



2014:12

Sida Decentralised Evaluation

Ian Christoplos
Karen L. Greene

Mid-Term Review of Sweden's Support to the Cambodia Development Resource Institute

Final Report

Mid-Term Review of Sweden's Support to the Cambodia Development Resource Institute

**Final Report
March 2014**

**Ian Christoplos
Karen L. Greene**

Authors: Ian Christoplos and Karen L. Greene

The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

Sida Decentralised Evaluation 2014:12

Commissioned by Sida

Copyright: Sida and the authors

Date of final report: March 2014

Published by Citat 2014

Art. no. Sida61714en

urn:nbn:se:sida-61714en

This publication can be downloaded from: <http://www.sida.se/publications>

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm

Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

E-mail: info@sida.se. Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>

Table of contents

Table of contents	2
Abbreviations and Acronyms	4
Preface	5
Executive Summary	6
1 Introduction	10
1.1 Purpose of the MTR	10
1.2 Background	11
1.3 Methods	12
1.4 Limitations	15
2 Relevance	18
2.1 Independence and engagement	18
2.2 Relevance in relation to user needs and capacities	21
2.3 Relevance in relation to human rights principles	22
3 Effectiveness	25
3.1 Adherence to strategic plans and workplans	25
3.2 Quality of research outputs	26
3.3 Quality assurance	34
3.4 Risk management at CDRI	34
4 Impact and outcomes	36
4.1 Pathways to influence policies and their use	36
4.2 Measurement of outcomes, tracking and learning	38
4.3 Influence on policies	38
4.4 Positioning in the region	40
4.5 Capacity to use research and culture of research	40
4.6 Policy research on labour markets and education gaps	42
5 Sustainability	44
5.1 Resource mobilisation	44
5.2 Organisational and human resource development	45
5.3 Gender in the organisation	46
5.4 Positioning in relation to potential partnerships	47

5.5	Cambodianisation.....	48
6	Conclusions and lessons learnt.....	49
7	Recommendations.....	52
7.1	Recommendations to CDRI for the period until 2016	52
7.2	Recommendations to the Swedish Embassy.....	53
8	Annexes.....	54
8.1	Annex 1 : Terms of reference	54
8.2	Annex 2 : Persons met	59
8.3	Annex 3 : Inception report	63
8.4	Annex 4 : Literature reviewed	85
8.5	Annex 5: Research report quality assessment matrix.....	89

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CDRI	Cambodia Development Resource Institute
CGIAR	Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
GWG	Gender Working Group
IFI	International Finance Institutions
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
MTR	Mid-term Review
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development(Development Assistance Committee
WFP	World Food Programme

Preface

This mid-term review of Sweden's support to the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) was undertaken during the first quarter of 2014. It focuses on the independence of the institute, the quality of research and the outcomes in relation to policy influence and capacity development. The Indevelop review team consisted of Ian Christoplos and Karen L. Greene. Anna Liljelund Hedqvist has been the responsible project manager at Indevelop and Adam Pain conducted quality assurance of the reports.

The team wishes to express considerable appreciation to the staff of CDRI who provided exceptional support to the team and showed complete openness during a very hectic mission. The team also wishes to note the extraordinary engagement and transparency of interviewees.

Executive Summary

The purpose of the mid-term review (MTR) is to assess the performance of the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) in relation to the CDRI-Sida Partnership Document July 2011-June 2016 and the CDRI Strategic Plan 2011-2015 and to make recommendations regarding how research quality and influence on policy formation can be further enhanced. The MTR has analysed the outcomes of CDRI's work and its own organisational development process with a primary focus from the following four perspectives:

- CDRI's stance on independence amid polarisation and skewed perceptions
- CDRI's sphere of policy influence in diverse areas, from inclusive growth to gender
- Human resource and organisational capacity development
- CDRI's role in promoting evidence based policy formation
- Progress towards a 'healthy' mix of activities and revenues for future sustainability and staff satisfaction

In the highly polarised political context in Cambodia the issue of independence has emerged as critical. The MTR team encountered varied perceptions regarding how appropriately CDRI has managed its efforts to balance being seen as a constructive but critical actor in the policy debate. The MTR recognises that there is no 'right' stance on this issue but concludes that CDRI has managed this balance well. In some instances CDRI has however, in the view of the MTR team, tended to err on the side of caution, most notably in relation to its relative silence on land issues, discrimination, political patronage, and some migration issues. This weakens the credibility of some outputs and has meant that some areas where policy dialogue would seem essential have not been addressed.

CDRI published outputs and engagements in policy dialogue are well suited to influencing key governmental policy-makers, due in part to an extraordinary convening power and an ability to identify and respond to emerging needs in the policy agenda. Support by government is high profile in the national media. Communication efforts have not been designed equally well to establish a strong dialogue with civil society, and new social media channels have not been sufficiently exploited.

CDRI's research very rarely refers to human rights issues, but the content is highly relevant for enhancing understanding of dimensions of participation, transparency and accountability. Non-discrimination is given significantly less attention. Some excellent work on gender has been produced, but mainstreaming of gender concerns in the research portfolio is limited and even where good outputs have been produced they

have not been publicised among many of those who could potentially best utilise them in their work.

CDRI performs well in relation to following its workplans. Research staff and management are solidly committed to the strategic plan and are firm in their efforts to follow these plans, despite financial pressures to take on a range of commissioned work. The quality of CDRI research outputs is mixed, as would be expected in an institute with a very broad agenda and which has a major role in fostering the skills of young researchers. Some products are excellent, whereas others would benefit from closer attention. The effectiveness of quality assurance and advisory support procedures vary among the research areas due to different funding sources and in-house skills sets.

CDRI has forged some strong pathways for influencing policy and praxis, but there are areas where more critical attention is needed. Commitments to influencing sub-national government are admirable, but do not necessarily meet local needs. At central level influence on government is strong. Links to the private sector are very limited. CDRI has interfaces with civil society, but these are relatively weak. Links to the broader academic community are starting to be forged through the Development Research Forum, but it is too early to judge whether this will lead to significant outcomes.

CDRI lacks systems and commitment to tracking and learning from outcomes. There appears to be faith in the tacit understanding that exists among the staff regarding achievements, but as competition increases in Cambodian development research, and as Cambodia enters what is likely to be a period of even more rapid change, a more concerted effort is likely to be needed to learn and adapt efforts to meet changing needs and opportunities.

In actually influencing policy, CDRI has made a clear mark on the discourse, playing a central role in ensuring that the need for more inclusive growth is not forgotten. This is reflected in the discourse and in actual policy documents. There appears to also have been influence on actual procedures and practice. It is difficult to verifiably judge CDRI's influence on behaviour, but by working with reform minded (especially young) policy makers, CDRI seems to play a role in changing how policy processes are perceived in Cambodia. A downside of the close relations with government is that influence via civil society channels is weaker.

CDRI has commitments to anchoring its research agenda in a regional perspective, and has produced some highly appropriate and influential studies. However, the regional perspective is not well mainstreamed in CDRI research and ownership of this perspective is not strong among the senior research staff.

CDRI is recognised as having played a significant role in legitimising the use of evidence in policy formation and ensuring that a 'culture of research' is fostered in

Cambodia despite the often polemic and polarised public debate. The reported use of evidence among interviewees in the MTR was high.

Despite significant success in raising funds, CDRI lacks a clear and useful resource mobilisation strategy. The competing demands on staff time between programme and commissioned studies is creating tensions. CDRI has not defined a path for dealing with what is likely to be declining aid flows and a need to shift to regular research funding channels in the future. Incentives are not in place for the staff to produce peer reviewed publications or build enduring partnerships with international research institutes. This is understandable given the landscape of Cambodian development efforts today, but may be poorly suited to the future.

One observer interviewed stressed how Cambodia is entering into a period of “non-linear change”, when new challenges are not likely to reflect a mere incremental stage in processes underway. These non-linear changes relate to achieving middle income status, ASEAN integration, changes in agriculture and industry, and the coming of age of a generation of professionals educated in world-class universities. If this is true, then the CDRI’s research agenda is also likely to face a period of non-linear challenges. In light of this, the MTR makes the following overall recommendations:

- Continue to maintain independence through a stance reflecting both clear contributions to the policy debate and pragmatism regarding how to present these messages in a constructive manner.
- Continue diversifying the Board to include a broader representation of Cambodian development and private sector actors.
- Rethink incentives for staff satisfaction in relation to engagement in internationally recognised research and benefits from undertaking commissioned studies.
- Address greater proportional attention to strategic international/regional partnerships compared with the current focus on aid sources.
- Reassess mechanisms for participatory management of the research units and see through plans to regenerate the gender committee.
- Differentiate levels of publications and better highlight staff outputs resulting from international collaboration and peer reviewed publications.
- Seek out new, stronger public channels and outreach methods to engage with civil society.
- Make outcome monitoring a core activity with value for learning.
- Bring in outside assistance (soon) to develop clearer direction on gender, social media and other areas noted in this MTR as lacking clear direction.

No major changes are recommended regarding current structures of support from the Swedish embassy, but the embassy should encourage greater research update though, for example, highlighting the relevance of Democratic Governance research among like-minded donors and civil society partners working in related fields.

1 Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE MTR

The purpose of the mid-term review (MTR) is to assess the performance of CDRI in relation to the CDRI-Sida Partnership Document July 2011-June 2016 and the CDRI Strategic Plan 2011-2015 and to draw conclusions and make recommendations for the remaining period of the Agreement/Strategic Plan. This includes recommendations regarding how research quality and influence on policy formation can be further enhanced.

This MTR integrates discussion of CDRI's progress toward the five main internal challenges identified in the 2020 strategy and shown to be the focus of ongoing attention in the 2012 development review and 2011-2015 strategic plan:

1. Focusing and developing research on emerging issues in Cambodian society which are increasingly urgent, but not historically addressed by CDRI.
2. Enhancing quality and relevance - In order to be fully engaged with both policy decision-makers and international research, CDRI is seeking to establish a more comprehensive research programme including independent research and a project monitoring and evaluation system will be established.
3. Strengthening impact – The 2020 research strategy identifies the need to enhance dissemination of CDRI research and engagement in international forums.
4. Cambodianisation has progressed significantly thanks to the increasing capacity of Cambodian nationals in general and CDRI's commitment to staff professional development and recruitment policies. The 2012 review indicates that recruitment and retention systems and policies require improvement, especially given that Cambodians with doctorates are in high demand in a highly competitive employment market.
5. Balancing programme versus project-based and collaborative versus independent research are ongoing major goals.

In sum, the MTR has sought to analyse the outcomes of CDRI's work and its own organisational development process from the following four perspectives:

- Relations: How to define and determine an appropriate stance on independence amid polarisation and skewed perceptions?
- Policy reform outcomes: What is CDRI's sphere of influence and how should it approach diverse issues, from inclusive growth to gender?
- Capacity development outcomes: What determines 'staff satisfaction' (internal) and what is CDRI's niche in (external) capacity development?

- Sustainability: Is CDRI moving towards a ‘healthy’ mix of activities and revenues?

1.2 BACKGROUND

CDRI was created in 1990 and has grown in size, reputation, and in terms of the organisational mission as the country itself has developed. CDRI has 84 staff, of which 80 are Cambodian. Its agenda has moved from a focus on capacity development and conflict resolution to a large and varied research agenda. Organisational capacity to produce research, collaborate with international institutions as an equal, and influence policy has grown steadily over the years. With Cambodia joining the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and increasing integration into the Greater Mekong Sub-region, it has expanded its networks, areas of consultations and presentations, and the range of research distribution.

Within CDRI’s 2011-2015 strategic plan research is being undertaken in the following areas:

- Economy, trade and regional cooperation
- Poverty, agriculture and rural development
- Democratic governance and public sector reform
- Natural resources and the environment
- Social development

There is also growing awareness that within this agenda that greater attention is needed to issues related to labour and migration.

CDRI has held a close relationship with the Cambodian government since its founding. Influence on government policy formation, either directly or in conjunction with engagements and public debate initiated by other domestic and international actors in society, is the core of CDRI’s work. In the context of an often confrontational civil society¹-government relationship, CDRI’s close relation with the government has had both advantages and disadvantages.

CDRI receives a variety of support. The organisation has consistently (with the exception of 2011) operated with a balanced budget, usually with a modest surplus.

¹ This report uses the term ‘civil society’ to refer to a broad range of organisations ranging from grass-roots groups to international non-governmental organisations. It is recognised that most of these organisations lack firm anchoring in ‘genuine’ civil institutions. This simplification is deemed necessary as it is beyond the scope of the evaluation to classify different cohorts in this broad spectrum of organisations.

CDRI operates with a mix of long term programme funding (currently primarily from IDRC and the Rockefeller Foundation), commissioned studies (from e.g., the World Food Programme, WFP) and core support, the latter coming entirely from Sweden. The total expenditure for 2012 was USD 2.2 million. In 2013 the projected budget was USD 2.5 million, of which USD 760 thousand (SEK 5 million) was from Sweden. Support from Sweden is partially earmarked to specific studies, selected in consultation between CDRI and the embassy. Sweden's support for the period 2011-2015 is estimated at USD 4.2 million (SEK 26.5 million), which is expected to constitute approximately 26 percent of total financing.

Since the 2013 national elections, the political situation on the ground has been volatile and tense, but the sensitivity and political polarisation around many development issues is not new. Given that social development, peace and reconciliation are major foci for CDRI, and that human rights concerns are the primary focus of the government of Sweden, the MTR team recognises the importance of CDRI's ability to combine and manoeuvre between its close relations with policy makers and its need for an independent stance to engage in and contribute to policy-related debates and activities, including providing evidence that can enhance the accountability of duty bearers.

1.3 METHODS

The evaluation methodology began with an inception phase in which, through a review of documentation and initial discussion with the Swedish Embassy, the MTR worked to understand CDRI's overall theory of change and determine the parameters of the evaluation from the perspective of the Swedish embassy. In the inception report a detailed matrix was developed with slightly revised evaluation questions and proposed data sources and analytic foci. This matrix is included in the inception report in annex three. The adjusted evaluation questions have been addressed in this report merged under key themes to avoid repetition. It should be noted that the adjusted questions were categorised under the OECD/DAC criteria, but are only loosely aligned with these as the emphasis has been on addressing the issues raised in the ToRs for the MTR (see annex one).

Interviews with a broad range of staff, Board members, stakeholders and independent observers, and a document review have been used to assess the different perspectives on the nature of the theory of change through which CDRI is perceived to work towards the achievement of objectives. Interviews and a document review were also used to assess the extent to which CDRI research outputs had led to intended outcomes, and the factors that determined CDRI's successes and failures in this regard. A major factor that emerged in the MTR is independence, both actual and perceived.

The MTR's assessment of outcomes in policy influence has looked at how policies are expected to be influenced in terms of the following areas: attitudinal change, discursive commitments (i.e. the language used to frame arguments for a given policy),

procedural change, policy content, and behavioural change (including policy implementation).²

The MTR team interviewed staff, management, funders and Board members. The team reviewed CDRI organisational manuals and minutes of various meetings and documents on the parameters and trends in capacity development in relation to human resource management (including special attention to staff retention). It also examined organisational development with respect to structures for the assurance of quality in research (including the internal peer review process and structured advice for junior and senior researchers).

In addition to looking at internal capacity development, interviews with governmental and civil society actors elicited assessment of CDRI outcomes, including its success in fostering a broader environment for evidence based policy formation. This was related to how effective dissemination/outreach has been, and even more importantly the extent to which CDRI's work has fostered a culture of research and respect for evidence amid a highly polarised and polemical political atmosphere.

Overall the achievement of results intended in CDRI's theory of change was assessed through a modified 'outcome harvesting' approach. Using the data collection methods described above, the MTR team sought to elicit what stakeholders see to be the central accomplishments or changes, positive or negative, in the current funding period, vis-à-vis CDRI institutional objectives. The analysis then worked back along 'influence pathways' to CDRI to assess its specific or accumulated contribution from many angles. Assessment of CDRI has paid focused attention to contextual factors affecting research needs, demands, opportunities and challenges, particularly in relation to key development and political events in Cambodia.

The quality of a sample of research outputs was assessed against a set of criteria including policy relevance, potential utility and scientific rigour (see annex five). The sample focused on the following areas: Climate change, natural resources and livelihoods; decentralisation and civil society; and labour. The background paper: Vision 2030 ASEAN, and assorted other background papers on integration into the Greater Mekong Sub-region were also included in the sample.

The team assessed the research reports based on the following indicators of 'quality' (dependent upon the relevant contextual information available):

² Jones, Harry (2011) A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Policy Influence. ODI Background Note February 2011.

- Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy. This refers to the degree to which the articles, papers, or briefs, offer relevant insights, provide useful summaries of, or the consolidate existing knowledge, give critical analyses of conditions relevant to a policy area, point out gaps, or address some other policy relevant issue.
- Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) appear as particular points of inquiry or significantly inform the analysis.
- Timeliness in relation to current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse. This point considers the timeliness of the issue in general and the extent to which it addresses specific points of debate in the policy discourse at the time of preparation.
- Added value refers to the degree to which the document reviewed brings something new to the discussion on policy in Cambodia, building on work already done and applying knowledge and experience from other sources. Anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia either to build on or to redirect the discourse (to the extent possible based on citations and range of knowledge of the MTR team).
- Extent to which the research is anchored in the international research and policy discourse on the given topic. This can involve three different bodies of international literature: critical social and development theory; international literature developing agreed on theoretical perspectives; policy and implementation examples from other development contexts.
- Claims for results are consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises. Assessing outputs according to their own internal criteria and respecting that criteria in evaluating the output according to all other indicators is the foundation of fair critique.
- Accessibility for intended target audience. Since CDRI has many diverse target audiences, the MTR assessed English language publications for accessibility by readers at a proficiency level at which they can work in their field in English. It considered both verbal assessments and the degree of expressed need for Khmer language publications as indicator of quality of Khmer language publications.
- Gender. The MTR considered outputs treating gender as a focal point in the research question and as a mainstreamed ‘cross-cutting’ issue.

In addition, three citation searches were carried out.

The MTR was undertaken in three phases, inception, data collection and analysis/drafting. The objective of the inception phase was to develop the focus and the methodology for implementing the assignment in agreement with the Embassy of Sweden. Four main activities were undertaken:

1. Methodology development, which included initial review of CDRI’s theory of change as defined in key documents (particularly the Strategic Plan 2011-2015)

and defining key concepts, reassessing the evaluation questions, further development of data collection methods and criteria for assessing the evaluation questions, including research quality and impact.

