

Cambodia Ending Violence Against Women
Concept Note
April 2012

Introduction and Analysis

This concept note describes a program of support to the Government of Cambodia to strategically and comprehensively work to end violence against women in Cambodia.

The EVAW budget measure offers an historic opportunity to make a significant impact on the problem of violence against women (VAW) in Cambodia by building on current investments of Australian aid and by supporting a multi-disciplinary approach to actively promoting national response and prevention systems.

The program will work with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), the Ministries of Interior and Justice (through CCJAP) and Cambodian Civil Society to deliver a comprehensive response to VAW.

In the short term, we will:

- support the development of a new National Action Plan on Violence Against Women (NAPVAW) that is fully costed, evidence based, and developed in consultation with communities, survivors of violence, Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and whole of government, to identify a comprehensive and coordinated response to VAW.;
- support a prevalence study (the first ever, and different from a perception study) that will ensure resources are well targeted to need; and to provide a baseline to measure program impact over the next 5 years.

In the medium term (July-December) we will undertake a joint design with UN Women to:

- identify the best modality for civil society support for providing victim assistance services, legal aid, advocacy and community awareness/behaviour change; and
- assess the feasibility of integrating the legal enforcement aspects of the NAPVAW into the new phase of assistance to the justice sector);

Longer term (by early 2013): we will have:

- an Agreement with UN Women to manage a civil society program window and
- integrated feasible components of NAPVAW into the 2013 CCJAP Annual Plans, leveraging additional funding to make real improvements in law enforcement and the legal response to domestic and sexual violence
- An plan for ensuring no woman in Cambodia does not have access to emergency shelter accommodation and relevant services by 2015

The program goal is a sustained reduction in violence against women in Cambodia. Progress towards this result will include the following outcomes:

- The formulation of a new Cambodian NAPVAW
- Implementation of the new NAPVAW, including advancements in the RGC's enforcement of its laws and policies aimed at ending violence against women

- Increase in the provision of direct services for survivors of violence in Cambodia in particularly access to crisis services, safe shelter, psycho-social support and legal services.

Violence against Women in Cambodia

Violence against women remains a serious concern in Cambodia with wide gaps in what is currently an inadequate response system with only nascent initiatives in addressing prevention.¹

Violence against women (VAW) is widespread, systematic and culturally entrenched in Cambodian society. National statistics show that one out of four women who have been in a relationship has experienced violence² The roots of VAW lie in historically unequal power relations between men and women and pervasive discrimination against women in both the public and private spheres³.

Women with disabilities face multiple forms of discrimination and vulnerability, including vulnerability to violence, and women and girls with disabilities are at greater risk from all forms of violence than women without disabilities.^[4] Evidence shows that people with disabilities are three times more likely than others to be victims of physical and sexual abuse and rape.^[5] For example, in Cambodia there are some estimates that 40 per cent of women who are deaf have been sexually abused.^[6]

Cambodia has made significant progress in its efforts to intervene and prevent gender-based violence (GBV), but challenges still remain. While appropriate laws and policies have been promulgated, implementation is a challenge. Services are available, but not in all regions and areas of the country.

There is strong support and commitment from the various line ministries and community service organizations to continue to strengthen the response in Cambodia. For example, the government has developed strong laws and policies and has prioritized GBV in its new Commune Village Safety Policy. Where training has been provided on these laws to the local authorities and villagers, we have seen an improved response. But there is much more to be done.

The provision of direct services in Cambodia has been led by the civil society. There are a variety of available services including crisis services, shelter, psycho-social support, advocacy, legal counselling, first aid or emergency health services, and rehabilitation and re-integration. However, the organizations that provide these services are concentrated in a few provinces and women in much of the country do not have access to these supports. Barriers such as distance to service locations, cost of transportation, and both formal and informal fees prevent some women from even trying to get help.

¹ UN Women Cambodia draft concept note – February 2012

² Ministry of Women's Affairs, Royal Government of Cambodia (2012) Review report on the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women.

³ Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, United Nations, General Assembly, A/RES/48/104

^[4] Cockram, J. Silent Voices; ESCAP (1995), *Hidden Sisters: Women and Girls with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 2003

^[5] World Health Organisation, United Nations Population Fund, *Promoting sexual and reproductive health for persons with disabilities, Guidance Note*, 2009

^[6] Hagar and UNICEF (Jennifer Carter). Towards a cooperative approach: a study on the situation of children with intellectual disabilities in Cambodia.

While there are significant scattered efforts to end violence and to provide services to survivors of violence a feasibility study⁴ has identified the following gaps for women survivors of violence:

- **Inconsistent level of services for GBV survivors:** There is not a consistent level of service options available to victims of GBV throughout Cambodia.
- **Lack of access to safe shelter:** Most women in the country do not have access to safe shelter if needed.
- **Local authorities lack skills in GBV interventions:** Local authorities are on the front line for responding to GBV, but often lack the skills needed to provide safe, survivor-centered interventions.
- **Police and courts minimize GBV:** The police and court authorities report having training on the various GBV laws, however, they routinely do not respond to cases deemed “not serious”.
- **Lack of protocols for GBV identification and response in health care system:** The health care system in Cambodia does not target GBV except in the provision of forensic examinations.
- **Cost a barrier to services:** Survivors of GBV face difficulties at all levels as a result of the cost of obtaining services. Lack of money for transportation and legal fees sometimes prevents survivors from getting help.
- **Lack of understanding of the dynamics of GBV:** There is a general lack of understanding of the dynamics of the different forms of GBV. People identify the causes of GBV as poverty and alcohol.
- **Confidentiality was almost non-existent** in the government sector. GBV cases are routinely discussed without permission of the survivor.

The EAW budget measure offers an historic opportunity to make a significant impact on the problem of violence against women (VAW) in Cambodia by building on current investments of Australian aid and by supporting a multi-disciplinary approach to actively promoting national response *and* prevention systems.

Australian and Partner Government policy and strategic aid objectives in Cambodia

This approach will build on prior and current investments of AusAID, such as Criminal Justice Assistance Project (CCJAP), Health Sector Support Program (HSSP), and the Cambodia Human Rights Small Grants Scheme (HRSGS). Furthermore, the proposed comprehensive continuum of responses to EAW is aligned with both *Australia’s Strategic Approach to Aid in Cambodia 2010-2015* and Australia’s strategy on *Promoting Opportunities for All: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment* (November 2011).

The Australian Cambodia Country Strategy includes four key areas: rural development, health, infrastructure, and law and justice, all of which are directly linked to a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach to ending violence against women. A focus on reducing VAW is specifically mentioned in the access to justice component of the Strategy. At least 70% of Cambodia’s population lives in rural areas, involving women in rural economic initiatives as well as upgrading the infrastructure will increase women’s access to employment and livelihood options, particularly in areas of extreme poverty. Sustainable

⁴ Ministry of Women’s Affairs – Royal Government of Cambodia (2011) Feasibility Study one stop service centre for gender based violence survivors

options exist to prevent VAW from taking place and to help victims break out of the cycle of violence, especially when avenues to economic independence are fostered. Moreover, improving the quality of training of health care providers and service delivery is in keeping with providing health care to women who have experienced violence.

In terms of the Approaches and Ways of Working articulated in the Cambodia Country Strategy, integrating gender into all Australian-aid work is particularly emphasized. Furthermore, eliminating discrimination against women, including violence against women, is specifically cited as a key policy objective of the Australian aid program, “recognizing that violence is a factor in preventing women from exercising their rights and achieving equality.”

Ending violence against women and girls at home, in their communities and in disaster and conflict situations is one of the four pillars of Australia’s gender equality strategy. This strategy highlights that a more strategic and targeted focus is needed in areas where progress has been slow and that the highest levels of expenditure will be in the countries with the most severe gender gaps. Cambodia meets this criterion as it ranks 99 out of 145 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII) of the 2011 Human Development Report (HDR), which is one of the lowest rankings in the region.

The RGC’s Gender Equality Strategy (Neary Ratanak III) emphasizes the need for equal access of women and girls to legal protection and to their human rights, that gender issues should be taken into consideration in the preparation and implementation of laws and legal training, that public awareness should be developed, and provision made for the care and rehabilitation of victims of gender-based violence (Strategic Area 3). Moreover, the current NAPVAW prioritizes raising public awareness and the dissemination of laws to the public, creating and improving social health and legal services, and the development and improving of related policies and laws.

