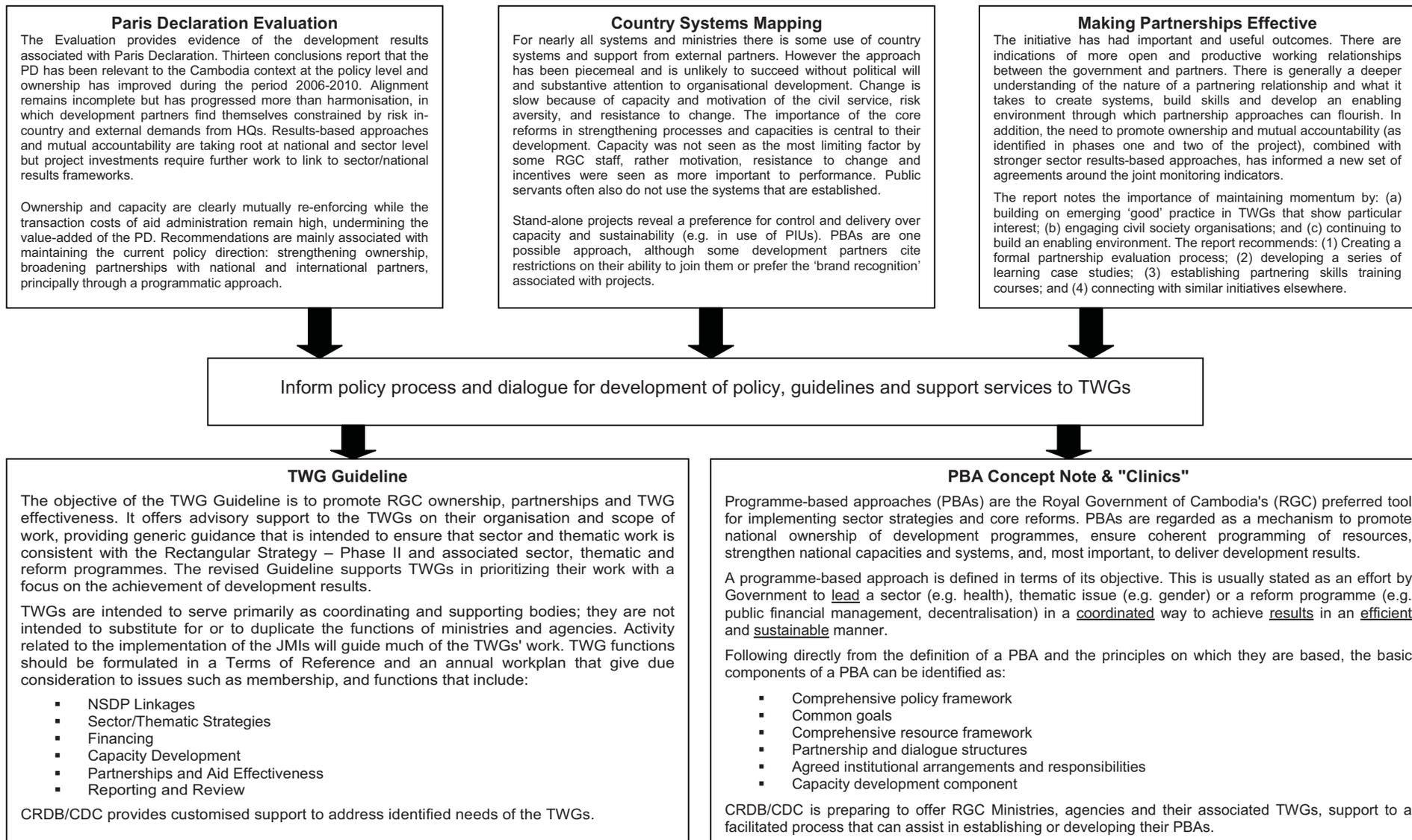


**Partnership and aid management processes: Principal studies and processes contributing to policy and support services**  
 TWG Network meeting, September 2010



## Global Evaluation of the Paris Declaration – Cambodia country study

The purpose of the Evaluation is to provide evidence about the development results achieved through improved aid effectiveness practices associated with the Paris Declaration. The Evaluation considered three core questions:

1. Context - What are the important factors that have affected the relevance and implementation of the Paris Declaration and its potential effects on results?
2. Process - To what extent, and how, has the implementation of the Paris Declaration led to an improvement in the efficiency of aid delivery and better partnerships?
3. Development outcomes - Has the implementation of Paris Declaration strengthened the contribution of aid to sustainable development results?

