

*Daring to share from their hearts*



## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

## **REPORT**

**August 2008**



## SUMMARY

The overarching purpose of the annual impact assessment is to help VBNK practically understand more about the realisation of its vision, mission and goal. For Impact Assessment 2008 we selected four themes that reflect VBNK's programme areas and customised services to be the focus for investigation – social dialogue and engagement, facilitative learning and change processes, women's empowerment and change, and professional and personal development.

Impact Assessment 2008 built on the experience and confidence gained in the previous two years. We drew on focus group discussions to generate data about the selected themes. Participants in the focus groups included a diverse mix of respondents from NGOs, local government and the private sector. We also included two VBNK groups to test out our own learning. This year we were less concerned about documenting outputs, as these are regularly tracked in end-of-course evaluations and other post event activities. Instead we pushed ourselves to look for outcomes by asking questions about the application of learning in the workplace. We also explored factors that help and hinder participants learning and the application of learning into practice.

We heard from the respondents about their experience learning, and applying that learning in the context of their work. Respondents described connections between their learning and its application.

- Some respondents connected their story of change at the community level: they talked about increased trust, participation and communication and provided examples of increased cooperation between community members and development practitioners.
- Most respondents talked about how they had improved professionally as development practitioners, for example, how they had gained in confidence as facilitators or increased their skills in identifying and solving problems without external assistance.
- A majority of the respondents connected their stories with some kind of change within their organisations, and talked about more effective teamwork, fewer internal conflicts and or more effective communication.

Impact Assessment 2008 provides us with many signs of progress and change. But it is also important to note that the evidence for positive change is not evenly spread across all participants or all organisations. There is not yet a critical mass emerging. That being said, we have increased our understanding about what factors influence learning and how individuals are overcoming some of their long-experienced blocks to learning. We also better understand where we need to focus greater attention in future programme interventions.

- First, we recognise that VBNK needs to promote a greater awareness amongst our clients that they need to re-create the same learning conditions when they work with their colleagues or when they are leading a service delivery.
- Second, we need to work more on strategies for recognising and overcoming blocks to the application of new learning and for challenging hierarchy and old habits/traditions that block open communication and restrain the application of learning.
- Third, participants are trying to apply the facilitation tools they gain during a VBNK event and activity. We need to better understand how participants adapt/adopt facilitation methods rather than only mimicking our approach. We also need to help them adapt a particular approach or tool to their particular work context.
- Finally, we need to continue to resist filling the gap. We believe that learning about how to "facilitate" a process is essential to supporting social development objectives. Thus will continue to focus on enabling programme participants to guide learning and change in their workplace.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ARLP</b>	Action – Reflection – Learning – Planning
<b>BFC</b>	Better Factories Cambodia
<b>CCs</b>	Commune Councillors
<b>CHART</b>	Creative, Holistic, Action Research for Relationship Transformation
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>GROW</b>	Goal – Realities – Obstacles/Options – Will
<b>IMDP</b>	Introductory Manager’s Development Programme
<b>IPP</b>	ICCO Partners Project
<b>LAAR</b>	Local Administration and Reform Programme
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>NVC</b>	Nonviolent Communication
<b>OA</b>	Open Access (training course)
<b>PLAU</b>	Provincial Local Administration Unit
<b>PDRD</b>	Provincial Department of Rural Development
<b>PM</b>	Project Management (training course)
<b>SP</b>	Strategic Planning
<b>SWOT</b>	Strength – Weakness – Opportunity – Threat
<b>TNA</b>	Training Needs Assessment
<b>ToT</b>	Training of Trainer

## 1. INTRODUCTION

We believe that a responsive and flexible impact assessment process must:

- Tell us about the things that are most important to the people with whom we work;
- Tell us whether the work we are doing is helping or not; and
- Help us improve our work in the future.

Our approach to how we organised and conducted Impact Assessment 2008 built on the experience and confidence gained in the previous two years. We decided to continue our emphasis on selected themes and to again facilitate focus group discussions to generate our data set. At the same time we included a more diverse mix of respondents from NGOs, local government and the private sector. We also included two VBKN groups to test out our own learning.

We began each FGD discussion by asking respondents to talk about what they had gained from the particular VBKN event/activity. As in previous years, we found that respondents were comfortable speaking about outputs of a training or facilitation event, because this is most familiar to them. They could easily recall concepts, facts, guidelines, methods, tools and skills gained from when they were a participant. This year, though, we were less concerned about documenting outputs, as these are regularly tracked in end-of-course evaluations and other post event activities. Instead we pushed ourselves to look for outcomes. Thus the more significant part of each FGD was facilitating discussion to find the outcomes and impact of VBKN services, to look for applications of learning into the workplace, and to explore factors that help and hinder participants to learn and to apply their learning.

The overarching purpose of the annual IA is to help VBKN practically understand more about the realisation of its vision, mission and goal<sup>1</sup>. This year we selected four themes to be the focus for investigation – social dialogue and engagement, facilitative learning and change processes, women’s empowerment and change, and professional and personal development – which reflect VBKN’s programme areas and customised services.

Themes for Assessment	VBKN Programme Areas
Social dialogue and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference</li> <li>• ILO – BFC</li> <li>• LAAR</li> <li>• CHART<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Customised courses</li> </ul>
Facilitative learning and change processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IPP</li> <li>• LAAR</li> <li>• Customised courses</li> <li>• Conference</li> </ul>
Women’s empowerment and change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customised courses</li> <li>• OA courses</li> <li>• VBKN internal</li> </ul>
Professional and personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IPP</li> <li>• LAAR</li> <li>• Customised courses</li> <li>• VBKN Internal</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the document *VBKN Strategic Plan 2006-2009*, which was established September 2005.

<sup>2</sup> A regular component of the Chart Project is an annual evaluation, which includes stories of change. The evaluation report has more in-depth information about behavioural changes and impacts.

## 2. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND KEY RESPONDENTS

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were organised for each theme and were conducted during 5 to 12<sup>th</sup> August 2008 in Phnom Penh and Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Pursat and Siem Reap provinces. Each FGD ran for 3-4 hours. In all 94 persons (including 59 women) took part in 13 FGDs. (For a list of respondents, see Appendix III.)

The respondents were a representative group (Phnom Penh and province-based men and women from CNGOs and INGOs) who had participated in VBNK activities during the period from June 2006 to June 2008. They included 34 staff from Cambodian NGOs, 38 staff from international NGOs and 22 staff from other institutions. The diversity of the participants in each focus group provided an opportunity for respondents to see if others had had similar experiences, or a completely different experience. In addition, for the first time we conducted two focus groups with VBNK staff. One group (all women) discussed *women's empowerment and change*; the other (men and women) discussed *professional and personal development*.

Building on the experience of last year, Impact Assessment 2008 gave more time to the preparation and dry run. Only one VBNK team was assigned each theme, so that we could give more time to preparation and to data analysis. And the facilitators were challenged to be more consistent in asking questions and to probe for issues about learning difficulties or blocks to implementation.

Each of the four facilitation teams was made up of 3 staff. Each team was responsible for preparing, conducting and reporting back on the FGDs for one theme. They were also responsible for managing the entire process, including identifying a suitable venue for each FGD, making logistical arrangements, confirming the participation of the invited respondents, and ensuring an appropriate number of respondents for each FGD.

A Program Manager and Technical Advisor provided support to the FGD design (Appendix II: *A Guide to Focus Group Discussions*); data analysis and writing of the report. To ensure consistency in facilitation, members of each team discussed and assigned themselves specific roles in the FGD process. They agreed, for example, that one person would lead each FGD. They also reviewed the guiding questions so that the team was clear on the purpose of each question and what information to document when listening to the discussion. For 2008, we decided to reduce the number of standard questions so that the facilitator would have more flexibility for using probing questions to guide discussion on certain issues that emerged during the FGD. A set of standard questions provided a guide to probe about outputs, outcomes and impacts as well to explore factors that supported or blocked learning and the application of learning following an intervention.

During the preparation week, two teams were scheduled to facilitate focus groups with VBNK staff. The two FGDs provided other teams with the opportunity to observe the process, and then later, to sit together with the facilitators to discuss the process, before conducting their own focus groups. This proved helpful; the teams were able to refine the FGD guiding questions and to better understand what and how to record the FGDs (Appendix IV: Example for Guidance on Writing the Report).

### 3. REPORTING FORMAT

Drawing on the report format used in 2007, we have written our findings and analysis following an identical format for each theme.

