Guideline on the Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue
April 2019

1. Context

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) acknowledges an increasing need to promote multi-stakeholder dialogue at the sector level to review and discuss sector-wide progress, challenges and opportunities and broaden inclusive participation of all development actors including the private sector. To support the RGC's objective, the Development Cooperation and Partnerships Strategy (2019-2023) identifies Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue to serve as a high-impact partnership dialogue mechanism at the sector level that brings together a broader range of development actors including the RGC, development partners, NGOs, associations, academic community and the private sector to identify an appropriate and agreed strategy or a course of action and to create consensus on priorities and financing that requires both collective and individual attention by all actors and all sources of development finance.

This Guideline sets out objectives, guiding principles, priority areas of work, and institutional arrangements of Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue together with the relationship to Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to ensure that this mechanism is convened in a collaborative manner for maximum effect. While acknowledging a process of learning, adaption and incremental adjustment, this Guideline is not intended to be prescriptive but, rather, provides broader aspects for more purposeful and informed dialogue.

2. Objectives of Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue

The over-arching objective of the Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue mechanism is to support the implementation of the RS-IV, NSDP, CSDGs, sector strategy/plan and major governance reform programmes. It is intended to support RGC's efforts to strengthen RGC's ownership and leadership in implementing sector plans and reforms, to ensure partnership in mobilising and coordinating all resources, and to deliver effective development results as articulated in the RS-IV, NSDP, CSDGs, and sector strategy/plan.

Specific objectives of the dialogue mechanism are:

(i)   To promote effective partnership dialogue at an additional level of the sector and provide an important opportunity for all development actors working within the sector to review and discuss sector's progress and challenges;

(ii)   To serve as high-level consultation mechanism for sector-wide review by reinforcing the sector's results framework and facilitating high-impact decisions and commitments;

(iii)   To ensure wider inclusiveness with an increased representation of all development actors in the respective sector including the private sector;

(iv)   To support the gradual integration of ODA into the sector plan and budget plan by providing an opportunity especially for development partners to commit new funding; and

(v)   To complement other partnership arrangements including the TWG mechanism with an emphasis on building consensus on priority-setting and financing.

3. Guiding Principles for Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue

A number of general guiding principles are intended to ensure that the organisation of Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue is purposeful and informative including:

(i)   ***Inclusive*** – The dialogue is designed to accommodate a wide range of actors to ensure wider inclusiveness including the RGC, development partners, NGOs, associations, academic community and the private sector;

(ii)   ***Coordinating*** – The dialogue offers an opportunity to bring together relevant actors to ensure that all essential tasks including information sharing and effective communication are being performed efficiently and effectively with a minimum of overlap and duplication;

(iii)   ***Complementary*** – The dialogue will increase efficiency and effectiveness by serving as a partnership arrangement at an additional level that complements other mechanisms including TWGs; and

(iv)   ***Collaborative*** – The dialogue shall provide an opportunity for important development actors to collaborate, mobilise and commit certain resources to support the implementation of sector strategy/plan and major governance reform programmes.

4. Priority Areas of Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue

This Guideline presents four areas of work that the host ministry/agency should prioritise in the dialogue. However, these agenda items and activities within each area of work are discretionary under the management of the host ministry/agency.

(a) Monitoring and Review of Sector Development Results

(i)   Review and discuss sectoral/thematic/reform progress and challenges faced by relevant development actors working in the respective sector/theme/reform;

(ii)   Promote the use of the sector's results framework that is linked to the NSDP and CSDGs to strengthen the RGC's monitoring and evaluation system;

(iii)   Discuss and follow-up issues related to the sector that are raised in other forums including the unresolved challenges identified in the TWG meetings; and

(iv)   Promote the use of performance-informed budgeting to monitor and evaluate the sector progress and gradually integrate ODA into sector plan and budget plan.

(b) Identification of Forward-looking Priorities

(i)   Identify sector priorities and prepare/implement a sector strategy/plan that is associated with the RS-IV, NSDP and CSDGs including cross-cutting thematic issues and major governance reforms;

(ii)   Determine agreed priority activities to address identified challenges that are raised in the monitoring and reviewing process;

(iii)   Present priority works for the next fiscal year including programs/proposals to be financed by external resources;

(iv)   Identify and discuss cross-cutting thematic issues either through collaboration across relevant ministries/agencies or with other development actors; and

(v)   Propose dedicated modalities for improving collaboration and synergic implementation of sector priorities with similar or common objectives.

(c) *Resource Mobilisation and Financing Issues*

(i)   Identify agreed resource mobilisation strategy, based upon resource mapping exercise and reports on support financed by all development actors;

(ii) Identify the funding gap for the following year and discuss an appropriate strategy, ideally on a joint basis, to mobilise and commit resources to fulfil the spending needs;

(iii) Promote the use of the annual budgeting process to gradually integrate ODA into the sector plan and budget plan; and

(iv) Follow-up financing issues raised in other forums (e.g. TWG) and discuss them in line with PFM reform (budget) and DCPS (all non-RGC development actors).