The proposed implementation of the EVAW budget measure in Cambodia is in alignment with both Australian aid objectives and Cambodian national priorities.

Activity Description

A partnership will be established with UN Women Cambodia to work with the MOWA on developing the new NAPVAW, and then on co-ordinating the implementation of the plan to allow for a comprehensive response to violence. If this concept is approved at peer review, work will commence on the NAPVAW phase in FY 2011-12 prior to the design mission.

The implementation phase will follow the comprehensive NAPVAW framework incorporating new and existing programs into a continuum of responses to VAW: from emergency intervention by police and medical personnel, to shelter and counselling services, to legal aid and prosecution, to follow-up on family case management need, to job options (in agriculture and construction) for women seeking alternatives to returning to lives of violence, to data collection and research, to legislation, legal reforms, public policies, and their implementation, monitoring and evaluation and also to public awareness, education and training.

In the NAPVAW implementation phase, we propose Australian funds will be directed towards increasing crisis services and part of it targeted to supporting expansion of the Cambodian Women’s Crisis Centre to provide shelter and protection in underserved

provinces of Cambodia. A secondary aim would be increasing women's access to justice and preventing violence against women. The design team will explore the possibility of CCJAP being used to increase women's access to justice.

By taking a comprehensive, coherent approach to EAW in Cambodia, we will not be contributing to further fragmentation or the current piecemeal isolated interventions that have failed to translate into a consistent improvement in the services available to women.

Additionally, by focussing on strengthening capacities in Justice and Health, we will not be adding sectors to our portfolio but will instead be deepening our engagement by involving existing programs in EAW objectives. To date, there is no development partner that has taken this decisive or comprehensive an approach to EAW in Cambodia, and the EAW budget measure enables Australia to make a credible difference by bringing together disparate actors, interventions and programs in a focused manner.

UN Women has been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) on the NAPVAW. An assessment has been undertaken, gaps identified in the continuum of responses, and stakeholders approached in consultations that have cultivated interest and ownership at both the national and sub-national levels—from government and civil society alike. In this regard, the EAW budget measure can make the critical difference in the horizon of EAW in Cambodia by both funding ready-partners to close the gaps, and by strengthening capacities in our current programs to contribute to common EAW objectives.

What will indicate Success?

The ultimate goal is a sustained reduction in violence against women in Cambodia, and progress towards this result will include the following outcomes:

- The formulation of a new NAPVAW to replace the version that is scheduled to end in February 2012, in a participatory approach that builds institutional capacities of the MOWA especially to serve as a leader in the coordination and management of EAW response and prevention systems in Cambodia. The costing of key components of the NAPVAW, and the establishment of a national monitoring system on EAW to measure progress made against the new NAPVAW.
- Implementation of the new NAPVAW, including advancements in the RGC's enforcement of its laws and policies aimed at ending violence against women—effectively reflecting the gains delineated above and thereby contributing to Cambodia's national gender priorities in line with Neary Rattanak III.
- Increasingly effective capacities on the part of the RGC to respond to and prevent violence against women, as reflected in the existence of mandatory response policies and procedures, increased numbers of trained police and judicial officers, improved arrest and prosecution rates, and victim feedback (on an optional and confidential basis).
- A fuller integration of women into decision making roles with substantive responsibilities in the Cambodian National Police (CNP), as well as in roles of frontline response to VAW at the community level, including the judicial police.

- Increased access to appropriate services by women with disabilities, women living with HIV/AIDS, young women and girls, migrant women workers, indigenous women, ethnic and religious minority women, and women in prison. The provision of targeted small grants will help achieve this outcome. These small grants are in addition to the inclusion of marginalised and minority group needs into the design response and will supplement the broader mainstream services.
- The existence of reliable data and research, including perception and prevalence studies, for evidence-based advocacy and to support the formulation of policies and programs.
- Sustained decreases in reports of violence against women, including domestic violence and rape.
- The implementation of the AusAID thematic strategy *Promoting Opportunities for All: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* (November 2011) in Cambodia, achieved through the EAW budget measure and objectives, in line with *Australia's Strategic Approach to Aid in Cambodia 2010-2015*.