The Cambodia country study produced thirteen conclusions:

1. **Relevance of the Paris Declaration in Cambodia** - PD has contributed to shaping the context of aid in Cambodia at the policy level, set priorities, and secured partnerships.
2. **Ownership** - The Royal Government of Cambodia led by the CRDB/CDC has increased its leadership capacity and ownership.
3. **Alignment** - Progress on alignment remains incomplete, especially on country systems. Few development partners are prepared to raise their fiduciary risk tolerance levels.
4. **Harmonization** - Aid coordination mechanisms are established but aid remains fragmented as donor HQ requirements dominate over local harmonisation incentives.
5. **Managing for Results** – this is increasing at sector programme level but few donor programs show evidence of linking work to outcome-level results.
6. **Mutual Accountability** - has taken hold at a national level (NSDP, JMIs), however at the sector and the project investment level the practice is not widespread.
7. **Conflicts or Trade-offs among PD Principles** - achieving country ownership is dependent on the country's capacity and willingness of DPs to support capacity work.
8. **Contribution to aid effectiveness, results and sustainability** - the Paris Declaration has unquestionably had a positive influence on improving aid effectiveness in Cambodia.
9. **Increased Burden of Aid Management** - reducing the burden of aid management for all concerned has not yet taken place in Cambodia and remains high.
10. **Value added of the Paris Declaration** - Paris Declaration-style cooperation in Cambodia preceded the advent of the Paris Declaration but has been strengthened by it.
11. **Key messages for national stakeholders** - for government, to continue to assert leadership. For CSOs, to increase their involvement and participation in national networks.
12. **Key messages for donor countries and agencies** - emphasis on working together in sector approaches and shared accountability for the achievement of development results.
13. **New challenges, opportunities, actors and relationships** - there is a clear positive side to Cambodia's engagement with non-traditional and "emerging donors".

The conclusions of the study have been developed into a set of recommendations. These will be presented for discussion nationally to inform policy development and will also inform the global synthesis that will be presented to the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Korea in November 2011.

*[This summary is derived from the "Paris Declaration Evaluation phase II – Cambodia country study", July 2010]*

## Country Systems mapping study

The Accra Agenda for Action states that "successful development depends to a large extent on a government's capacity to implement its policies and manage public resources through its own institutions and systems." In Cambodia only 12% of external assistance is estimated to use country systems (Paris Declaration monitoring survey, 2007 data). To promote an increased understanding of the status of country systems, SIDA, on behalf of EU partners, commissioned a mapping study that reviewed existing documents and assessments of the following systems in MoP, MEF, MoP, CAR, SNDD, Agriculture, Education and Health:

- Planning
- Public financial management systems
- Social assessments
- Environmental assessments
- Human resource management, including civil service reform
- Monitoring and evaluation/results framework

The study intended to: (i) consolidate information on national structures and systems in Cambodia in order to increase knowledge that enabled decisions about the alignment with and use of country systems; and (ii) provide information for identification of challenges and the manner in which RGC reforms and external support could combine to strengthen these systems.

### Main findings

- For nearly all systems and ministries there was some use of country systems, with some support from external partners. However the approach has been piecemeal and is unlikely to succeed without both political will and substantive attention to organisational development.
- There is political recognition that systems are weak. Change is slow because of: (i) capacity and motivation of the civil service; (ii) risk aversity and a long-term outlook by RGC; and (iii) resistance to change due to vested interests of both RGC and DPs.
- The importance (but slow pace, according to development partners) of core reforms in strengthening sector processes, capacities and systems is central to the development and use of country systems.
- The timeframe for implementing change is an area of disagreement between RGC and development partners. RGC has a much longer time horizon based on national context while development partners apply their own norms and shorter timeframes.
- Multiple projects and programs and the number of project implementation units reveal a preference for control and delivery over capacity and sustainability. PBAs represent a possible response, although some development partners cite restrictions on their ability to join them or prefer the 'brand recognition' associated with projects.
- There is often a preference by both RGC and development partners to use PIUs as these mitigate risk and promote (short-term) performance as well as permitting greater latitude in human resource management. A possible middle ground is the combination of a number of projects or programs under the management of one PIU with a common set of procedures.
- Capacity was not seen as the most limiting factor by some RGC staff; rather motivation, resistance to change and incentives were seen as more important to performance. Public servants often also do not use the systems that are established.