- The report for each theme begins with a brief description of the **expected impact** for the particular theme. The statement is intended to help us gauge what kinds of contributions we are making towards initiating and creatively applying development methods that generate knowledge and understanding. The key words in the statement express positive changes, for example, “effectiveness and quality of leadership practices”, “people-centred training and facilitation practices”, as well as “open attitudes and supportive behaviours that encourage learning and application of learning.”

<i>THEME OF EXPECTED IMPACT</i>
<i>EXPECTED IMPACT</i>
<i>METHODOLOGY</i>
<i>DESCRIPTION OF OUTPUTS</i>
<i>DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES</i>
<i>ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS</i>
<i>SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS</i>

- The section on **description of outputs** helps us see what participants have retained after being part of a VBANK event or activity. It also serves to document what was similar or different among respondents and what respondents tell us influences how they learn.

- The section on **description of outcomes** describes the connection between the knowledge and skill respondents said they had gained and what results came about from applying their knowledge and skill. These are described in terms achievements made by the respondents, for example: more successfully performed work tasks; developed staff through better supervision; increased participation during training activities; and introduced specific policies and procedures (e.g. staff appraisal processes or strategic planning). Similar to the description of outputs, we documented what respondents said about what influences them to successfully and more fully apply their learning.

- The **assessment of impacts** is the description of our understanding about the emerging changes in situation either at an individual staff level (as a result of applying their learning and gaining more experiences in their programme activities) or at organisation level.

- The last part of the report on each theme is the **summary of analysis**. In this section we draw conclusions about issues such as: outcomes, the factors that supported the learning process; influence of VBANK’s innovative or creative process; factors that either positively influenced or limited/blocked application of learning; and issues influencing making an impact.

## **4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **4a. THEME OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Social Dialogue and Engagement<sup>3</sup>**

#### **EXPECTED IMPACT:**

Different generations of Cambodians and organisations (NGOs, government, business and civil society) working in different occupations in the social development sector are seeking out each other's cooperation to share concerns about challenges and learning together from their experiences to plan how to contribute to positive social changes.

There are more opportunities for and mechanisms applied by different actors, as stated above, to find effective solutions to their social and economic challenges and problems for mobilising their resources and engaging all relevant stakeholders to realise their desired solutions.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

The respondents had participated in VBNK conferences and the CHART and LAAR programmes held in 2007 and 2008; the remediation programme for Better Factory Cambodia (ILO-BFC); or customised training (facilitation and communication courses) in 2007.

The common aims among these events and activities were: exploring mechanisms for better conversation and dialogue amongst different groups of people; reducing conflict and a culture of blame; and contributing to a more-harmonised Cambodian society.

In all there were three focus group discussions with a total of 23 respondents.

- Eight respondents, including four females, in the first FGD came from six different garment factories in Phnom Penh
- Five respondents, including three females in Siem Reap, from three local organisation (BS, NK and FAP) and commune council (CC) in the second FGD
- Ten respondents in Kampong Thom included 7 women, from three different organisations (CWS, COWS and BFDK), CCs, and government officials (PDRD and PLAU) in the third FGD

The CCs were particularly active and excited about participating in the FGDs. The majority of respondents expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to be involved in the FGDs and that they always enjoyed and learned new things, e.g. creative activities and process and visual aids, from being involved with VBNK activities.

The FGD in Siem Reap involved five respondents, each of whom had participated in different VBNK activities, and they found it difficult to find common issues or learning examples to discuss with each other. In Kampong Thom, the large number of respondents (ten) slowed down the process, as it was difficult to balance the participation in the discussion. Most of the respondents focused their discussion and sharing on her/his experience. The discussion was mainly between an individual and the VBNK facilitator and not amongst the respondents. Not being well enough able to relate the different stories and contexts made it difficult for the VBNK facilitators to deepen the analysis.

The majority of respondents from the factories were from the Admin/HR department. Therefore, the discussion and sharing of their learning and application focused on issues related to personnel issues in the factories.

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<sup>3</sup> VBNK Team that completed the assessment for this theme: Vanly Virya, Chi Sothy and Khe Sothoeun

**DESCRIPTION OF OUTPUTS:**

All respondents expressed their appreciation for the diversity of methods and tools VBNK applied in the delivery of its services. They all valued the participatory and practical nature of the learning they experienced. However, a majority of respondents (BFC) requested for more practical examples, guidelines and documents they could adapt and apply into their work.

- Five (BFC) respondents emphasised cooperation, safety and health in the workplace. They perceived that these factors ensure smoothness of work and result in greater productivity for factories. They explained that they (as supervisors) improved cooperation by having more frequent conversations with workers. They also developed an agreed on grievance procedure. The efforts taken for cooperation and grievance helped reduce conflict and promoted a better working environment in the factories.
- Three (BFC) respondents said that having grievance procedure is not enough, but ensuring workers understood about and having mechanisms that help them access and easily apply the procedure (when needed) is most important for a healthy work environment.
- Two (BFC) respondents said they had learned about how to encourage and motivate workers to be more efficient. For example, they discussed and agreed with workers on ways to reduce time spent walking away from their seats to the drinking area.
- Four respondents involved with VBNK conference were impressed by the creative processes applied. All of them mentioned the “joyful learning environment” with a lot of discussion and sharing, and different styles of presentation, e.g. role play and drawing. One mentioned about the usefulness of the Café style discussion for creating a safe environment for expression and the opportunity for different generations to share and learn from each other. Another appreciated the drawing of river of life as a way for individuals to have conversation with each other. She added that the river of life had helped her make a thorough analysis of past and current experiences. Two respondents stated they were frustrated during the conference, as they had expected answers or guidance from the VBNK facilitator for certain issues, and none were given.
- All the female councillors (3 persons) felt warm and comfortable with the hospitality and friendly environment at VBNK. It helped them let go of fear and encouraged them to express their ideas and participate. They reported that the practical training they had experienced has been very useful; they all are very excited about the diversity of facilitation skills they learned from the class.
- The respondents (5 persons) involved in LAAR and CHART were interested in how VBNK training used questions to guide discussions and the ARLP tool to encourage participants learn from their own experiences. However, a few experienced having tension when exposed to open questions that required many reasons to confirm the answer. The CHART participant learned about how to give constructive feedback in her work.

**DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES:**

- All respondent in provinces said that they had adopted VBNK’s tools, processes and facilitation approaches in their work. For example, the LAAR participants and CCs applied facilitation skills when conducting echo training and facilitating forums. Two respondents were drawing on role play in their work with communities. Another two respondents described how they had drawn on the “river of life” and ARLP to get community members to reflect back on and learn from their experiences, before planning for the future. Another respondent gave an example of applying the Café Discussion in a staff retreat; yet another practiced giving feedback to peers and partners using appreciative inquiry and constructive feedback approaches – “*the yes ... and...*” she had learned from VBNK.

- The respondents were asked to identify factors that support application of learning. A majority identified self commitment combined with motivation and support from their peers and supervisors. Blocks were also identified. Five respondents, including the CCs, said that the learning was new and not always understood by staff and stakeholders, and it took time to apply and get support or buy in from others. Another five said they had found it a struggle to encourage community participation (citing lack of visioning and also the community members' need to focus on day-to-day issues and earning income). One respondent commented that hierarchy and the old habits of his supervisor as the critical barrier.
- All BFC respondents were conducting continuous training on safety and health to workers; one had developed a more user-friendly grievance procedure. They identified personal commitment and encouragement from the factory owner as the critical factors motivating them to apply their learning. In addition, other factors, such as minimal costs for training activities, better fulfilment of job descriptions and positive benefit for both workers and the factories were supporting factors. However, not all the learning had been successfully applied. Challenges and obstacles included (1) a hierarchical system whereby decision making rests with the owner; (2) the workers' preferences for entertainment over training and a drive for quantity (productivity) over safety and health, and (3) the high turnover in the workforce.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS:**

##### **Individual Level:**

- Seven respondents felt confident in facilitating workshops and forum and *dared* to advocate and negotiate with their supervisor and higher levels. As a result, all gained more recognition from their peers and supervisor, and in one case from relevant partners. For example, female CCs received recognition from PLAU and NGOs about their increased capacity to organising and facilitating forums. This supportive encouragement led them to more willingly initiate activities.
- Four confirmed that their attitude had changed and felt they were more self-reflective, open to listening and accepting feedback from peers, subordinates and younger colleagues. Two others described being more tolerant; being calmer and more sympathetic; and a willingness to give firm constructive feedback and *to stop blaming*.
- Four others felt they were more empathetic to their staff (workers) and stopped perceiving problems in the workplace as wrong performance. They said they believed now in the importance of open and ongoing discussions with different and across levels of staff to reduce conflict in the workplace.

