**Narrative Report**

*Strengthening Farmers’ Organizations (FOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for Effective Engagement in the GAFSP Process at the National Level*

*Grant Agreement #1273: January 14, 2013*

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A. Activity Update:

### a.1 Title

**Strengthening Farmers’ Organizations (FOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for Effective Engagement in the GAFSP Process at the National Level**

**Locations:** The project was implemented in 8 provinces out of 10 target provinces of the GAFSP project. We implemented in Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng. Two exceptional provinces were Preah Vihear and Odor Meanchey, because both provinces were out of FNN target provinces.

### a.2 Location

**a.2 of the GAFSP project. We implemented in Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng. Two exceptional provinces were Preah Vihear and Odor Meanchey, because both provinces were out of FNN target provinces.**

### a.3 Stakeholders:

- The project targeted planned for:
  - 15 participants per province. So, the plan was 120 participants for 8 provinces;
  - 24 participants for national consultation workshops; and
  - 24 participants for the national policy dialogue.

- Proposed participants were included representatives of FNN, Fos and NGOs in the 8 target provinces; representatives of national and international NGOs and the government and international institutions.

### a.4 Starting Date and Duration

- The project was effective from July to October 2012.

### a.5 Objectives

The Project aims to:

- Know the situation, the initiatives, the challenges of the farmers in the target areas of GAFSP
- Inform the farmers in the target areas of GAFSP about the GAFSP proposal and the ADB projects and get their feedback as well as their views on these two projects
- Strengthen the capacities of the FOs in the CSO Working Group in developing proposals that can be submitted to the government and ADB with regards the final implementation plan
- Develop and implement strategies for effective influence of the CSO Working Group on the GAFSP final implementation plan as well as the technical component.

### a.6 Activities Plan

Main activities plan of the proposal are as follows:

7.1 **Mapping and consultations workshops among farmers in GAFSP target areas of Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu, Takeo, Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, Banteay**
Meanchey, Siem Reap, Kampong Thom provinces (15 farmers per province whom 30% are women will participated)

7.2 National consultation workshops to be attended by representatives among the regional or provincial consultations (number 1 above)

7.3 Meetings with the government and the ADB (Supervising Entity) representatives and individual meetings separately between FNN’s president and vice president with Ministry of Agriculture, ADB, WB, IFAD, FAO, CARD and MEF.

7.4 Policy dialogue workshop

7.5 Farmers exchange visits

7.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

**a.7 Activities Done and Results:**

a.7.1 FNN organized 8 provincial mapping and consultation workshops (out 10 target provinces), which included Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey provinces in July 2012, where 143 participants (whom 54 are female) attended. Two exceptional provinces were Preah Vihear and Udar Mean Chey, because both are out of the FNN target provinces. The compositions of participants were included representatives of FNN, local NGOs and local authorities in each province.

- **Purposes** of the workshops:
  1. Inform and disseminate the information about the GAFSP project;
  2. Present about activities of the GAFSP project;
  3. Collect and gather feed-back and recommendations from attending farmers and other stakeholders

- **Activities:**
  In each workshop, facilitator summarized and reviewed about FNN’s history, key purposes of the workshop and the GAFSP’s project in order to help participants to be aware and get familiar with FNN and GAFSP project in Cambodia, especially in their respective provinces. The facilitators shared main activities of FNN and five pillars of key activities of the GAFSP project in Cambodia, which included (1) Raising Agricultural Productivity, (2) Linking Farmers to Market, (3) Reducing Risk and Vulnerability, (4) Improving Non-Farm Rural Livelihoods and (5) technical Assistance, Institution-building and Capacity Development.