2. Initial desk-review of CDRI outputs and other documentation in accordance with the evaluation questions.
3. Skype-meeting with the Embassy of Sweden to assess information requirements, agree on overall evaluation methodology and plan the visit to Cambodia.
4. The inception report was submitted to the Embassy of Sweden and CDRI for comments and was approved with minor corrections (see annex three).

The main data collection took place during the team leader's mission to Cambodia (February 9-21). This mission involved the following:

1. Interviews with CDRI management and staff.
2. Interviews with CDRI Board members, representatives of Cambodian government, one representative of the private sector, a selection of development partners/multilateral organisations, civil society organisations, and other institutes and universities in Cambodia. The selection of individuals was made in consultation with CDRI.
3. A small number of additional follow-up interviews.
4. Review of selected CDRI research outputs.
5. Review of CDRI internal documents and systems.
6. A brief field visit to one research site.
7. Presentation of preliminary findings to the Embassy of Sweden and CDRI.

The interviews were based on semi-structured guides for different categories of interviewees. These guides were based on the evaluation questions above.

The analysis and drafting phase has included the following tasks:

1. Analysis of the collected data and drafting of the draft report.
2. Submission of the draft report to the Embassy of Sweden and CDRI.
3. Incorporation of comments and writing of the final report.
4. Submission of the final report.

1.4 LIMITATIONS

Any attempt to attribute changes in policies to research is fraught with limitations. Verifying the extent to which any particular input has influenced a particular policy, especially in a highly politicised and largely informal process such as the one in Cambodia is especially difficult. The MTR was not present in the conferences, meetings and informal dinners where policies are discussed. The MTR team has had to rely on recalled accounts of these processes, the descriptions of participants regarding the contribution of CDRI representatives and its reception, and the perceptions of partners regarding the influence of CDRI research overall.

The MTR has also relied on the perceptions of CDRI's contribution to policy discussions offered by those who were not privy to apparently pivotal events. Civil society organisations are not part of the inner circle of public policy formation, but they do exert significant influence. Their perceptions of the credibility and usefulness of CDRI's work is related to their perceptions of the extent to which CDRI provides a sufficiently independent and forceful voice. This is important precisely because they are not always present where that voice is being used.

This concern has significant bearing on who uses whose research to influence policy formation and how. For many of those interviewed who felt it important to keep a dialogue going with all sectors of society the perception that CDRI is not independent led to a concern that citing their research could alienate other partners. By the same token, government officials note that the high level government perception that civil society research leans in support of the opposition party constrains their ability to cite civil society organisations' (CSO) reports on relevant issues. The fact that these government officials tend to cite CDRI but not CSOs contributes to the perception of pro-government bias by those CSOs, and so the circle goes.

The different kinds of perceptions hold different weight in analysis. The MTR describes these layered perceptions, with the crucial distinctions, caveats and mitigating factors acknowledged. Perceptions can be used as evidence for analysis in and of themselves when they are understood as 'social facts'³ i.e., when people offer them as (albeit partial) explanations for their own observable actions (who gets invited, who gets hired, who gets cited, who reads/follows whom, how people talk about each other/organisations, who collaborates with whom). Perceptions by insiders regarding how effective an argument has been in the context of a particular meeting or conference is, to the degree it can be trusted as sincere and is echoed by others, a reasonable indicator of influence at that limited level.

However, perceptions of influence on policy are less useful the further away the speaker is from the policy-makers' actual process in affiliation as well as practical involvement. Perceptions of CDRI's independence or bias (or that of civil society, the government, international finance institutions (IFIs), the Board, etc. for that matter) is in no way evidence of actual independence or bias. However, the MTR emphasises that, whilst the selection of interviewees and documents reviewed by CDRI and the MTR team is believed to be reasonably representative, it remains a particular selection of stakeholders, stronger in some sectors than others (the private sector and universities were weakly represented).

³ A 'social fact' is an idea held in common by many members of a group that as such comes to have coercive power. Durkheim. 1895. *The Rules of Sociological Method*, explained in *Emile Durkheim: An Introduction to Four Major Works*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1986. Pp. 60-81.

Tracking outputs back from outcomes and triangulation between interviews, documents, policies produced, invitee lists, etc. in addition to attention to the context of varied perceptions mitigates some of the shortcomings mentioned. This leads to a limitation of the MTR that is related to concerns expressed by the Swedish embassy, that CDRI has lacked effective outcome and impact indicators. To a significant degree, the reliance on recollections and perceptions described above is related to the lack of monitoring data at the outcome level (and even weak data collection on proxy indicators, such as the various formal and informal meetings and engagements with different stakeholders in the policy process).

Thus, while the MTR cannot pass definitive and rigorous judgements on some aspects of the outcomes, among other possible benefits, it is hoped that the analysis and its conclusions will contribute to CDRI's efforts to negotiate its practical challenges, define its theory of change and develop indicators of policy influence.

2 Relevance

2.1 INDEPENDENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

The relevance of the work of a policy research institution in a politically highly polarised country such as Cambodia is related to the extent to which it has maintained a balance between independence and engagement. The MTR uncovered a diverse range of perceptions regarding CDRI's complex balancing process.

Governmental officials interviewed felt that CDRI has chosen its approach extremely well. They all expressed the view that CDRI presents what are often strong criticisms in highly constructive ways. As CDRI is viewed as a constructive and even loyal (rather than polemical) critic, this allows these officials to, for example, cite documents and invite researchers to policy discussions without the danger of disrupting incidents or the risk that participating officials would be seen as disloyal to the government. CDRI's way of communicating critique in the form of educational policy forums (as opposed to confrontational advocacy) was seen as a sign of the relevance of CDRI's approach to maintaining its independence.

IFIs generally concurred with their colleagues in the government and saw it as significant that CDRI was often the lone representative of Cambodian organisations outside the government invited to major policy discussions. They noted that CDRI was very outspoken in these meetings, i.e., that CDRI retained its independent voice, but presented this critique in a way that did not alienate the intended audience.

Informants outside the government were aware of this close relationship and understood it to be CDRI's strategy to influence policy; also that this strategy could help CDRI maintain access to government. However civil society and donor interviewees offered mixed views on whether this was a problem for CDRI independence or not, depending on the extent to which they saw this pragmatic approach as yielding significant benefits in terms of policy influence. One civil society representative interviewed pointed out that CSOs oriented towards human rights tended to question CDRI independence, whereas those involved primarily with service provision did not.

The differences of assessment emerge around eight main points:

1. CDRI's preference for non-confrontational forums designed as educational or informational or feedback events: Some interviewees saw this as too conciliatory to the government—and too easily ignored or manipulated in practice. This because they understand that even well-meaning high ranking officials may not communicate, explain, or defend unpopular ideas in interactions with higher level decision-makers. They judged CDRI in effect, not independent enough.

2. The nature of follow-up after those events to ensure that reports and conference notes do not just end up ‘on the shelf’: Some, especially the IFIs, saw this as a unique strength of CDRI as it enabled them to more consistently push difficult issues. CSO interviewees, especially for those not privy to invitation-only discussions, expressed concern that limited exposure of government officials to CDRI research, and perceived intermittent dissemination to CSOs was not enough to reinforce the uptake of substantive CDRI research.

3. The relative advantage or disadvantage of elite informal gatherings over public advocacy and public engagement: CDRI’s presence at gatherings providing informal access to government officials was often cited by IFIs, multilaterals and donors as a sign of government respect for CDRI and an indication that CDRI had ways to effectively communicate findings and recommendations that would be seen as overly confrontational in more public fora. However, this was cited by some civil society representatives as an indication of CDRI’s participation in a culture of patronage (non-transparency) suggesting inadequate independence.

4. The perceived degree to which real and perceived affiliations with government officials resulted in self-censorship, and a lack of transparency: Several interviewees expressed concerns that the constitution of the Board (with some members closely associated with the government) affected the selection of research topics, the opting for broad critiques rather than detailed critique of policy options, and an imbalanced approach to dissemination. Those who raised this issue also mentioned the fact that the government provides the land for CDRI’s office free of charge as a factor that could inhibit independence.

5. The perceived degree to which CDRI’s limited engagement with civil society organisations reflects a bias toward government, or at least a self-censorship: Civil society organisations appear to be split on this issue. However, interviewees from advocacy and human rights organisations in civil society saw the need for evidence based public platforms and debates as especially crucial at this point in time in Cambodia. They saw a role for CDRI in producing critical information, but that more balanced outreach would be dependent on taking more proactive steps to enhance accessibility for action-oriented users of CDRI findings (i.e., those who are unlikely to read research reports or even formal policy briefs).

6. Assessment of the political economy analyses on the range of policy issues: A few interviewees suggested that CDRI avoids political economy analyses, while others point to the detailed descriptions of power relationships especially at the sub-national level in many CDRI reports.

7. The degree to which the dependence on commissioned studies influences the focus and findings of CDRI research: Interviewees that had a sense of CDRI’s work in this regard generally felt that CDRI was not prone to ‘telling donors what they want to hear’, but also that this was inevitably a risk. The existence of a significant level of core funding (from Sweden) was widely recognised as being very important in giving CDRI the space it needs to set its own agenda and thereby maintain independence. On the other hand, some have noted that CDRI tends to frame its analyses within concepts used by donors (e.g., around social protection and rural devel-

opment), which may not be well aligned with Cambodian concerns. This does not necessarily involve less independent analyses, but could isolate CDRI from the national discourse and inhibit the framing of questions in a way generated from the local context. This view was not confirmed by governmental interviewees. However, this may reflect the fact that the MTR team interviewed government officials who are relatively aware of and are themselves working with these international concepts.

8. Finally, the degree to which the focus and language of reports is seen to obscure or neglect ‘difficult’ topics: Some interviewees expressed concerns about independence in relation to what was not being addressed in the research (especially land issues), and some interviewees felt that CDRI focused on what the government has accomplished (rather than what it failed to accomplish), thereby presenting a biased picture.

In assessing these varied perceptions, the MTR tends to concur that CDRI has in some instances tended to err on the side of caution, most notably in relation to its relative silence on land issues, discrimination, political patronage, and some migration issues. A strategy in the structure of some written outputs to use an update of government progress in policy production to define the direction of discussion, or as a ‘response’ to the articulation of policy-related issues, can contribute to this perception. This weakens the credibility of some outputs and has meant that some areas that would seem essential to policy dialogue have not been addressed.

The MTR team feels that the critique that CDRI avoids political economy is exaggerated. CDRI produces some excellent political economy analyses.⁴ While the studies of economy tend toward a technical or deterministic understanding of economic processes, a few are informed by a sensitivity to political economy.⁵

However, CDRI has been selective in its application of a political economy approach, e.g., not addressing land issues in areas of research where these issues are central, sometimes leading to an ‘elephant in the room that nobody is talking about’ situation.

The MTR team notes further that much of the work on less ‘difficult’ topics (e.g., water is less controversial than land, and critique is welcomed in relation to issues related to decentralisation, education reform, etc.) is highly critical and shows no indication of self censorship. The overall impression is that CDRI can maintain strong

⁴ For example in publications since 2011: Gatekeepers in Local Politics: Political Parties in Cambodia and their Gender Policy; Impact of Decentralisation on Cambodia’s Urban Governance; The Local Governance of Common Pool Resources: The Case of Irrigation Water.

⁵ For example: Assessing Economic Inclusiveness in Cambodia: Consumption and Non-consumption Pro-poor approach.

independence when pursuing most of its research portfolio. However, there are a few problematic areas wherein CDRI runs the danger of losing overall credibility due to self censorship.

There is no consensus regarding whether CDRI has found the ‘right’ position on the continuum between independence and engagement. Achieving and maintaining that balance appears to be a complex negotiating process that requires sensitivity to the shifting political climate, flexibility, confidence in the solidity of relationships, networks, and reputation built up over the past 2 decades---a persistence in and a refined skill in reframing polemical questions as problems of governance to be addressed through research, evidence-based analysis, a comparative investigation of like situations, and policy development.

2.2 RELEVANCE IN RELATION TO USER NEEDS AND CAPACITIES

The MTR assessed relevance in regard to users in 4 areas: 1. accessibility and clarity of written text (including language); 2. accessibility vis-à-vis dissemination technologies; 3. awareness of state-of-the-field; and 4. timeliness.

1. Accessibility of written outputs: There is a general consensus that CDRI outputs are largely user friendly. Virtually all interviewees who have read CDRI reports said that the reports are clear. There is a view amongst government and IFIs that the quantity of output in Khmer is sufficient. A few interviewees from CSOs, one a librarian and one discussing the use of CDRI reports as evidence in their own outputs, suggested that Khmer language reports open the material up to a wider student population and help maintain the professional Khmer face in bilingual publications. The CDRI staff mentioned the inevitable difficulties of translation, especially in technical fields.

Several interviewees noted that the longer reports can be seen as ‘academic.’ All thought this adds to CDRI credibility as a research institute and that policy briefs and other shorter research products make them accessible to less ‘academic’ audiences. Some thought that the academic character of the publications needed further digesting and publicising to be useful to action-oriented, light-reading CSOs.

2. Dissemination technologies and fora: Many governmental and civil society actors get their information through other channels than research reports and policy briefs. Interviewees reported they use mass media, social media, seminars and discussions in other fora such as meetings of CSO networks. CDRI organises a significant number of seminars and presentations, and a regular programme of national and sub-national dissemination fora. By both necessity and design, not everyone (and not many) attend high level meetings including, considering the relative number of CSOs in Phnom Penh, the Outlook Conference, where the dissemination of research and a productive debate might be expected to occur. A significant proportion of potential users are not being reached.

CDRI's use of various fora to have open and informal discussions with governmental actors and donors is noted by interviewees as a good way of ensuring that information is provided in a useful manner for those who are unlikely to read reports. All CSO interviewees acknowledged a need for evidence-based research in advocacy and programming. CDRI's efforts to serve this need through technologies that targeted them more directly (Facebook, twitter, consultative and dissemination fora) were perceived as insufficient.

3. State of the field: Two programme officers outside of CDRI who have attended dissemination fora with CSO implementers of policies and programmes reported that while the research regarding the problem was solid, CDRI made recommendations that the NGOs in that sector had already tried and that had not worked for them. The recommendations were seen to have no added value and so were not useful. They suggested that ongoing dialogue with NGOs who work in the field, beginning in the planning stages of research, would permit ongoing work to inform CDRI research and analysis.

4. Timeliness: IFIs and government praised CDRI as responsive to questions and quick to produce their own reports. For example, with regard to the Vision 2030 process, CDRI's input arrived in time to have influence on the draft content. The speed of their response assisted government officials in drafting their five year strategies as well. The Board Chairman mentioned an example of a similar responsiveness to immediate need when the Deputy Prime Minister requested material on the private sector for a meeting with the Ambassador of Malaysia. He noted that whereas large IFI reports are usually out of date, CDRI's bi-weekly bulletins are useful in a case like this. Another government official suggested that when government data is late he can rely on CDRI.

2.3 RELEVANCE IN RELATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES

Relevance in relation to human rights principles is reflected in CDRI's written outputs, its contributions to institutional capacity development and outreach. CDRI staff and stakeholders noted that talking about human rights using the vocabulary of rights could be sensitive since the terms evoke the current volatility around political rights. However, they assess addressing issues using the terminology and/or guiding principles of accountability, participation, discrimination, and transparency to be less sensitive.

Participation

Findings from the MTR team's brief trip to the field suggest that local stakeholders see the CDRI intervention contributing to grassroots participation, and local officials' ability to fulfil their role in resource management. An effort is made to include wom-

en in farmer's associations (see discussion of discrimination and gender below). The scale of participation achieved among farmers and villagers, however, is not clear.

An important aspect of participation is the engagement of stakeholders in research processes. CDRI senior researchers recognise that their credibility and outcomes rely on this and great efforts are made to engage sub-national government and farmer organisations in research efforts. There are notable limits, however, given the polarisation in Cambodian society, wherein engagement with one group of stakeholders may alienate others. For this reason participation of government representatives in one event may require separate engagement with civil society.

Research on governance issues effectively highlights opportunities for and obstacles to greater participation within the sub-national relationships between rights holders and duty bearers. The research pays considerably less attention to presenting the voices of members of the general public; their concerns are often represented through the observations of local level duty bearers and some citing of other studies. Ethnic groups, the variety of religious groups and groups loosely considered lesbian, gay, bi-, trans- or inter-sexual are almost entirely absent or, at least, remain unidentified.

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency is important for CDRI in that they strive to create a more open dialogue about key issues. The extent to which broad transparency is achieved is related to the breadth of voices represented in the policy dialogue that is fostered. The overall finding of the MTR is that the research as a whole brings together a powerful and important meta-message that inclusive growth relies on transparent and accountable governance at both national and sub-national levels.

Facilitating the use of the research is an ongoing challenge. The written outputs contribute to a broad atmosphere of transparency in that they are available to all. The diverse outreach efforts and summary reports on them make both CDRI policy analyses available to a wide range of stakeholders indiscriminately.

Interviewees who engage regularly in formal and informal policy circles with government officials say officials appear open to hearing about problems and gaps in the government's performance from CDRI, and since the 2013 elections, to be asserting a general commitment to reform related to greater accountability. They suggest that CDRI's role in promoting transparency about governmental shortcomings has been and will be useful in supporting government efforts to build a social contract in the wake of social unrest and declining electoral support.

The Development Research Forum has potential for widening transparency. It endeavours to bring more university voices into the conversation on policy. This is important because, while some staff at universities do research, the universities in Cambodia are generally not seen to be research oriented or contributors to policy. A diver-

sity of institutions appear to be represented, but the limited level of participation on the Development Research Forum website indicates insufficient outreach.

Some interviewees from civil society organisations expressed concern that CDRI's informal networking to influence government, while reflecting a possibly effective access to policy makers, may contribute to a general lack of transparency in Cambodian governance because it does not contribute to open political discourse.

Overall, CDRI documents do much to identify gaps requiring policy attention, definition of roles, and point out problem areas in sub-national government, water governance, higher education systems and the health care system. The relationship and social contract between duty bearers and rights holders is given considerable and in-depth analysis in CDRI research (although rarely using human rights terminology or in relation to particularly sensitive topics).

Non-discrimination

Non-discrimination is rarely explicit in CDRI's work due to a tendency to apply relatively undifferentiated analyses of 'communities' in terms of, e.g., who actually engages in associations, receives services, etc. Aspects of ethnicity and issues regarding the Christian, Muslim and Vietnamese populations are notably absent in CDRI research. Although poverty and inclusion are a focus, it is not always very clear who the poor are and the factors that lead to their marginalisation. Other existing studies that have taken up these issues are generally not referred to in CDRI research. CDRI researchers have begun to investigate inter-generational relationships in terms of discrimination against youth.