##### **Organisation Level:**

- There was clear evidence that new ideas and approaches learned had added value to the organisation, particularly when there had been delegation of work and opportunities for staff to try out new things. This was true both for Commune Councillors as well as four NGO staff.
- Two respondents stated that the organisation had become stronger and more appreciated by donors.
- The eight BFC respondents observed a reduction in accidents and conflict in the factories. They recognised that this was influenced by increased communication between supervisors and workers. However, there have not yet been noticeable changes in communication at the top-level between management and supervisors.

## **SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:**

The findings confirmed that the majority of participants had gained an appreciation that creating a comfortable and friendly space for learning and drawing on a variety of learning methods can promote an environment for joyful learning and more open discussions and sharing. The participants felt that VBNK's participatory and practical learning, creativity and mix of different tools and techniques had supported their own learning. All respondents confirmed that VBNK's approach to capacity building "is on the right track" and contributing to development activities in Cambodia. However, most confessed that they still struggle to apply what they learn in their own work environments.

Significant outcomes included the attempts of the participants to replicate VBNK facilitation methods and tools, e.g. the Café style discussion, drawing and role playing to facilitate conversations, and practising constructive feedback instead of blaming. Self commitment, motivation and support from peers and supervisor were identified as most important factors supporting application of learning. In contrast the absence of a more broad understanding, hierarchy and old habits/traditions were the main blocks to application of new learning.

There are also changes in the way participants are performing their work and interacting with peers and communities. There appears to be greater self-esteem, more open attitudes and empathy towards others and less conflict in the workplaces. We observed that three respondents had clearly internalised the learning and this became part of their way of doing business. A statement from one respondent offers an insight to changing behaviour and practice. She said:

*"Before I often blamed and criticized the wrong performance of my partners. The VBNK programme and events helped me reverse my thinking. Now, I often ask myself if I gave enough guidance to my partners. What else I can do to help them work better? I believe in and practise giving more constructive or appreciative feedback (e.g. "Your report is alright;" or "If you can add more information or work more at this part it would be better or excellent.")"*

## **4b. THEME OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Facilitative Learning and Change Processes<sup>4</sup>**

### **EXPECTED IMPACT:**

Staff members internalised their learning in their daily work life, are enthusiastic about the self-directed learning approaches, and are assuming responsible for their learning. There is more openness to overcoming blocks to learning, such as lack of confidence, fear of taking a risk, and fear of learning from mistakes. Staff are less directive in their training activities, and more confidently guide learning activities so that learners are aware of changes they need to make in order to improve performance. They increasingly guide and encourage participants to explore and reflect on their own situations. Organizations have adopted learning as one of their organisational values and make time and resources available for learning.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

There were three Focus Group Discussions. A total of seventeen participants from seven different organisations joined the discussions held in the province: two participants from AK, ILDO, KAWP and PIU, three from Saboras, one from EPDO and SC, and four from CC. There were ten female and seven male respondents.

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<sup>4</sup> VBNK Team that completed the assessment for this theme: Men Maronel, Hour Khikheng and Tem Sokchea

### **DESCRIPTION OF OUTPUTS:**

The respondents identified the methods, tools, skills and knowledge they gained from the interventions, courses or events facilitated by VBNK.

- Four CC female respondents reported that they deepened their knowledge about how to facilitate training and workshops. One CC said, *"I conducted role-plays and games to reflect about the roles and responsibilities of commune councillors and I was able to use questioning and listening skills for the reflection game or role-play."* Two other CC members said they were now able to lead discussions in both small groups and plenary sessions and were motivating and encouraging their participants to express their own ideas and experiences. One of the CCs said she was able to select appropriate facilitation methods to fit with the level of participant's understanding for a particular topic and situation.
- All respondents gained understanding of facilitation and training methods including role-plays, drawing pictures, small group and plenary discussions and creative presentation (using flipcharts and visual aids). They were also more aware of modulating their voice and using simple words and gestures to communicate with others.
- The majority of respondents stated that VBNK's approach to facilitation had helped their own learning – it had encouraged them to reflect on their work performance and to learn from their own and the experiences of others. An example given was how the "river of life" had encouraged them to look back on their experiences in the past. Another factor was how VBNK connected practical theories with real examples appropriate to their work situations. Others reported that coaching skills had helped them to be a better thinker and to learn from their own work experiences.
- The respondents from IPP and LAAR reported that they understand how to use the "ARLP" tool properly in their workplace. Furthermore, CC members emphasised that reflection is a means to develop self awareness and bring about work improvements.
- Six respondents from NGOs and CC emphasised the importance of conducting training needs assessment (TNA) to help learners achieve their learning purpose and to get them to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, two CCs reported that before they conducted training in a community, they did TNA to find out priority needs of community.
- Five of the women said they learned about the techniques for facilitating problem solving and conflict resolution (by collecting and analysing data to identify root causes).

### **DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES:**

- Most informants cited examples of how they had applied participatory methods learned through VBNK's activities into their own training and meetings. Five of the women (one NGO and four CCs) described how they had actively engaged staff and/or communities in problem identification and solution making, e.g. getting staff to look at ways to save gasoline expenses, asking commune councillors how to decide how to allocate an under-spent budget.
- Some respondents applied observation skills and used the rule of "no right, no wrong" to encourage and motivate their participants to actively engage in a training or workshop. They reported that their participants were now discussing more openly and freely, that reducing attention on making mistakes had increased participation. A few respondents described how they were drawing on 'mistakes' as learning opportunities, and that acknowledging mistakes had helped them to learn and change their performance. They also explained how giving and receiving feedback helped them to learn about their work and help others to learn, too.
- The respondents from LAAR described how they had worked together as a team to develop session plans. They felt this allowed them to be more flexible and to be more fully involved in the training activities, and to learn and share experiences with each other.

- Some managers and commune councillors, recognising that continuous learning can help them to better respond to emerging issues, encouraged their staff to bring the learning points from other organisations into their organisation. They also devoted time for their staff to share lessons learnt with each other and to reflect on their past performance.
- All respondents from IPP reported that they are committed to regularly practising ARLP individually and with their teams after conducting a training or facilitating a workshop. The staff stated that the practice has led to improvement in subsequent training and workshop delivery. Furthermore, a few organisations and specialized teams have set up a schedule for reflection every six months or annually, while CCs have committed to monthly reflections.
- Some respondents from LAAR are applying coaching skills when following up on financial implementation; they are also conducting monthly follow up sessions with commune councillors.
- Some respondents felt that attending a training or workshop was not enough; they wanted coaching after the course. (They recognised that coaching is important for filling gaps and increasing confidence to perform their work.) Additionally, two managers reported that they are using staff performance appraisal as a tool to motivate staff to learn and enhance their work performance (rather than to look for fault).

#### **ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS:**

##### **Individual Level:**

- Respondents seem to be taking more responsibility for their own learning and have shifted from being passive learners (just receiving content from the trainer) to more active learners. For example, two female CCs described how continuous learning had helped them to build their capacity and confidence to better deal with gender inequity, hierarchy and fear of taking risk. They bravely challenged their supervisors and male colleagues to change their thinking. The women reported that they had receiving positive recognition from male staff and other colleagues about how they were applying their learning. As a result, the CC chief is now delegating work to them because he can see the benefits from work done well. Also, the chief has encouraged the commune council to apply new learning points from training courses and put it in the commune development plan.
- Some NGO staff had shown initiative for their own learning by presenting their learning objectives and commitments with their supervisors or by sharing their learning points from outside with colleagues and discussing how to apply these in the workplace.

##### **Organisation Level:**

- Some managers/directors, seeing the value of staff learning strategies, have helped the staff person to share lessons learnt and experiences with each other. They have scheduled regular reflection sessions to identify learning and identify ways for improvement.
- One organisation put learning into their organisational values and has committed to walk the talk.
- Some managers/directors have allocated a budget to their staff capacity building program and allocated time to regularly reflect on their activities to draw the lesson learnt.
- One NGO has added a staff capacity building budgets to the strategic plan.
- A donor of one of the NGOs has recognised improved quality services to beneficiaries; both the donor and NGO management now believe that building staff capacity is improving quality services to the beneficiaries: the more competent the staff, the better quality services delivered to the beneficiaries.