(d) Capacity Development and Organisation Strengthening

(i) Identify capacity development work, based on the review and monitoring exercises, to ensure a sufficient level of monitoring competencies and evaluation system strengthening;

(ii) Discuss organisational and capacity requirements with emphasis on opportunities to collaborate for mutual benefits;

(iii) Propose initiatives for program-specific capacity development, especially with a focus on the implementation of the RGC's reform programmes; and

(iv) Share information and promote dialogue on policy implementation so that a more informed course of action could be pursued to strengthen national systems and better deliver development results.

5. Institutional Arrangements

Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue will take place over a full day or in sufficient duration and should be convened once per annum or as deemed appropriate under the leadership of the host ministry/ agency. To avoid establishing an additional or parallel mechanism, the host ministry/agency is encouraged to use the existing or similar arrangement to accommodate the dialogue by broadening the participation to all development actors.

This mechanism should emphasise representation at a senior level so that bottlenecks and challenges identified at other forums including in the TWG meetings can be brought further to the discussion. The process of preparation will ensure readiness to take important decisions and certain high-level political commitments and to agree upon an individual or collective action that builds on the technical dialogue and coordination work under the TWG.

The dialogue is open to all development actors active in the respective sector. However, for reasonable and manageable representation, participants and management should be determined by the host ministry/agency. To achieve purposeful and informed deliberation, it is necessary that the dialogue should consist of:

(i) *An RGC Chair:* The chairperson is the head of ministry/agency or his/her appointee who is of the top management position and able to address all policy matters arising in the sector.

(ii) *The Secretariat:* The host minister/agency may consider establishing a new Secretariat to support the administration of the dialogue, to follow-up on agreed actions, to facilitate information management and to produce the dialogue report. To avoid creating an additional bureaucratic structure, reduce transaction costs, and increase efficiency and effectiveness, the host ministry/agency is encouraged to use the existing TWG Secretariat to serve as the dialogue's Secretariat. The TWG Secretariat may have 1) a clearly structured Terms of Reference and mandate; 2) an adequate level of coordination and partnership skills; and 3) an ability to bring the unresolved issues and challenges identified in the TWG mechanism to discuss in the dialogue.

(iii) ***Representatives of all relevant ministries and agencies:*** Representatives from relevant ministries and agencies should be of sufficiently senior level, preferably in the rank of Director General or above, to discuss cross-cutting thematic issues and support cross-government coordination. The representative must be well-informed, technically competent, and resourceful in term of providing required information and facilitating follow-up action within his/her own organisation.

(iv) ***A development partner lead facilitator:*** The development partner lead facilitator(s) in the TWG plays an important role in Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue in coordinating within development partner community, discussing and setting agenda for the discussion with the RGC counterparts and mobilising and committing resources to fulfil the financing requirement.

(v) ***Development partners active in the sector:*** Representatives from development partners should be at country/agency-represented level, ideally ambassadors, country representatives, or heads of cooperation, and be able to make certain commitments and contributions and support the Chair in reaching high-impact decisions. They could propose policy initiatives to address on-going issues of the sector and disseminate deliberations and decisions of the dialogue to create a common course of action that can be carried out at the technical level.

(vi) ***A representative of CRDB/CDC:*** The CRDB/CDC representative of a senior level will provide advisory and technical support on aid and development effectiveness issues in line with the DCPS (2019-2023). The representative will also ensure good practices, coordination and management of the provision of technical cooperation.

(vii) ***NGO and private sector representatives and other relevant stakeholders:*** Representatives from NGOs, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders should be invited. As of high-level dialogue, they should demonstrate a capacity to well-represent their broader community and must make a commitment to contribute, based on their comparative advantage, and agree on collective action for undertaking at the implementation level. Their representatives, at the discretion of the Chair, should be determined based on their relevance and ability to contribute to the sector and the dialogue.

6. Relationship to Technical Working Groups

In the fast-changing context of development cooperation, the DCPS (2019-2023) proposes Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue to serve as an effective partnership mechanism for elevating the discussion and coordination from the technical level in TWGs to the higher level. The two mechanisms are complementary and not substitutes for one another. The Guideline on the Role and Functioning of Technical Working Groups was revised to ensure no duplication between the two and encourage the improved performance of TWGs to realise their objectives.

TWGs remain critical to technical functions as articulated in their respective Guideline. The Sectoral Multi-stakeholder Dialogue mechanism can add value by providing a more senior-level, medium-term and strategic dialogue opportunity based on all of the functions included in this Guideline.