Gender is the aspect of discrimination that is best addressed in research outputs, but not in a sufficiently consistent manner. There are some excellent studies specifically treating gender-related questions in particular sectors, but in studies with other driving research questions, gender is not well mainstreamed and is often glaringly absent.

Furthermore, some of CDRI's very useful work on gender, such as the 2014 study on women's participation in political parties at local level, is not reaching key actors among CSOs who are in a position to influence policy. Overall, the gender research is not contributing to the public discourse as it should. Civil society representatives the MTR team spoke with, positioned to influence and support evidence-based advocacy, were not aware of the CDRI gender studies.

3 Effectiveness

3.1 ADHERENCE TO STRATEGIC PLANS AND WORKPLANS

Research staff and senior management report that the strategic plan is respected and followed. There is no doubt that CDRI ‘owns’ the strategy, which is fairly unusual in a research institute given the ‘centrifugal’ pressures within any research institution with reliance on donors and commissioners with varied agendas and a cadre of researchers with diverse personal interests and skills. The MTR team judges that the credit for this strategic clarity goes to management. In addition, CDRI is constituted by a group of long-term, core staff, working with management, who care about research, have similar ideas about CDRI’s role in Cambodia, and are cognisant of the realities of what it takes to make an institute work in this environment.

The five themes in the CDRI strategic plan are reflected in the organisational structure of the research units. These sections take up new issues as their time, budget and opportunities for both new programmatic funding and shorter term commissioned studies allow. Coordinators of the units, other senior researchers and management report that they do not accept commissioned assignments that lie outside of the strategic plan. There are some concerns, however, that the variety of topics that are undertaken due to the broad scope of the strategic priorities encourages researchers to become generalists. This reduces their self confidence and their own skills as specialists within their own areas of research.

The workplans are widely reported to be followed well. The few negative comments received concerning deviations and late outputs were related to competing time pressures due to short-term commissioned work. CDRI researchers mentioned scheduling issues, including the uncertainty and rescheduling imposed by research partners and those commissioning studies, as making stricter planning difficult. Finally, the programme coordinators and management noted that the success of young researchers in winning fellowships to study abroad contributes to challenges in following workplans. When someone leaves a project in the middle, the new researcher who takes his or her place requires time to get oriented to the project. Time is lost due to re-recruitment and training in this kind of staff change-over.

3.2 QUALITY OF RESEARCH OUTPUTS

The quality of a sample⁶ of research outputs was assessed against a set of criteria including policy relevance, potential utility and scientific rigour. The sample focused on the following areas: Climate change, natural resources and livelihoods; decentralisation and civil society; and labour. The background paper: Vision 2030 ASEAN and a few overviews related to regional integration were also included in the sample. In addition, a brief citation search was carried out on three commonly used academic indexes: Academic One File, resulting in 15 citations 3 of which were published in the review period (2011-present), PAIS International, resulting in 11 hits, 4 of which were published in the review period; and EBSCO, resulting in 51 hits, 9 of which were published between 2011-present. The search was for mention anywhere in the text. Two mentions were in the author's 'bio' field referring to the Research Manager of CDRI. An effort was made to count doubles only once. All in this review period seem to be peer-reviewed journals.⁷

Topics

Groundwater quality - 1
 Land tenure - 1
 Trafficking -1
 Decentralisation/Indigenous -1
 Economics (Menon citing his own CDRI report) -1
 Natural resources/political discourse - 2
 Agriculture/law (Khmer author) -1
 Food/stunting children - 1
 Health debt - 1
 Animal disease and livelihoods -1
 Foreign aid/investment -1
 Climate- 1
 Cambodia-China relations- 1
 Water/livelihoods/governance -1

⁶ Summary assessments of each selected report is included in annex five.

⁷ Journals in which publications citing CDRI appeared 2011-2013 from 3 academic indexes: *Geographical Research, Human Geography, Asian Studies Review, Pacific Review, Pacific Affairs, AsiaPacific Issues, Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy, International Archives of Medicine, BMC Health Services Research, Pacific Affairs.*

Overall, The CDRI publications are strong in describing the overall situation (often pointing out serious problems in precise but unemotional terms), describing government policies in regard to international standards/consensus on common problems, and gaps in the government progress. They are strong on documenting and critiquing the implementation of recent structural reforms, especially at sub-national levels and from the point of view of government authorities. The publications describe the Cambodian situation in the terms of the ongoing international policy discourse, but they sometimes miss opportunities to use CDRI's 'comparative advantage' as a team of researchers with training in international perspectives and both deep local knowledge and wide ranging local access. The publications are uneven in analysing the affects of government policy and international trends in policy on regular citizens and everyday life. Of the sample the MTR was given, the broad and deep knowledge of especially the sub-national level of government policy and practice is evident.

Important for understanding labour issues, but treated only in part in our disaggregated discussion below, CDRI is building a set of background papers toward an understanding of ASEAN economic integration and inclusive growth in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region. CDRI was commissioned by the Asian Development Bank Institute to produce a Cambodia country background paper for the ASEAN 2030 Growing together for Economic Prosperity—The Challenges study. Its introduction suggests reading it with the Cambodia Development Dynamics report. In terms of integrating human rights analysis, the ASEAN 2030 paper mentions the protests of CSOs regarding the non-conditionality of Chinese investment. It focuses on the benefits of integration such as infrastructure development and employment (garment industry); and identifies human resource development as a major issue that requires interventions in education and especially vocational education. Gender, migration and other forms of discrimination do not appear as issues in this paper. Reading the ASEAN 2030 report together with the Cambodia Development Dynamics provides a broader perspective, but the section on civil society in this otherwise strong and well lauded publication is critical in a way that seems to reflect a problematic distance and disconnect from that sector. The 2012-2013 Annual Development Review includes contributions to this discussion, including one on education relevant for the future labour market.

The growing collection of work does take a 'pro-poor' perspective. It includes an overview (Assessing Economic Inclusiveness in Cambodia: Consumption and Non-Consumption Pro-poor Approach) that makes a measured but significant argument for a human rights based approach to economic development, even though human rights are not explicitly mentioned. This paper was produced in the context of CDRI's collaboration in the Greater Mekong Sub-region Development Analysis Network (and includes country studies from Laos, Vietnam, China, Thailand). It is accompanied by an assessment of trends on Growth, Development and Inclusion in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. The 2013-2014 Annual Development Review also addresses the issue.

Only a few articles directly related to labour were part of the review sample. The MTR included the sample education study in this category given the concern with the changing labour market's demands on the educational system, a finding to which several interviewees have referred. The regional sample, and also economics studies are included here given their attention to current shifts in farming as a livelihood and their focus on wage labour and poverty levels as Cambodia enters low middle-income status, and also given their discussions of education and vocational training (see section 4.6 below). A few articles published before 2011, so not included in this review contribute to CDRI's growing base on this issue and the early work on migration was mentioned by at least one interviewee.

The fact that CDRI is a training ground for young researchers/writers is evident in the findings regarding variable quality. This should therefore not be interpreted as indicating overall concerns about quality deficiencies, but is problematic given that there is no structure in the publications for distinguishing preparatory papers (where younger researchers' outputs may be featured more) from full working papers and final reports. Such a differentiation could provide implicit clarity regarding which papers represent part of the training process and which are presented as final, professional products.

The team assessed a selection of 32 research reports and articles (see annex five) based on the following indicators of 'quality' (dependent upon the relevant contextual information available):

- Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy. This refers to the degree to which the articles, papers, or briefs, offer relevant insights, useful summaries of or the consolidation of existing knowledge, critical analyses of conditions relevant to a policy area, point out gaps, or address some other policy relevant issue.
- Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) appear as particular points of inquiry or significantly inform the analysis.
- Timeliness in relation to current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse. This point considers the timeliness of the issue in general and the extent to which it addresses specific points of debate in the policy discourse at the time of preparation.
- Added value refers to the degree to which the document reviewed brings something new to the discussion, building on work already done and applying knowledge and experience from other sources.
- Anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia either to build on or redirect the discourse.
- Extent to which the research is anchored in the international research and policy discourse on the given topic. This can involve three different bodies of international literature: critical social and development theory; international literature

developing agreed on theoretical perspectives; policy and implementation examples from other development contexts.

- Claims for results are consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises. Assessing outputs according to their own internal criteria, and respecting that criteria in evaluating the output according to all other indicators is the foundation of fair critique.
- Accessibility for intended target audience. Since CDRI has many diverse target audiences, the MTR assessed English language publications for accessibility by readers at a proficiency level at which they can work in their field in English and considered both verbal assessments and the degree of expressed need for Khmer language publications as indicator of quality of Khmer language publications.
- Gender. The MTR considered outputs treating gender as a focal point in the research question; and as a mainstreamed ‘cross-cutting’ issue.

1. Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy (Cambodia/international)

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: The papers as a whole are strong as a cataloguing of issues and practices and some papers present solid anchoring in public policy issues, but analysis is uneven and in some areas critical analysis is missing.

Gender: The sample was uneven. Observation of obstacles or tensions often do not lead to policy-related analyses. Opportunities to challenge or reinterpret received knowledge are insufficiently exploited.

Democratic governance: Overall the CDRI work in this area is strong in describing the theories, goals, and processes of decentralisation on the one hand and the asserted points of view and perceptions of the process among sub-national government officials (including local councillors). It is orientated to government programmes pointing out general gaps in progress toward policy goals. The research presents strong critiques. As the papers contribute to and result in published academic papers, they create a solid body of knowledge reflecting on international political science and related fields. The governance work is strong in the descriptions of actual processes. The body of work is extremely useful to people needing a consolidated picture of the Cambodian case. The studies take advantage of local knowledge to explain local practices through local concepts. They do not demonstrate familiarity with related literature elsewhere in the region. The discussions that are mainly speaking to theory or to a need to clarify concepts such as ‘civil society’ are strong in description of local issues and so very useful as such, but sometimes weaker in theoretical foundation.

Labour: Issues of health, education and migration have been covered in overviews. The work on women in politics is also relevant taking the civil service as an important employment sector. Two on health resources apply for the same reason. One small study (not included in the matrix) on the effect on elders provides a strong window on village-level processes that contributes to policy discussions by challenging conventional thinking on the affects of migration on the people left behind..

2. Claims for results consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: Consistency was uneven, with two studies standing out as being well structured and the others very weak.

Gender: The absence of women informants who are not part of the government structure limits conclusions in the sample. Methodologically, deep attitudes and practices are very difficult to assess through the means of self-reporting surveys and interviews.

Democratic governance: The link between method chosen and theoretical orientation is rarely explained, but the studies usually do what they say they will do, for example, survey political parties on gender decisions--and in a professional manner. Theoretical positioning is often within the current discourse of decentralisation or privatisation (for example) rather than within the literature of debate on forms of policy approaches to economic and social issues. The body of work is especially strong in assessing the goals of government against the perceptions of sub-national governmental implementers.

Labour: Some merely use the government or international policy frames as a framework for description. Other brief targeted articles reflect well thought-out techniques for overviews including small fieldwork-based pieces.

3. Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) are analysed

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: Significant focus on participation, but attention to the role of duty bearers is mixed. Opportunities to discuss discrimination are generally missed.

Gender: In general gives a good overview of current data and the difficulties women encounter in sub-national government. The absence of women who are not part of the government structures limits the depth of vision on power relationships and change regarding gender.

Democratic governance: Attention to the accountability and lack of transparency of duty bearers always appears in summaries of critical papers and reports. In the 2014 Annual Development Review, for example, (not part of the sample for review) one article gives a close critique of the failure of decentralisation to counter top-down governance. However, overall there is weak representation of citizen 'voices' vis-à-vis local government representatives. However, the issue of participation is addressed fairly critically through the reporting of local government officials, and through citing of academic literature critically analysing Cambodian governance. Problems in accountability and transparency are frequently treated as technical issues—tensions or confusions in understanding the new systems. Discrimination beyond the notion of gender is absent.

Labour: Discussion of 'push' factors to migration are very general and do not discuss some possibly sensitive factors. Others like the problem of regulating recruit-

ment are unevenly treated. Using “traditional culture” as an explanatory trope is very problematic for the theory of change, for addressing contemporary resistance to change and the national discourse on the status quo, and for engaging international feminist assumptions on what the future should look like in Cambodia. This is also true for the gender literature. The country assessments for the Greater Mekong Sub-region –Development Analysis Network that articulate a pro-poor approach use Amartya Sen’s ‘capabilities’ approach to human rights and make strong arguments for social protection (and cite a human rights organisation) though without using other aspects of the discourse on rights based approaches.

4. Timeliness in relation to current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: Overview discussions and some studies point out significant gaps in services which may inform climate change policy arenas, but it is difficult to discern the niche of these studies in these processes in relation to other research underway. Water studies seemed particularly well timed with the launching of a specific water policy.

Gender: Policy related questions, where raised, tend to be geared at general principles and directions.

Democratic governance: As a general topic, this work is all timely. The papers on governance in particular sectors clarify issues of relevance to current debates. However, particular policy questions do not drive this research and recommendations tend to be general, calling attention to gaps rather than assessing current or different methods/options for addressing these gaps.

Labour: Conclusions/recommendations sometimes seem stimulated by a discussion in the research, but not emerging from a policy-driven question. However, this work is clearly just beginning to build a store of CDRI knowledge on the subject and can be seen as exploratory.

5. Added value and anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: Of the five studies presented for review most were found to be well grounded in the international research and grounded empirically in the local discourse, though often without applying a critical analysis relevant for policy-making. Overall it is the empirical contribution that shines in this category. In some instances the strong empirical data and collection of relevant literature is weakly analysed.

Gender and democratic governance: In general this body of work misses the opportunity to find synergies with research commissioned by CSOs in order to supplement local fieldwork and build a fine grained picture. Orientation is lacking in relation to building on the literature on similar issues in the region. Added value within the local policy debate is difficult to assess because the research makes little reference to the broad (admittedly fragmented and uneven) advocacy and service-

provider/programme generated discourse. In both gender and decentralisation/deconcentration, later articles prepared for international publication or reflecting partnerships of international mentors and senior CDRI researchers clearly benefit from a consolidation of the earlier works.

Labour: The use of the literature review seems uneven and is not always visible in the published papers. The Cambodia country assessments for the ASEAN and Greater Mekong Sub-regional work that take an economic approach do not seem to draw from other kinds of research that could help strengthen its ‘pro-poor’ arguments, but they do challenge current IFI approaches and conventional economic analyses.

6. Extent to which the research is anchored in the international research and policy discourse on the given topic

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: Most papers were found to be well grounded, particularly the earlier water papers. The treatment of international literature is sometimes an overview of aid claims rather than a critical discussion of relevance to policy.

Gender and democratic governance: CDRI research on gender and governance consistently refer to published and professionally respected international scholars and theories. This is important for publishing in peer-reviewed publications outside Cambodia. The references to the broader academic literature about Cambodia (small as it is) is sometimes lacking, as is the literature on Southeast Asia and the critical academic literature on gender and development.

Labour: The frame of reference is often government documents, information and policy and publications of the IFIs. Theoretical frames are lacking when formulating policy questions.

7. Accessibility for intended target audience

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: Papers are for the most part clearly presented. Complex issues were well served by diagrams. Weakness in structured analyses occasionally make it difficult to discern a clear policy message.

Gender and democratic governance: The samples were mostly clearly presented and points relevant to policy extrapolated from statistical data.

Labour- The ASEAN and Greater Mekong Sub-regional papers can be dense, and would require simplified language or Khmer versions for some users. The others seem reasonably accessible.

8. Gender mainstreamed

Agriculture/water/climate change/natural resources: The sample was, with one exception⁸, largely gender blind.

Gender and democratic governance: Attention to gender in these studies is uneven, with gender ignored completely in some reports. Sometimes received knowledge is cited in areas in which grassroots studies (including CDRI's own experience in the field) would offer a more refined, possibly mitigating or contradictory view.

Labour: The regional work does not disaggregate gender issues. For the migration work, there are some key aspects as yet left untouched regarding, for example, domestic labour both in-country and in cross-border migration.

CDRI has produced a handbook on Research Project Development and Management that has been distributed to universities. A course using the book was well received and well attended by CDRI staff and universities. This is a basically solid guide to putting together and managing research projects, however, there are three basic areas where it is weak.

First it seems geared toward commissioned studies alone, particularly for work for which the research problem is mandated by the commissioning agency (for example the matrix refers to the "terms of reference" for studies, which is problematic in relation to promoting academic freedom of expression). This is a major concern for the long term professional development of the senior staff and for the long term sustainability of CDRI if greater efforts are to be made to access pure research funding and 'get off of the treadmill' of commissioned studies.

There is related to the second weak spot. The description of academic research either demeans it as 'for students' or dismisses it as not really relevant for policy. The opposition between academic and policy research is false and potentially very problematic. Various kinds of academic research and writing, including that which serves or addresses only theory, can be relevant for policy. A narrow perspective (and a narrow adherence to 'terms of reference') risks missing the need to establish a deeper and critical understanding of the assumptions underpinning policies at the outset, and the sometimes foregone conclusions applied in formulation by different actors. Researchers need to recognise the range of potential entry points for policy analysis and the importance of a broad grasp of complex issues.

⁸ Nang Phirun, 2013

A third weakness is the guidance on how to integrate local knowledge (a.k.a. ‘Khmer studies’) into the research. The treatment of ‘gender’ is a case in point, since gender stereotypes and representative ‘traditional’ documents may constitute part of a nationalist discourse in a reified form along with the notion of the ‘patrimonial state’ that is used to defend rather than combat gender bias and nepotism as the ‘traditional Khmer way’.

3.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Different points were raised by each set of users and by the researchers themselves as influencing ability to ensure quality, and with that CDRI’s ability to maintain its role as Cambodia’s pre-eminent policy research institute given the emergence of other institutions and researchers addressing similar themes in-country and internationally.

Management and senior researchers describe quality assurance as being largely related to mentorship/advisory mechanisms within the institution. These consist of bi-monthly research meetings, coordination and advice from the research director, editorial support, and a designated research advisor for specific programmes. Senior researchers express concerns that the quality assurance process is uneven. The Democratic Governance and Economic units have access to relatively ample external expert advice due largely to Swedish support and the expertise of the research director. The other units report difficulty accessing the expertise they need on technical issues (e.g., qualitative methods, research design, subject matter expertise) when they need it, beyond editing or general comments. Since their own level of expertise is high, advice needed is likely to be substantive and specific to a field, method or technical matter, thus requiring ongoing engagement/knowledge of the specific research topic. When these needs arise, internal advisors play a secondary role in relation to external advisors, advisory groups and other feedback mechanisms created by partners and those commissioning the research. The CDRI research director is described as playing a role of reviewing policy relevance and supporting policy-related contacts, but his role is strongest within economics and more macro perspectives. Depending on external advisors has its drawbacks, since contact depends on the advisors’ consistent availability and initiative, which sometimes does not match the needs of the researcher or the timeframe of the project.

