related institutions: Forestry Administration, Fisheries Administration, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. The group is mandated to raise awareness on gender and women's empowerment issues among members of the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce, four technical teams and the consultation group. It provides advice on elements of the National REDD+ Strategy related to gender to ensure that the strategy and subsequent implementation guidelines are gender-balanced and responsive.

In April – May 2015, the REDD+ Gender Group conducted two consultation workshops on the concept of gender and REDD+ in Preah Sihanouk and Siem Reap provinces for the four technical teams and the consultation group. The workshops aimed to: enhance understanding of the concept of gender and women's empowerment; discuss and identify entry points for gender mainstreaming considerations



into REDD+ activities and programmes; and familiarize the groups with the gender checklist.

Dr. Khorn Saret, Head of the REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat, highlighted the importance of including gender issues in the National REDD+ Strategy. He encouraged participants to learn the concepts of gender and apply these to the REDD+ programme. He also focused on the key role of the technical teams and REDD+ consultation group in supporting the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce for REDD+ readiness, and in the development of the National REDD+ Strategy.

There were 89 participants in the workshops, including the Heads of the Forestry Cantonment in Siem Reap, Kompong Thom, Preah Vihea, Ordar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey. There were also members of the REDD+ consultation group, and four REDD+ technical teams from the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Environment; Interior; Economy and Finance; Mines and Energy; Women Affairs; and Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction. There were also REDD+ development partners from JICA and UNDP.

Members of the REDD+ Gender Group from the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Environment, and Women's Affairs did the training and facilitation, using a diverse range of training tools and methods. These included presentations, group discussions and videos to keep the participants energized throughout the workshop.

Outcomes

- Learned the concepts of gender and tools for gender analysis
- Learned methods to mainstream gender into the forestry sector with lessons drawn from REDD+

- Reviewed and pre-tested the use of the National REDD+ Strategy to ensure gender issues had been included in its first draft. It was revealed that there were gaps in gender issues being mainstreamed.

Discussions

The participants recommended that the gender checklist be simplified in updates of the draft National REDD+ Strategy. They said the gender checklist was a very important tool that helped them easily capture gaps in highlighting gender in the draft.

Recommendations relating to the National REDD+ Strategy included the addition of key elements from the Constitution of Cambodia and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); increased emphasis on mainstreaming and inclusion of indigenous peoples, women's perspectives and community participation; clear guidelines and mechanisms for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC); sex-disaggregation of all data and indicators; establishment of an effective grievance redress mechanism, fund mechanism and benefit sharing; clarification of the role of gender in Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) and Reference Emission Levels (REL).

All inputs and recommendations from participants have been incorporated and included into the draft of the National REDD+ Strategy after national consultations.

In addition to the Consultative Workshop on 22 June 2015, REDD+ Gender Group was invited to be guest speakers for FM102 and National Television of Cambodia's talk-show to promote public awareness on the REDD+ and Gender to students and public.



Using mass media to build REDD+ awareness throughout Cambodia

The Cambodia REDD+ programme continues to build awareness by using mainstream mass media such as radio and television. Agreement was reached in 2014 with National Television of Cambodia and Radio FM 102 to produce a series of programmes related to REDD+ activities.

Eight television programmes out of a total of 10 have already been telecast, and seven radio talk shows out of 17 have aired. The television show is filmed in front of an audience who can listen to the speakers and ask questions. Each session is approximately 30 to 40 minutes. The radio show is aired live and allows listeners to call in with questions during the 50-minute session.

The main topics for TV and radio have been: What is REDD+?; REDD+ activities; REL; REDD+ results; costs and benefits of REDD+; REDD+ safeguards, forestry and climate change; benefit sharing and community participation in REDD+ implementation.

The speakers are government officials of the Forestry Administration and the Ministry of Environment, and NGOs. National Television of Cambodia has increased the broadcast schedule from twice each week to three times each week.