  - Key results were summarized and formulated as follows:
    - Learned about FNN’s history, development processes and results; understood about purposes of the workshop and aims of the GAFSP project; known about target provinces, target beneficiaries;
    - Learned about five pillars of key activities and sub-activities of the GAFSP, which included (1) Raising Agricultural Productivity, (2) Linking Farmers to Market, (3) Reducing Risk and Vulnerability, (4) Improving Non-Farm Rural Livelihoods and (5) technical Assistance, Institution-building and Capacity Development.
    - Seen GAFSP project plays key roles to (1) improve livelihood of the farmers; (2) contribute to change behavior and attitude of the farmers to adopt new innovative techniques; (3) maximize rice production of the farmers; (4) be able to develop food processing and access to market; (5) minimize migration; (6) adapt climate change and climate resilience; (7) be healthy either health or wealth; and (8) be sustainable and self-reliance.

- **Key challenges founded:**
1. lack of water and irrigation schemes;
2. lack of agricultural seeds;
3. lack of human resources;
4. lack of communication, cooperation and support from public service providers;
5. natural disasters; and
6. Limited to access to information, health services, market, and financial resources.

FNN organized a national consultation workshop on September 13, 2012, at East and West restaurant, Phnom Penh, where 27 participants (whom 7 were female) attended. Among them were included Deputy Secretary General of CARD, representatives of CEDAC, CFAP Cambodia, Flifly, VOD, FNN and other relevant local farmer associations.

- **Purposes:** The workshop just aimed to share a room for farmer representatives and some relevant stakeholders to discuss and finalize some recommendations to contribute a small contribution for effectiveness of GAFSP project implementation, where real challenges of the farmers in the target provinces are properly responded.
Activities:
The workshop was delivered an opening remark by H.E. Srun Darith, Deputy Secretary General of CARD. He mentioned that it is crucial for farmers, who are the beneficiaries under the target areas, are provided good chances to express their concerns with regard to effectiveness of the implementation of the GAFSP project in Cambodia. He encouraged farmers to bravely speak out and express their concerns, challenges and recommendations to the government and relevant stakeholders through the national consultation workshop. He added that farmers are deserved to do so, because they are the real beneficiaries, who really want to see the budget either grants or loans are wisely and effectively spent and managed.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Proposed solutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Lack of irrigation system</td>
<td>Appeal to the project to construct or rehabilitate the existing irrigation schemes such dikes, canals, reservoirs and water gate etc.</td>
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| 2 Lack of capital for investment on Agriculture                          | Appeal to the project to:  
  - Directly provide capital for the farmers to do investment on agriculture with low interest rate (6% per year);  
  - Directly support existing self-help saving groups to be stronger and effectiveness. |
| 3 Lack of communication and information on the market                     | Appeal to the project to:  
  - Assist farmers in the target areas to be able to access their agricultural products to the market with better prices;  
  - Empower farmer producer groups to be able to determine the price of their agricultural products by themselves;  
  - Provide more capacity buildings to the farmer producer groups to be able to do processing their local products. |
| 4 Lack of agricultural techniques such as SRI, chicken, fish, and pig etc. | Appeal to the project to provide more capacity buildings and technical supports through trainings and exchange visits to the producer groups and relevant beneficiaries under the project areas. |
| 5 Health issues of human and soil                                       | Appeal to the project to:  
  - Fully raise awareness on negative impact of using chemical fertilizers and pesticides;  
  - Strongly promote and encourage farmers to apply organic agriculture, especially SRI, bio-digesters, and multi-purposes farms. |
| 6 Agricultural and local seed selection and purification                 | Appeal to the project to:  
  - Fully focus on promotion of application local seed selection, especially rice varieties. |
a.7.3 FNN hold a national policy dialogue on November 8, 2012, with 43 participants (whom 11 were female) representing farmers from 8 GAFSP project areas, 2 other national FOs (Farmer and Water Net and CFAP), and 3 national NGOs (CEDAC, FLIFLY, Irrigation Service Center). The meeting was observed by representatives from national FOs in Nepal and Mongolia, Mr. Mammadou Cissokho of ROPPA in Africa, Ms. Marlene Ramirez from AsiaDHRRRA and Mr. Marek Poznanski from CSA, both of which are Agricord members. AFA was represented by Mr. Marciano Virola Jr., Ms. Lany Rebagay and Ms. Esther Penunia. The farmer participants appreciated the presence of HE Vong Sandap, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Economics and Finance, HE Srun Darith, Deputy Secretary General of CARD, and Ms. Nao Ikemoto from ADB, which is the Supervising Entity of the project. During the dialogue, the farmers were able to get a copy of the 100 communes that will be covered by the Project. The farmers also asked the government officials to adopt processes that will include the voices of the farmer leaders in the covered areas, and build the self-reliance of farmers groups. They also asked for participation of CSOs in the steering committee at the national level.
a.7.4 FNN co-hosted knowledge management sharing workshops on November 9-10, 2012, at Cambodiana hotel, where 23 people (whom 7 were female) attended. There were three main sessions were done with regard to Lessons Learned from Farmers’ Involvement in GAFSP Processes as follows:

- **SESSION 1:** Sharing of Experience in GAFSP Processes in Cambodia, Nepal, Mongolia and Bangladesh
- **SESSION 2:** Capturing the Lessons Learned
- **SESSION 3:** Recommendations
a.7.5  FNN facilitated an evaluation meeting of GAFSP’s representatives with Cambodia ADB’s representative, Ms. Nao Ikemoto.

a.7.6  FNN organized exposure field visit to Rice Mill Cooperative in Prey Kabas district, and Self-help saving Cooperative in Samrong district, Takeo province. On November 11, 2012, all GAFSP team members paid an exposure visit to FNN Rice Mill Cooperative in Prey Kabas district, Takeo province. Key aims of the visit were to share and learn experiences of sustainable community development and self-reliance through self-help saving group, self-processing capacity of rice mill cooperative and good cooperation with local government and relevant stakeholders. After that the team visited another FNN self-help saving and credit cooperative in Samrong district, Takeo province. Various questions and answers were exchanged during the visits. Both the visitors and the hosts were really happy and satisfied with the progresses and development of both cooperatives. Building sustainable and self-reliant individual family economy is a key instrument of small family farming to advocate for their rights. Visitors, during the visits, had also observed about the gender promotion and gender-balanced in the community development processes.
a.7.7  FNN organized an evaluation meeting of GAFSP team with Dr. Yang Saing Koma, CEDAC president and non-voting member of GAFSP steering committee for CSO Asia. The team also had a brief discussed with Dr. Koma to generally discuss and evaluate the GAFSP’s processes, implementation, cooperation and involvement of the government with relevant NGOs and CSOs in the country in order to ensure about the transparency and efficiency use of the public resources.

B.  Experiences with the instrument, process and modalities of FO partnership with government on public resources

b.1  Context
- Recently, the government has set new development policy to reduce poverty in Cambodia such 1 million ton of milled rice export by 2015.
- Supporting farmer cooperatives, supporting self-help saving groups, and supporting organic and sustainable agriculture...
- Farmers are needed to be formed in groups...

b.2  Problems/Issues
- There have been many laws and policies have been made in Cambodia. However, some articles of laws and policies are not so helpful for the farmers and farmer organizations that are needed to be discussed and consulted and amended. Such as anti-corruption law, Association and NGO laws, cooperative law, and agricultural land use law...etc.
- The government actually opens, but sometimes it is hard toward advocacy groups...

b.3  Initiatives
In order to approach the government to get public services/resources, farmer organizations generally to organize and participated in meetings/workshops with the governments and other partners. Being proactive is the great initiatives for FOs to works and cooperates with the government.

Build good relationship with the government...

b.4 Facilitating factors in effective partnerships with government and effective access to its resources

- Ways to facilitate factors in effective partnership with the government include organizing meetings, workshops, and field visits by inviting key and relevant government representatives;
- Key facilitating factors are included doing advocacy by doing activities based on principles.

b.5 Hindering factors in effective partnerships with government and effective access to its resources

- The government and some NGOs always look at the farmer organizations are small and weak institution and entity.
Farmer organizations are always thought and regarded as lack of competence to handle and manage both human and financial resources by themselves.