### Recommendations

- Dissemination, including through a workshop/seminar.
- Establishment of a joint study that promotes the increased use of systems under RGC (CRDB/CDC) leadership.

*[This summary is derived from the study on "National Structures and Systems for Aid Implementation in Cambodia", May 2010]*

## Making Partnerships Effective in Cambodia

The *Making Partnerships Effective* initiative began in June 2009, when CDRB/CDC commissioned The Partnering Initiative and VBNK to undertake a programme of work to strengthen development partnerships in Cambodia. The project team has subsequently worked with senior Cambodian Government and development partners in a 3-stage process: an engagement and inception phase (June 2009); a Strategic Meeting on Making Partnerships Effective (September 2009); and a follow-up phase (October 2009 – present). This report describes support provided and identifies specific actions that have been taken by different Government and development agencies towards making their partnerships more effective since the initiative began.

While precise impacts are hard to measure, the project team believes that the initiative has had important and useful outcomes. Most progress can be seen in terms of qualitative benefits. There are indications, for example, of more open and productive working relationships between the government and donor partners. There is generally a deeper understanding of the nature of a partnering relationship and what it takes to create systems, build skills and develop an enabling environment through which partnership approaches can flourish. In addition, the need to promote ownership and mutual accountability (as identified in phases one and two of the project), combined with a results-based management workshop late in 2009, has informed a new set of agreements around the joint monitoring indicators.

The report prepared on phase 3 of the Partnering exercise notes the importance of maintaining momentum by: (a) building on emerging 'good' practice in Technical Working Groups (TWGs) that show particular enthusiasm for deepening the partnership approach and a clear aptitude for enabling their colleagues and TWGs; (b) more actively engaging civil society organisations in development partnerships; and (c) continuing to build an enabling environment in which partnerships can thrive.

The project team recommends four activities that would be valuable in advancing this work:

1. Creating a more formal partnership evaluation process closely aligned with the upcoming review of the TWGs and the Guideline that informs their work; the Paris Declaration principles and commitments; and the agreement to review CSO engagement and their participation in development forums.
2. Developing a series of learning case studies that focus on good partnering practice in a way that can be accessed and assimilated by Government and donor partners and which would also give direction to CSOs on how to strengthen their capacities for engagement.
3. Establishing a comprehensive series of partnering skills training courses linked to key issues that are proving challenging (e.g. Facilitating Dialogue; Facilitating Partner Relationship Reviews and Interest-based Negotiation) and make these available to Government, development partner and CSO partners.
4. Making an active connection to similar initiatives in other countries to allow for cross learning and confidence building.

Much of this work can be taken forward through the "PBA clinics" that CRDB/CDC intends to facilitate beginning in the last quarter of 2010.

*[This summary is extracted from the TPI/VBNK Progress Report on Phase Three of the "Making Partnerships Effective in Cambodia" exercise, August 2010]*

## **Guideline on the Role and Functioning of the TWGs**

The objective of the revised TWG Guideline is to promote RGC ownership, partnerships and TWG effectiveness. It offers advisory support to the TWGs on their organisation and scope of work, providing generic guidance that is intended to ensure that sector and thematic work is consistent with the Rectangular Strategy – Phase II and associated sector, thematic and reform programmes. The revised Guideline will therefore support TWGs in prioritizing their work with a focus on the achievement of development results.

TWGs are intended to serve primarily as coordinating and supporting bodies; they are not intended to substitute for or to duplicate the functions of ministries and agencies. Activity related to the implementation of the JMIs will guide much of the TWGs' work. TWG functions should be formulated in a Terms of Reference and an annual workplan that give due consideration to a range of issues, including:

### **Membership of TWGs**

- (i) An RGC-appointed Chair with authority within the host ministry to be able to address all matters arising in the TWG as well as to guide discussions smoothly.
- (ii) RGC representatives of all relevant Ministries and agencies who are well informed, technically competent, and of a sufficiently senior level.
- (iii) A development partner lead facilitator, competent in the field and willing to relate information to all other development partners.
- (iv) Development partners active in the sector or thematic area.
- (v) The TWG Secretariat with capacity to facilitate the administration of the TWG.
- (vi) Focal points for generic and cross-cutting issues.
- (vii) Technical Advisors of projects/programmes working within the RGC structure.
- (viii) Civil society or NGO representatives.