Partnerships

To enable a co-operative multi-sectoral response it will be essential to cultivate and maintain existing partnerships with agents working to end violence against women in Cambodia in a positive way.

Partnerships with the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Health, and Women's Affairs will continue at both national and sub-national levels. As these institutions are key to ensuring a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach to EAW, it is essential that their capacities on EAW and inter-ministerial coordination be strengthened.

Given the central role of MOWA in leading on EAW in Cambodia, UN Agencies can easily provide comprehensive capacity building to strengthen MOWA's coordination, management and technical capacities. MOWA's Program Based Approach (PBA) to gender equality is still in its preparation phase (with assistance from UNDP), and implementation of EAW objectives will feed into its formulation.

Partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) and other development partners will be pursued for service delivery and prevention campaigns. CSOs are a main actor in the provision of services and the mobilization of communities. Through the GBV Coordination mechanism established by UN Women and GIZ in 2010, development partners are at the forefront of joint advocacy and behavioural change initiatives.

AusAID's strongest and most relevant existing partnership is with the Ministry of Interior who have responsibility for police and the authority for the Provincial Governors and sub-national governance. There is agreement that MOWA is an important partner for CCJAP in the next phase for the purpose of implementing the law enforcement components of the National Strategy for Ending Domestic Violence. Additional funds of the scale proposed would seriously elevate the leverage we expect by having MOWA on the National Management Board.

Program co-ordination and management

The policy development and victim assistance and advocacy components of the program will be coordinated/managed by UN Women Cambodia involving one contract with UN Women Cambodia managed by Phnom Penh post. The legal enforcement components will be integrated into the working plans of CCJAP.

A Monitoring and Evaluation framework, linked to the National Strategic Development Plan and sector strategies will be the unifying tool to track progress on the comprehensive response.

Arrangements for Inter-Ministerial coordination to review progress towards EAW will need to be identified. While MOWA “owns” the NAPVAW, it is dependent on a strong law enforcement response. The MOWA will sit on the CCJAP National Management Board, but has little reverse capacity to convene/lead with the Ministry of Interior. This will be considered during the proposed design in quarter three 2012.

First Secretary (Health, Justice and Gender) will have overall responsibility for relationship management of the two lead Ministries and UN Women. Senior Program Officer (Justice and Health/Gender) will have day to day responsibility for ensuring EAW activities are fully integrated and monitored. Counsellor will have regular high level meetings with the Minister for Women’s Affairs and Chairman of the CCJAP NMB to reinforce the Inter-Ministerial Partnership necessary to achieve the goals of the NAPVAW and AusAID’s EAW budget measure.

Why work with UN Women?

UN Women are currently a significant player in coordinating the responses of government, development partners and civil society in ending violence against women.

In 2010, UN Women and GIZ conducted a mapping of development partners’ activities on EAW in Cambodia. In 2011, UN Women led the UN Gender Theme Group in mapping and prioritizing UN commitments on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in Cambodia. Also in 2011, UN Women provided technical assistance to the MOWA in mapping activities and stakeholders on progress under the current NAPVAW.

They have identified a set of partnerships with viable options for improving the EAW response and prevention systems, and Cambodia stands ready to receive critical support under the EAW budget measure. Viable options include, as one example, partnerships with both the MOWA and civil society organizations (with specific NGOs having been identified for their demonstrated experience and capacities) on an increase in shelter and counselling services, including the possibility of piloting a One Stop Service Centre (the feasibility of which has just been assessed by UNDP and UNFPA).

UN Women offers access to technical expertise under its global programs on EAW (including Safe Cities and Universal Access to Critical Services) which continue to test best practices and reap lessons learned. In this case, options include adopting components from such global programs for adaptation in Cambodia. Their links to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the UN Secretary General’s UNiTE Campaign to End Violence against Women bring considerable resources including strategic partnerships and technical know-how to this comprehensive response to EAW in Cambodia.