3.4 RISK MANAGEMENT AT CDRI

In its support to CDRI the Swedish embassy has identified a set of risks in this support. The following summarises the MTR assessment of these risks.

External risk

Retention and management of internal capacities in a changing job market:

The 2012 review indicated that recruitment and retention systems and policies required improvement, especially given that Cambodians with doctorates are in high

demand in a highly competitive employment market. The situation within CDRI is currently stable, with good levels of staff retention. However, the MTR team judges that there is inadequate strategic direction to respond to the changing situation and there is a risk that the situation may deteriorate in a rapidly changing market.

Independence:

The effectiveness by which efforts to maintain independence is subject to varied interpretations. The MTR judges that this has been well managed, but in the future this aspect of risk mitigation will always generate new challenges and prospects will be strongly influenced by choice of new executive director.

Dependence on commissioned work:

There are no signs of this risk abating. The resource mobilisation strategy lacks sufficient direction regarding how to address this concern.

Internal risk

Adequacy of internal quality control:

Procedures are in place for advice/mentoring, but these are unevenly applied. Internal peer review is weak. Quality control procedures may need to be reconsidered if different types of research partnerships emerge where greater emphasis is placed on, for example, international publications.

Audit process and financial control, procurement, corruption:

No assessment made.

Ownership and capacity to sustain results:

CDRI staff demonstrate pride in the organisation and stability prevails. This is combined with some tensions due to an insufficiently developed staff satisfaction policy.

4 Impact and outcomes

4.1 PATHWAYS TO INFLUENCE POLICIES AND THEIR USE

CDRI's stated core "guiding value" is that objective and high quality research can and should support policy making leading towards sustainable development and with that effective implementation of national strategies and programmes. This section analyses this assumption with attention to the intended and de facto channels through which research is expected to contribute to policies, and ultimate implementation within strategies and programmes. CDRI is working towards this goal at different scales and through different sets of stakeholders in the policy formation process.

Sub-national level

At sub-national level CDRI's pathways to influence are based on efforts to increase awareness of the nature of challenges in implementing policies and dealing with the fragmented and often project-driven processes of providing local services. This awareness is fostered at both local government levels and with communities and community based organisations (including farmer organisations and water users associations). Feedback and the focus on most research reports suggest that attention to CSO-led local processes is generally considerably weaker than engagement with government-led processes, and given the realities wherein CSOs have taken on duty bearers' responsibilities in a large proportion of rural areas this gap is problematic.

One part of the local pathway for influence is CDRI's impressive and indeed unusual commitment to feeding back research to sub-national government and communities. Researcher efforts show notable integrity in ensuring that this is undertaken as planned and considerable effort is devoted to this task. It is however not clear how this feedback is intended to translate into action. As part of efforts to feedback and apply findings at local level, CDRI has used action research, particularly in water governance. CDRI's action research in some ways resembles that of CSOs working with similar issues. A major difference is that CDRI has far better access to government officials at provincial, district and commune levels. Even though CDRI has the ear of these officials, the challenge of providing them with useful actionable advice remains. The MTR team has found that the paths through which this research is intended to influence local change (in general and in the communities themselves) is unclear. One district official interviewed described the approach of addressing a huge and deep seated array of institutional problems in his watershed with small and scattered activities as an "elephant too big to grill", indicating that these very modest transformative initiatives were unlikely to lead to overall systemic change.

Central government

Interviewees from every sector praised CDRI's remarkable success in convening powerful policy makers. CDRI's involvement in the formative meetings that ultimately shaped major reform policies (Vision 2030, Rectangular Strategy 2014-2018 and the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2018) was described as indicative of CDRI's unique capacities and opportunities to turn research outputs into genuine outcomes in terms of changes in policies, practices and behaviour. CDRI has developed and used an extraordinary convening power, primarily among governmental decision makers and development agencies, to mobilise a more open policy formation dialogue. The Outlook Conference has been the annual lynchpin of these efforts. The Conferences have been followed up with the subsequent proactive use of conference decisions, other supporting research, and the spin-off of invitations to informal dialogue to create momentum for broader injection of evidence in what otherwise is often a polemical discourse.

The participation of the prime minister in the Cambodia Outlook Conference is seen as invaluable in ensuring that CDRI research findings are respected and applied at ministerial level. One interviewee mentioned that questioning the research could be equated with disagreeing with the prime minister.

Civil society

In interviews with CSO representatives there was recognition that potential influence pathways through civil society existed, but were not well exploited and generally weak. Some examples were mentioned of engagement with civil society which then contributed to their capacity to understand, advocate and provide services reflecting more informed policy options. But these examples were few. The MTR team sees latent potential for developing these pathways further.

Private sector

The MTR team only had contact with one representative from the private sector (and indeed, it appears that CDRI has had relatively limited contacts with the private sector in general). ANZ bank, CDRI's donor partner on the Outlook Conference expressed positive views regarding their ability to channel CDRI research into their own decision-making and noted that this in turn influenced banking decisions that had broader effects on private sector investments. This year's Outlook Conference included a large number of invitees from the private sector (257 persons).

Broader academia

The Development Research Forum is the main CDRI-led initiative to mobilise broader academia to influence public policy, primarily through greater university engagement. It is a collaborative project with several universities, the Cambodia Economic Institute, the Learning Institute (chaired by H.E. Naron, ex-CDRI board member and now Minister of Education), and the National Institute of Public Health. The Development Research Forum has six interest groups each with approximately five core members each. It also has a 'Facebook style' website to encourage discussions, but

this is not yet very active. The Development Research Forum plans to become its own “independent research coordination institute” at the end of 2015. The Development Research Forum has not yet achieved significant outcomes. The MTR team judges that it is a potentially useful initiative to broaden the pathways to influencing policy, but it is largely unproven and therefore conclusions cannot be drawn regarding the extent to which it may eventually achieve its goals.

4.2 MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES, TRACKING AND LEARNING

In interviews the MTR team found that some significant learning is underway based on experience leading to a tacit understanding of policy influence being exerted (or lack thereof). It is apparent that CDRI staff have an understanding of what constitutes policy research outcomes, but that this has not led to relevant reporting. CDRI undertakes very limited effective documented outcome monitoring. The MTR interprets this gap between awareness and action as indicating insufficient commitment to undertaking such reporting, perhaps due to a discomfort with using qualitative data in reports.

Also, there are no clear signs that outcome monitoring is perceived as being important for learning within the organisation. Tacit awareness about ‘where CDRI stands’ in relation to its role in influencing policy and developing capacities seems to be seen as sufficient for informing management and researchers’ decisions. Given the deficiencies noted in this report in some key areas, and the transition ahead with a new executive director being recruited, the MTR team sees this as problematic and that more formalised feedback loops would constitute a good investment of staff time and resources. Despite the considerable political savvy and awareness of quality research standards in the organisation, the absence of structured reflection on outcomes places too much faith in the ‘common sense’ of CDRI leadership to steer an appropriate course in a highly volatile context.

4.3 INFLUENCE ON POLICIES

Influence on policy discourse

CDRI is seen as providing an informed and credible Cambodian voice that contributes to a genuinely Cambodian discourse on inclusive development. A range of interviewees noted that CDRI can be credited with fostering a discourse where it is explicitly recognised that ‘growth is not enough’ and that inclusivity must be a feature of Cambodian policies. Influence is primarily apparent in the discourse on economic development. It appears that the research on social dimensions does not have the same level of influence as the economic analysis, but in many interviews the rest of the CDRI research portfolio was noted as giving credibility to a discourse that includes social dimensions. However, despite these achievements at the meta-level,

influence on the discourse has been uneven, with outcomes more difficult to identify in sectoral areas.

Influence on policy implementation procedures

It is not possible to verify outcomes in relation to influence in procedures, but interviews suggest that some influence has been achieved on sub-national procedures related to water governance and decentralisation in general. The Minister of Education has noted that CDRI's harsh critique of the chaotic situation in higher education has led to his decision to stop approving diplomas from unaccredited universities. Procedures for managing vocational education have also been said to be changed as a result of CDRI findings.

Of particular note, the procedures for sharing information around policy processes have been changed through activities such as the Outlook Conference. CDRI has been credited with contributing to the inclusion of evidence as a counterweight to policy implementation that has otherwise often been dominated by patronage and polemics.

Influence on policy content

Interviewees perceive that CDRI has had direct influence on specific policies, most notably Cambodia Vision 2030, which has in turn led to related changes in the Rectangular Strategy 2014-2018 and the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2018. It has been noted that the prime minister's speech at the Outlook Conference has legitimised reference to CDRI's research in such a way that other ministers are able to use CDRI findings in specific policy texts.

IFIs that attended the Vision 2030 meetings with CDRI emphasised that CDRI made the argument for giving priority to investments in education despite resistance from the Ministry of Finance. Related to this, another area where CDRI is said to have influenced changes in policy content is by inclusion of attention to how ASEAN integration and greater market competition is leading to demands for higher skilled workers and with that a shift from expansion of higher education to more focus on technical and vocational training. The government is said to have listened to these warnings and adapted policies accordingly.

Influence on policy-related behaviour

Attendance at events where policies are critically discussed based on emerging evidence is in itself is a change in behaviour attributable to CDRI's convening power.

Some observers mentioned that a major transformation in behaviour can be attributed to the ascendancy of younger leaders in the government (especially after the 2013 elections). CDRI has only made a small contribution to the voice of these reform-minded individuals, but some felt that CDRI has made a modest but notable contribution to their ability to argue for more evidence based thinking.

4.4 POSITIONING IN THE REGION

CDRI is well positioned to influence the discourse nationally and regionally on Cambodia's role in the region. High quality outputs have been produced and dialogue initiatives undertaken, most notably hosting and participating in the Greater Mekong Sub-region Development Analysts Network. Some interviewees have noted how CDRI has effectively used the Outlook Conference to raise attention to emerging challenges with ASEAN integration in relation to migration, human resource development and other issues.

Despite these successes, the MTR team has noted a lack of commitment to this regional agenda among senior researchers. The Development Analysis Network is very seldom mentioned as having a bearing on their work. In general, the regional dimension seems to be weakly 'mainstreamed' in CDRI research in terms of the scope of the transboundary analyses and in the selection of sources for research. The latter tend to emphasise Cambodian and global sources rather than Southeast Asian research *per se*.

Collaboration with other research institutions in the region has been promoted, especially by the executive director, but remains at a modest level. The Board has encouraged further efforts in this area, as have some donors, but challenges apparently remain.

Another obstacle to integration in the region has been that some Asian funders are reported to have contracted CDRI for relatively menial tasks, as enumerators rather than as genuine partners. Since CDRI avoids accepting such assignments, this naturally limits engagement with institutions that do not recognise CDRI's role and integrity.

4.5 CAPACITY TO USE RESEARCH AND CULTURE OF RESEARCH

Capacity and commitments to use research are partly a matter of skills in understanding research and how to apply it in policy decisions, and also about attitudes and behaviour. Though the concept of a 'culture of research' is somewhat vague, interviewees suggest that CDRI's voice about evidence has both 'struck a chord' and enhanced awareness and respect for evidence-based argumentation in the policy arena. This is related to the delicate balance between independence and engagements described in section 2.1 above. The fact that senior governmental decision makers are allowed to use and cite CDRI research has contributed more generally to an evidence-based discourse and with that a 'culture of research'. Several interviewees from government and donor agencies noted that this culture was being fostered by CDRI, but most importantly driven by the emergence of a cadre of young and well educated policy makers in ministries and in the Supreme National Economic Council. CDRI provides

them with the information they need to promote change, suggesting synergies between CDRI efforts and a broader process of renewal and reform.

One interviewee stressed that the role of CDRI (compared with that of consultants doing studies on similar issues) has been to ensure that analyses are put in a long-term perspective. An ahistorical analysis is otherwise a particular danger in a very rapidly changing context such as that in Cambodia, with a risk that analyses lack attention to the broader drivers of change.

Within the Cambodian scientific research community CDRI has largely been ‘going it alone’ thus far. As noted above, the Development Research Forum is a potentially useful initiative that may bridge the gap that currently exists between CDRI and the universities. The membership lists for the Research Interest Groups show an impressive range of interest. However, the Development Research Forum overall is still at a formative stage. CDRI has some engagement with Cambodian natural science research institutions, but this is limited, with collaboration involving multidisciplinary rather than interdisciplinary efforts (i.e., each institute acting independently within a common project). If CDRI was to engage more in research programmes that bridge the divide between social and natural science this gap could prove problematic. For example, a greater engagement with the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR) or an expanded focus on climate change would probably require a more integrated perspective to the ‘culture of research’.

An important way that CDRI has contributed to a broader ‘culture of research’ in Cambodia is through the many young researchers who started their career at CDRI and who have then moved on to other positions in government or elsewhere. This role of CDRI is perhaps unintentional, but given that several interviewees mentioned this directly or implicitly suggests that it has been an important ‘positive externality’ for the organisation. However, CDRI does not keep track of its ‘alumni’ and has not taken actions to explicitly try to keep them engaged in policy dialogue. One Board member suggested that they should be seen as “CDRI nodes” in dialogue efforts, but this has not been developed. There are currently 11 CDRI staff on study leave abroad.

CDRI senior researchers stress the importance of getting relevant stakeholders involved in research initiatives already at the planning stage. This is a way to ensure that they develop ownership of the findings. It is also to avoid tendencies that have sometimes been noted to claim at a later stage that the research is biased as an excuse to disregard findings. They also see this as a proactive way of avoiding the problems noted above regarding perceived independence. Even outside observers recognise that government ownership has been (and must be) fostered through a series of interactions and not a single event, much less a single publication. The same could be said of engagement with civil society. The relatively infrequent meetings with CSOs may be part of the reason for the distance that exists between CDRI and much of civil society given the importance on ongoing dialogue. The report in the 2012-13 Annual Development Review on the Water Resources Management Research Capacity Develop-

ment Programme on the five-year Australian Agency for International Development 2006-2011, describes a high degree of capacity development for the CDRI staff, diverse contributors to the CDRI knowledge base from local participants, and significant increased awareness among Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology officials on the policy implications of researched water usage issues.

4.6 POLICY RESEARCH ON LABOUR MARKETS AND EDUCATION GAPS

The ToRs for this MTR request special attention to CDRI engagement in research related to labour markets. Although, as will be describe below, this is an area where CDRI's research portfolio is limited, it is an excellent illustration of (a) how CDRI is struggling to deal with an emerging 'hot' topic, (b) the ways that policy makers are relying on CDRI to support them in evidence-based policy reform, and (c) the challenges in dealing with polarisation and distrust in political reform processes.

The recent violence around election protests, sparked by the growing activism of garment workers, points to a rapidly emerging issue in Cambodia that cuts across policy arenas of labour, migration, education and youth and also touches on the links between domestic policies and international competition. CDRI has already significant work in these areas, and recognises this as a crucial focus for future research. Policy-makers are already using CDRI research identifying gaps in the labour force to meet future needs as Cambodia moves up to 'middle income status' and on economic and education trends. They are eager for more research guidance on the Gordian knot they are facing today.

The most pivotal challenge today is the minimum wage issue, where polemics and rigid positions are seen by reflective observers as being reinforced by a dearth of credible empirical research into the likely effects of different courses of action. One official interviewed expressed dismay at the predominance of complaints and unsubstantiated claims in the current discourse.

To address these needs and demands, CDRI researchers will face even greater challenges than in the past in fostering respect for evidence-based policy formation. Engagements will be needed with antagonistic groups of political stakeholders, private actors, unions and civil society. Multiple and complex economic scenarios will need to be considered in assessing the long-term, broad ripple effects of any decision. Raising salaries in factories is likely to draw labour from agriculture. Gendered wage opportunities will inevitably be affected. Impacts on domestic and regional migration are difficult to foresee. Rising wages risk pricing Cambodia out of regional agriculture and global garment markets. Debates around this issue have far reaching implications for the future of social protection and the quality of life for families in Cambodia. Economic findings would therefore need to be analysed through a human rights

lens and with qualitative methods that can push beyond statistical human development indicators.

CDRI has intimidating, but unique and exciting opportunities to contribute to reframing the debate in a way that integrates human rights principles and existing commitments to inclusive growth in economic debates. CDRI can build on past research into migration and the combined impacts of ASEAN integration and domestic priorities on future movement of people in the region. A particular area where existing CDRI research has been influential already is on demands for new skills, and reassessing the focus of education investments, in relation to the ‘right’ path to industrialisation. Earlier CDRI findings on disorderly migration note the “low policy coherence” around migration. The Cambodia Development Review brief on Ecotourism and work on contract farming are important entry points for where CDRI plans to focus on labour. Some of the earlier studies were mentioned by interviewees as contributing to their knowledge on the subject.

5 Sustainability

5.1 RESOURCE MOBILISATION

CDRI's resource mobilisation and staff satisfaction strategy is seen by the MTR team as constituting a statement of intent to establish a strategy, but does not provide clear strategic direction for the organisation. It refers to a 'healthy' mix of income sources but lacks a clear indication of what would be considered 'healthy' in terms of benefits for both the organisation and its staff. It does not explore how decisions related to income streams could and should be used to create positive incentives for staff performance. This gap has meant, among other things, that staff tend to perceive commissioned work to be an additional burden that they must undertake to provide additional income.

Despite this lack of strategic direction, CDRI is very effective at mobilising resources through commissioned work, having won 17 out of 24 bids last year. CDRI has generated significant programme support as well. The main challenge faced by the organisation is related to core funding, with Sweden being the only current donor. Swiss Development Cooperation is expected to provide similar support in the future.

A broader concern regarding resource mobilisation is the extent to which CDRI efforts seem to focus more on existing aid channels rather than research funding structures. This has proven effective until now (as evidenced by CDRI's rapid growth and financial stability) but may not be sustainable in the future when aid flows diminish in conjunction with Cambodia's middle income status. The current handbook for Research Project Development and Management exemplifies a research design process that may be highly relevant for engaging with aid actors and commissioned studies, but may be inappropriate for engaging with international research partners in the future.

There is a recognition within CDRI of the importance of 'getting off the treadmill' of commissioned research. Sweden's unearmarked funding is seen as invaluable for giving researchers, particularly in Democratic Governance, an opportunity to explore new areas. This may eventually lead to skills and partnerships that can provide new resources. By contrast, The Agriculture unit has little Swedish support and other non-commissioned programme funding and therefore has more difficulties in 'getting off the treadmill'. There does not seem to be a strategy for breaking this dependency on short-term funding despite potential opportunities. For example, apart from a limited project with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), links have not been pursued with the CGIAR system as a whole even though the reforms underway in the CGIAR may create significant opportunities for CDRI.