Both the government and NGOs, sometimes, act on behalf of the farmers and assumed that what their thought are what the farmers thought, wants and needs.

C. Lessons Learned:

c.1 Capturing the Lessons Learned from Farmers’ Involvement in GAFSP Processes

c.1.1 Factors with POSITIVE effect on FOs effective partnerships and active/meaningful participation with government and international institutions in GAFSP processes

- Keep all FOs, NGOs and relevant stakeholders being informed and updated about the GAFSP project as well as other government development programs.
- Help to monitor and evaluate the implementation processes of the GAFSP.
- Contribute positive inputs based upon the regular feedbacks and recommendations from the real needs of farmers, who are the final beneficiaries.
- More resources and services are given.


c.1.2 Factors with NEGATIVE effect on FOs effective partnerships and active/meaningful participation with government and international institutions in GAFSP processes

- Farmer organizations will be having been politicized and affiliated
- Conflicting interest or controversial ideas will be come up
- Beneficiaries will be not happy if we are not able to intervene or influence on the government to fulfill their needs.
- Farmers will be more dependency and tend to chemical fertilizers and pesticide users.


c.1.3 Factors with UNKNOWN effect (could be positive or negative) on FOs effective partnerships and active/meaningful participation with government and international institutions in GAFSP processes

- May be FOs don’t have enough times and resources to join implementation the project.
- We don’t know yet about whether the beneficiaries appreciate or be happy with the results of the project implementation or not.
- Whether local authorities support our activities or not.
- The project may help to build capacity of our FOs/NGOs.


c.1.4 Factors with POSITIVE effect on multi-stakeholders cooperation with government, other NGOs and other FOs in accessing the public resources, particularly GAFSP

- More services and resources are allocated and provided by the government to FOs and NGOs that have relevant activities and skills with the GAFSP project through multi-stakeholders cooperation.
- More solidarity and cooperation among FOs/NGOs and the government side are better improved and strengthened.


c.1.5 Factors with NEGATIVE effect on multi-stakeholders cooperation with government, other NGOs and other FOs in accessing the public resources, particularly GAFSP

- Conflict of interests among the FOs, NGOs and relevant stakeholders due to unfair allocating resources and services that are provided by the GAFSP project as well as
other relevant programs

c.1.6 Factors with UNKNOWN effect (could be positive or negative) on multi-stakeholders cooperation with government, other NGOs and other FOs in accessing the public resources, particularly GAFSP

- May be some feeling jealous with one another due to unfair receiving services or resources from the project. It can fragile the solidarity and cooperation among the FOs and NGOs/CSOs.
- However, it may be also good of sharing resources both human and financial resources based on specific expertise and can strengthen the farmer organizations and CSOs to build stronger voice for doing advocacy with the government.

c.1.7 Factors with POSITIVE effect on effective and efficient project management

More transparency, responsibility and accountability of the project holders, implementers and advisors are strengthened and better developed. The FOS/NGOs/CSOs could learn from joining the processes and could do reflection with regard to ourselves.

c.1.8 Factors with NEGATIVE effect on effective and efficient project management

We might be not able to fully involve in the implement processes of the project. But, we the results of the project implementation will be linked with us. So, in case the results are not really satisfied or not succeed we will be blamed by our beneficiaries as well.

c.1.9 Factors with UNKNOWN effect (could be positive or negative) on effective and efficient project management

May be we can help the government be more democratization, open, transparent, responsible and accountable to the farmers. Farmers gain more profit and benefit from the project, especially capacity building and leadership management. However, it might also be happened, some farmer organizations will become puppets or instrument of the government to spoil others.

E. Looking Forward:

The CSOs and NGOs in Cambodia will follow up and join the GAFSP processes in Cambodia in order to contribute to the transparent and effective management of public resources through the Cambodia GAFSP project. ADB and the Cambodian government promised to invite relevant farmer organizations, CSOs and NGOs in Cambodia to involve with the GAFSP.