

# A Case Study of ECPAT Cambodia prepared for ODI

Roo Griffiths and Ly Vichuta<sup>1</sup>

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Background to the research</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Objectives	2
1.2 Methodology	2
1.3 Constraints and caveats	2
1.4 Structure of the paper	3
<b>2. Organisational overview</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Structure of ECPAT Cambodia	4
2.2 Objectives and activities	5
2.3 Functions of ECPAT Cambodia according to the RAPID framework	6
<b>3. External environment: challenges</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 Cultural challenges	8
3.2 Challenges in the NGO climate	8
3.3 Challenges in the political arena	8
<b>4. Strengths and weaknesses</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 Awareness raising and advocacy	10
4.2 Coordination and cooperation	11
4.3 Activities that cross all objectives	11
4.4 Summary: strengths and weaknesses in implementation of functions	12
<b>5. Impact of form on function</b>	<b>13</b>
5.1 Governance	13
5.2 Localisation and scope	13
5.3 Capacity and skill	13
5.4 Resources	14
5.5 Membership	14
5.6 Communications	14
5.7 External environment	14
5.8 Strategic and adaptive capacity	15
<b>6. Brief conclusions</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Annex 1: References</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Annex 2: ECPAT Cambodia members</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Annex 3: ECPAT Cambodia details</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Annex 4: Interviewees</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Annex 5: Questionnaire</b>	<b>21</b>

---

<sup>1</sup> Roo Griffiths is an independent researcher and editor in Cambodia ([www.griffiths-saat.org.uk](http://www.griffiths-saat.org.uk)). Ly Vichuta is Director of Legal Support for Children and Women (LSCW), a Cambodian local NGO ([www.lscw.org](http://www.lscw.org)).

# **1. Background to the research**

The extent to which networks can influence policy or carry out other functions is affected by different constraints in any given location. In Cambodia, there are varying constraints, including political and social factors. The study of networks in Cambodia is a new area; there has been comparatively little research carried out in this field. It is important to note how constraints can affect the potential of a network to carry out its mandate and/or influence policy, and what specific strengths and weaknesses there are in Cambodia affecting the environment in which networks operate. A previous research study on the COSECAM network identified preliminary findings on networks in Cambodia. Building on this study, this research project aims to supplement these initial findings by analysing a further three networks in the country.

## **1.1 Objectives**

This research project was contracted by the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) programme of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The aim of the project was to produce case studies of three NGO networks in Cambodia to back up the initial COSECAM study of the effectiveness of the network model within the country, in terms of influencing policy and carrying out its own mandate. The project uses the function/form framework (as detailed by the RAPID website to identify: i) the functions of the network; ii) the network's structure and how this affects its functions; iii) the ways in which it attempts to carry out its functions; and iv) its successes and failures to do so.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The research was carried out over 45 days between 1 April and 15 July 2006. It was decided to select three NGOs (the NGO Committee on the Rights of the Child – NGOCRC; MEDiCAM – membership organisation for NGOs active in the health sector in Cambodia; and ECPAT Cambodia) as the networks for focus. The reasons for these choices were as follows: i) NGOCRC and ECPAT Cambodia were selected owing to the background of the researchers, both of whom work or have worked within the fields of child sexual exploitation, trafficking and children's rights in Cambodia, and owing to the significance of the issue in Cambodia (which makes for a great deal of funding and therefore a great many NGOs/networks); ii) MEDiCAM was selected owing to its prominence in Cambodian society and the its importance of the work it carries out.

Research took the form of a brief literature review of background information on i) the network itself; ii) the context in which the network carries out its activities; and iii) the current debate on networks and the function/form framework. This was followed by the development of a questionnaire for participants. Three members of staff from each network and one staff member from each of four NGO member organisations for each network were to be identified to be interview participants. Interviews were for the main one-on-one, although some respondents worked by email with the questionnaires.

## **1.3 Constraints and caveats**

Despite the proliferation of NGO and other reports on Cambodia, there has not been much research carried out in this area. The idea of studying the significance and impact of networks is relatively new (although see Bradley, 2005, for the exception to this, on networks in natural resources management, and RAPID's preliminary findings on the MEDiCAM network on its website). This means that the findings from this report are preliminary and should not be taken as confirmed conclusions: it is recommended that findings lead to further discussion in the future. It is hoped that findings of all four studies will be synthesised as a first step towards this.