Even more generally, it does not appear that structured search is being undertaken for opportunities for international research funding and partnerships. Some exist, but they seem not to be anchored in a strategic plan that would clarify what kinds of international funding and partnerships should be given priority.

CDRI is developing capacities among the staff for more effectively pursuing commissioned assignments focused on in-depth analysis (as opposed to mere data collection and description). Consideration has been given to creating a unit for monitoring and evaluation within CDRI. Given the significant demand for in-depth impact evaluations, the MTR team sees such a development as a potentially positive way to ensure a focus on quality research while not abandoning the income streams inherent in ‘the treadmill’. CDRI was described by some commissioners as being uniquely placed to take on such a role in in-depth commissioned work. To develop these areas further may require targeted skills development to help the staff to understand the specialised methods required for these tasks. Also, CDRI staff may need to develop better understanding of the needs and organisational cultures of different clients. The approaches used by the United States Agency for International Development for impact evaluation, for example, are likely to be very different from the UN system’s priorities and norms in evaluation. It can be noted that CDRI’s strong position in relation to broadening economic perspectives to recognise social factors is largely congruent with the UN focus on capabilities and human development, and that some modest ‘tweaking’ of current research approaches could lead to a closer partnership in the future.

Finally, in terms of raising revenue from donors in Cambodia, it should be recognised that this is related to the layers of perceptions. Some donors interviewed stressed that they fully respect CDRI’s stance on independence and see it as very positive that they have been able to keep an open door to government. They also note that some of their Cambodian partners have a more negative view of this, which creates tensions when the donor is seen to be supporting the government by supporting CDRI. There is presumably little that could be done to defuse such concerns, but it is nonetheless a constraint on CDRI’s potential resource mobilisation.

5.2 ORGANISATIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

CDRI is known for and justifiably proud of its role in providing entry level positions for promising young researchers with new degrees but little experience. The organisation fosters the work of these researchers by engaging them in projects together with more senior colleagues.

CDRI has, through its Human Resource Working Party, an ongoing internal discussion about how to encourage better performance, but from the perspective of the senior researchers the results are unsatisfactory. There are no incentives present for pro-

ducing peer reviewed publications or other aspects of performance relevant for a senior researcher career. For example, non-CDRI publications are not mentioned on the CDRI website and peer reviewed publications are not an explicit staff performance indicator. Commissioned work is seen as a burden, and there are no financial or career incentives for generating extra income to the organisation through seeking out and undertaking commissioned projects. There are inadequate opportunities for focused discussion of management related matters in-house and with the Board.

The CDRI Board is active and are proud of the work of the organisation. They discuss overall strategic direction and sustainability issues, but do not get involved in decisions regarding specific research activities. The existence of senior members of and advisors to the government in the Board is seen by some civil society observers as being problematic in relation to independence, but they also recognise that these members are relatively outspoken and open-minded. The Board does not work on fundraising and the Chair has indicated that a specialist might be needed for this task.

CDRI has been effective at retaining its own human resources. However, a large number of young researchers are now returning from abroad with master's degrees and doctorates and this is changing the job market. New consultancy firms and other more flexible institutional arrangements are increasingly competing with CDRI. Staff retention approaches that have been effective in the past are not necessarily appropriate for future sustainability. Senior staff are particularly dissatisfied with their fixed term (two year) contracts, which create incentives to investigate other employment options when their contracts come up for renewal.

5.3 GENDER IN THE ORGANISATION

A gendered perspective on organisational and human resource development at CDRI is currently weak, but this may be a temporary problem. The Gender Guidelines (August 2013) list the Director of Operations, Director of Research, and the Executive Director as responsible for the Gender Working Group (GWG), however, loss of the gender specialist who was the central support for female staff but also the engine behind the GWG overall has clearly had significant impact. The "Amended 2011-15 CDRI Strategic Plan and Retreat Priorities for 2014" notes that finding a replacement is a priority. Other female advisors are appreciated as supportive encouragement in this respect. The committee members interviewed said the GWG has functioned as a study group in the past. One goal of the group, to stand as an expert resource base for in-house and outside researchers, links that function to the goal of creating a solid resource base on gender issues with the CDRI learning center, though this does not yet seem to be underway. While the library does have a collection, the project is on hold while the GWG regroups. With this, the "Gender Guidelines 2013" has set out an ambitious ToR for the group, setting the GWG as an advisory and planning group on staff development, a mechanism for educating staff, and a mechanism for assuring gender mainstreaming. The group seems to need a great deal of focused attention for these functions to begin operating effectively.

According to the “CDRI Gender Profile Updated in 2013,” the balance of men and women below the programme coordinator level is good (35 women/43 men; research staff 19 women/22men) but staff and management admit a need to improve the balance at the upper levels.

The Gender Working Group (GWG) and other staff mentioned the perception that movement up the promotion hierarchy could be slower for female than for male colleagues. The impression was that especially the younger, less experienced women feel they need to struggle for respect and to make an effort to be involved in CDRI institutional activities like working groups to combat what was noted as a ‘stereotype’ of women as passive. Interviewees also spoke of these problems as related to female confidence. Experienced, higher level women staff make this point. The MTR team considers both the male dominated work space (numbers in some units for example rather than explicit discrimination, intended or not), alongside the self-selection and confidence issue among female staff, as likely crucial parts of an explanation. Regarding units that have a male majority, the GWG representatives reported a gap in knowledge sharing. (The GWG mentioned Governance and Economics, though Agriculture and Natural Resources also seems to have an imbalance.) Where an imbalance favours women researchers this is apparently not an issue (Social Development). According to the GWG, women researchers sometimes turn down opportunities to run CDRI capacity building workshops because they are worried their performance will be below institutional standards. The impression of the MTR team is that the encouragement of women to be brave is a good start, but would go well with (perhaps interactive) awareness training for all.

5.4 POSITIONING IN RELATION TO POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

CDRI has been able to fill an important niche in the analysis of Cambodian development processes, but is not seen as equally strong in bringing in international perspectives to the Cambodian policy discourse. One high level government interviewee stated that he engaged European research institutes when he needed a better understanding of international experience and trends. This could be interpreted as suggesting that a gap exists in terms of CDRI being able to leverage international partnerships to pair with its local experience and knowledge. Partnerships with international research institutions (e.g., Overseas Development Institute, IFPRI) and universities in other countries are not prominent on the CDRI website, nor are joint publication with other institutions. If CDRI is to increase its relative attention to these areas it would need to look more closely at the (dis)incentives for such collaboration in the organisation and how it could bargain for appropriate collaboration given the asymmetrical nature of many such partnerships. The MTR team judges that CDRI is well placed to benefit more from these relationships in the future if it acts strategically. This would require highlighting these partnerships and creating stronger incentives for its staff to produce

peer reviewed publications, as this is at the core performance indicator steering most international research institutions.

5.5 CAMBODIANISATION

One of the main internal challenges identified in the 2020 strategy and shown to be the focus of ongoing attention in the 2012 development review and 2011-2015 strategic plan is Cambodianisation. It had progressed significantly thanks to the increasing capacity of Cambodian nationals in general and CDRI's commitment to staff professional development and recruitment policies. At the arrival of the MTR team, there were four expatriate staff members, the executive director, the research director, a research advisor and an editor, plus mentors at a distance and one contract editor.

High level economic overview articles tend to be authored by non-Cambodian staff. Without having done a full count, most but not all of the articles published in international peer reviewed journals seem to be co-authored with international advisors. This mentorship role seems to be much appreciated. Researchers express enthusiasm for participation in collaborative research projects.

Stakeholders, Board members and staff offered a variety of thoughtful responses to the question of how quickly to proceed toward a completely Cambodian CDRI. Several interviewees felt that, particularly in the current polarised political context, it would be best not to appoint a Khmer executive director at this time. Others felt that the principles of Cambodianisation and merit based recruitment implied that full Cambodianisation should continue to be actively pursued. In general it appeared that the older interviewees tended to urge caution in the Cambodianisation process, whereas the younger interviewees gave precedence to the principles and showed confidence in the abilities (and strength of character in the face of political pressures) of the rising generation of professionals.

6 Conclusions and lessons learnt

One observer interviewed stressed how Cambodia is entering into a period of “non-linear change”, when new challenges are not likely to reflect a mere incremental stage in processes underway. These non-linear changes relate to achieving middle income status, ASEAN integration and changes in agriculture and industry. If this is true, then the CDRI’s research agenda is also likely to face a period of non-linear challenges. Are they prepared for this? In light of this likely rather significant change facing Cambodia in the future, the MTR draws the following conclusions.

Independence and engagement: An appropriate balance has been achieved to permit government officials constrained regarding the material they can reference for policy formation to engage with CDRI researchers in a way they cannot with other institutes, organisations and individuals who strike a different balance. However, maintaining this balance is a never-ending task and has implications in terms of Cambodianisation, choice of partners, discursive entry points, and appropriate formats. CDRI is seen by some stakeholders as having a pro-government bias, which is a ‘fact on the ground’ that needs to be considered. The MTR does not suggest radical departures from the current approaches at present, but does recommend considering some experiments in outreach, and notes that the choices needed to maintain this balance in the future may be quite different.

A research and outreach agenda that reflects human rights based approach: CDRI is strong in its commitments and actions to support broader participation and increase transparency. Research highlights many core issues regarding the accountability of duty bearers, but there are notable gaps, and it is unclear if the research can stimulate change in the face of structures of patronage, power differentials and weak sub-national governance given the above limits. Discrimination has been weakly addressed. CDRI shows significant commitments to gender equality in-house, and in its publications, but due to unfortunate circumstances initiatives are currently experiencing a lull. The factors constraining and enabling change are, however, themselves entering a period of rapid change. This suggests that, despite certain deficiencies, CDRI is well placed to contribute to these discussions now and in the future.

Relevant and effective tools for outreach and communication: While efforts have shown incremental improvements in publications and ensuring access in Khmer, CDRI has not kept up with the new networking technologies and has been uneven in its awareness and commitments to broad engagement.

Effective production of research: Taking into consideration the challenges in managing a diverse research portfolio in terms of both content and audience/clients, CDRI performs impressively. Direction is lacking however in how to combine the need to respond to income opportunities ‘on the treadmill’ of commissioned work with pursuance of longer term programmatic initiatives.

Quality of research outputs: CDRI has a remarkable reputation for credible, evidence-based policy analysis. The institution has accumulated an impressive portfolio of solid work and useful systems for reaching busy policy professionals. Even if the quality of research outputs is variable, many of the deficiencies noted in the MTR are inevitable in an institute relying on young staff at the start of their careers. Clearer differentiation between working papers and final reports could be a way to clarify where initiatives are still a ‘work in progress’. In some cases, literature reviews targeted to critical policy research questions rather than broad thematic categories could help focus analysis and conclusions toward policy concerns. An institutional discussion on ways to combine the need to continue to enhance academic standards with retaining the ear of policy-makers would seem particularly relevant at this juncture in CDRI’s institutional development.

Outcomes in influencing policy and practice: Compared to all other Cambodian research and policy-interested organisations, CDRI has remarkable access to policy-makers at the highest levels of government. Influence derives from both the quality and relevance of research and close long-term collegial relationships with officials with influence within upper echelons of government. As more pluralistic forms of governance take hold in Cambodia, these approaches will remain important, but are likely to require CDRI to ‘cast the net more broadly’ as the entry points for policy influence are likely to shift.

Learning from evidence: Capacities and commitments to learn from evidence are growing thanks, to a considerable extent, to CDRI efforts. More actors, both research institutions and consultancy firms, are becoming engaged in producing evidence and promoting learning. CSOs remark on the need for both CSOs and the general public to redirect advocacy efforts toward evidence-based argument. Government officials, private sector representatives, and CSOs, gathered at the recent 2014 Outlook Conference, were reportedly more engaged than ever before in the conference focus on evidence-based policy formation. This likely reflects the recognition on the part of government that certain reforms are pressing in the post-election period. Highly educated Cambodian researchers are rapidly increasing in numbers. CDRI will therefore need to think more strategically and tactically to (re)define and maintain its preeminent role in the future.

CDRI’s capacity to learn from outcomes: CDRI management and staff have strong sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the institution. CDRI seems less aware of the usefulness or methods of tracking outcomes. This highlights the need for stronger commitments and mechanisms to tracking influence and more structured processes

within CDRI to learn from this experience and adapt to the changing political and policy landscape, both at national and sub-national levels.

Positioning in the region: CDRI leadership is aware of the growing importance of the regional dimension, but there have been challenges in fully anchoring this in research approaches and partnerships. While recognising that the transaction costs of overcoming these barriers may be great, to remain relevant CDRI needs greater collaboration within the Greater Mekong Sub-region, both as a way to inform the regional research agenda, and so as to enhance awareness among CDRI senior researchers of how the ‘non-linear change’ afoot in the region as a whole is likely to impact on Cambodia in the coming years with ASEAN integration. Engaging the staff across the research units to support the economic research currently contributing to Greater Mekong Sub-region Development Analysis Network exchanges would also enrich the exchanges.

Resource mobilisation: CDRI has thus far been very successful in resource mobilisation, but the competition for these resources is rapidly increasing and the types of resources are likely to change dramatically. Traditional aid flows are likely to be complemented and then even become secondary to new sources, such as research councils. Demands for impact evaluation and new and massive investments in climate change adaptation and mitigation suggest opportunities to adjust CDRI resource flows to a different funding landscape in the near future. Frustration over lack of strategic direction in relation to the balance between commissioned work and programme support needs to be addressed, partly as it seems to be distracting attention from the broader questions ahead.

Staff satisfaction: The staff at CDRI are passionately committed to CDRI as an institution and to its goals and values. The senior researchers express a deep satisfaction with the role of researcher. They also express significant frustrations, some of which they realise is related to inevitable institutional challenges. The ‘non-linear’ shifts in challenges and opportunities described above imply changes that are needed in how CDRI are encouraged to retain and expand their current levels of satisfaction. Greater attention is needed to the incentive structures, participatory management, mechanisms for feedback among staff, management and Board, peer support mechanisms and other factors that will be needed to support this in the future.

Cambodianisation: CDRI has a surprisingly ‘Cambodian’ identity already, despite the central role of non-Cambodians in its outreach. This can be seen to suggest that there is no need to rush to change this status quo. There are apparent risks in politically polarised situation in moving rapidly to full Cambodianisation. However, given that this is a moment of ‘non-linear change’ in Cambodia, and as the availability of senior Cambodian researchers is growing, the disadvantages of a non-Cambodian executive director may come to outweigh the advantages in the not-too-distant future.

7 Recommendations

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CDRI FOR THE PERIOD UNTIL 2016

Most of the following recommendations below are not new to CDRI and the “Amended 2011-15 CDRI Strategic Plan and Retreat Priorities for 2014” reflects many of these themes. This suggests that CDRI is well aware of the challenges ahead and how they need to be addressed.

- Continue to maintain independence through a stance reflecting both clear contributions to the policy debate and pragmatism regarding how to present these messages in a constructive manner; and with this pursue Cambodianisation in a way that is cognisant of prevailing (and currently heightened) perceptions regarding independence.
- Continue diversifying the Board to include a broader representation of Cambodian development and private sector actors, and with a focus on recruiting those who could assist in fund raising.
- Rethink incentives for staff satisfaction (retention) in relation to engagement in internationally recognised research (e.g., financial or intellectual recognition for the production of peer reviewed publications) and benefits (either financial or professional) from undertaking commissioned studies.
- Address greater proportional attention to strategic international/regional partnerships compared with the current focus on aid sources.
- Reassess mechanisms for participatory management of the research units and see through plans to regenerate the gender committee.
- Involve senior level female staff participation as ‘peer mentors’ of more junior women researchers.
- Differentiate levels of publications (problem overviews, working papers, and final research reports) and better highlight staff outputs resulting from international collaboration and those leading to peer reviewed publication.
- Seek out new, stronger public channels and outreach methods to engage with civil society; as part of this, balance outreach efforts with more activities targeted explicitly at those who do not attend the Cambodia Outlook Conference.
- Consider ways to keep former staff in the policy dialogue by seeing them as ‘policy nodes’ that can be engaged in outreach; this can include mobilising engagement from their current organisations, and exploration of entry points for greater policy influence.
- Make outcome monitoring a core activity with value for learning:
 - Engage with stakeholders to jointly consider appropriate indicators of policy influence so as to build ownership and reduce risks of perceived bias.

- Keep records of formal and informal presentations, engagements, and current and ex-staff activities.
- Bring in outside assistance (soon) to develop clearer direction on:
 - Gender plans
 - More effective use of social networking, media, etc.
 - Skills/incentives with a potential for developing the intended ‘healthy’ mix between long- and short-term engagements
 - A ‘real’ resource mobilisation strategy
 - Consideration of whether to establish a dedicated unit for undertaking in-depth (impact) monitoring and evaluation assignments
 - Creation of internal outcome monitoring structures

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SWEDISH EMBASSY

- No major changes are recommended regarding current structures of support during the current funding period.
- Encourage greater uptake of Swedish supported research though, for example, highlighting the relevance of Democratic Governance research among like-minded donors and civil society partners working in related fields.
- If funding is continued beyond the current period the Swedish embassy should move towards 100% core funding with a dialogue on priorities.

8 Annexes

8.1 ANNEX 1 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Review of Sweden's support to the Cambodia Development Resource Institute, CDRI

1. Background

Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) was established in 1990 and is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental institution. It is governed by an independent board of directors comprising people of Cambodian and international backgrounds acting in their individual capacities. CDRI is the leading policy research institute in Cambodia and probably also the leading social science research organisation in the country. It has increasingly taken responsibility for overall coordination of research, dissemination and discussion of research results and policy implications.

CDRI's research programmes and operations are mainly guided by a long-term research strategy (2011-2020), the CDRI Cambodia 2020 Research Strategy and by the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan has four strategic goals:

(i) To produce independent, objective, high quality policy-relevant development research, and to maximise the accessibility of the knowledge to policy makers, influencers and stakeholders, and its policy impact, in five interrelated areas that are key for Cambodia's sustainable development

- Economy, trade and regional cooperation;
- Agriculture and rural development;
- Democratic governance and public sector reform;
- Natural resources and the environment;
- Social development;

and the cross cutting issues of inclusive growth, poverty reduction, sustainability, governance and institutional arrangements, gender equity, and conflict prevention and resolution

(ii) To make a significant contribution to Cambodia's national development research culture, capacity and institutions and community awareness of development issues

(iii) To achieve best practice standards for research quality through continuous improvement of research management and support systems, and effective monitoring practices

(iv) To build a more sustainable future for CDRI as Cambodia's leading development policy research institution, through the strengthening of CDRI as an institution, the deepening of its "Cambodianisation" agenda and the capacity development of its management and staff, and effective resource mobilisation.

