

# STREAM



## Country Strategy Paper

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## CAMBODIA

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**December 2002**

## I. PREFACE

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### What is STREAM?

Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management (STREAM) is a regional communications and learning initiative, which is mandated by 15 Asia-Pacific governments and designed within the five-year work programme cycle of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA). The purpose of STREAM is to *strengthen, or develop, and communicate strategies, processes and practices that enable poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users in the Asia-Pacific region to pursue their livelihoods objectives*. It aims to achieve this, by working with partners to ensure that:

1. Service providers better understand the *livelihoods* of poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users
2. *Institutions* better support the livelihoods objectives of poor and vulnerable aquatic resource users
3. *Policy* development processes better reflect the livelihoods objectives of poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users
4. *Communications* among poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users, service providers, institutions and policy-makers are improved.

The STREAM Initiative is based around a series of partnerships, involving at the outset a coalition of founding partners (DFID, FAO and VSO) supporting NACA. STREAM is currently also supported by AusAID, APEC and DFID NRSP. It tries to adopt an inclusive approach, reaching out to link stakeholders engaged in aquatic resources management and supporting them to influence the initiative's design, implementation and management.

STREAM's work is coordinated in each country through STREAM Country Offices. These teams comprise a National Coordinator (a senior national colleague agreed with the government) and a Communications Hub Manager (a full-time national colleague supported in the first two years by STREAM), with linkages to a range of national stakeholders. These teams are provided hardware, software, information technology, networking and human resources development support. At the regional level, the teams are linked through an internet-based virtual regional network. The STREAM Regional Office (at the NACA Secretariat in Bangkok) directs the initiative, providing a regional coordination function and supporting interactions, lesson learning and partnership activities.

### What is a Country Strategy Paper?

In each country where STREAM operates, a Country Strategy Paper (CSP) is prepared in consultation with a range of national stakeholders, and with support from the STREAM Regional Office in Bangkok. A CSP identifies relevant national poverty and aquatic resources issues, examines policy and institutional environments, establishes key objectives, proposes implementation approaches, highlights partnerships with national and regional stakeholders, and provides a basis for seeking financial support and resources from STREAM, its partners and other sources.

A CSP should remain valid for three to five years. The CSP, and the process and practice to develop it, will be reviewed and revised as circumstances change and learning takes place<sup>1</sup>. The CSP will act as a guiding framework, enabling STREAM Country Offices and the Regional Office to make more detailed action plans so that the STREAM Initiative focuses its efforts to achieve its purpose and outputs around the themes of *livelihoods, institutions, policy and communications*.

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<sup>1</sup> A CSP Planning Kit is available from STREAM offices.

## II. SUMMARY

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Cambodia is one of the poorest countries in the world; much of its population live in rural areas and many live below the local poverty line. The management of common property aquatic resources is of over-riding importance to food security and sustainable rural development in Cambodia. The key groups of poor people who use aquatic resources as part of their diverse livelihoods portfolios are subsistence fishers, small-scale aquaculture practitioners and aquatic resources collectors. Subsistence fishers access mainly the rivers, lakes and inundated forests in Tonle Sap provinces, the lower Mekong and Bassac regions and the upper part of the Mekong. Small-scale aquaculture and/or the collection of aquatic resources are most important in provinces that are not rich in fisheries resources including Kompong Speu, Ratnakiri, Mondulkiri, Preah Vihear and Ortdar Meanchey. Freshwater capture fisheries probably contribute more to national food security and the national economy in Cambodia than in any other country in the world.

Privatisation of most of the national inland fishery brought “family scale” fishers into conflict with commercial lot operators, who, in spite of the law, have prevented subsistence fishers from accessing the resource through intimidation, violence and false imprisonment. Civil unrest, with lack of access to the resource by poor people at its heart, instigated management and institutional changes from HE Hun Sen, the Prime Minister, in 2001.

The central aim of the proposed changes is to develop a system of co-management of the fishery; however, there is not yet a provision in law for community fisheries or their co-management with the government. The current law makes provision for, and supports, “family scale” (subsistence) fishing, which is distinct from middle scale and commercial scale fishing activity. However, in contemporary Cambodia, poor people need to operate a level of fishing effort that is currently disallowed by law, and which provides no basis for poor people to escape from poverty through incremental increases in fishing effort.