Cambodia faces many problems in its attempt to develop. Identified in this report is the lack of trust resulting from Cambodia's significant and recent problems of war and political and social upheaval. This has resulted in a climate of distrust and competitiveness (see the initial report on COSECAM). As a result, it was found that some participants found it difficult to answer questions surrounding strengths and weakness. Participants do not like to appear to be criticising their organisation or network. This research has made an effort to reassure participants that the report is an attempt to assess conditions for networks in Cambodia and not merely a critical review of the network itself. There were also some difficulties in terms of understanding of the concept of networks and the purpose of the current study. The team attempted to clarify these issues.

It was originally decided that three staff of the network would be interviewed. In the event, all six staff were keen to answer questions. At the same time, it was intended to interview four people from network member NGOs. It was difficult to set up meetings with four: time constraints and lack of incentives meant that many people were not interested in responding. In the end, three were identified and it was deemed that this number would in fact be sufficient.

#### **1.4 Structure of the paper**

Interview participants spoke of issues of relevance to all sections of the report. It was therefore decided that findings from interviews were to be incorporated throughout the paper: there is no individual section on findings. Section 1 has introduced the research. Section 2 of the paper will detail a background of ECPAT Cambodia, looking briefly at its background, structure, objectives and activities. This section will analyse the functions of the network. Section 3 will supply a brief analysis of the country context, for the purpose of identifying major challenges faced by a network in carrying out its mandate in Cambodia (external environment). Section 4 will then look at the successes and failures of the network in carrying out its mandate, according to participants and according to further analysis of the primary and secondary information. Section 5 will make an analysis of the ways in which activities are constrained by the form of the network and the challenges identified in Section 3. Section 6 will give brief initial conclusions. Annexed to the document will be a brief bibliography, a list of ECPAT Cambodia members, organisation details, a list of interviewees and a summary of the questionnaire used.

## **2. Organisational overview**

### **2.1 Structure of ECPAT Cambodia**

ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) is a global network of organisations and individuals working together. It seeks to encourage the world community to ensure that children everywhere enjoy their fundamental rights, free and secure from all forms of exploitation. ECPAT Cambodia was established in 1995 by a group of NGOs, intending to create a joint force between national and international organisations. ECPAT Cambodia was registered as a member of ECPAT International in 1996, and became an affiliated member in September 2002. ECPAT Cambodia is registered with the Council of Ministers and is a non-governmental organisation.

Current donors to ECPAT Cambodia are ANESVAD (Spain) and INWA Intervida World Alliance (Spain). Technical assistance is provided by ECPAT International. Originally, ECPAT Cambodia had 33 members, but revised its statute in 2004 in order to clarify the rights and obligations of members. As a result, the network now has 28 members. NGO members should have similar objectives to ECPAT in terms of working against child exploitation. In addition, members should be registered by law with the Ministry of Interior or the Council of Ministers, and should have their application approved by the Board of Directors. New members are presented to the network meeting and must give a presentation on their activities and answer questions. After this time, a period of one month is left for members to approve the new members. No new members have been rejected thus far through this process.