While the activity will be implemented following the direction of the RGC NAPVAW the program will not be implemented through partner government systems. Funds will not go through the partner government system but will be managed by UN Women Cambodia.

Budget envelope

A rough estimate places the operating budget for the four year program between 20-24 million AUD.

Design implementation and resourcing

Timeframe

The program will be designed over a six month period. The design process will run from July to December 2012.

Resources

While leadership for the design will come from AusAID we anticipate UN Women as partners will create the design of the program enlisting good technical expertise. This could be funded by AusAID.

Gender Specialist ASSP, Cambodia Country desk in Canberra, Phnom Penh Post and UN Women Cambodia will work on the design and be involved in the design mission.

Support will also be available from the AusAID Ending Violence Against Women Adviser.

Design outputs

The final output will be the design document. It will include a monitoring and evaluation Framework and TOR for all major positions and the managing partner.

Relationships to other AusAID programs

This project will be working closely with Cambodia Criminal Justice Assistance Project (CCJAP), Health Sector Support Program (HSSP) and the Cambodia Human Rights Small Grants Scheme (HRSGS).

If the program goes ahead the most significant impact will be on the justice sector program. The justice program has had an overall annual budget of around \$4 million. The projected figures of \$5 million from the EVAW measure in 2012-13 and \$9 million in 2013-14 dwarf the resources that have been available for the whole sector.

Risks

Demand for reduced fragmentation

The demand to reduce fragmentation in the Cambodia program will require integration of the objectives into some existing programs. For example, the new justice sector program has a strong community justice focus, with a focus on support to survivors of violence.

The scale of the budget measure will require a significant elevation of the domestic violence prevention and services aspects of the new law and justice program. There are a number of local NGOs providing services to survivors of domestic violence, some of which already

receive AusAID through the annual Community Development Fund (CDF) process. EVAW is the focus of the successful Cambodia HRSGS through the Women's Media Centre.

Managing partner absorptive capability - UN Women Cambodia

The country director of UN Women Cambodia, Wenny Kasume, has had considerable experience in managing and disbursing funds. However the scale of the funds is large for any organisation. The design mission will assess absorptive capacity of UN women country office and the feasibility of integrating NAPVAW into CCJAP in 2013 and to identify additional anticipated outcomes for EVAW because of increased resources.

The Australian Government is strong supporter of the establishment of UN Women and the fifth largest contributor to the one year old gender agency. This initiative presents an opportunity for AusAID and UN women to work together to show results for the new entity working at the country level, and demonstrates Australia's considerable trust in the work on UN Women. Since it opened its doors 1 January 2011, UN Women put in place a new structure, developed a Strategic Plan, while at the same time continuing its global advocacy to promote gender equality, empower women and reduce violence against women. If carefully managed, this program will demonstrate UN Women's capabilities to coordinate other agencies to work on gender equality issues, and to have meaningful achievements in improving the lives of women.

Unfortunately UN Women is not part of the current Australian Multilateral Assessment, as it is at an early stage of its transition, and as such cannot be assessed in the same way as more established UN agencies. However, UN Women will be assessed in future processes.

Women in front line policing

We do not really understand the political and cultural constraints to getting police women into front line jobs to be part of the initial response to domestic and sexual offence allegation, despite their verbal support to go in this direction. We would like to commission PEA on this through TAF, who are well regarded by MOI following their Safer Communities analysis and have researchers with the required skills to undertake this work.

AusAID visibility and involvement

The EVAW budget measure is a significant and highly visible demonstration of the Australian Government's commitment to EVAW in the East Asia region. We anticipate considerable interest in this program by the Australian Government, the Australian people and other development partners. It is a considerable financial investment. As mentioned above it will dwarf the current investment in the law and justice sector. AusAID will be closely involved with the strategic direction and branding of the program. In addition to close involvement in the design of the program AusAID staff will be on the managing board to ensure that the directions of the program are in line with Australian Government policy.

The design mission will develop a joint engagement plan that will highlight opportunities for gaining visibility of Australian Government investment

Next Steps

- a. **Concept approval**
- b. **Partnership agreement with UN Women Cambodia to fund formulation of NAPVAW in FY 2011-12**
- c. **Technical design document**