CDRI has identified a set of major research themes and topics which reflect the priority long-term research questions or themes and build on and deepen the research outcomes of the programmes that have been undertaken with Swedish support over the last decade (mainly on Democratic Governance and Public Sector Reform). They also explore other key development challenges for Cambodia - Inclusive Growth; Climate Change, Adaptation and Livelihoods; and Human Resource Development in Tertiary and Vocational Education, all located in the context of the cross-cutting issues of Poverty Reduction and Gender Equity.

Over the period 2011-15 CDRI are designing and implementing a series of programme-based policy research projects on these themes and topics in consultation with relevant government agencies, development partners, the private sector, civil society and the research community. Gender Equity is integrated in the Strategic Plan, including both gender sensitive research agenda and increase of female staff in general and at senior positions in particular.

Sweden's current core support to CDRI amounts to SEK 26,500,000 for the period 2011-2016, and is guided by a Contribution Agreement, the CDRI-Sida Partnership Document July 2011-June 2016 and the CDRI Strategic Plan 2011-2016. The Agreement stipulates that a Mid Term Review (MTR) shall be carried out.

A number of evaluations and reviews have been carried out during the previous cooperation. The most recent is a MTR that was conducted in 2009⁹, and a special review of the internal operational, financial management and procurement control system ("Grant Assessment) was made in 2011¹⁰.

2. Purpose of the Mid-Term Review

The purpose of the MTR is to assess the performance of CDRI against the CDRI-Sida Partnership Document July 2011-June 2016 and the CDRI Strategic Plan 2011-2016 and to make conclusions and recommendations for the remaining period of the Agreement/Strategic Plan implementation, including recom-

⁹ Mid Term Review of Sida's core support to the Cambodia Development Resources Institute (CDRI), Lars Rylander & Örjan Sjöberg, SPM Consultants, March 2009

¹⁰ Grant Assessment – Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) 2011-15, KPMG, August 2011

mentations regarding how research quality and influence on policy formation can be further enhanced.

3. Tasks and scope of the assignment

- Assess to what extent planned activities have been implemented and to what extent these contribute to stated objectives (qualitatively and quantitatively) in the Strategic Plan 2011-2016. Analyse major deviations from plans and objectives.
- Assess to what extent CDRI is likely to achieve the stated objectives at the end of 2016.
- Assess the main risks that might prevent the achievement of objectives and how these risks can be mitigated
- Assess if the current choices of approaches and activities are relevant and strategic for the achievement of the objectives.
- Assess the present situation regarding the sustainability and options for ensuring sustainable capacity and financial sustainability for CDRI
- Assess the quality of a sample of research outputs within the existing four programme areas. Research related to labour market and employment should be part of this assessment.
- Assess how CDRI involve stakeholders in the research process and the dissemination of results. Assess the quality of interaction with stakeholders, as well as the relevance of the forums chosen for interaction and dissemination. Are there evidence or good practices on how the research process and research findings have attributed to change of policies/behaviour in government? Are research findings presented in a user-friendly manner? Assess CDRI's role and inputs in relation to the formulation of Cambodia's strategic development direction; Cambodia vision 2030, Rectangular Strategy 2014-2018 and the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2018.
- Assess how impact of research outcomes is measured, how the influence pathways are tracked. Recommend measurement indicators and procedures to improve the tracking of the impact of CDRI's research.
- Assess how gender equality has been addressed in CDRI research and organisation
- Assess CDRI's position in the region, the extent of regional and international institutional partnerships, including sub-regional collaboration in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and CLMs (?)
- Make recommendations regarding priority actions for the remaining period of the Strategic Plan implementation

4. Methodology

The consultants shall carry out the assignment by reviewing relevant documentation and conduct interviews. The assignment shall be carried out in January 2014. It is estimated that a total of seven weeks are required for the assignment, and that at least 3 weeks of work in Cambodia is needed. The consultants shall propose a plan on how the team will structure its work and which methods that will be used.

Relevant documentation includes:

CDRI Cambodia 2020 Research Strategy
 CDRI Strategic Plan 2011-2016
 CDRI Result Assessments
 CDRI Annual Work Plans and Budgets
 CDRI Annual Progress and Financial Reports
 CDRI Annual Audit Reports

Previous evaluation/MTR reports and management responses

The Swedish Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia 2012-2013
 Agreement Sweden-CDRI
 CDRI-Sida Partnership Document July 2011-June 2016
 Minutes from Annual Review Meetings
 Embassy of Sweden Contribution Management Documents, including Assessment Memo

Sample of research and studies produced by CDRI
 Web-based material produced by CDRI
 Quarterly Cambodia Development Review (CDR)
 Annual Development Review (ADR)
 Special Reports on Cambodia Development Dynamics
 Cambodia Outlook Briefs

CDRI Stakeholder consultation reports

Key Cambodia policy documents: Cambodia vision 2030, Rectangular Strategy 2014-2018 and the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2018 (if draft is available)

Interviews should include:

CDRI management and staff, including
 Overall: : Larry Strange, Executive Director
 Coordination with MTR Consultants and External Interviewees: Ms Moudda Billmeier, External Relations Manager
 Research: Dr Srini Madhur, Director of Research
 Operations and Finance: Mr Ung Sirn Lee, Director of Operations

CDRI Board members, representatives of Cambodian government, representatives of the private sector, a selection of Development Partners/multilateral or-

ganizations, other institutes and universities, representatives of partner institutes in other countries.

5. Qualifications of the consultants

The team shall consist of two consultants. One consultant will be responsible for the institutional and capacity development assessment and should be a specialist in institutional and organizational development. The second consultant will be responsible for the assessment of the research quality and should have a background in socio-economic research. Both consultants should have experience of evaluation of development cooperation projects.

6. Work Plan and Reporting

The MTR shall be undertaken in February 2014. The consultants shall present a preliminary report to CDRI and the Embassy of Sweden and arrange a meeting to present and discuss the preliminary report. The Embassy and CDRI will provide comments on the preliminary report 10 days after the receipt of the report, and the consultants will finalize the report in view of these comments. A final report shall be delivered by 20 March 2014. The report should be written in English and be analytical, logically structured, contain evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons-learned and recommendations and have an executive summary

8.2 ANNEX 2: PERSONS MET

No.	Name	Position	Institution
Monday 10 February 2014			
	Kristina Kuhnel Klas Rasmusson Sofia Hedström	Head of Development Cooperation Section Counsellor, Economist Intern	Swedish Embassy
	Larry Strange	Executive Director	CDRI
	Ung Sirn Lee	Director of Operations	CDRI
4	Informal Briefing Lunch with Mr Larry Strange, Dr Srimi Madhur, Mr Ung Sirn Lee and Ms Moudda Billmeier and Sida Consultants		
5	Srinivasa Madhur Chheat Sreang Chem Phalla Theng Vuthy Nou Keosothea Tong Kimsun	Director of Research CDRI Programme Coordinator	CDRI Governance and Public Sector Re- form Natural Resources and the Envi- ronment Poverty, Agricultural and Rural Development Social Development Programme Economy, Trade and Regional Co- operation
Tuesday 11 February 2014			
6	Chheat Sreang Chem Phalla Theng Vuthy Nou Keosothea Tong Kimsun	CDRI Programme Coordinator	Governance and Public Sector Re- form Natural Resources and the Envi- ronment Poverty, Agricultural and Rural Development Social Development Programme Economy, Trade and Regional Co- operation
7	Introduction to CDRI Staff	CDRI Staff	CDRI
8	Ung Sirn Lee Moudda Bill- meier	Director of Operations Manager	CDRI External Relations Manager Finance Manager

	Beauphara Thong Oeung Bon Thyda Leng Vanna Em Sorany You Sethirith He Hin		Human Resource and Administration Manager Information Technology Manager Development Knowledge Management Manager Publications (AI) Manager Library Manager
9	Larry Strange	Executive Director	CDRI
10	Hing Vutha Ros Bandeth	Research Fellow and Gender Working Group	CDRI
Wednesday 12 February 2014			
11	Neav Chanthana	CDRI Board Director; Deputy Governor	National Bank of Cambodia
12	Faisal Ahmed	Resident Representative	IMF
13	Eric Sidgwick	Country Director	ADB-Cambodia Resident Mission
14	Tia Phalla	CDRI Board Director; Vice Chair	National AIDS Authority
Thursday 13 February 2014			
15	Hang Chuon Naron	Minister Vice-Chairman Former CDRI Chair of Board of Directors	Ministry of Education, Youth & Sport Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC)
16	Rath Virak	Secretary General	Council of Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD)
17	Ngoy Chanphal	Secretary of State Second Vice Chairman	Ministry of Interior Council for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD)
18	Leng Vy	Under Secretary of State	Ministry of Interior
19	Heng Sour	Director General of Administration and Finance	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
Friday 14 February 2014			
20	Rebecca Black Sak Sambath	Mission Director Agricultural Econo-	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

	William Bradley	mist, Agricultural Officer	
21	Sok Siphana	Chair Principal Sok Siphana & Associates Advisor	CDRI Board of Directors Sok Siphana & Associates Royal Government of Cambodia
Saturday 15 February 2014			
22	Field Visit	Kampong Chhnang Province	For Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihood for Inclusive Growth Project with CDRI NRE Programme
Monday 17 February 2014			
23	Pou Sothirak	Executive Director	Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace for Peace (CICP)
	Pou Sovachna	Deputy Director	
24	Grant Knuckey	CEO	ANZ Royal Cambodia
25	Ly Sarann	Deputy Head of Rural Engineering Department	Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC)
Tuesday 18 February 2014			
26	Soeung Saroeun	Executive Director	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)
27	Enrique Aldaz-Caroll	Senior Economist	The World Bank
28	Setsuko Yamazaki	Country Director	UNDP
29	Alex Read Hisham Mousar	Training Manager Research Manager	Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia (PIC)
Wednesday 19 February 2014			
30	Thida Khus	Executive Director	SILAKA
31	Mr Ou Virak	President	Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)
32	Boesch Rahel	Director of Cooperation	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
33	Paul Keogh	Counsellor Development Cooperation	Embassy of Australia
34	Gianpietro Bordinon Edith Heines Jonathan Rivers	Representative and Country Director Deputy Country Director MERVAM Officer	World Food Programme
Thursday 20 February 2014			
35	Larry Strange	Executive Director	CDRI

36	Chheat Sreang Chem Phalla Theng Vuthy Nou Keosothea Tong Kimsun	CDRI Programme Coordinator	Governance and Public Sector Re- form Natural Resources and the Envi- ronment Poverty, Agricultural and Rural Development Social Development Programme Economy, Trade and Regional Co- operation
37	Meeting Embas- sy of Sweden Staff		Swedish Embassy
38	Hing Vutha	Research Associate and DRF RIG Coordi- nator	CDRI
39	Em Sorany	Development Knowledge Manage- ment And DRF Coordinator	CDRI
40	Leang Supheap	Researcher	NIPH
41	Lim Chanphirun	Online Moderator for DRF website	The Learning Institute
Friday 21 February 2014			
42	Joint presentation of the main conclusions and recommendations with CDRI, Em- bassy and evaluation team		
	Friday 27 February 2014		
	Cheang Sokha Executive Director YRDP		
	Wednesday 4 March 2014		
	Heng Molyaneth Research Fellow Social Development Unit CDRI		
	Tong Kimsum Programme Director and Staff Representative to the Board CDRI		
	HE Hin Library Manager		

8.3 ANNEX 3 : INCEPTION REPORT

1. Executive Summary

This inception report presents initial analyses of the theory of change through which Cambodia Development Research Institute (CDRI) intends to influence policy, enhance its own capacity and that of its partners, and build a stronger foundation for evidence based policy formation in Cambodia.

The report reassesses the areas for analysis proposed in the terms of reference for this mid-term review and based on this suggests evaluation questions aligned with the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact (in this case primarily focused on outcomes) and sustainability.

The proposed method for the evaluation applies a modified outcome harvesting approach designed to assess the perspectives of CDRI staff, stakeholders in research and policy change, and outside observers regarding how CDRI is reaching the objectives in the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. This is combined with critical review of the quality of CDRI research outputs. Special attention in the evaluation will be given to understanding how CDRI is maintaining quality and independence in a tense political process. Also, the team will look at the organisational development process at CDRI, including “Cambodianisation” and the trends towards new research partnerships in Cambodia and in the region.

2. Assessment of Scope of the Evaluation

2.1 THE ASSIGNMENT

Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) was established in 1990 and is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental institution. It is governed by a diverse and independent board of directors acting in their individual capacities. CDRI is the leading policy research institute in Cambodia and is in many respects the leading social science research organisation in the country. It is engaged in overall coordination of research, dissemination and discussion of research results and policy implications.

The purpose of the mid-term review (MTR) is to assess the performance of CDRI in relation to the CDRI-Sida Partnership Document July 2011-June 2016 and the CDRI Strategic Plan 2011-2015 and to draw conclusions and make recommendations for the remaining period of the Agreement/Strategic Plan, including recommendations regarding how research quality and influence on policy formation can be further enhanced.

A basic framework for analysing policy influence suggests that there are five processes that are targeted when influencing policy: attitudinal change, discursive commitments (i.e. the language used to frame arguments for a given policy), procedural change, policy content, and behavioural change (including policy implementation).¹¹ Though difficult to assess, the evaluation will seek to draw conclusions regarding CDRI's policy impact within these categories of change, most notably as a way to assess the "quality" of CDRI's research in terms of how the products and processes are designed and produced in order to influence intended users. It is noted that concerns have been expressed in various documents reviewed that CDRI has lacked effective outcome and impact indicators. Even if the MTR cannot draw definitive and rigorous conclusions on some aspects of these outcomes, it is hoped that the approach chosen will contribute to CDRI's efforts to further develop its results based management efforts by better defining relevant theories of change and indicators for policy influence.

2.2 INITIAL INTERPRETATION OF THE CDRI THEORY OF CHANGE

*CDRI's vision is for a peaceful, prosperous and more equitable Cambodia that has made significant progress in sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction, based on high levels of growth and economic diversification, agricultural and rural development, the strengthening of democratic development and public institutions, improved management of natural resources, and social development in education, health and gender equity.*¹²

CDRI's stated core "guiding value" is the assumption that objective and high quality research can and should support policy making leading towards sustainable development and with that effective implementation of national strategies and programmes. Independence and neutrality are seen as central for maintaining this quality. Two of the principles that underpin Swedish commitments to a human rights based approach, mostly notably participation and transparency, are core ethical principles for CDRI. The organisation sees its own ability to influence policy as being reliant on strengthening capacities within CDRI,

¹¹ Jones, Harry (2011) A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Policy Influence. ODI Background Note February 2011.

¹² CDRI 2011-2015 Strategic Plan

among other researchers, and among a broader range of stakeholders whose engagement and understanding is essential for applying research in policies and practice. A strong focus on participation, partnership and an emphasis on capacity development could be interpreted as indirectly and implicitly suggesting that CDRI sees itself as accountable to its partners and the broader users of its research. Accountability is another core aspect of a human rights based approach.

It is notable however that the “guiding values and operating principles” in the CDRI 2011-2015 Strategic Plan make no recognisable commitments to the fourth aspect of a human rights based approach, non-discrimination. There is one reference to the “well-being of the vulnerable”, but it is not clear what they might be vulnerable to (e.g., discrimination). The main commitments to non-discrimination are mentioned in the first strategic goal in relation to the cross cutting issues of inclusive growth, poverty reduction and gender equity.

CDRI’s research programmes and operations are mainly guided by a long-term research strategy (2011-2020), the CDRI Cambodia 2020 Research Strategy and by the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan has four strategic goals.

The first strategic goal outlines the scope of analysis needed to achieve its vision and emphasise its values.

To produce independent, objective, high quality policy-relevant development research, and to maximise the accessibility of the knowledge to policy makers, influencers and stakeholders, and its policy impact, in five interrelated areas that are key for Cambodia’s sustainable development

- *Economy, trade and regional cooperation;*
- *Agriculture and rural development;*
- *Democratic governance and public sector reform;*
- *Natural resources and the environment;*
- *Social development*

A set of cross cutting issues are stressed as key aspects of this research: inclusive growth and poverty reduction; sustainability; governance and institutional arrangements; gender equity; conflict prevention and resolution.

Initial review of research undertaken suggests that CDRI largely accepts prevailing overall policy directions. This narrative reflects assumptions that a peaceful, prosperous and equitable Cambodia will be achieved through sustainable and inclusive growth based on economic diversification, competitiveness and productivity. This can in turn be achieved through the strengthening of key export-oriented sectors, through private sector development including the strategic integration of Cambodia’s economy into the Greater Mekong Sub-region; the strengthening of public institutions, the strengthening of the civil service and judicial reform; better management of natural resources; social develop-

ment especially for women, children and youth; human security; and education. The research plan reflects these assumptions in the 5 interrelated areas.

CDRI situates its analyses in the recent progress in economic growth, agricultural production, and the implementation of relatively recent laws and strategies of decentralisation and public sector reform. However, the focus of research also acknowledges ongoing problems regarding inclusion in economic growth, governance, equity and natural resource management. Increasing industrialisation and urbanisation are seen as requiring deepened research.

CDRI recognises that production and use of this research must be a Cambodian process, owned, undertaken and utilised by Cambodians at local and national levels.

CDRI's second strategic goal stresses the broader capacity development process facing Cambodian society in moving towards evidence-based policy formation and development efforts

To make a significant contribution to Cambodia's national development research culture, capacity and institutions and community awareness of development issues

This is to be undertaken by providing accessible sources of information through a variety of methods of dissemination, high level consultation and participation in community, national, international, and local civil society conferences, networks, and dialogues on policy issues. Efforts include producing publications in English and Khmer and the preparation of the Development Research Forum and Cambodia's Outlook Conference.

CDRI's third strategic goal describes the results oriented research management processes required to achieve the first two goals

To achieve best practice standards for research quality through continuous improvement of research management and support systems, effective monitoring practices,

CDRI has committed itself to improvements in systems for ensuring research quality and solid administrative procedures and support functions. The former includes establishing monitoring/support committees and advisors for the research divisions and publications. This includes a strong ethics policy. The latter includes enhanced financial management and information technology, publications and library systems.

These efforts also include systems to monitor satisfaction with these systems within CDRI and among research users; and to ensure that products are available in accessible and user friendly forms through the website and other channels.

The fourth strategic goal recognises that CDRI must pursue these aims through human resource development in the perspective of its role within the broader Cambodian research community

To build a more sustainable future for CDRI as Cambodia's leading development policy research institution, through the strengthening of CDRI as an institution, the deepening of its "Cambodianisation" agenda and the capacity development of its management and staff, and effective resource mobilisation.