Feedback indicates that use of mass media to build awareness about REDD+ is an effective approach and will continue to be used through 2015. This will

reach out to a wider public audience that can turn awareness into action and contribute to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Community-based REDD+ Country Plan launches in Cambodia

February 2015 saw Cambodia become one of the first of six pilot countries to launch its Community-based REDD+ (CBR+) initiatives, by issuing calls for proposals for community grants.

Currently in its pilot phase, CBR+ is a partnership between the UN-REDD Programme and the GEF Small Grants Programme, delivering grants of up to US\$50,000 directly to indigenous peoples and local communities. CBR+ aims to empower local-level stakeholders to engage fully in the design, implementation and monitoring of REDD+ readiness activities, and to develop experiences, lessons and recommendations at the local level that can feed into national REDD+ processes. CBR+ is being piloted in six countries: Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Panama, Paraguay, DR Congo and Nigeria.

By supporting the protection of forests, and the empowerment of forest communities who live in and depend on them, CBR+ aims to contribute to the fulfilment of broader environmental and social goals, including biodiversity conservation, enhanced food security, improved rights and livelihoods for indigenous peoples and local communities, and climate change adaptation.

In Cambodia, three regional consultations were



held in the Northern Plain and Dangrek Mountain Region, the North-eastern Region and the Coastal Zone and Cardamom Mountain Region, involving approximately 135 participants from local communities, NGOs and academia. Three community-level thematic consultations were held to identify the specific needs and experiences of communities involved in Community Forestry, Community Fisheries and Community Protected Areas, respectively. Each of these thematic consultations involved approximately 25 community members. Following the consultation process, a national-level validation workshop was held in Phnom Penh in December 2014 with 52 representatives of the stakeholder groups previously consulted, as well as government officials, NGOs, indigenous peoples and the private sector.

South-South sharing of lessons and experiences on Forest Reference Levels

Developing countries engaged in REDD+ readiness need to build national capacity for the development of Forest Reference Levels (FRLs). FRLs are key in determining the results of a country's efforts to reduce

GHG emissions and enhance GHG removals through a national REDD+ programme. This is a new concept for developing countries, and therefore a significant capacity barrier for countries intending to participate in the REDD+ mechanism. These countries stand to benefit through sharing their experiences before they submit their FRELs to the UNFCCC.

The UN-REDD Programme and FCPF is actively seeking to address this capacity barrier through a series of national, regional and global events on FRLs, and development of associated knowledge products. As a part of this initiative, a regional consultation workshop was held on 4-5 May 2015 for experts and officials from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal and Vietnam.

These countries are currently in the process of developing their FRLs, which will then be assessed by a panel of experts convened by the UNFCCC. Hosted by Cambodia and organized by the UN-REDD Programme, the two-day event enabled more than 30 participants to receive information, updates and clarifications on FRL development and assessment processes.

“The helpful advice we received from FAO experts and the experience shared among Asian countries was critical for the Vietnam delegation to improve our FRL before submission,” said Vu Tan Phuong, director of the training and international cooperation department of the Vietnam Academy of Forest Sciences. Many other participants shared this opinion. “Based on the advice we received at this workshop, we will revise our draft FRL before we submit it to the UNFCCC,” said Dr Mohan Poudel, Under Secretary, REDD Implementation Centre of Nepal. Dr María J. Sanz-Sánchez, team leader of FAO UN-REDD team and global expert on



FRL said, “Many countries share two predominant concerns: how to detect and measure forest degradation and how to include enhancement of forest carbon stocks within their FRL.”

Malaysia’s experience as the only country in Asia, to date, have submitted an FRL to the UNFCCC was highlighted by participants from other countries as a major benefit of the regional exchange. Malaysian delegates provided first-hand advice and feedback on the UNFCCC expert assessment process and the lessons that they have learned from the experience. The other four countries prepared brief presentations of their current visions for national FRLs, which were assessed by mock expert panels made up of the participants. “This exercise reassured us that we will be able to respond effectively to the UNFCCC assessment process,” said an Indonesian delegate. As hosts of the event, Cambodia sent a delegation of 12 officials. They received dedicated advice from technical experts on the key elements to consider when finalizing their FRL.

Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal and Vietnam plan to continue working towards submission of their FRLs to the UNFCCC. To enter into the technical assessment process for 2016, countries will have to submit their FRLs by the end of December 2015.

Strategy for protected areas

The Ministry of Environment is responsible for Cambodia’s Protected Area (PA) system, covering 23 areas that amount to about 3.3 million ha (18.3 percent of the total land area). The system includes seven national parks, ten wildlife sanctuaries, three protected landscapes and three multiple use areas. These PAs are governed by a policy framework that includes the Constitution of Cambodia (1993), the Protected Area Law (2008) and the Law on Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Development (1996).

Since 2014, the MoE has been developing its ten-year National Protected Areas Strategic Management Plan (NPASMP) to further strengthen existing regulations. The NPASMP will guide the effective implementation of the national PA policies by prioritizing strategies and approaches for the conservation and sustainable management of PAs, expansion of community livelihood opportunities and strengthening the infrastructure and institutional capacity of the ministry. The NPASMP will also act as an important policy instrument to link REDD+ and PA management at the national level.

So far, with support from UN-REDD and FCPF, the Ministry of Environment has completed an initial working draft of the NPASMP that builds on assessments of the existing status of and approaches to PA management, and a series of sub-national and national consultations.

Cost and benefit analysis of REDD+ Implementation in Cambodia

At the workshop on Cost and Benefit Analysis of REDD+ Implementation in Cambodia, Dr. Chea Sam Ang, Cambodia REDD+ National Programme Director said, “This is a unique event, as it will help us understand the potential gains from REDD+ and issues related to analyzing the costs and benefits of REDD+ implementation in Cambodia.”

The benefits of REDD+ include financial benefits associated with payment for emission reductions, as well as other potential benefits, such as improved biodiversity conservation and natural resource management.

More than 30 participants from the REDD+ Taskforce, Forestry Administration, Fisheries Administration, General Department of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection (GDANCP), REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat and consultations joined the



workshop. It is part of a project that supports the implementation of the REDD+ Cambodia National Programme, through helping to develop and trial REDD+ costs, benefits and spatial analysis.

In general, the costs of REDD+ include opportunity costs, implementation costs, transaction costs, administrative costs, stabilization costs and social costs. Opportunity costs are the foregone benefits: preserving forests under a REDD+ mechanism means foregoing the benefits that may have been generated by alternative land use that would have replaced forests. The difference between the benefits provided by the forest and those that would have been provided by the alternative use is the opportunity cost of avoiding deforestation.

Through group work and discussion, participants made recommendations for changes to the spread sheet tools and highlighted a number of challenges, such as translating costs and benefits into values per hectare.

The key recommendations that will guide further revision of the spread sheet include: more data on specific tasks and costs should be collected from relevant institutions, and multiple institutions where possible; costs related to specific tasks should be more detailed; citations and data in the spread sheet should be updated; costs for some specific tasks can be calculated per hectare, while others cannot; calculation of costs should take into account different management structures/requirements; and the methodology of the calculations should be further clarified and defined.

Developing safeguards through sub-national consultative meetings on Cambodia REDD+

As part of efforts to develop a national approach for social and environmental safeguards for REDD+ in Cambodia, the technical team on REDD+ Safeguards organized four consultative meetings at the sub-national level, from 14 July to 18 August 2014. The locations of

the meetings were based on how the Forestry Administration divides its administrative inspectorates across the country. The consultative meetings were conducted in the following provinces: Kratie for Mekong Forestry Administration Inspectorate, Siem Reap for North Tonle Sap Forestry Administration Inspectorate, Pursat for South Tonle Sap Forestry Administration Inspectorate and Sihanoukville for Coastal Areas / Gulf Forestry Administration Inspectorate.