### **SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:**

Most respondents believed that without continuous learning, we are like "a frog in a well." The majority of the respondents seemed pleased to follow a self-directed learning style (learning by reflection on our experiences, learning by doing, learning from other people's experiences). A few were also applying the contents and methods used by VBNK into workplace.

Respondents reported that the facilitation methods used by VBNK not only encouraged participation but also increased responsibility for learning. All respondents identified three factors that encouraged learning: sharing experiences and ideas with each other, self reflection, and active involvement in activities. They see that participatory methods, including ARLP and coaching, will continue to help them to sharpen their learning and self reflection.

Following on from their own participation in process, the respondents said they were able to guide their own staff to analyse and learn from their work experience and to identify ways to improve work performance. Organisations are using facilitation more as a means for encouraging teamwork and helping staff further their own learning. Staff are gaining confidence to apply various methods to focus the organisation on emerging issues and to promote responsibility for action.

Furthermore, the application of facilitation methods in their own training and workshops has encouraged more active participation by their clients. The respondents gave numerous examples of how facilitation methods have helped them be less directive in their training activities. They are experiencing that the various methods help their participants express concerns and problems during training. Moreover, they are seeing that participants feel more comfortable in training sessions and are sharing information and learning from each other. They increasingly guide and encourage participants to explore and reflect on situations.

### **4c. THEME OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Women's Empowerment and Change<sup>5</sup>**

#### **EXPECTED IMPACT:**

Women are more empathising with others and helping each other. Levels of self awareness and trust have increased and relationships are strengthened. Women are more assertive in the work place and more confident to explain their opinions to male managers.

Women managers are proactive in doing their work and solving problems. They are using their position to bring about change in their organization and to promote positive social change.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

Three Focus Group Discussions were conducted in Phnom Penh with 21 female participants, including one group of nine VBNK staff and two client organization groups (12 persons). Some former participants (from courses on IMDP, M&E, PM, Strategic Planning and ToT) came in pairs (from Hagar, Krousar Thmey and PSE); the rest were single representatives (from AUA, CCPCR, CEPA, GHTO, MS and WVC). Most hold senior positions: seven are managers, one is a coordinator, two are team leaders and one is a supervisor.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF OUTPUTS:**

- All respondents from outside VBNK identified the following knowledge and skills gained from VBNK courses: time and workload management, how to write good quality reports and proposals, how to develop student centred-approach training session plan to respond to

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<sup>5</sup> VBNK Team that completed the assessment for this theme: Sim Noreth, Som Saran, May Sreylon, and Sang Bernadine.

differences within a target group, and how to prepare a strategic plan and work plan with a clear process.

- Most VBNK women believe they have learned when to be flexible, how to use power in different situations, how to solve problems through identifying types of conflict, how to effectively negotiate, and how to develop good relationships. Their increased understanding helped enhance their trust building and self esteem.
- A few respondents, both inside and outside VBNK, reported an increased understanding about how to help themselves learn, including using improved methods/tools of learning (e.g. journaling, ARLP, GROW model, NVC practices) and to reflect on past experiences to identify strengths and weaknesses and to stay alert to these experiences.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES:**

- Most of the respondents from inside and outside VBNK reported an increased ability to present themselves in different activities within their organizations and overcome their customary shyness in speaking out and sharing ideas in large groups.
- VBNK women staff reported that they had deepened their relationships, built trust, and become more supportive of each other; in monthly group meetings and informally, they regularly share personal stories and engage in problem solving together. They feel that are listening with more empathy and that they have been able to reduce some tensions and conflicting ideas by applying the 4 elements of NVC (observation, feeling, needs and making requests) plus tools like ARLP and GROW.
- More than one respondent from outside VBNK described how they had spoken out and recommended that a manager in another unit/department integrate a new reporting format which they had taken from VBNK. Other respondents spoke about how application of their understanding and skills had helped them prioritise tasks, reduce workload and meet deadlines and that they were receiving feedback from management about their increased capacity and confidence to perform work well. One respondent appeared very confident and was using creative methods and a student-centred approach to design training sessions that encouraged a high level of participation. She reported that, as a result, the street children she worked with were more involved in and supported the organisation activities.
- Two other respondents described an increased ability to disseminate knowledge and skills to their staff on how to monitor and evaluate project activities and how to solve problems. In addition, they were applying the questionnaires tools from the VBNK training to conduct data collection, problem analysis and problem solving with women clients. They reported that the women *dared to share from their heart* during meetings and informal talks.
- There were some difficulties that women managers/ staff spoke about. There were instances where a few male managers did not trust the ability of women, therefore opportunities for women were blocked. Sometimes, women dared not to fully challenge male managers. Furthermore, a few women expressed staying in their comfort zone rather than taking a risk because they are not confident enough to move themselves in a new position.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS:**

##### **Individual Level:**

- Some respondents from both inside and outside VBNK stated that they were more confident to be proactive at work and put forward their opinions to male managers, and that the voices of women are represented in decision making at management meetings.

- VBNK women recognize that self awareness and values help women reduce judgement of others. They explained that their women's group activities led to improvement in the women's health, changed perceptions, attitudes and behaviours regarding self and others, and giving space for everyone to raise ideas.
- A young respondent from outside VBNK described how she became a lead in her organisation by promoting high participation among her target group. Another respondent from AUA said:

*"I feel that my self-awareness and confidence in working is strong after attending VBNK course. I was very surprised when I came here [to the FGD] to share about my change to also hear about the great impact of changes for other women. Now I am sure that it was not only me who gained understanding, but also other women who attended the course."<sup>6</sup>*

- During VBNK tenth anniversary event, the women group put on a role play that reflected on women's issues and how to empower women themselves in Cambodian society. This contributed to change one woman's mindset about going back to work and not staying at home to take care of her children: *"I decided to go back to work only when I attended VBNK tenth anniversary that reflected to my feeling and drive me to work"*.

#### **Organisation Level:**

- A respondent from outside VBNK expressed that her women staff are now participating more and are more willing to share specific ideas during group meetings. Two respondents explained that staff demonstrated their confidence in solving problems because they as managers were able to better guide their staff.
- Most women both inside and outside VBNK reported that they noted less criticism from male colleagues after the women began to help men better understand their reasoning rather than simply reacting to men's critical comments. The women also reported feeling more comfortable expressing their feeling and reasons.
- One respondent from outside VBNK explained that her organisation had received funding from a donor because her proposal included a clear process about empowering women and that fulfilled the donor's requirement.

#### **SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:**

From the training courses/activities, most women respondents said they enjoyed creative methods/tools that provided opportunities to women to be an important part of discussions. Reflection on past experiences and practical exercises were most appreciated and enabled women to learn most. Moreover, women recognised that being less judgmental and accepting the ideas of others who had different experience helps them learn more.

Respondents realised that they were not always successful when they applied new learning. However, they were more successful when their managers gave opportunities to use their learning and supported women in doing their work. Furthermore, women were more successful with the application of their learning when they had made a personal commitment to change and build up their own capacity. The organisations that had policies and practices that provided equal opportunity to men and women was another factor that influenced women's success in their work.

Blocks or resistances to the application of learning included: personal fears to move out of a comfort zone and take a risk in the face of new challenges; a working environment where line managers do

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<sup>6</sup> One respondent from AUA shared her feeling at the end of the focus group discussion

not fully support women's implementation of learning; and no space for women to be promoted due to hierarchy and status. To overcome personal and professional challenges the respondents suggested that women should be patient and set themselves as a good example for the family; should be persistent; and should find ways to prove to the organisation that they are strong in their thinking, that they are effective at work and that they dare to take risks.

In terms of women's empowerment, we can clearly see some emerging impacts at an individual level and organisation level. Women believe they are more aware of their strengths and weaknesses. This has increased their confidence. For instance, they are more confident in thinking and decision making in both their personal life and professional life. They are more assertive and willing to challenge male managers. A final point is that women are increasing trust and solidarity amongst each other. Within the organisation, there are increased levels of participation by female staff and greater willingness to express ideas and to engage in problem solving on their own.

#### **4d. THEME OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Professional and Personal Development<sup>7</sup>**

##### **EXPECTED IMPACT:**

Individuals identify their own learning objectives and regularly reflect on progress towards achievement of these objectives. Staff and managers demonstrate increased sense/spirit of ownership of organisational values, identity and work performance.

There is more guidance given toward achieving organisation's priorities, and there are more transparent standards for expected quality and work performance. Management/supervisors recognise increased performance by staff. Quality of group work (team work) is clearly evident. There are noticeable examples of staff discussing and arguing in a constructive manner in team work/organisation meetings. The organisation has deeper profile of achievement and is recognised for its significant contributions to social change.