This situates CDRI's approach to capacity development within a process of leadership succession. Overall changes in the organisation are foreseen through attention to capacity/professional development, support for graduate work and better staff retention. CDRI also recognises that its own internal systems must reflect commitments and investments in the organisation's own human resources; and that its organisational norms need to reflect a commitment to quality in both research and in ways of working.

The ultimate intention is that CDRI will assume a stronger Cambodian character, recognised as being Cambodian owned, led and managed, with "Cambodia-friendly" research products.

2.3 CDRI'S EVOLVING ROLE

CDRI was created in 1990 and has grown in size, reputation, and in terms of the organizational mission as the country itself has developed. Its agenda has moved from a focus on capacity development and conflict resolution to a full research agenda, while it has increasingly attracted projects on the borderline of research and consultancy, mostly from major multilateral development institutions. This can be understood as a response to the practical needs of these and of other international and national agencies during a time of rapid development. It is also a reflection of the fact that these projects have provided a stable source of funding, and have thus aided efforts to enhance the research capacity and stability of tenure of its research staff. With Cambodia's joining of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and increasing integration into the Greater Mekong Sub-region, it has expanded its networks, areas of consultations and presentations, and the range of product distribution.

CDRI's research strategy, is supportive of and consistent with the Royal Government of Cambodia's revised National Strategic Development Plan 2009-13 and beyond, and the associated priorities of the government's international development partners, private sector and civil society stakeholders. CDRI has held a close relationship with government since its founding. In the context of an often confrontational civil society-government relationship, this has had many advantages in collaborative work with the government. It carries also some potential constraints (self-imposed or otherwise, real or perceived by civil

society organizations) on the kinds of research questions, collaborations, and inquiries it undertakes; as well as on the policy advice it offers.

Organizational capacity to produce research, collaborate with international institutions as an equal, and influence policy has grown steadily over the years. Since 2005 CDRI has made significant progress on its “Cambodianisation” efforts, with the only permanent position held by an expatriate that of the Executive Director.

Since the 2013 national elections, the political situation on the ground has been volatile and tense. Given that social development, peace and reconciliation are major foci for CDRI, and that human rights concerns are the primary focus of the government of Sweden, CDRI’s ability to combine and manoeuvre between its close relations with policy makers and its need for an independent stance to engage in and contribute to policy-related debates and activities is likely to be under notable strain.

2.4 ADAPTING TO THE CHANGING RESEARCH AGENDA

Despite rapid economic growth, “old issues” related to poverty and development and long running human rights issues such as land policy disputes have not disappeared. “New issues” have also arisen. These include the possible inciting or manipulating of youth in sometimes violent political engagement, and responses to unemployment and changing labour markets. The ToRs for this MTR suggest a particular focus on these latter issues. This is deemed relevant, but given the political tensions prevailing in early 2014 the feasibility of stimulating an open and evidence based discussion on these topics may need to be reassessed.

Some examples of other significant changes in the five CDRI research areas include :

- Democratic governance and public sector reform: Changes in governance structures are raising new questions for research revolving around inter-level relationships, resources flows, and development planning. Governance challenges are being aggravated by non-transparent contracts and agreements, a patronage-based economy and informal resource flows.
- Economy, trade, and regional cooperation: Export production has increased exponentially. Regional integration and cooperation are bringing shifts in roles of and relation to regional and non-regional partners such as the United States and China.
- Natural resources management and environmental stability: Pre-existing natural resource management pressures are increasing with climate change and as the urban and industrial sectors grow This is resulting in increased pressure on urban labour markets.

- Agriculture, fisheries, and subsistence production; Trends are emerging toward a plantation economy associated with violent land acquisitions and rural landlessness.
- Social development: The recent protests over election results and the salaries of factory workers and teachers speak directly to CDRI research interests in democratisation and civil society. Migration policy is currently a major issue with a rural population often supplementing income through disorderly out-migration. As the numbers of Cambodians with higher education grow, so does a concern about a “brain-drain” if the labour market in Cambodia cannot keep up, on the one hand, and loss of jobs to better qualified youth with increasing integration in the Asian Economic Community.

To respond to these and other changes in the context, five main internal challenges were identified in the 2020 strategy and shown to be the focus of ongoing attention in the 2012 development review and 2011-2015 strategic plan :

1. Focusing and developing research on emerging issues in Cambodian society which are increasingly urgent, but not historically addressed by CDRI.
2. Enhancing quality and relevance - In order to be fully engaged with both policy decision-makers and international research, CDRI is seeking to establish a more comprehensive research programme including independent research and a project monitoring and evaluation system will be established.
3. Strengthening impact – The 2020 research strategy identifies the need to enhance dissemination of CDRI research and engagement in international forums.
4. Cambodianisation has progressed significantly thanks to the increasing capacity of Cambodian nationals in general and CDRI’s commitment to staff professional development and recruitment policies. The 2012 review indicates that recruitment and retention systems and policies require improvement, especially given that Cambodians with doctorates are in high demand in a highly competitive employment market.
5. Balancing programme versus project-based and collaborative versus independent research is an ongoing major goal.

To respond to the research goals and challenges summarised above, CDRI has developed programmes, research questions guiding research, and projects within each of the 5 major themes.

2011-2015 Research Specific Objectives:

Economy, trade and regional cooperation

1. To monitor and analyse Cambodia’s macroeconomic performance
2. To provide policy research and analysis on the impact of the global financial crisis and economic downturn and vulnerability in Cambodia, and its policy and planning implications
3. To produce policy research and analysis on the key binding constraints of economic growth

4. To provide policy research and analysis on economic diversification for sustainable growth, regional integration and competitiveness, industrial policy, labour market and financial market.

Agriculture and rural development (and water resources management, agricultural development and food security, fisheries, livestock)

1. To monitor and evaluate impact of government policy implementation of poverty reduction strategy
2. To conduct policy research on social protection to support social protection policy implementation
3. To provide policy options for agriculture and rural development

Democratic governance and public sector reform;

1. To produce high quality relevant research on Cambodian political economy
2. To produce high quality relevant research on Democratic Development & Sub-national Decentralization & Deconcentration reform
3. To produce high quality relevant research on and natural resource governance

Natural resources and the environment

1. . To inform decision makers on the key policies regarding the issues of land use change, water management, current agricultural practices, and forestry
2. To better understand the implications of climate change for Cambodia and its impact on natural resource management and local livelihoods and adaptation ability to cope with change
3. To enhance scientific-research-based capacity for natural resources and environment policy research with a focus on the linkages between natural resource and environmental management, livelihoods and climate change

Social development

1. To increase and strengthen policy research in public health in the areas of: (i) maternal mortality and health services (ii) demand-side and supply-side health financing, (iii) human resources for health, and (iv) health equity
- 2: To build policy research in education in the specific areas of: (i) vocational education and (ii) privatisation of education services
3. To increase and strengthen policy research in social welfare, focusing on poverty in health sector
4. to build and strengthen research capacity in gender governance in education and public health
5. To increase and strengthen case study based training for sub-national government, community leaders and local CSO workers

In addition to participation in conferences and workshops in Cambodia and abroad, each of CDRI's research units have produced both collaborative and single author reports on topics reflecting a commitment to unit goals. The Economy Trade and Regional Cooperation unit publishes a regular *Flash Report on the Cambodian Economy*. In 2012 it published 8 working papers. CDRI also publishes a quarterly *Cambodia Development Review* and an *Annual Development Review*, with associated Khmer-language materials. In 2012 The Economy Trade and Regional Cooperation unit produced 8 policy briefs from one of several major projects on inclusive growth and the recent financial crisis. Poverty, Agriculture and Rural Development completed 4, and was working on 9 projects, exploring labor issues while working in consideration of whatever tension has been cause by recent political events. The Democratic Governance unit was finishing up eight research projects, mainly funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida); produced several working papers on civil society, a project on gender mainstreaming in decentralisation and, moving toward greater international recognition for CDRI, submitted an article for publication in an international journal. Three of Natural Resources and Environment's seven projects were concluded, while the others were carried over into 2013, including a 3-year collaborative project on climate change and water governance reflecting the commitment to longer term studies. Social Development prepared publications on the health sector, higher education services, gender and labor. Most if not all publications are available for download on the CDRI website, and users can request email delivery for regular reports. Information on the Development Research Forum, a collaborative project with other research-related institutions, is also available on line. A series of outlook briefs report on the annual Outlook Conference and are available in English and Khmer. The CDRI library catalogue and other research tools are also accessible from the website.

3. Relevance and Evaluability of Evaluation Questions

3.1 EVALUABILITY OF THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The ToRs for this assignment suggest areas for analysis which the MTR team finds relevant and feasible. The MTR team has developed these into a number of questions and sub-questions, which will structure the interviews. The original areas for analysis proposed in the ToRs are underlined in the matrix below. The evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact (primarily focused on outcomes) and sustainability have been used to group the evaluation questions, guide the implementation of the assignment and structure the findings in the evaluation report. The grouping of the evaluation questions in the matrix

below includes a re-ordering and further development of the evaluation questions.

These adjustments are suggested regarding the tasks outlined in the ToRs in order to also highlight how the evaluation findings will reflect CDRI's own objectives. The latter is emphasised in order to maximise opportunities for utility in contributing to CDRI's own future reflection over its management for results. The questions have also been framed so as to highlight relevance in relation to Swedish development cooperation policies focused on a human rights based approach.

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
<i>Relevance</i>	<u>Assess if the current choices of approaches and activities are relevant and strategic for the achievement of the objectives.</u>		
Primarily related to CDRI objective 1: <i>To produce independent, objective, high quality policy-relevant development research, and to maximise the accessibility of the knowledge to policy makers, influencers and stakeholders, and its policy impact</i>	1.A Has CDRI maintained an appropriate balance between independence and engagement?	Perceptions of CDRI staff and governmental and civil society actors regarding the balance between "pragmatism and independence" in order to maintain government engagement amid political tension and polarisation in relation to key CDRI research themes	Triangulation of interview data from sources in government, local civil society and international agencies
	1.B Has CDRI chosen its research approach and activities in such a way as to highlight key	Extent to which research methods and outputs highlight aspects of participation,	Critical review of selected sample of research reports

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
	human rights principles of participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination?	transparency, accountability and non-discrimination	
	1.C Are research findings being presented in a user-friendly manner and has CDRI focused its approaches at ‘the right level’ in relation to ‘intended use by intended users’?	Strategic Plan refers to “Cambodia-friendly” research products; the MTR mission will look closely at how this is perceived by different stakeholders and assess accordingly	Triangulation of critical review of research reports and other outputs with feedback from interviews with intended users
	2.A <u>Assess how gender equality has been addressed in CDRI research and organisation</u>	<p>In research to be assessed as a core aspect of non-discrimination, and incorporation of a gender perspective in research designs, subject/informant involvement in research.</p> <p>In organisation to be assessed through review of human resource and organisational development processes</p>	<p>Data sources described in 1.B above</p> <p>Review of staff policies, staffing, partnerships and initiatives</p>
<i>Effectiveness</i>	<u>Assess to what extent planned</u>		

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
	<u>activities have been implemented and to what extent these contribute to stated objectives (qualitatively and quantitatively) in the Strategic Plan 2011-2015. Analyse major deviations from plans and objectives.</u>		
Primarily related to CDRI objective 3: <i>To achieve best practice standards for research quality through continuous improvement of research management and support systems, and effective monitoring practices</i>	3.A Are plans being followed and is evidence presented of results achievement?	Assessment of the current results reporting in relation to outputs and outcomes in accordance with the performance indicators listed in the CDRI 2011-2015 Strategic Plan	Review of reports Annual Reports, minutes of Review Meetings, etc.
	3.B Have deficiencies regarding effectiveness noted in past reviews been addressed?	Initial list of core deficiencies noted in these reviews is being compiled and will be discussed with CDRI leadership and Swedish embassy at the start of the MTR mission.	Review of reports Annual Reports, minutes of Review Meetings, etc.
	<u>4. Assess the main risks that might prevent the achievement of objectives and how</u>	The Sida Assessment Memo for the current phase identified risks related to	These risks will largely be addressed in relation to the other questions in the MTR. The team will identify any gaps and address these in the

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
	<u>these risks can be mitigated</u>	maintaining independence (and with it trust), becoming project/donor driven, retaining senior staff, maintaining sufficient attention to capacity development of senior researchers, and inefficiencies related to internal control systems.	course of the review.
	<u>5. Assess the quality of a sample of research outputs within the existing four programme areas. Research related to labour markets and employment should be part of this assessment.</u>	<p>Criteria (See also methods below regarding quality in relation to impact):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy • Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) are analysed • Timeliness in relation to 	Review of research reports (sample to be chosen based on further discussions with CDRI and Swedish embassy); review of quality assurance mechanisms. Special note; given the current tensions in relation to labour market and employment issues the approach for addressing this aspect of the research portfolio will be discussed with the Swedish embassy and CDRI at the start of the mission of the team leader

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
		<p>current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added value and anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia • Extent to which the research is anchored in the international research and policy discourse on the given topic • Claims for results are consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises. • Accessibility for intended target audi- 	

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
		ence	
<i>Impact</i>	<u>6. Assess to what extent CDRI is likely to achieve the stated objectives at the end of 2015.</u>		
Primarily related to CDRI objective 2: <i>To make a significant contribution to Cambodia's national development research culture, capacity and institutions and community awareness of development issues</i>	6.A To what extent has a “culture of research” been developed among research partners and among users in relation to commitments to evidence based policy formation?	Concept of “culture of research” to be discussed with informants to define relevant indicators that reflect the processes through which CDRI engages with research partners and users.	Semi-structured interviews with three cohorts: government, civil society and researchers/students/professors further informed by donor perspectives and CDRI staff perspectives; library use.
	6.B What progress has been made in developing the broader capacity and institutions that can absorb and utilise research?	Further discussions are needed to define the parameters for what is feasible for CDRI to contribute in relation to broader capacities to absorb and utilise research.	To be addressed as part of discussions of 6.A and 10.B
	6.C To what extent has CDRI found ways to feed back research results to community (directly or through the work of those using CDRI outputs)?	The Strategic Plan refers to this being monitored through CDRI Development Knowledge Management and case-studies; these will be reviewed after which assess-	Primarily evidence will be drawn from CDRI reporting, complemented with interviews with research users, and polling of major local media sites.

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
		ment will be made of the need for further analysis.	
	<u>7. Assess how impact of research outcomes are measured, how the influence pathways are tracked. Recommend measurement indicators and procedures to improve the tracking of the impact of CDRI's research.</u>		
	7.A How have the research process and research findings contributed to change of policies/behaviour in government?	Review of assumptions regarding influence on policy, particularly in terms of attitudinal change, discursive commitments (i.e., the language used to frame arguments for a given policy), procedural change, policy content, and behavioural change (including policy implementation)	Review of CDRI documents and interviews with CDRI leadership. See also 3A,3B
	7.B Are these results being actively tracked and how is the tracking of these results feeding into CDRI decision-making?	Review of the extent to which monitoring of the aspects of policy influence identified in 7.A is used in managing for results	Review of CDRI documents and interviews with CDRI leadership, staff and stakeholders in dissemination; case study of examples of dissemination initiatives.

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
	<u>8. Assess CDRI's position in the region, the extent of regional and international institutional partnerships, including sub-regional collaboration in the Greater Mekong Sub-region</u>	Assessment of what is considered an optimal level of collaboration and the extent to which partnership with international research institutions lead to equitable and productive research partnerships	Interviews with CDRI leadership and Skype interviews with international partners
	<u>9.A Assess how CDRI involves stakeholders in the research process and the dissemination of results, including the quality of interaction with stakeholders, as well as the relevance of the fora chosen for interaction and dissemination.</u>	Outcome descriptors to be developed so as to highlight how dissemination activities are intended to create fora that can lead to evidence based policy change (based on the criteria described in 7.A)	Interviews with government officials and other partners and critical review of selected research reports with a focus on intended use by intended users
	<u>9.B Assess CDRI's role and inputs in relation to the formulation of Cambodia's strategic development direction; Cambodia vision 2030, Rectangular Strategy 2014-2018 and the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2014-2018</u>	Review of influence on these policies in terms of attitudinal change, discursive commitments (i.e. the language used to frame arguments for a given policy), procedural change, policy content, and behavioural	Case studies of the 3 policies documenting influence as perceived by CDRI leadership and key governmental, private sector and civil society stakeholders.

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
		change (including policy implementation). Special note given to the extent to which CDRI has contributed to stronger voice in policy discussions where donor pressures are strong.	
<p><i>Sustainability</i></p> <p>Primarily related to CDRI objective 4: : <i>To build a more sustainable future for CDRI as Cambodia's leading development policy research institution, through the strengthening of CDRI as an institution, the deepening of its "Cambodianisation" agenda and the capacity development of its management and staff, and effective resource mobilisation.</i></p>	<p><u>10. Assess the present situation regarding the sustainability and options for ensuring sustainable capacity and financial sustainability for CDRI</u></p>		
	10.A How have CDRI's overall organisational and human resource capacities been strengthened?	Analysis will focus heavily on issues of retention of senior staff both through organisational development efforts to make CDRI an	Review of CDRI staff retention policies, plans and reporting and interviews with staff at all levels; interviews with other Cambodian researchers to obtain an overview of research capacity development in Cambodia.

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
		attractive workplace and investments in human resource development. CDRI progress in this regard will be assessed in the context of research capacity development in Cambodia.	
	10.B What progress has been made in relation to “Cambodianisation” (taking into account pressures to both “Cambodianise” CDRI research and maintain independence and maximum quality standards)?	Assessment will look both at Cambodianisation (authorship, leadership, capacity to maintain a CDRI led agenda) as related to both internal CDRI capacity development and capacity to mobilise partnerships with other Cambodian research institutes	Review of CDRI strategic efforts based on documentation; authorship of reports; and perceptions of staff and external observers, professional development/capacity-building, staff retention.
	10.C What progress has been made regarding resource mobilisation and what are the implications of this for future sustainability?	Review of changes in income sources over time in relation to trends in both CDRI initiatives, governmental commitments to finance evidence based policy formation and donor priorities.	Financial statements and interviews with CDRI staff regarding perceived potential for improved resource mobilisation in the future
<i>Other</i>	<u>11. Make recommendations regard-</u>		N/A

DAC criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators and foci	Methods and data sources
	<u>ing priority actions for the remaining period of the Strategic Plan implementation</u>		

Methodology

4.1 OVERALL METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodology of the assignment will consist of application of the matrix above as part of the following process.