The four sub-national meetings brought together participants from 22 provinces across Cambodia. From each province, the consultative meetings invited representatives from the Royal Government of Cambodia (Forestry Administration, Ministry of Environment, Fisheries Administration, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction and Ministry of Mines and Energy), local civil society organizations, local communities and indigenous peoples. There were 55 participants at the Kratie meeting, 69 participants at the Siem Reap meeting, 61 participants at the Pursat meeting and 64 participants at the Sihanoukville meeting. The four meetings were attended by 249 participants.

The outputs from the consultative meetings were: (1) increased understanding among local stakeholders on: REDD+ and its evolution internationally, as well as in Cambodia, potential social and environmental risks from REDD+ and UNFCCC decisions on REDD+ safeguards, as well as those from the UN-REDD Programme and the World Bank's FCPF; (2) local stakeholders' inputs on some of the potential social and environmental risks that might occur in their areas should REDD+ be implemented; and (3) local stakeholders' inputs for possible options to address those potential risks identified. These outputs will be used as inputs for the national consultative meeting where a draft national approach for social and environmental safeguards for REDD+ in Cambodia will be proposed.



The sixth Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Meeting

H.E Chea Sam Ang, Head of Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce and Deputy Director General of Forestry Administration said “The sixth meeting is very important for REDD+ activity implementation, as this meeting will be a platform to reflect achievements for whole of 2014. It will be followed by concrete discussion and consultation of the work for the year 2015, towards REDD+ activity implementation, harmonized with the national development agenda.”

Since 2013, the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce has played an important role in managing and coordinating a process of strategies, programmes and projects. It makes decisions on pilot project implementation, monitors results of projects to ensure they are consistent with the current context of Cambodia, and reports the latest updates to the Ministers of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Environment.

The members of the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce are senior officials from the Ministries of Interior, Economy and Finance, Industry, Mines and Energy, Rural Development, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Environment, Land Management, Urbanization and Construction. This institutional arrangement is important for the full participation of ministries involved in REDD+ activities.

On 30 December 2014, 35 members of the REDD+ Taskforce, REDD+ Technical Teams, REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat, officials and consultants, joined the sixth Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce Meeting in Kep province.

The meeting produced remarkable outcomes:

- Assigned the REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat coordinates with relevant institutions to prepare project proposal to carry out the activities REDD+ at sub-national level
- Presented and approved the development of the National REDD+ Strategy. The REDD+ Taskforce made a clear timeframe to complete the National REDD+ Strategy before the COP21 in Paris
- Approved the next REDD+ Taskforce meeting will invite the REDD+ Gender Group to participate and share progress on mainstreaming gender into REDD+ activities, especially the National REDD+ Strategy
- Approved to the study REDD+ benefit sharing and incorporate the study finding into the National REDD+ Strategy
- Approved the REDD+ MRV technical team to develop the REDD+ SIS, to be consistent with the 2015 annual work plan

Capacity building of the REDD+ technical teams and relevant institutions' officials at sub-national level

Some initial capacity building of Forestry Administration, GDANCP and Fisheries Administration officials has been done with funding from the UN-REDD programme. However, the scope and intensity of capacity building needs to be extended, and required capacity building includes both individual and institutional capacities.

In 2014, a national seminar was organized in Phnom Penh to further develop capacity for 41 officials of Forestry Administration, GDANCP and Fisheries Administration to implement the national REDD+ programme. There was a series of sessions mainly focused on the Warsaw Framework: Implications for Cambodia, Forest Monitoring and Safeguards for REDD+.

There were four training sessions in Battambang, Siem Reap, Kratie and Sihanouk provinces, with a total of 217 participants from the Forestry Administration Inspection, Cantonment and Division level. Participants had an introduction to REDD+ and learned about drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, policies and measures to reduce emissions, MRV, monitoring, benefit distribution, safeguards, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), and the status of REDD+ readiness in Cambodia, including preparation of the national REDD+ Strategy.