The purpose of STREAM Cambodia is to strengthen, or develop, and communicate strategies, processes and practices that enable poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users to pursue their livelihoods objectives. This will be achieved through supporting better understanding of poor people’s livelihoods, building capacity of service providers, legal reforms and improved communication.

The STREAM Initiative was conceived, developed and continues to operate as a coalition of partners at local, national and regional levels. Securing the resources to achieve the objectives set out in this CSP is central to the STREAM Cambodia mandate.

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## 1. POVERTY AND AQUATIC RESOURCES IN CAMBODIA

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### 1.1 Rural poverty in Cambodia

The 1998 Population Census recorded 11.4 million Cambodians, about 82% of whom live in rural areas. In terms of its HDI, Cambodia ranks among the lowest 20%. It is also among the poorest 20 countries in the world. Absolute poverty in Cambodia remains pervasive, though it did decline by around 3% between 1993 and 1997. About 36% of Cambodians live below the poverty line of US\$ 145 per person per year.

There are large provincial differences in social and human indicators of poverty and aquatic resources use. A Cambodia-specific Human Development Index (CHDI), which aggregates a wide range of social and economic indicators, identifies Kampong Speu as especially disadvantaged. The provinces of the northeast (such as Ratnakiri and Mondulkiri) as well as the provinces of Kampong Cham, Siem Reap and Prey Veng also have low human development scores.

### 1.2 The importance of aquatic resources to rural livelihoods in Cambodia<sup>2</sup>

The management of common property aquatic resources is of over-riding importance to food security and sustainable rural development in Cambodia. For example:

- Fish and fish products (crabs, shrimps, snails, frogs, beetles) constitute around 75% of animal protein in the diet and aquatic vegetation consumed includes morning glory, lotus and water lily
- Between 160,000 – 250,000 tonnes<sup>3</sup> of aquatic resources are harvested annually through family fisheries and foraging in rice fields
- Fishing or fishing-related activity is reportedly the primary source of employment for more than 10% of poor rural households, a part-time income generating activity for at least 30% of poor rural households, and key to the livelihoods of over 90% of poor rural households
- A huge migration takes place every year to the Tonle Sap to trade rice for Trey Riel (*Henicorhynchus sp.* – a small cyprinid) and other small fish species to make Prahoc (fish paste), a key component of seasonal food security for poor rice farmers
- The capture and collection of aquatic resources by the landless during the “hungry months” is key to food security and also used to generate income for the purchase of rice
- The key groups who use aquatic resources as part of their diverse livelihoods portfolios are subsistence fishers, small-scale aquaculture practitioners and aquatic resources collectors. Subsistence fishers access mainly the rivers, lakes and inundated forests in:

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<sup>2</sup> For more detailed analyses of poverty and aquatic resource use, refer to “An Analysis of Poverty and Aquatic Resources Use, focusing especially on the livelihoods of the poor, in Cambodia”. DFID-SEA ARMP, 2000, Bangkok, 47p.

<sup>3</sup> Although larger than previous figures this is probably an underestimate.

- The Tonle Sap provinces - Kampong Thom, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Battamabang, Pursat, Kampong Chhnang and Kandal to the north of Phnom Penh
- The lower Mekong and Bassac regions - Kandal to the south of Phnom Penh, Kampong Cham, Say Rieng, Prey Veng and Takeo
- The upper part of the Mekong and the rapids region of Cambodia - Kratie and Stung Treng.

Small-scale aquaculture and/or the collection of aquatic resources is most important in provinces that are not rich in fisheries resources and which are situated far from Tonle Sap Lake and Mekong and Bassac rivers - Kampong Speu, Ratnakiri, Mondulkiri, Preah Vihear and Ortdar Meanchey.

### **1.3 The aquatic resources base in Cambodia**

In comparison with its neighbours (Thailand, Lao and Vietnam), Cambodia is a geographically compact country of 181,035 km<sup>2</sup>. The country is divided into 24 provinces, three of which have relatively short maritime boundaries. The Tonle Sap Great Lake and the Mekong and Bassac River systems drain a central low-lying alluvial plain, dominating the livelihoods of most Cambodians and the country's terrain. Over 85% of the country lies within the catchment of the Mekong River.

Aquatic resources production takes place in the wetland ecosystem that is driven by the annual flooding of the Mekong River during the southwest monsoon (June-October). This temporarily submerges 10,000 – 13, 000 km<sup>2</sup> of land beside the Mekong River, its tributaries, the Tonle Sap Great Lake and the Bassac River. The outlet of the Tonle Sap Great Lake (a river of the same name) flows into the Mekong during the dry season, whilst during the wet season the Mekong flood flows back into the lake.