##### **METHODOLOGY:**

We invited 33 respondents to take part in this assessment of impact (19 men and 14 women ranging in ages from 25 to 63). The respondents were divided into four Focus Groups.

- 9 staff only from VBNK.
- 6 persons in Kampong Thom (from PHJ Foundation, COP and MODE)
- 8 persons in Siem Reap (from FWAB, CRC-ICH, Plan International, Krousar Thmey, TPC, and Wathnakteap)
- 10 persons in Kampong Cham (DRC, PSAD, Plan, Krousar Thmey and Commune Councillors)

The respondents' professions included the following: director, program manager, trainer/ facilitator to admin and finance officer, community development worker and local government commune council members. The respondents had attended a wide range of VBNK led activities from open access courses (like report writing, project design and management, communication, leadership courses: the IPP project; a five-module course on good governance for social development under the Local Administration and Reform Program (LAAR); as well as VBNK internal events like Learning Week and workshops.

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<sup>7</sup> VBNK Team that completed the assessment for this theme: Seoung Sotheawat, Phum Thol, Vong Thavy

### **DESCRIPTION OF OUTPUTS:**

Every one reported that they had gained skills and knowledge or new methods and tools. Since they all had taken part in different training and workshops, they spoke about a variety of outputs.

- Four respondents from Kampong Thom and two from Siem Reap were able to describe the difference between the concept and format for proposal writing, their learning experiences at VBANK and their real practice of applying their learning.
- A few participants from Kampong Thom recognised the importance of staff contributing ideas to strategic planning and the making of a project plan.
- A few respondents from Kampong Thom and Kampong Cham described how they were using ARLP to reflect on their work, i.e. after the meeting or other services delivery. They described accurately about the importance to following the four stage ARLP process.
- Two LAAR respondents and one Commune Council respondent from Kampong Cham were aware of the VBANK facilitation process and methods used during sessions. Reflection and real practice helped them better understand their work as trainer/facilitators. They are applying their knowledge and skills in preparing and facilitating training sessions and workshops. One person said:

*“Before I was not patient and liked to answer questions immediately when participants asked me questions, but now I feel more patient than before and recognised that participatory learning by sharing comments and experiences from participants are important for adult learning”.*

- Some LAAR respondents spoke about their understanding of coaching practices and using skills like asking questions to encourage another to better use his/her ability.

### **DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES:**

- Most participants from all sites are applying facilitation methods that they learnt from VBANK events and activities. They emphasised significant of the methods for learning from experience. LAAR respondents have facilitated other staff to build a common understanding about participatory learning and reducing the lecture mode. They have created visual aids and other materials and are drawing on games and role play to make participants more energetic. As a result, they feel their staff meetings with citizens are more effective than before.
- The respondents from LAAR came together to develop session plans before conducting a training program and this helped them to clarify the content, process, and their roles and responsibilities. They improved the quality of designing session plans through the coaching support from VBANK. Moreover, they have applied coaching skills with Commune Councils and community members in the field. All respondents from LAAR have made use of ARLP to reflect on their work performance and to identify what areas to work on more.
- Respondents from Siem Reap who are directors and managers are using their knowledge, skills and strategies learnt with VBANK to deal with problems in the organisation. They have committed to use the staff appraisal process to improve the relationship between the management team and staff. Staff are now accepting feedback from their managers and also making suggestions to managers. Managers report they are more open to accepting staff feedback.
- A few participants from Kampong Cham worked with their organisation to develop participatory M&E tools. The community health workers and other clients accepted the M&E results. In addition, staff and managers are confident about monitoring and making progress reports because monitoring tools are now in place.
- Some participants from Siem Reap have improved their ability to write SMART indicators and are able to differentiate levels and types of indicators. They are also using analysis tools like problem

trees, mind maps and SWOT to help them have a broader view (see the bigger picture) of their work situation.

- An organisation in Kampong Thom has improved the functioning of its board of directors. The Management Team together with the board members wrote a staff policy. The organisation has also created a staff appraisal system, finalised the financial manual and updated job descriptions.
- Respondents described factors that seemed to block the application of learning, including: not feeling safe when facing the consequence of unsuccessful outcomes; feeling discouraged after a few attempts of unsuccessful application; insufficient collaboration with other colleagues or partners due to unequal level of understanding and lack of familiarity with new methods and tools; and a director not supporting or valuing learning because s/he is concerned about staff not completing other responsibilities.

## **ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS:**

### **Individual Level:**

- Learning has taken root in most respondents. Most respondents believed that learning helps both staff and the organization grow, and learning helps them change their way of working and to be more innovative.
- Managers at two organizations spoke about feeling more confident in writing reports and proposals to donors. Their performance led to the director spending less time checking and editing the reports and proposals. Also, they explained about talking less and listening more to their staff, about supporting staff ideas/initiatives and about giving greater value to their staff's knowledge and experience.
- Staff are more confident in facilitating training courses and workshops. A commune councillor in Kampong Cham said:  
*"Before I was scared and afraid when I stood in front of many participants but when I learnt skills and methods, and practiced frequently, I felt that my facilitation skills improved because my fear was gone. I am more patient, dare to talk in public and as a result I have been asked to cooperate in facilitation of a training managed by provincial department of woman affairs."*
- Staff are happier to attend a meeting/training and more actively participate, which leads to a meeting/training being more fruitful.
- Staff are more accountable and responsible for their work, and willing to take more tasks from supervisor due to a clear plan in place and the influence of staff appraisal.

### **Organisation Level:**

- Donors expressed satisfaction with the improvement of one organization's logframe and reports, and the review of staff policies and structure.
- There is better cooperation among staff. Communication between staff and staff, and staff and managers has improved because the organisations are using ARLP in their work on a regular basis and have established human resource and financial policies, and M& E processes. These achievements have helped raise self-awareness and reduce team conflict.
- Managers and directors accepted more ideas from staff because the staff appraisal process has helped improve understanding about important issues. Staff from Kampong Thom and Siem Reap mentioned their directors trusted them more, and therefore delegated more responsibility. The directors are now focusing more on organizational strategy and external relationships.

**SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:**

Many (field workers, administrators and financial officer, facilitators/educators, and CCs) spoke about gaining confidence and more independence in their work and decision making. Many staff and managers have begun to recognise learning and capacity building are important to organisation development.

We learned that about a third of the managers did very well in applying what they learned about management and leadership. They are satisfied that staff are more committed to work, taking the initiative to deal with conflicts and difficulties among themselves.

Almost everybody from the 4 FGDs realised that participatory activities and supportive practices, including learning from each other, are very important processes to help them learn and concentrate longer. Some indicated what helped them learn was connecting past experience to a new concept introduced by facilitators.

There were several helping factors that influenced professional learning. These factors include content that is engaging and challenging, responding to the needs of participants and building on their existing skills and knowledge, letting participants analyse and find answers by themselves, coaching after training, and not judging participants' answer as right or wrong. Another important condition is ongoing dialogue between staff and managers about what staff want to learn.

The respondents also explained that they are better able to apply their learning when managers and supervisors provide support space and time for their application, and when the organisation gives more value to promoting learning and its application.

The examples given by respondents show that staff are giving more attention to using what they learnt to contribute to success of their organisation, and that there are significant changes related to improved quality in the completion of tasks within the organisation and recognition of increased performance by staff, e.g. quality of group work.

Although respondents spoke about professional development, they made few connections to personal development. They seemed to stress the importance of doing a good job and did not give examples about their own personal growth.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In each of the theme areas we have documented examples of what respondents said they have gained (description of outputs) and also what respondents said they have been able to achieve by applying what they learned (description of outcomes). These success stories show that the VBNK programme interventions are directly benefitting participants. Compared with Impact Assessment 2007, we noticed that many more of the statements made by the respondents are about their learning and related outcomes.

- There is widespread feedback (a) that the facilitation methods used encouraged participation, increased responsibility for learning and stressed letting participants find answers by themselves; and (b) that VBNK programmes create the conditions for a learning environment that encourage sharing of experiences and feeling safe to make mistakes.
- The learning-by-doing approach facilitated by VBNK led to numerous examples given by the respondents (both female and male) about how their learning experience and subsequent application of learning increased self-confidence.
- Many of the changes that respondents spoke about were related to how changes in individual attitudes and behaviours had translated into change in work performance and quality.

However, we still do not know whether the respondent experienced success just the one time or whether their learning was sustained over a long period. There was insufficient time during the FGD to probe deeper into each respondent's experience. This learning will be considered in IA 2009.

