**ABS Project Briefing**

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

Diverse climate conditions and thousands of years of agricultural practices have resulted in rich biodiversity and genetic crop resources in Cambodia. This high level of genetic diversity makes Cambodia an attractive country for bioprospecting, especially given the high number of known medicinal plants, many of which have associated traditional knowledge. Yet, as the country continues to manage its transition from a subsistence-based agrarian economy to a consumption-based cash economy, its biological resources are increasingly under threat. These threats include competing for land use from urbanization and infrastructure, poaching of wild plants and animals, overharvesting of forest products, and the effects of climate change. Furthermore, Cambodia is facing the loss of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.

To counter these various threats to biodiversity, this project aims to strengthen national capacities for access to benefit sharing of Cambodia’s genetic resources. To achieve this objective, the project supports the creation of an enabling national policy, legal and institutional framework consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol.

A well-developed and functioning Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) national legal, institutional, and administrative framework will enable the equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge between the Royal Government of Cambodia, private sector and research sector and owners of these resources and traditional knowledge.

The above objective would be achieved through two components, namely:

**Component 1:** Creating an enabling national policy, legal and institutional framework for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Nagoya Protocol.

**Component 2:** Developing capacity and administrative measures for the implementation of the national Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) framework.

**Project Expected Results:**

* National ABS legislation, including its supporting instruments and guidelines procedures finalized and submitted for approval;
* National ABS framework developed and finalized;
* National ABS roadmap developed and finalized;
* Model on bio-prospecting, monitoring framework for tracking genetic resources application and M&E plan developed and finalized;
* Communication strategy and networking flateform developed and finalized;
* Guideline for community protocols including Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) analysis related to ABS Projects developed and finalized;
* Effective financial mechanism for benefit-sharing from ABS agreements established;
* ABS Administrative Permitting System and Check-points established;
* Training to National Competent Authorities, National Focal Points and related stakeholders on Nagoya Protocol and ABS legislations conducted, including capacity building tools and program developed;
* Communication, Education and Public Awareness (ABS-CEPA) strategy and action plan, including campaign and audio visual and education materials developed and implemented;
* ABS-Clearing House Mechanism developed, extended, and maintained, including capacity building provided; and
* Gender Mainsreaming action plan developed and implemented, including awaresnes and outreach activities conducted.

**Project Activities:**

* Develop national ABS legislation, including its supporting instruments and guidelines procedures (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Masao);
* Develop ABS roadmap (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Jorge);
* Develop models on bio-prospecting and research procedures (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Jorge);
* Develop a User Guide of rules and procedures for users and providers (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Jorge);
* Develop Framework for Monitoring and Tracking Genetic Resource Application, Utilization and Commercialization Processes and M&E Plan for Regular Update of Result Findings (On-going by national consultant - Mr. Piseth);
* Develop guidelines for community protocols (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Jorge);
* Develop ABS financial mechanism (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Masao);
* Develop administrative and permitting system (PIC and MAT) for the implementation of ABS framework and legislation, including check point (On-going by international consultant - Mr. Masao); and
* Develop Tools/Models and Action-Plan for Capacity Building and Provide Training to National Competent Authority, National Focal Point and related stakeholders on the Nagoya Protocol and ABS (On-going by national consultant - Mr. Sokcha).

**Progress/achievement to date:**

* Stocktaking exercise to review and identify existing legal documents and best practices related to ABS completed;
* Gap analysis of ABS legislation in Cambodia in compliance with the Nagoya Protocol including ABS skeleton and preliminary draft legislation completed;
* National ABS legislation (Sub-Decree) for both Khmer and English version developed and finalized;
* National ABS framework and its analysis completed;
* Stocktaking exercise to establish an institutional framework for ABS completed;
* Communication​​ strategy and networking platforms developed, including Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey;
* Assessment report on the current system for documentation of genetic resource and traditional knowledge including the proposed regulatory measures and safeguards and clear rules and procedures developed.
* Assessment report to inform the development of a guideline for community protocols completed;
* Communication, Education and Public Awareness (ABS-CEPA) strategy and action plan, including campaign and audio visual and education materials such as Leaflets on the overview of Nagoya Protocol and Khmer’s text of Nagoya Protocol on ABS developed and distributed.
* ABS-Clearing House developed and being expanded to National CHM;
* Gender mainstreaming action plan developed and implemented.

**Project status:** Ongoing

**Duration:** July 2019 – July 2022

**Project budget:** USD 967,342.50

**Source of Funds:**

* UNDP Co-financing: USD 124,100.00
* GEF Trust Fund: USD 843,242.00

**Implementing Partners:** MoE/NCSD