Freshwater capture fisheries probably contribute more to national food security and the national economy in Cambodia than in any other country in the world. The annual catch ranges between 290,000 – 430,000 tonnes, the fourth-largest inland fishery catch in the world. The monetary value of the total catch at the landing site ranges from US\$ 100-200 million. This increases in the market chain to US\$ 250-500 million and represents 9-18% of total GDP.

## 2. POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS IN CAMBODIA<sup>4</sup>

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### 2.1 The Department of Fisheries

The Department of Fisheries (DoF) was created in 1979. Its primary objective was the management and administration of the fisheries domain (which is considered property of the state), including the management and administration of 15 sanctuaries. In practice, the management and administration of the fisheries domain has focused on the regulation of fishing through the classification of different scales of permitted fishing gear: family scale (synonymous with subsistence), middle scale and (the administration of fishing lots for) commercial scale. Aquaculture and fisheries extension was largely uncoordinated and still depends heavily on inputs from donor projects such as the Asian Institute of Technology Outreach Programme and NGO activities.

### 2.2 The importance of “family scale” fishing

The current law makes provision for “family scale” (subsistence) fishing, which is distinct from middle scale and commercial scale fishing activity. The definition of “family scale” fishing is based on the type and size of fishing gear used. Family scale fishing is not licensed and family scale fishing gear can be used all year round throughout the fisheries domain (except in the 15 sanctuaries). It is important to emphasize that this includes inside commercial fishing lots – in special areas designated as “set aside” for people during the open season, but throughout the commercial fishing lots during the closed season. However, privatisation of most of the national inland fishery has brought “family scale” fishers into conflict with commercial lot operators, who, in spite of the law, prevent subsistence fishers from accessing the resource through intimidation, violence and false imprisonment.

In addition, the current definition of “family scale” fishing is not based on the level of fishing effort that is required today to derive a subsistence living, but on types of fishing gear that were used by subsistence fishers during the colonial period. In practice, this means that *poor people are forced to operate a level of fishing effort that is currently disallowed by law*, if they are to derive a livelihood. Furthermore, the current definition of “family scale” fishing precludes subsistence fishers from trading in fish; hence *the law currently provides no basis for poor people to escape from poverty through incremental increases in fishing effort*.

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<sup>4</sup> Many authors have discussed aquatic resources (primarily fisheries) and livelihoods and access and conflicts in specific provinces, particularly the provinces around the Tonle Sap Great Lake. For more detailed analyses, see: Ahmed et al., 1998; Azimi et al., 2000; *Cambodia Daily* Newspaper, 2000; Degen et al., 2000; Kato, 1999; Oxfam, 2000; Sithirith, 2000; Swift, 1999; Thuok and Song, 1999; and Van Acker, 1999; and a few studies from provinces situated on the upper Mekong and its major tributaries such as Stung Treng (EWG, 2000) and Ratnakiri (FPO, 2000; Phiak, 2000).

### **2.3 Emerging opportunities for change**

Civil unrest in relation to the management and administration of the fisheries domain has become the primary contemporary aquatic resources management issue in Cambodia, with lack of access to the resource by poor people at its heart. In response, in 2001 HE Hun Sen publicly announced his intention to instigate institutional changes. These have included rescinding a large proportion of commercial fishing lots, replacing the Director of the DoF with his deputy, and establishing a new office within the DoF, the Community Fisheries Development Office (CFDO), to support the development of community fisheries.

Following HE Hun Sen's recommendation, 12 sub-decrees have now been finalised releasing commercial fishing lots. All lots valued at less than 30 million riel have been abolished as well as some lots up to a value of 300 million riel where much conflict over fishing had existed. Following consultations involving the Ministry, provincial fisheries and lot operators, a draft sub-decree detailing the new bidding process for fishing lots has also been finalised. Again following HE Hun Sen's recommendation, a sub-decree has repealed fishing fees (which were formally applied in relation to fishing effort). The impact of these moves on the revenue and remit of the DoF remains unclear.