The data from the focus group discussions have increased our understanding of the factors that **support the learning process and influence how or when a person applies her/his learning** as well as the factors that **limit/block application of learning**. We have also gained deeper insight into **specific changes experienced at an individual level** and changes experienced **at the organisational level**.

### ***Factors that supported learning***

All respondents expressed their appreciation for the diversity of methods and tools VBNK applied in its different services. They all valued the participatory and practical based learning they experienced. Some said that the methods used and the environment created helped them let go of fear and encouraged them to express their ideas and participate. Others pointed out that learning from each other was an important part of the process.

Respondents recognised that facilitation methods encouraged participation, increased responsibility for learning and stressed letting participants find answers by themselves (or as a group). Moreover, facilitative methods were significant for learning from experience.

Some women recognised that being less judgmental and accepting the ideas of others having different experience helped them learn more. Parallel to this view was the recognition by several female and male facilitators that their role is not to judge participants' answers as right or wrong; their role is to respond to the needs of participants and build on the existing skills and knowledge of participants.

We also heard often that learning happens when an individual commits her/himself to learning.

### ***Factors that support the person to apply their learning***

Most respondents stressed that self-commitment and motivation and support from their peers and supervisors strongly influenced their efforts to apply what they learned. They explained that self-commitment influenced whether or not they were successful but that managers and supervisors must provide the space and time for application. A change in work habits require time to prepare as well as time to reflect on experience.

Similarly women are more successful when their managers give them opportunities to use their learning and support and believe in a women's ability to get the work done.

***Factors that limited/ prevented the person to apply their learning***

All respondents confirmed that the VBNK capacity building approach is on the right track in contributing to development activities in Cambodia. However, they still struggle to apply what they learn in their work environment. There were different explanations for the cause of their challenges. Some respondents pointed to the hierarchical system and old habits/traditions as major blocks to the application of new learning. In addition, some female respondents reported situations where line managers do not fully support women having certain responsibilities.

Some respondents recognised that they carry a personal fear to move out of their comfort zones and take a risk when faced with a new challenge. Others said that they did not feel safe and worried about facing the consequence of an unsuccessful outcome. Some felt discouraged after a few unsuccessful attempts.

Even though respondents were aware that commitment makes a difference towards successful outcomes, there were other respondents who were not ready to make such a commitment. This blocked them. Some explained that the cause was too high a workload, or their workload would increase if they applied a different method.

***Specific changes experienced by individuals***

Respondents in all focus groups gave examples on how they had changed personally as part of their learning. There were numerous examples of increased self-confidence (ranging from facilitating groups and processes to problem solving and decision making). For some, the change was about being more self-reflective and more open to listening to and accepting feedback from peers. For others, the change was a greater sense of self-esteem and pride and also empathy toward others.

These changes in attitudes led to changes in work and personal behaviours: some of the women are overcoming their customary shyness and speaking out and sharing ideas in group settings. Women staff are participating more in meetings and engaging in problem solving. They are putting forward their ideas to male colleagues. There are also many examples of more open and constructive feedback from managers and staff. Some managers are consciously working against the hierarchy that blocks open communication.

We also found more responsibility for personal learning and a willingness to learn from experiences to learn from mistakes.

***Specific changes experienced by organisation***

Many of the changes that respondents spoke about were related to how changes in individual attitudes and behaviours had translated into change in work performance and quality. There were also examples of reduction in internal conflicts among team members (attributed to an ongoing process of conversations across different work units and levels of staff). There is evidence of more cooperation among staff. And the wide use of ARLP in the workplace appears to be improving communication between staff and managers alike. There was recognition too that when managers guided their staff to learn from their work and focus on the specific issues and context, they were promoting responsibility to take action.

There were also examples of changing trends at the community level, with NGO staff and communities collaborating together in problem identification and in looking for solutions. There also appears to be more open discussion and increased participation.

### ***How well are we doing?***

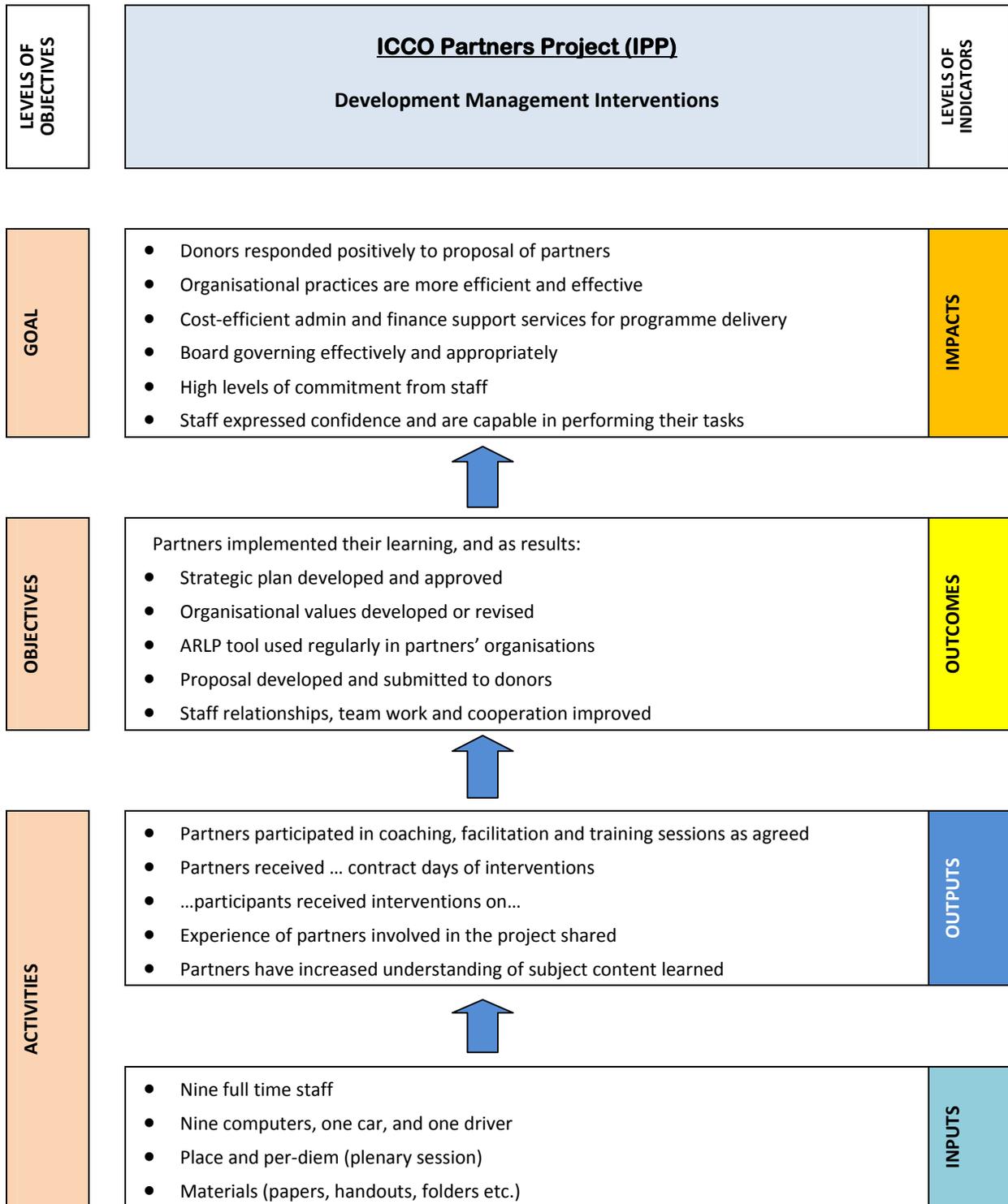
When we compare the data for each of the four themes, we see many connections between the key words of the expected impacts and key phrases that form VBNK's statements about **vision** (*a social development sector that responds creatively and effectively to Cambodia's development needs*), **mission** (*centre of learning, working creatively...in order to generate and share innovative practice and knowledge...*) and **goal** (*improved effectiveness and quality of development practice and management as a result of learning and innovative methods*).