The training also provided opportunities for participants to discuss two different topics: how the Cambodia REDD+ programme can build the capacity of technical teams and officials in relevant institutions, and how to strengthen those institutions to successfully implement REDD+ in Cambodia.

Feedback from the discussion and suggestions from trainers included:

- Provide training of trainers (ToT) to officials of relevant institutions on the REDD+ implementation mechanism, coordination skills, technical issues related to REDD+ development, such as methodologies for calculating carbon sink and carbon emission;
- Exchange visits in the country and in the region to countries that have a good model and experience on REDD+ implementation;
- Equip the extension team with awareness-raising tools and equipment;
- On-the-job training with national and international experts, and awareness raising about the importance of REDD+.

The second discussion topic was: What kind of training related to REDD+ development in Cambodia do you want to have your official at sub-national level training?



The feedback from the discussion and suggestions from trainers included:

- Provide ToT to officials in each cantonment and at Director level of GDANCP. Officials of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuary should be trained on specific topics required to understand REDD+ mechanisms, methodologies for monitoring and verification and overall management;
- Raise awareness on REDD+ and government policies supporting REDD+ in institutions, especially forestry communities, fisheries communities and community protected areas in relevant locations.

School Extension Activities to promote public awareness on REDD+

As part of an on-going effort to raise awareness about REDD+ among all relevant stakeholders, the REDD+ Cambodia Programme (with UN-REDD and FCPF funding) has supported the Institute of Forest and Wildlife Research and Development in raising awareness among primary and secondary school children around Community Forests in Siem Reap province.

The awareness-raising team met with teachers in five villages to distribute and explain materials to be used and to organize the events. During the events at each school, folders containing brochures on climate change, crayons, pencils, erasers, a notebook and A3-sized drawing paper were distributed to the students. Some parents were also present, as well as officials of the Community Forests nearby.

The teachers explained the reading materials to the children and they watched a video provided by the REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat about climate change and REDD+. This required a mobile generator, as none of the schools have electricity. It was followed by a question-and-answer session. To motivate the children to participate, a token (a milk sachet) was given to those who raised their hands to answer questions.

The children were then organized into groups and the different groups were asked to discuss and prepare drawings to answer such questions as:

- What causes or contributes to climate change?
- What are the effects of climate change?
- What can be done to mitigate climate change?

In Phum Ou village, one of the villagers who accompanied his child shared his concern that even if the villagers effectively protect a forest area, destruction and illegal logging might move to another area, causing continued forest loss. In response, the team members emphasized the need for collaborative efforts in protecting the forests.

In some schools, the children were quite shy because it was their first time they experienced such interactive sessions. The teachers and some parents suggested that similar sessions be organized in the future, as they provided both knowledge and excitement to the children. Some parents said they would share what they had learned with other villagers and friends.

The schools took pride in the drawings prepared by the children, so there are plans to compile them into a book that will be distributed back to the schools.

Views of NGOs on the process of implementation of REDD+ Readiness in Cambodia

The interview with Mr. TEK Vannara, Executive Director, NGO FORUM on Cambodia was conducted as follows:

Q1: What do you think are the strongest aspects of the REDD+ readiness process in Cambodia so far? What do you think Cambodia can teach other countries about REDD+ readiness?

Cambodia received funding from UN-REDD and FCPF to prepare policy-related documents to implement REDD+. The REDD+ programme has

an institutional structure, with involvement from various government institutions. The structure has a REDD+ Consultation Group (CG) which provides comments to the REDD+ Taskforce on the REDD+ readiness process and provides a forum to represent the views of local stakeholders, especially civil society and NGOs. The members of CG are representatives of CSO, NGOs, IPs, academia, communities and the private sector. CSOs are involved in government structure to build up cooperation in monitoring and implementation, forest management and REDD+. Civil society has participated in REDD+ since starting the process of developing the REDD+ roadmap, which was the guide for taking action.