The fisheries law is also being revised. A first complete draft has been circulated to Provisional Fisheries and Agriculture Directors for comment. Articles 76, 77 and 78 of the draft new law regarding co-management and a proposed new sub-decree on community fisheries is with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MAFF), prior to its passage to the Prime Minister for signing. However, Article 15 of the new draft still refers to subsistence fishing and precludes subsistence fishers from trading in fish, whilst the sub-decree has gone through more than 50 iterations over the past two years without resolution or passage into law.

### **2.4 The role of external support agencies**

AIT Outreach, the MRC, FAO, NACA and NGOs such as Oxfam have had a long term presence in the sector in Cambodia. There has been a focus on understanding the extent and the dynamics of the fishery, the plight of poor people who fish, as well as interventions which have focused on aquaculture. Advocacy and awareness-raising have played a role in challenging fisheries management approaches and bringing about changes. Many external support agencies have found it difficult to respond rapidly to these new challenges in fisheries management. However, approximately 30 small NGOs are working to support various approaches to community management. The Cambodian Development Research Institute has made an initial attempt to assess their progress, though specific information on progress and approach is so far limited. One example is the South East Asia Development Programme (SADP), which works with the Mekong River Commission to support



community fisheries development in three abolished fishing lots in Kampong Chhnang. Challenges that have arisen include what can and cannot be done compared to what is officially allowed, and different treatment between released fishing lots and areas that have always been open access.

Other international development support includes the FAO, which has been working in Siem Reap on natural resource management (including fisheries) for several years, and the World Bank, which has provided support through the Agricultural Production Improvement Programme in the form of broad-based advice on institutional reform and the revision of the fisheries law.

The European Commission announced a new three-year aid package worth €68.7 million (almost US\$ 62 million) in May 2002, to assist rural development in Cambodia's social sector. The main focus of this package will be livestock and fisheries rearing, water management and crop diversification, vocational training, and mine clearance. The Asian Development Bank too is expected to agree a large, but geographically specific, loan to the sector. The IDRC and ICLARM are also considering smaller support and research projects.

### 3. OBJECTIVES

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#### 3.1 Goal

The goal of STREAM Cambodia is that:

*Poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users in Cambodia are able to achieve their livelihoods objectives.*

#### 3.2 Purpose

The purpose of STREAM Cambodia is:

*To strengthen, or develop, and communicate strategies, processes and practices that enable poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users in Cambodia to pursue their livelihoods objectives, focusing on Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces.*

#### 3.3 Outputs

STREAM Cambodia will achieve the following outputs:

1. Staff at the provincial offices of the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Women's and Veterans' Affairs in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces, and staff at SCALE and the CFDO, better understand the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable aquatic resource users
2. Local NGOs, community groups and the provincial offices of the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Women's and Veterans' Affairs in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces, and SCALE and the CFDO, better support the livelihoods objectives of poor and vulnerable aquatic resource users
3. The reformulation process of Articles 15 of the draft new fisheries law better reflects the livelihoods objectives of poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users in Cambodia
4. Communications are improved among poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users, service providers, institutions and policy-makers.

## 4. APPROACHES

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There is considerable confusion in Cambodia about the state of the fisheries law, fisheries administration (particularly the concept of community management and the institutional roles and responsibilities of the state and of communities associated with it), and the early stages of institutional development required to support community management. Support needs are vast and cannot all be addressed by an initiative the size of STREAM. In this context, it is important to re-emphasise that the over-riding needs of poor aquatic resources users themselves are *secured legal access to the resource and appropriate support services from local and national (government and non-government) mediating institutions*. With these in mind, STREAM will focus its support towards the following priority areas<sup>5</sup>.

### 4.1 Developing the capabilities of individuals to adopt a livelihoods approach

The ability of fisheries staff to understand the livelihoods of poor aquatic resource users is critical, if the development of aquatic resources management strategies, processes and practices are to respond effectively to the needs of disadvantaged people. However, the capacity of the CFDO and other government support agencies to adopt a livelihoods approach is limited, with few staff having the skills or experience required to analyse and understand the livelihoods of poor aquatic resources users.

STREAM will work to increase the capabilities of government officials to conduct livelihoods analyses. It will focus in particular on supporting provincial-level livelihoods teams that are drawn from the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Women's and Veterans' Affairs in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal (south of Phnom Penh) and Kratie provinces, representing the main fishing areas of the upper Mekong, the Tonle Sap and the lower Mekong/Bassac respectively. This approach will also ensure that STREAM's human resources development support is invested beyond Phnom Penh.