- We learned from the **Social Dialogue and Engagement** theme that there are more occasions of collaboration among different actors to find effective solutions for their challenges and problems. The collaboration has been effective mobilising relevant stakeholders to actively contribute to a problem solving process.
- We learned from the **Facilitative Learning and Change Processes** theme that staff are becoming more enthusiastic about the self-directed learning approach and are becoming better equipped overcome blocks to learning. There are numerous examples of staff being less-directive in their training activities, and there is more encouragement to explore and reflect.
- We learned from women in the **Women's Empowerment and Change** theme that there are increasing levels of self awareness and solidarity amongst the women. Women are becoming more proactive in their work, solving problems, and confidently expressing their opinions to male managers.
- We learned from the **Professional and Personal Development** theme that individuals are beginning to identify their own learning objectives and more regularly reflect on their progress. Managers/supervisors are seeing increased performance by staff.

Impact Assessment 2008 has contributed to a deeper understanding of the quality of VBNK's services. By looking at the expected impacts for the four selected themes we have evidence that we are moving towards having greater impact. We believe that the expected impacts for each of the theme areas remain relevant to guide our work in the future. We also learned where we need to pay more attention in future:

- We recognise that VBNK needs to promote a greater awareness amongst our clients that they need to re-create the same learning conditions when they work with their colleagues or when they are leading a service delivery.
- Respondents expressed feeling isolated and discouraged when trying to overcome major blocks to the application of new learning. We will need to work more on strategies for overcoming specific blocks, e.g. lack of open communication, hierarchy and old habits/traditions that limit full application of new knowledge and skills.
- Participants are trying to apply the facilitation tools they gain during a VBNK event and activity. However they are not yet aware enough about what qualities to look for in order to develop that practice for specific situations. We will need to better understand how participants adapt/adopt facilitation methods, and give guidance on using an approach or tool for a particular work context.
- Participants still have expectations for receiving solutions to problems and for VBNK to fill up a knowledge gap. We believe that learning about how to "facilitate" a process is essential to supporting social development objectives. Consequently, we will continue to focus on enabling programme participants to guide learning and change in their workplace.

**APPENDIX I: Example: Results/ Effects Chain - From Inputs to Impacts**



**APPENDIX II: A Guide to Focus Group  Discussions**

FOCUS AREAS to Discuss	How to guide the Focus Group Discussion process
Introduction to FGD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Explain</b> purpose for discussion and clarify participants' understanding.</li> <li>• Warm up for respondents to be familiar with one and other.</li> </ul>
1) <b>Outputs from a project/ programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents to specify what they believe are the results from the project/ programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collect and Cluster their examples of <b>outputs</b>: <b>deepened</b> knowledge/ understanding; <b>increased</b> skill; <b>improved</b> ability/ methodology; adapted process/ tools; etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2) <b>Factors that supported the learning process and the achieving an output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents to describe <u>what influenced</u> them to learn during the project/ programme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List their examples: E.g. learning by doing; creative methods; sharing, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Facilitate</b> a talk about what is most <u>similar</u> among the responses, and about what is most <u>different</u>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Find the reasons for the preferences.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3) <b>Application of an output leading to a result (an outcome)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents to describe what successes they made using the outputs described for Focus Area #1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List what participants describe about the application they made of their new learning!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4) <b>Factors that influenced the person to apply their learning (and make effective use of the outputs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents to give examples on what influenced their own behavior and attitude to apply what they learned.</li> <li>• <b>Cluster</b> their responses in categories, for example, factors like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-confidence, trust, self-awareness, etc.</li> <li>▪ Community or work environment (support from elders, relationship with peers);</li> <li>▪ Resources and incentives to apply their learning.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Summarise</b> their examples by specifying conditions/ factors that enable learners to better apply their learning and make change.</li> </ul>
5) <b>Factors that limited/ prevented the person to apply their learning (and not make effective use of the outputs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents to talk about factors that limited/ blocked their intention to apply what they learned.)</li> <li>• Cluster their responses in categories, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal: Willingness; confidence; fear;</li> <li>▪ Community/ Work environment;</li> <li>▪ Cultural factors; status; hierarchy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents which of the challenges/ limits is most possible to gradually overcome – Reasons?</li> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents which of the challenges/ limits is most unlikely to gradually overcome – Reasons?</li> </ul>
6) <b>Changes (an impact) on <u>individuals</u> as a result of the successful outcomes (and successfully applying what was learned</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ask</b> respondents whether or not they experienced changes in their own behavior and attitude due to successfully applying their learning and influencing successful outcomes. (Refer to the list described in answer to focus area #3.)</li> <li>• <b>Facilitate</b> talking about issues like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have these successful experiences influenced their <b>self-awareness</b>,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>including <b>confidence</b> and <b>willingness</b> to take action?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have these experiences influenced their offering <b>trust</b> and <b>building relationships</b>?</li> <li>▪ Have these experiences influenced the level of <b>risk</b> they are willing to take and learn from <b>mistakes</b>?</li> <li>▪ Have they changed their thinking about how to learn?</li> </ul>
<p><b>7) Changes (an impact) experienced by the <u>organisation</u> as a result of the successful outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask respondents to comment on the <u>size of benefit</u> their community/ organizations have from the application of their learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask for examples of benefits – consider individual and organizational benefits. Ask for reasons.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Summarise</b> the examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has the respondent received recognition for improved performance?</li> <li>▪ Has the organization changed processes/ procedures?</li> <li>▪ Has the organization changed the importance given to learning?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusion to the Focus Group Discussion</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Briefly summarise what you found most interesting.</li> <li>2) Ask the participants what they learned from the discussion and hearing about the experiences of others.</li> <li>3) Give an opportunity for questions and clarification.</li> </ol>

**APPENDIX III: VBNK 2008 Impact Assessment - List of Respondents**

No.	Name	Sex		Organisation			Position	Tel	Impact Theme	Date FGD
		F	M	LNGOs	INGOs	Others				
1	Khorn Syna		✓			Factory	Warehouse keeper	017 946 400	Social dialogue and engagement	8/10/2008 (at PNP)
2	Lang Kimhor	✓				Factory	Human Resource	012 862 978		
3	Sok Khorn		✓			Factory	COC	016 868 817		
4	Kieng Rotha		✓			Factory	Human Resource	012 732 603		
5	Dourng Samnang		✓			Factory	Human Resource	012 680 875		
6	Noeun Leakhena	✓				Factory	Worker	011 766 415		
7	Korn Theary	✓				Factory	Admin	012 212 622		
8	Nong Sreyleap	✓				Factory	Admin	016 212 717		
9	Phan Tol	✓		BS			Project officer	092 725 017		8/11/2008 (at Siem Reap)
10	Chan Taen		✓	NK			Executive Director	012 728 068		
11	Pen Sakun		✓	FAP			Executive Director	012 943 155		
12	Nou Sarim	✓		BS			Village Working Group	063 963 254		
13	Koy Phally	✓				CC	CC member (Facilitator)	092 691 672		
14	Plang Salan		✓			Government	Deputy Chief Admin	012 671 074		8/12/2008 (at Kom Thom)
15	Prak Vimeany	✓		CWS			Project Coordinator	012 783 026		
16	Nget Polrith		✓	PLAU			PFT	012 583 934		
17	Chum Chanputheavy	✓		COWS			Director	012 784 122		
18	Ky Siyana	✓		COWS			LAAR Staff	092 893 536		
19	Pak Ren	✓		CWS			Community Staff			
20	Mean Siv Horn	✓				CC	CC: First Deputy	012 191 5703		
21	Hak Sokha	✓				CC	CC Member	089 925 542		
22	Pheng Chantha	✓		BFDK			Accountant	012 257 559		
23	Ly Khom		✓	BFDK			Director	012 734 467		
24	Dan Pisey	✓			Krousar Thmey		Assistant	017 396 501	Women's empowerment and change	8/11/2008 (AM)
25	Yim Thanath	✓			Krousar Thmey		Brand Manager	012 979 530		
26	Tho Thary	✓			CCPCR		Admin	012 449 055		
27	Chiv MengLay	✓		GHPO			Project Manager	012 248 247		
28	Meng LyThyra	✓		CEPA			Admin Manager	012 891 376		
29	Pok Sokhunthea	✓		AUA			Admin	012 340 135		
30	Chan Sokheang	✓			PSE		Supervisor	012 754 459		8/11/2008