### **Roles and Functions of TWGs**

- a) NSDP Linkages - identify sector priorities and prepare/implement a strategy which is related to the NSDP Update 2009-2013;
- b) Sector/Thematic Strategies - to promote the attainment of NSDP targets, supports routine work functions and capacity development needs.
- c) Financing – use of the ODA Database and Budget process to integrate all resources and prioritise expenditures
- d) Capacity Development - a coherent strategy located in the context of on-going public service reforms to support national systems (not project implementation).
- e) Partnerships and Aid Effectiveness - identify relevant actions that will promote aid effectiveness and partnership, including through a PBA sector programme.
- f) Reporting and Review - identify and agree a modality for reviewing TWG and/or sector progress, ideally on a joint basis.

### **CRDB/CDC support to TWGs**

A CRDB staff member participates in every TWG meeting to provide on-demand support and advice on matters related to aid management. The TWG Network convenes meetings and training events for all TWG secretariats and anticipates the use of "clinics" for providing tailored support to the TWGs. They are principally linked to developing programme-based approaches but can also be applied to a wider range of aid management-related issues.

*[This summary has been developed using the revised "Guideline on the Role and Functioning of the TWGs", released for consultation in August 2010]*

## Supporting Results-based Programmatic Approaches in Cambodia

Programme-based approaches (PBAs) are the Royal Government of Cambodia's (RGC) preferred tool for implementing sector strategies and core reforms. PBAs are regarded as a mechanism to promote national ownership of development programmes, ensure coherent programming of resources, strengthen national capacities and systems, and, most important, to deliver development results.

### Defining a programme-based approach

A programme-based approach is defined in terms of its objective. This is usually stated as an effort by Government to lead a sector (e.g. health), thematic issue (e.g. gender) or a reform programme (e.g. public financial management, decentralisation) in a coordinated way to achieve results in an efficient and sustainable manner.

*A PBA is defined as way to work together in a coordinated partnership under Government's lead to achieve results in an efficient and sustainable manner*

### Principal elements of a PBA

Following directly from the definition of a PBA and the principles on which they are based, the basic components of a PBA can be identified as:

- Comprehensive policy framework
- Common goals
- Comprehensive resource framework
- Partnership and dialogue structures
- Agreed institutional arrangements and responsibilities
- Capacity development component

### PBAs in the Cambodia context

A PBA is a mechanism that enables the sector or reform programme to become better organised by bringing together the many actors and processes that are already in place. Achieving and sustaining high levels of sector performance requires that support be directed to develop the sector as a whole, not programmed and implemented as discrete initiatives. This means that all partners and their resources, both national and external, must be working together under RGC leadership to formulate, implement and monitor activities at the sector or programme level.

- Effective partnership requires strong and skilful Government leadership to be mobilised and strengthened around a coherent policy and financing framework.
- Fragmented aid and multiple funding sources and modalities can be managed through a single planning, resource allocation and monitoring process.
- Capacity development and the strengthening of national systems can be achieved through the improved use of technical cooperation focused on sector priorities.
- Partnership dynamics can be improved, leading to greater efficiency and improved results through the more effective use of coordination and dialogue mechanisms.
- Harmonisation of development partner assistance can be promoted through the establishment of RGC systems and procedures linked to the core reforms.

### PBA "clinics"

CRDB/CDC is preparing to offer RGC Ministries, agencies and their associated TWGs, support to a facilitated process that can assist in establishing or developing their PBAs. A joint needs assessment to be discussed with CRDB/CDC and ratified by the TWG will lead to the delivery of a "clinic", which will take the form of a practical training and supported-dialogue event that is based on the identified needs of the sector. This may include components to support an understanding of PBAs and their potential advantages, applying results-based approaches, strengthening partnerships and integration of aid and domestic resources, and capacity development to support the use of national systems.

*[This summary is an extract from the CRDB/CDC discussion note "Supporting results-based programmatic approaches in Cambodia", August 2010]*