STREAM will implement this work in partnership with the local NGO, SCALE. It builds on an extensive period of "capacity building through training and practice" support that began in January 2001 under the DFID Aquatic Resources Management Programme. This support has continued under STREAM and will remain a core component of this CSP throughout implementation.

Where opportunities arise, STREAM will support the livelihoods teams to work with local communities to develop community pilot projects, based on the findings of the livelihoods analyses. This may include the provision of organisational and/or technical capacity building support to local

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<sup>5</sup> Detailed and regularly updated STREAM Cambodia work plans can be downloaded from the STREAM website at [www.streaminitiative.org](http://www.streaminitiative.org).

NGOs and community groups in each of the identified target communities (4.2.3 below). In the longer term, STREAM will support the livelihoods teams to utilize their skills, experience and learning to increase awareness and develop the capacity of government officials in other rural provinces.

## **4.2 Developing the capacity of support institutions**

### **4.2.1 *The Community Fisheries Development Office***

At its inception the CFDO had no office, no equipment, no trained staff, no strategic plan, no office systems and no budget. Staff were allocated to the CFDO from other offices by senior management. Several of the better trained staff were engaged with donor-funded project work for which they received a much-needed salary supplement, whilst more junior staff, on minimal salaries with no office to report to and no tasks to undertake, commonly failed to come to work.

Building the capacity of the CFDO to implement the required changes in fisheries management is a priority for the Department of Fisheries. As a process initiative, STREAM was able to respond rapidly to a request from the Director General of Fisheries to provide capacity building support to the CFDO. STREAM provided the CFDO with a permanent support presence, through the placement of a Management Advisor from *Accenture* (recruited under VSO's Business Partnership Scheme). The Advisor provided full-time support to the CFDO at a level that engaged on equal terms with staff in a way that a temporary consultant often cannot, and which has catalysed the development of office systems and structures, staff skills assessments, a CFDO strategy and a draft work plan.

This support, which is on-going, necessarily predates the development of this CSP and will continue in the near-medium term. There is every reason to believe that the Cambodian community fisheries sector will receive a large increase in donor support over the coming years. Steps must be taken now to ensure the CFDO has the capacity to co-ordinate the activities of many different support agencies, if these increased resources are to be used effectively and efficiently, and learning shared in the pursuit of common development objectives. STREAM will therefore maintain its limited capacity-building support to the CFDO, whilst committing itself to withdraw this support if and when more substantial forms of institutional support are realised from other development agencies (e.g., the ADB).

### **4.2.2 *Provincial government offices***

The capacity of the provincial government offices to implement the required changes in fisheries management is another key challenge. A decentralised capacity at the provincial level to link with the CFDO centrally will be essential to the proper functioning of the sector and the proposed development of co-management. Support for this will be sought to follow on from provisional capacity building with the CFDO. Development and promotion of co-management data collection and sharing

mechanisms is an early objective of the new CFDO in conjunction with the provincial government offices for which STREAM will seek support to implement as a partner, a pilot mechanism which would identify information needs and a system for collecting, sharing and regularly updating community fisheries and co-management experiences.

#### *4.2.3 Civil society organisations*

The adoption of a livelihoods approach by the Department of Fisheries (and others) offers considerable potential for poor aquatic resources users to exert more influence over those strategies, processes and practices that impact on their lives. The abolition of many commercial fishing lots also provides an opportunity for poor aquatic resources users to exert greater legal control over the resources upon which their livelihoods depend.

However, experience elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific region suggests that many poor aquatic resource users are unable to respond to these opportunities due to ineffective community representation and/or weak technical capacity. There is a need to strengthen the organisational and/or technical capacity of local NGOs and community groups in particular, if local communities are to play an effective role in promoting good governance, community management is to be sustainable, and the emerging trend towards people-centred approaches is to be maintained in Cambodia.

To date, much of STREAM's support to civil society has been for the local NGO, SCALE. This is in recognition of its pioneering partnership with the Department of Fisheries, in particular the CFDO. STREAM is committed to strengthening this partnership throughout the implementation of this CSP, and will work closely with the CFDO and SCALE to ensure this objective is achieved. Exact support requirements will emerge as the partnership evolves but in the near-medium term it is known to include the provision of a VSO IT Advisor and a fisheries advisor, who will work with both organisations to develop a shared Community Fisheries Database.