First, interviews and document review will be used to clarify and expand upon the theory of change through which CDRI aims for the achievement of objectives. This will involve situating analyses of how policies are expected to be influenced in terms of attitudinal change, discursive commitments (i.e. the language used to frame arguments for a given policy), procedural change, policy content, and behavioural change (including policy implementation). This will also look at the parameters and trends in capacity development in CDRI in relation to human resource management (including special attention to staff retention), organisational development and fostering of a broader environment for evidence based policy formation through effective dissemination and a culture of research among key research partners.

Second, the achievement of results intended in CDRI's theory of change will be assessed through a modified "outcome harvesting" approach using a variety of data collection methods. "Outcome Harvesting" will broaden the range of inquiry to elicit what stakeholders see to be the central accomplishments or changes, positive or negative, in the current funding period, vis-à-vis CDRI institutional objectives. The analysis will then work back along "influence pathways" to CDRI to assess its specific or accumulated contribution from many angles. Outcome harvesting methods will need to be modified because of practical limiting factors including time and the nature of the organisation under review. This can be accomplished through targeted questions and analysis of the data collected through the interviews with CRDI staff, interviews with Cambodian and international stakeholders, research users, collaborative partners. Outcome harvesting in this way works in conjunction with and integrates data from those interviews, "most important change/influence" cases, document reviews, quality assessment of research and outreach products and activities. Assessment of CDRI's work will pay strong attention to contextual factors af-

fecting research needs, demands, opportunities and challenges, particularly in relation to key development and political events in Cambodia.

The team expects that the timeframe for deliverables envisaged in the original proposal remains appropriate with this inception report being delivered on February 3, the draft report on March 7 and the final report on March 20. During the mission of the team leader a presentation of initial findings will be made to CDRI and the Embassy of Sweden on February 21.

4.2 PHASE 1: INCEPTION PHASE

The objective of the inception phase has been to develop the focus and the methodology for implementing the assignment in agreement with the Embassy of Sweden. Four main activities have been undertaken:

5. Methodology development, which includes initial review of CDRI's theory of change as defined in key documents (particularly the Strategic Plan 2011-2015) and defining key concepts, reassessing the evaluation questions, further development of data collection methods and criteria for assessing the evaluation questions, including research quality and impact.
6. Initial desk-review of CDRI outputs and other documentation in accordance with the evaluation questions.
7. Skype-meeting with the Embassy of Sweden to assess information requirements, agree on overall evaluation methodology and plan the visit to Cambodia.
8. This inception report has been submitted to the Embassy of Sweden and CDRI for comments and approval (expected upon arrival of the team leader in Phnom Penh).

4.3 PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW

The main data collection will take place during the team leader's mission to Phnom Penh (February 9-21). This mission will involve the following:

8. Interviews with CDRI management and staff.
9. Interviews with CDRI Board members, representatives of Cambodian government, representatives of the private sector, a selection of development partners/multilateral organisations, civil society organisations, and other institutes and universities (including students) in Cambodia and in the region. The selection of individuals is being made in consultation with CDRI.
10. Review of selected CDRI research outputs.
11. Review of CDRI internal documents and systems.
12. Presentation of preliminary findings to the Embassy of Sweden and CDRI.

The interviews will be based on a semi-structured guides for different categories of interviewees. These guides will be based on the evaluation questions above.

A selection of representatives of partner institutions in other countries (primarily in the region) will be interviewed by telephone or Skype.

The quality of a sample of research outputs within the existing four programme areas, one of which will be labour market and employment, will be assessed against a set of criteria including policy relevance, potential utility and scientific rigour. The sample will be chosen based on initial discussions with the Swedish embassy and CDRI. The team suggests the following as appropriate indicators of “quality”.

- Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy
- Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) are analysed
- Timeliness in relation to current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse
- Added value and anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia
- Extent to which the research is anchored in the international research and policy discourse on the given topic
- Claims for results are consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises.
- Accessibility for intended target audience

4.4 PHASE 3: ANALYSIS AND DRAFTING

The analysis and drafting phase will include the following tasks:

5. Analysis of the collected data and drafting of the draft report;
 6. Submission of the draft report to relevant the Embassy of Sweden and CDRI;
 7. Incorporation of comments and writing of the final Report; and
- Submission of the final report.

8.4 ANNEX 4 : LITERATURE REVIEWED

Research and evaluation reports

Abrams, Julian and Dok Doma (2013) Cambodia Water Resources Management Research and Capacity Development Program. Aidworks Initiative Number 38561

CDRI (2014) Annual Development Review 2013-2014, (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

CDRI (2013) Cambodia's Development Dynamics: Past Performance and Emerging Priorities (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

CDRI (2013), Inclusive Development in the GMS: An Assessment", Project Report on Inclusive Development in the GMS (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

CDRI (2013) Annual Development Review 2012-2013, (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

CDRI/NRE (2013) Reducing community vulnerability to drought and prolonged dry spells in Cambodia, DanchurchAid/Christian Aid

Chan Sophal (2012) Economic Costs and Benefits of Labour Migration: Case of Cambodia, in Costs and Benefits of Cross-Country Migration in the GMS, Hossein Jalilian, ed. (Singapore: ISEAS) p.118-189

Chea Chou (2010) The Local Governance of Common Pool Resources: The Case of Irrigation Water in Cambodia (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Chea Chou et.al (2011) Decentralised Governance of Irrigation Water in Cambodia: Matching Principles to Local Realities (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Chheat Sreang (2014) Impact of Decentralisation on Cambodia's Urban Governance (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Chheat Sreang, et.al. (2011) A Baseline Survey of Sub-national Government: Towards a Better Understanding of Decentralisation and Dconcentration in Cambodia (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Heng Seiha, Kim Sedara and So Sokbunthoeun (2011) Decentralised governance in a Hybrid Polity: Localisation of Decentralisation Reform in Cambodia (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Hing Vutha (2013), Leveraging Trade for Economic Growth in Cambodia, Working Paper Series No. 81 (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Hing Vutha (2011) Irregular Migration from Cambodia Characteristics, Challenges and Regulatory Approach (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Koy Ra and Em Sorany (2012) Gender in Climate Change Adaptation: The Case along the Mekong River and Tonle Sap Basin in The Annual Development Review 2011-12. Rebecca F. Catalla, PhD, and Susan Watkins editors (Phnom Penh: CDRI) p. 139-152

Naing Phirun et.al. (2011) Improving the Governance of Water Resources in Cambodia: A Stakeholder Analysis (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Saing Chan Hang (2013) Binding Constraints on Economic Growth in Cambodia: A Growth Diagnostic Approach (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Sum Sreymom and Keo Socheat (2012) Empowering Women's Greater participation in the Labour Market in The Annual Development Review 2011-12. Rebecca F. Catalla, PhD, and Susan Watkins editors (Phnom Penh: CDRI) p. 153-164

Kim Sedara and Joakim Ojendal et.al. (2012) A Gendered Analysis of Decentralisation Reform in Cambodia. (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Kim Sedara and Joakim Ojendal, et.al. (2014) Gatekeepers in Local Politics: political parties in Cambodia and their Gender Policy (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Kim Sedara and Joakim Ojendal et.al. (2012) Gender in Local Politics: The Case of Decentralisation Reform in Cambodia in The Annual Development Review 2011-12. Rebecca F. Catalla, PhD, and Susan Watkins editors (Phnom Penh: CDRI) p. 113-137

Madhur Srinivasa et.a. (2013) Cambodia's Development Dynamics: Emerging Priorities (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Madhur Srinivasa and Jayant Menon (2013), "Growth and Inclusiveness in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Countries: An Assessment", Synthesis Paper for the Project Report on Inclusive Development in the GMS (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Madhur Srinivasa and Jayant Menon (2014) Growth Development and Inclusion in the Mekong Subregion: An Assessment (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Sok Sethea (2012) Health Workforce Development and Policies in Cambodia: An Overview in The Annual Development Review 2011-12. Rebecca F. Catalla, PhD, and Susan Watkins editors (Phnom Penh: CDRI) p. 99-110

Madhur Srinivasa and Jayant Menon (2014) Growth, Development and Inclusion in the Greater Mekong Subregion: An Assessment. (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Net Neath and Huon Chantrea (2012) Country Situation Analysis: health Financing and Human Resources for Health in The Annual Development Review 2011-12. Rebecca F. Catalla, PhD, and Susan Watkins editors (Phnom Penh: CDRI) p. 87-98

Ou S. (2013), Subnational Civil Society in Cambodia: A Gramscian Perspective (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Ou S. and Kim S. (2013), 20 Years' Strengthening of Cambodian Civil Society: Times for Reflection (Phnom Penh: Cambodia Development Resource Institute)

Pak Kimchoeun (2011) Fiscal Decentralisation in Cambodia: A Review of Progress and Challenges (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Ros Bansok et.al. (2011) Agricultural Development and Climate Change: The Case of Cambodia (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Roth Vathana (2012) China's Sectoral Composition of Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, and Inequality: Developmental and Policy Implications for Cambodia, in The Annual Development Review 2011-12. Rebecca F. Catalla, PhD, and Susan Watkins editors (Phnom Penh: CDRI) p. 29-45

Roth, Vathana and Lun Pide (2013) Assessing Economic Inclusiveness in Cambodia: Consumption and Non-Consumption Pro-poor Approach (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Rylander, Lars and Örjan Sjöberg (2009) Mid-term Review of Sida's Core support to CDRI, SPM Consultants

Sen Vicheth and Ros Soveacha, et.al. (2013) Anatomy of Higher Education Governance in Cambodia. (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Strange, Larry et.al (2014) ASEAN 2030: Growing together for Economic Prosperity – the Challenges, Cambodia Background Paper (Phnom Penh: CDRI)

Cambodia Development Review, vol. 17:3, September 2013

- Can Community-Based Ecotourism Improve Local Livelihoods? A Case Study...
- Making Rice Contract Farming Work for Small holders and Agribusiness

Cambodia Development Review, Volume 15:1, January-March 2011

- Forests in their Contributions to Local Livelihoods
- Accountability in Cambodia: Relevant Concepts and their Application

Cambodia Development Review, Volume 16:2, April-June 2012

- Social Capital in an Urban and a Rural Community

Cambodia Development Review, Volume 15:2, April-June 2012

- Addressing Irregular Migration from Cambodia
- Reconsidering the Impact of Migration on Older Age Parents: Evidence from Two Battambang Communes
- Consolidating Gains, Preparing for Change: Cambodia's Labour Force and Diversification

CDRI and Swedish Embassy documents

- CDRI 2011-2015 Strategic Plan
- Amended 2011-15 CDRI Strategic Plan & Retreat Priorities for 2014 (draft for CDRI Board Meeting 28/2/14)
- Agreement between Sida and CDRI on core support during 2011-2016
- CDRI Annual Progress Report 2012 and Annual Work Plan 2013 for CDRI-Sida Partnership July 2011 to June 2016
- CDRI Annual Report 2012-2013
- CDRI Core Support 2011-16
- CDRI Gender Guidelines (August 2013)
- CDRI Research Project Development Handbook
- CDRI-Sida Partnership July 2011-June 2016; January – December 2012 (April 2013)
- CDRI Staff Manual (May 2011)
- CDRI Staff List
- CDRI Gender Profile (2013)
- CDRI Resource Mobilisation Policy and Associated Staff Satisfaction Policy
- KPMG, Grant Assessment CDRI 2011-2015 (2011)
- Staff on study leave abroad
- Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with Cambodia January 2012- December 2013
- The Indicative members of the Research Interest Groups, Cambodia Research Forum
- List of Participants for 2014 Cambodia Outlook Conference on “Cambodia The Next Five Years-Reform and Competiveness in an Integrated Region, 27 February 2014 at Hotel Intercontinental, Phnom Penh
- List of invitations for the 2012 Development Research Forum annual Symposium “Cambodia tomorrow Development Research Priorities for a Middle-Income Country” (and attendance sheet).
- CDRI library Journals subscriptions

8.5 ANNEX 5: RESEARCH REPORT QUALITY ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Two matrices are presented here. The first compiles the overall findings of the review of reports. The second presents the findings regarding individual reports. Thirty-two studies were reviewed for inclusion in the matrix. The scale used was: Excellent (5) Very good (4) Good (3) Satisfactory (2) Poor (1). Assigning number values to intellectual projects is, at best, a relatively subjective matter, relying on the interpretation of indicators, range of background knowledge in a given field of the evaluators, and for some indicators, amount of information provided within the document.

In the first matrix the number of “x” marks does not match the number of articles as an assessment occasionally earned 2 numbers (indicating a mark between categories). A study or article occasionally received no mark if the indicator was not relevant or the paper/article was unable to be assessed.

Assessment	1	2	3	4	5
1. Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy	x	xx	xxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxx	Xxxxxxxxx xxx
2. Claims for results are consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises	xxx	x	xxxxx	xxxxx	Xxxxxxxxx x xxxxxxx
	xxxxx	xxxxx x	xxxxx	Xxxxxxxxx xxxxx	xxxxxx

3. Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) are analysed					
4. Timeliness in relation to current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse		xxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx	Xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx
5. Added value and anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia	xxx	xxxxx	Xxxxxxx x xxxxx	xxxxxxxxxxxxx x	xxxx
6. Extent to which the research is anchored in the international re-	xxx	xxxxx x	xxxxxxxxx x	xxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxx

search and policy discourse on the given topic					
7. Accessibility for intended target		xx	xxx	Xxxxxxxxxx xxxxx	Xxxxxxxxxx xxx
8. Gender	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx xx	xx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xx

Category and Title of Document	Indicators (1-8: see descriptions below)							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<u>Governance, decentralisation, civil society</u>								
Impact of Decentralisation on Cambodia's Urban Governance	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	1
Fiscal Decentralisation in Cambodia: A review of Progress and Challenges	4	5	4	5	4/3	3	5	1
A Baseline Survey of Sub-national Government Decentralisation and Deconcentration in Cambodia	4	4	4	3	4/3	4	4	5
National Civil Society in Cambodia: A Gramscian	4	3	4	2	2/3	3	4	1
20 years Strengthening of Cambodian Civil Society: Time for Reflection	3/2	3	4	5	3/2	4/3	4	1
Decentralised Governance in	4	5	3	5	3/4	4	4	3

a Hybrid Polity: Localisation of Decentralisation Reform in								
The Local Governance of Common Pool Resources: The Case of Irrigation Water in	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	1
Anatomy of Higher Education Governance in Cambodia	3	4	2	5	4	3	5	1
<u>Gender</u>								
A Gender Analysis of Decentralisation Reform in Cambodia	3	4	4	2	4/3	2	5	4
Gatekeepers in Local Politics: Political Parties in Cambodia and their Gender Policy	4	3	4	5	2	3/2	5	4
Gender in Climate Change adaptation: the case along the Mekong river and tonle sap basin.	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	1
Empowering Women's Greater Participation in the Labour Market.	4	5	4	4	3	2	4	4/3
Gender in Local Politics: The Case of Decentralisation Reform in Cambodia. <u>Development Review 2011-201</u>	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5
<u>Economics and labour</u>								
Growth Development and Inclusion in the Greater Mekong Subregion: An Assessment by Srinivasa Madhur and Jayant Menon	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
Leveraging Trade for Economic Growth Hing Vutha	3	5	1	3	3	3	4	1

Economic Inclusiveness in Cambodia: Consumption and Non-Consumption Pro-poor Approach GMS DAN 2013	5	5	4	5	4	5	3	3
ASEAN 2030: Growing Together for Economic Prosperity—the Challenges. Cambodia Background Paper (Numbers here mitigated by fact this meant to be read with the Cambodia Development Dynamics report)	Broad o.v. 4	5 5	3/2 5	5 4	2 (civil society)/ 4	5 5	4 5	3 4
Constraints on Economic Growth in Cambodia: A Growth Diagnostic Approach	Difficult to assess	5	1	5	3	5	2	1
Assessing Economic Inclusiveness pro-poor	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	3
Growth, Development and Inclusion in the Greater Mekong Subregion: An Assessment (Madhum and Menon)	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4
China's Sectoral Composition of Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, and Inequality: Developmental and Policy Implications for Cambodia.	3	3	2	3	1	2	4	2
Country Situation Analysis: Health Financing and Human Resources for Health. <u>Development Review 2011-201</u>	3	5	2	4	3	1	4	2
Health Workforce Development and Policies in Cambodia: An Overview. <u>Development Review 2011-201</u> . Sok Sethea	5	5	3	2	4	1	5	1

Anatomy of Higher Education Governance in Cambodia	3	4	2	5	4	3	5	1
<u>Labour and Migration</u>								
Irregular Migration from Cambodia Characteristics, Challenges and Regulatory approach	4	5	3/4	5	Difficult to assess lit re-view not visible	4	5	4
Economic Costs and Benefits of Labor Migration: Cambodia in Costs and Benefits of Cross Country Labor Migration in the GMS. 2012. ISEAS Publishing	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
<u>Water, agriculture, climate and natural resources</u>								
Agricultural Development and Climate Change: The Case of Cambodia	3	3	3	n/a	4	2	5	1
Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods	2	1	1	2	3	1	5	3
Decentralised Governance of Irrigation Water in Cambodia: Matching principles to local realities	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	1
Improving the Governance of Water Resources in Cambodia: A stakeholder analysis	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	1
Reducing community vulnerability to drought and prolonged dry spells in Cambodia	2	1	2	4	3	3	3	1

- 1. Contribution to deeper understanding of critical issues in public policy (Cambodia/international)
- 2. Claims for results are consistent with methods of collection and data/material analysed and reflect coherent argumentation and solid theoretical premises.
- 3. Extent to which key human rights principles (participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination) are analysed
- 4. Timeliness in relation to current needs and demands in the Cambodian policy discourse
- 5. Added value and anchoring of findings in relation to the broader research discourse in Cambodia
- 6. Extent to which the research is anchored in the international research and policy discourse on the given topic
- 7. Accessibility for intended target audience
- 8. Gender mainstreamed



Mid-Term Review of Sweden's Support to the Cambodia Development Resource Institute

This evaluation of support to the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) assesses the relevance, effectiveness of outcomes of CDRI's policy research in what is a highly polarised political environment. Findings indicate that the Institute has successfully steered a difficult course, maintaining both independence and a constructive dialogue with government, which together have led to strong outcomes. The quality of research produced is generally good and the findings extremely relevant in relation to most key issues facing Cambodia today. CDRI is well placed to play a central role in supporting government and international partners with reflective policy analysis as they face rapid and potentially radical changes in Cambodian society. CDRI needs to strengthen its engagements with civil society and continue to develop links with development researchers in Cambodia, in the region and globally.

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm

Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

E-mail: info@sida.se. Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>