Q2: What do you see as the key remaining challenges? What do we need to improve in the REDD+ readiness process?



The National REDD+ Strategy and implementation framework has not yet been developed. There are no national guidelines on safeguards and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). There have been some awareness raising activities and capacity building of stakeholders on REDD+ concepts, however, the capacity of stakeholders to understand REDD+ is still limited and the awareness raising reaches only a small proportion of the population. There are limited awareness-raising materials on REDD+ in the Khmer language.

Cambodia is in the process of developing a National REDD+ Strategy and other related mechanisms, such as safeguards, benefit sharing options, MRV,

etc. in order for Cambodia to be ready for the implementation of REDD+ in the near future. However, there is little support on the ground to reduce the rate of deforestation and to safeguard the conversion of natural forests to plantation and other forms of land use. There was a workshop to discuss the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.

Therefore, I think we should consider:

- While Cambodia is in the process of developing the National REDD+ Strategy and other policies, it should support activities on the ground to protect natural forests, such as law enforcement, patrolling, solving issues of illegal logging, and forming community forests (CF) and community protected areas (CPA).
- Build capacity of stakeholders, especially the REDD+ CG so they can provide effective comments to the taskforce.
- Speed up support for the formulation of CF and community management plans, which are potential mechanisms for implementation and management of REDD+.
- Build communication between CSOs and the Government to strengthen law enforcement.
- Address the needs of local communities for safeguarding displacement of communities and transformation of natural forests.
- Wide consultation with CSOs, especially forest-dependent communities on related policies such as the national strategy, safeguards and benefit sharing, as Cambodia is a member of the UNFCCC. There are seven principle safeguards for REDD+ at the UNFCCC that Cambodia should incorporate into the REDD+ readiness process and implementation. These include transparent and effective national forest governance structures, respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities and full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, including, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities.

Q3: Cambodia is now looking to start implementation of REDD+; what do you think should be the priorities for initial REDD+ implementation?

- 1 Speed up the development of the National REDD+ Strategy and implementation, including safeguards

- and FPIC guidelines, with wider consultation with stakeholders, especially CSOs, IPs and communities.
- 2 Build the capacity of CSOs and local communities, including local authorities. Provide support to CG members to strengthening functioning of CG. The support should be technical and financial.
 - 3 There should be clear policies on safeguards, benefit sharing and grievance mechanisms, with full and effective consultation.
 - 4 Strengthen communication and information flows between CSOs and government to avoid communication gaps and effective participation of stakeholders in the REDD+ readiness implementation and consultation process.
 - 5 The community forestry (CF) and community protected areas (CPAs) play an important role in supporting REDD+ implementation. However, the communities face the challenge of transforming CF (in the process of legalization and agreement) to ELC. Also, often communities are unable to develop their own CF and CPA management plans, given the complex technical and financial requirements. There is a lack of support to the implementation of community plans and limited support for organizational development and strengthening of community forestry organizations. The REDD+ programme should speed up the activities of community management plans.

National REDD+ Strategy's Work Plan

Description	Timeframe
Skeleton	31 August 2014
Initial Working Draft	31 December 2014
Second Working Draft/ Background Document	10 April 2015
First Consultative Meeting with TF, TTs, CG, GG	20-21 May 2015
Third Working Draft/ Background Document	10 June 2015
Second Consultative Meeting with TF, TTs, CG, GG	6-8 July 2015
Fourth Working Draft/ Background Document	21 August 2015
Four Sub-national Consultative Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kratie Province ▪ Sihanouk Ville Province ▪ Battambang Province ▪ Siem Reap Province 	08-09 September 2015 15-16 September 2015 22-23 September 2015 29-30 September 2015
National Consultative Meeting/ Phnom Penh	Third Week of October 2015
Fifth/ Final Working Draft/ Background Document	06 November 2015
Endorsement by MAFF/ MoE/ PM	Prior to COP 21, Paris
Presentation/ Promotion of NRS at COP21	30 November to 11 December, 2015

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