In the longer term, STREAM is committed to developing the capacity of other elements of civil society, in particular local NGOs and community groups at the grassroots. In particular, it will build on the findings of the livelihoods analyses in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces. Where organisational and/or technical capacity building needs are identified by local communities, STREAM will make every effort to support the livelihoods teams and STREAM partner agencies to work with the local communities to develop, resource and implement plans that respond to these needs.

### **4.3 Supporting reformulation of Article 15 of the draft new fisheries law**

#### *4.3.1 Policy-making processes – a case study*

As an early contribution to improving understanding of (and hence capacity to engage with) fisheries policy-making processes in Cambodia, especially concerning which key decision-makers can effect changes in fisheries legislation, STREAM will review the development process of the sub-decree on community fisheries. This will include tracing the development of the sub-decree, interviewing key informants and participants involved in the process, and conducting other research into the background of fisheries issues in Cambodia. Review findings will feed into a document that examines the pattern of drafts (there are currently over 50), and which identifies the key changes, what institutions were involved and which individuals influenced the changes in this on-going process. It is anticipated that this increased awareness will increase the capacity of STREAM partners to engage with legislative processes in Cambodia, and in particular advocate for reformulation of Article 15 of the draft new law.

#### *4.3.2 Improving the utilisation of existing livelihoods-related work in Cambodia*

Although STREAM will support the conduct of livelihoods analyses in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces, it is important to reiterate that their primary purpose is to build the capacity of the livelihoods teams and not necessarily the provision of analytically accurate information, at least in the short term. However, both the Secretary of State for MAFF and the Director General of Fisheries have stated their desire to use information derived from these analyses to support reformulation of Article 15 of the new law.

This demonstrates the high demand for information about the lives of poor fishers in support of fisheries law revision, but also the limited livelihoods analyses conducted in Cambodia. Whilst it is true that few livelihoods analyses have been conducted in Cambodia, it should be recognised that a number of activities have been undertaken by different support agencies, many of which do provide additional insights into the lives of poor fishers and farmers in Cambodia.

STREAM will utilise this work in support of fisheries law reformulation, by conducting a desk review of secondary sources of information already available in Cambodia. This may include interviewing key stakeholders and participants involved in livelihoods-related work in the fisheries sector. Findings will support the results of the livelihoods analyses conducted in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces to produce a “composite” picture of the lives of poor aquatic resource users in Cambodia, focusing in particular on poor fishers in each of the three target provinces.

#### *4.3.3 Contributing towards clarity of definitions relevant to the new fisheries law*

Through workshops and discussion forums, STREAM plans to bring together experiences on the definition of “subsistence”, “fishing gear”, and other such terms to help to bring clarity to the

emerging legal basis for community fisheries and co-management. This is specifically in relation to STREAM's mandate regarding communication, working with and building partnerships, and influencing policy development processes.

#### *4.3.4 Engaging in legislative processes*

As stated elsewhere in this document, a key constraint in Cambodia is the current fisheries policy and Article 15 of the draft new law. The Secretary of State for MAFF and the Director General of Fisheries have both emphasised that Article 15 requires reformulation to better reflect the livelihoods strategies of "subsistence fishers" and to support sustainable rural development practices. Both of these key actors have reiterated to STREAM and others that capacity building in livelihoods analysis is a priority and emphasised a desire to use information derived from such analyses to add value to the reformulation of Article 15. They have also requested support to learn lessons from community management policy and practice in other parts of Asia, emphasising the experience of DFID in Bangladesh and opportunities for learning through the STREAM regional communication network.

Although engagement with policy-making processes is complex and unpredictable, STREAM is committed to supporting the Government of Cambodia's efforts to reformulate the Fisheries Law. The process by which this might happen is continually under negotiation, as is the whole process of reformulating the Fisheries Law. This means that the exact form of STREAM support is difficult to pre-determine and in many cases will be necessarily opportunistic. In this context, monitoring the process by which STREAM identifies and responds to opportunities for engagement will be a key challenge throughout implementation of this CSP, particularly if the initiative is to learn from experience and ensure that its modest contribution to the reformulation process can deliver demonstrable outcomes.

## **4.4 Communications**

In the longer term, supporting the needs of poor aquatic resources users in Cambodia requires improved information flows among and between poor aquatic resources users, service providers, support institutions and policy-makers. Steps must be taken to ensure that appropriate systems and structures are put in place, which facilitate lesson learning and the sharing of experience and resources between stakeholders. Only then will understanding and appreciation of the issues increase. This is especially pertinent in Cambodia today, given the widely anticipated increase in donor-supported activity to the community fisheries sector.

