



## Decentralization Forum Working Group

### Background

In 2003, after holding an initial Partnership Workshop sponsored by CIDSE, the Working Group on Partnerships in Decentralization identified the need for a regular venue where key stakeholders from a variety of sectors could come together to discuss issues arising from and impacting the decentralization process in Cambodia. The Working Group proposed to hold regular Decentralization Forums and to establish a separate Decentralization Forum Working Group to design, coordinate, and execute these events.

### About the Forums

The Decentralization Forum explores the issues and challenges of local level governance. The Forum offers opportunities to discuss how to tap into the potential of commune councils to improve the lives of Cambodian citizens, to encourage political and civic engagement among both men and women, and to ensure that the voices of people are heard regarding the issues that affect them, including service delivery. By bringing stakeholders together, the Forum provides an arena for the collaborative development of recommendations and strategies for addressing issues related to decentralization. The recommendations that emerge from the Forum can be used to advocate for change and to assess national policy objectives.

The goal of the Forum is to:

*Provide participating stakeholders with opportunities to share information, raise and explore decentralization issues, promote cooperation and facilitate coordination among decentralization stakeholders.*

The Forum is held in Phnom Penh two times per year, and focuses on a different aspect of decentralization each time. Forums to date have discussed Partnerships in Decentralization, Natural Resource Management, and Decentralization and Gender. The Forum is a one-day event, with up to 200 attendees. Forum participants reflect a broad range of stakeholders including local and central government, local and international NGOs, CBOs, donors, the private sector, the media and academics. The Decentralization Forum aims to create an environment conducive to the creation of independent, issue-focused working groups by participating organizations.

### About the Working Group

The Working Group meets monthly and welcomes new participants. The DFWG is dedicated to identifying and raising issues arising from and impacting the decentralization reform process in Cambodia. The activities of the DFWG promote the larger aims of the Working Group for Partnerships in Decentralization by increasing communication and opportunities for partnership between all decentralization stakeholders.

**Active Organizations:** *PLG/SEILA, UNICEF, CIDSE, GTZ, VBNK, KID, CDRI, Oxfam GB, Ockenden, Pact Cambodia and Concern.*

**All interested organizations are welcome to join the Decentralization Forum Working Group. For more information, please contact Phay Shokkhumar, Pact Cambodia +855 (0)23 217 855.**