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31	Chork KimLeng	✓		PSE		Manager	011 677 781		(PM)																
32	Kong Sathia	✓		MS		Team Leader	012 767 535																		
33	Duong Dara	✓		WVC		Manager	012 291 870																		
34	Sam Sreyna	✓		Hagar		Aftercare Manager	017 746 941																		
35	Ing Varony	✓		Hagar		Programming Manager	012 494 469																		
36	Chhay Chenmala	✓		VBNK										5-Aug-08											
37	On Chakrya	✓		VBNK																					
38	Sok sovanmealy	✓		VBNK																					
39	Eang Sarin	✓		VBNK																					
40	Som Dany	✓		VBNK																					
41	Phon Pheuy	✓		VBNK																					
42	Hok chanphalleap	✓		VBNK																					
43	Tann Chantha	✓		VBNK																					
44	Mov Lean	✓		VBNK																					
45	El Sreymom	✓		ILDO		Admin	012 910 606	<b>Facilitative and change process</b>														12-Aug-08			
46	Sem Kalyan	✓		ILDO		Human Resource Manager	012 664 487		<b>Facilitative and change process</b>																
47	Sarik Sothoeun	✓			CC	Member	012 327 378			<b>Facilitative and change process</b>															
48	Sea Sopha	✓			CC	Member	092 781 720				<b>Facilitative and change process</b>														
49	Kiet Thoeun	✓		KAWP		Coordinator Committee	012 856 303					<b>Facilitative and change process</b>													
50	Lun Ean		✓	KAWP		CDW	012 451 394						<b>Facilitative and change process</b>												
51	Kim Chhavy	✓		SABORAS		Project Manager	012 964 347							<b>Facilitative and change process</b>											
52	Mong Lany	✓			CC	Member	012 363 199								<b>Facilitative and change process</b>										
53	But Voeurt	✓			CC	2nd Deputy	089 950 649									<b>Facilitative and change process</b>									
54	So Phirun		✓	SABORAS		Project Manager	012 798 687										<b>Facilitative and change process</b>								
55	Vun Vith		✓	SABORAS		Financial Manager	017 981 827											<b>Facilitative and change process</b>							
56	Sun Phalla		✓	EPDO		Project Manager	012 678 367												<b>Facilitative and change process</b>			11-Aug-08			
57	Soeung Polin		✓	AK		Field Coordinator	012 687 590													<b>Facilitative and change process</b>					
58	Sir Sovan		✓		Government	Sanitation	092 950 561														<b>Facilitative and change process</b>				
59	Un Sarorn	✓		AK		Assistant	092 688 462															<b>Facilitative and change process</b>			
60	Orn Sophalla		✓		SC	Education Coordinator	012 391 077																<b>Facilitative and change process</b>		
61	Khat Sinoun	✓			Government	CD/ Gender	012 753 801																	<b>Facilitative and change process</b>	

62	Phan Sophorn		✓		Plan International		CDF	017 951 211	<b>Professional and personal development</b>	8/11/2008 (at Siem Reap)
63	Tep Sokunthea	✓			CRC - ICH		Admin/finance officer	012 884 644		
64	You Vath	✓			Krousar Thmey		Director	012 493 574		
65	Chea Samuth		✓		Krousar Thmey		Director	011 414 100		
66	Yat Bunchea		✓			TPC	Project Manager	012 567 589		
67	Chhin Vanna	✓			Plan International		CDF	012 490 233		
68	Chart Phath		✓		FWAB		CDHEP	012 768 951		
69	Kong Yan		✓	WP			Project Manager	092 276 403		
70	Burn Sorunna	✓			PHJ-Fundation		Project Officer	017 807 780		8/12/2008 (at Kom Thom)
71	Uch Sakun	✓		MODE			Health Pro. Coordinator	012 371 814		
72	Oum Sopha	✓		MODE			Team Leader HBC	012 656 416		
73	Yim Horng		✓	MODE			Credit Officer	012 214 642		
74	Hout SongMAB		✓	MODE			Team Leader HBC	012 948 794		
75	Nov Chea		✓	COP			Project Manager	012 943 910		
76	Keo Meng		✓	DRC			Administrator	092 984 508		
77	Chhuon Nat		✓	PSAD			Facilitator	012 563 019		8/12/2008 (at Kom Cham)
78	Chann Chhayren	✓				CC	Facilitator	011 689 701		
79	Kheang Siphon	✓				CC	Facilitator	012 553 521		
80	Chit Kimchhin	✓				CC	Facilitator	011 754 751		
81	Hak Sopagnha		✓		Plan International		Team Leader	012 552 209		
82	Sok Chhom		✓		Krousar Thmey		Brand Director	012 571 048		
83	Sem Socheata	✓			Plan International		CDF-PK	012 799 312		
84	Long Visal		✓	DRC			Investigator	092 609 261		6-Aug-08
85	Eang Sopheapang	✓		PSAD			SPC-LAAR Project	011 304 640		
86	Sim Chankiryoth		✓		VBNK					
87	Tem Sochea		✓		VBNK					
88	Sang Ber Nardin	✓			VBNK					
89	Chin Philip Las		✓		VBNK					
90	May Srey Lun	✓			VBNK					
91	Ou Saorn		✓		VBNK					
92	Srey Saren		✓		VBNK					
93	Mour Meng Hong		✓		VBNK					
94	Chea Sok Keang	✓			VBNK					
	<b>Total respondents: 94</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>				

**APPENDIX IV: Example for Guidance on Writing the Report**

<b>Theme of Impact Assessment:</b>
<b>EXPECTED IMPACT:</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY:</b> <i>Focus group discussions with a total of xx participants in xxxx. Describe what the respondents have in common (e.g. gender, age, kind of work, position). Mention events/ activities in which the respondents previously participated.</i>
<b>DESCRIPTION OF OUTPUTS:</b> Summarize the outputs – <b>refer to clusters/groups e.g.:</b> (a) <u>gained</u> knowledge; (b) <u>deepened</u> understanding; (c) <u>acquired</u> / practice skills; (d) <u>uncovered</u> process not just content; (e) <u>reviewed</u> samples/ guidelines ➔ and <b>include some specific examples!</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES:</b> Summarise successful <u>outcomes</u> – <b>consider clusters, e.g.:</b> (a) performed more successfully work tasks; (b) developed staff by better leadership/ supervision; (c) introduced more specific procedures and higher quality products (e.g. policy, system, strategic plan); (d) improved individual and organizational learning; (e) found solutions to old challenges/ solved problems; etc. ➔ and <b>include some specific examples!</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS:</b> Summarise the evidence for the different kinds of changes. Indicate which <u>changes</u> were experienced <b>by many, by some, by few</b> . Specify significant examples of changes: at <b>Individual Level: (changes in attitude and confidence)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Several persons expressed that ____ (e.g. capable to do; less time to do quality)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Many people felt that ____ (more motivated; more appreciated; more trusted)</i></li> </ul> at <b>Organisation Level: (changes in the internal situation; recognition; guidance)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The directors/managers expressed satisfaction with (e.g. delegation, performance)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>The organization received recognition for . . .</i></li> </ul>
<b>SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:</b> <u>Issue 1:</u> What factors supported the learning process? Which factors best enabled respondents to learn? How do respondents describe learning? <u>Issue 2:</u> Was there an influential relationship <b>between output and outcome</b> ? What factors <u>positively influenced</u> respondents to apply their learning? What factors <u>limited/ blocked</u> respondents to apply their learning? Was there an <b>effective use</b> of output? <u>Issue 3:</u> Did the outcomes lead to results and changes for the individual and/or organization: What enabled or blocked making an <b>impact compared</b> with <b>Expected Impact</b> above?

## **APPENDIX V: List of Acronyms**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
AK	Anakot Kumar
AUA	ARV Users Association
BFDK	Buddhism for Development Kampong Thom
BS	Banteay Srei
CCPCR	Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children’s Rights
CEPA	Culture and Environmental Preservation Association
COWS	Cambodia Organisation Women Support
COP	Organization Cambodia for Peace
CRC	Cambodian Red Cross
CWS	Church World Service
DRC	Destiny Rescue Cambodia
EPDO	Environment Protection and Development Organisation
FAP	Friend Association Pioneer
FWAB	Friends Without A Border
GHPO	Giving Hope for the People Organization
Hargar	Hargar
ILDO	Islamic Local Development Organisation
KAWP	Krom Akphiwat Phum
KNKS	Kumar Ney Kdey Sangkheum
MODE	Minority Organisation for Development of Economy
MS	Mith Sanlanh/Friends
NK	Neary Khmer
PDRD	Provincial Department of Rural Development
PHJ-Foundation	PH Japan Foundation
PLAU	Provincial Local Administration Unit
PSAD	Phnom Srey Association for Development
PSE	Pour un Sourire d’ Efant
SABORAS	SABORAS
SC	Sustainable Cambodia
VBNK	An institute to serve facilitators of development
WVC	World Vision Cambodia
WP	Wathanakpheap