STREAM, through the development and linking of a Communications Hub in Cambodia with similar Hubs in other Asia-Pacific countries, will facilitate the sharing of lessons being learnt in many

countries (about technologies, processes, ways of working, incentive structures, legal frameworks, management of particular environments, ways of monitoring and evaluation) through communication among counterparts in different countries. Through the development of appropriate partnerships, STREAM will also aim to increase stakeholder networking at the national level and to link national networks across the region.

In addition to linking with national networks and other counterparts, STREAM will facilitate access to information resources currently available through the international and scientific media and through the Web. This will include media monitoring, researching and linking with research organisations, and development and facilitated searching of an information-rich website. A key function of Communications Hub Managers will be to translate and share the meaning of key knowledge from these various sources. In order to develop the most appropriate means of networking nationally, people's access to information and the ways which they choose to share information will be surveyed in Cambodia. Two vehicles for regional communication, the quarterly *STREAM Journal* and *STREAM Update* will be published and distributed by the Communications Hub in Cambodia in Khmer and English.

Regular communication channels will be developed and maintained between Cambodian partners and those from other Asia-Pacific countries including: bi-monthly e-meetings linking all Communication Hubs and partners across the region (through web-based connection to a common Internet Protocol address), annual (face-to-face) Regional Conferences and ad hoc workshops, meetings and exchanges.



## 5. PARTNERSHIPS

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The STREAM Initiative was conceived and developed by a coalition of partners with an involvement in support of regional aquatic resources management and a special interest in the livelihoods of poor people. In this endeavour, the governments of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) were joined by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) – Aquatic Resources Management Programme, The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) Aquaculture Department in Rome and the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, and the international NGO Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO).

Following a process of engagement in Cambodia supported by DFID and a request to the NACA Governing Council, a Partnership Agreement dealing with implementation of the STREAM Initiative in Cambodia was signed between the Community Fisheries Development Office, Department of Fisheries, Phnom Penh, the NGO SCALE and the STREAM Initiative on 2 November 2001.

At the provincial level, partnerships have been developed through the instigation of capacity building in livelihoods analysis involving SCALE, with the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Women's and Veterans' Affairs in Kampong Chhnang, Kandal and Kratie provinces, providing services to the people of the main fishing areas of the upper Mekong, the Tonle Sap and the lower Mekong/Bassac respectively.

As the STREAM Initiative develops in Cambodia and around the region, it is proposed that further partnerships with donors, implementers and those who generate and share knowledge will be developed to support communications and learning amongst key national stakeholders as well as those with a regional and international research and development remit.

## 6. RESOURCING

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As a regional initiative, STREAM does not have the resources at its disposal to fully fund the implementation of this CSP. Although STREAM can provide “start-up” funds for each of the approaches outlined in this document, this contribution will be modest and is likely to represent less than 20% of the total funds required. Securing the resources to achieve the objectives set out in this CSP is therefore central to the STREAM Cambodia mandate. It is recognised that securing these funds will be a challenge. It places a responsibility on, but also provides an opportunity for, STREAM Cambodia, the STREAM Regional Office and all STREAM partners to work together to explore and follow up all potential leads.

Some progress has already been made. This includes the identification of confirmed and potential funding sources from the bilateral, multilateral, non-governmental and corporate sectors in Cambodia, southeast Asia, Australia, Europe and North America. Planning follow-up action to determine how STREAM and its partners can best co-ordinate their efforts and maximise income from these funding sources is a priority action. At the same time, significant cash and in-kind contributions have already been and will continue to be made to STREAM Cambodia from several sources, including the host government (Department of Fisheries), a local NGO (SCALE), STREAM’s founding partners (DFID, AusAID, FAO and VSO), and the governments of the Asia-Pacific region (through NACA).

It is also important to recognise that, in some instances, the most effective way to deliver impact will be for STREAM to influence the ways in which other stakeholders utilise their resources rather than applying directly for financial assistance. This is especially pertinent in Cambodia today, given the widely anticipated increase in donor-supported activity to the community fisheries sector. A key STREAM resourcing strategy will therefore be to actively explore ways in which it can work with other stakeholders to ensure all available resources are effectively and efficiently used to address the key issues and constraints identified in this document.

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