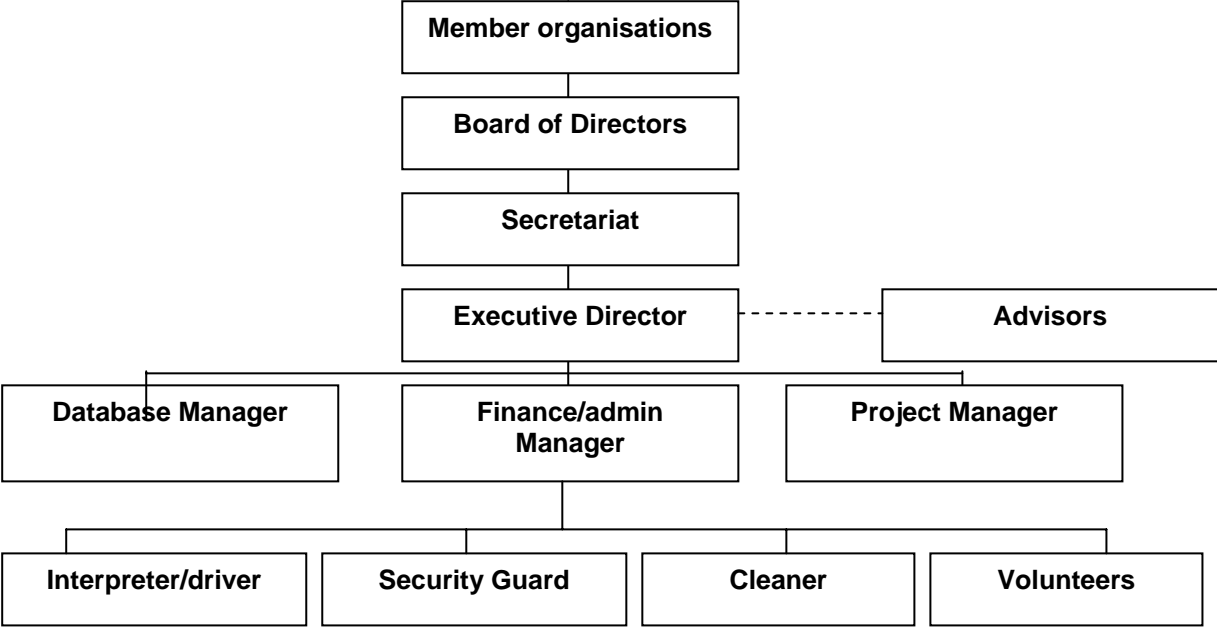
In principle, ECPAT Cambodia members need to pay a fee of US\$120 per year. If organisations are constrained financially, they must write to ECPAT Cambodia explaining their situation; ECPAT Cambodia takes this into account and asks for a contribution according to ability to pay.

The structure of ECPAT Cambodia has recently been updated (see Figure 1). Through a member meeting, it was decided to give the former Coordinator of the Secretariat executive control. Before this point, this power lay with the Executive Committee. Now, the Executive Committee has become the Board of Directors, with advisory and monitoring responsibilities on the activities, strategies and policies of the Secretariat. The Board is elected by and from the members of the network; there are five members, all Khmer (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and two Members). The Coordinator is now the Executive Director, with signatory power and executive control. Meanwhile, there are six staff members in the network, with one Khmer volunteer and three expatriate volunteers. Meetings for all take place monthly; the Stakeholder Group Meeting takes place every three months to share experiences and exchange information.

There are no Working Groups set up on specific issues: activities are carried out by the network staff or by voluntary members of the network.

ECPAT Cambodia has in place a statute and a strategic five-year plan (currently under development).

**Figure 1: Organisational structure of ECPAT Cambodia**



Source: ECPAT interviews.

**2.2 Objectives and activities**

The vision of ECPAT Cambodia is the realisation of the rights of all children to live free of child prostitution, abuse, child pornography and child trafficking for sexual purposes. Its mission is to eliminate CSEC (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) through awareness raising, advocacy, monitoring and the coordination of action and information among relevant stakeholders. From here, then, can be extracted the following main objectives:

- 1) Working for the understanding of CSEC issues and the adoption of appropriate legislation, and advocating for the development and effective implementation of supportive and protective policies, child protection mechanisms and prevention measures against CSEC (awareness raising and advocacy).
- 2) Coordinating the exchange of information and best practice, and maximising interaction among key actors involved at both national and regional levels in the cause of protecting children from CSEC (coordination and cooperation).
- 3) Monitoring the implementation of the Cambodia National Five-Year Plan against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Objective 3 could be included as an activity within Objective 1, as it involves awareness raising and advocacy on the issue of the implementation of the Cambodia National Five-Year Plan against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children. It is included here as an objective as this is how it is reflected in ECPAT Cambodia documents.

Activities to carry these objectives out include the following:

- Production of materials, through a yearly plan, to raise awareness of members and of the public through these members (Objective 1).
- Research, including reports and situational analyses, often joint with other organisations, for the purposes of awareness raising (Objective 1).
- Advocacy on the various CSEC issues, through lobbying of government on draft laws and on the adoption of Anti-Trafficking Day (Objective 1).
- Strengthening cooperation and coordination among main actors, particularly through contact with ECPAT International, national and international network organisations, and government institutions (Objective 2).

- Monitoring the implementation of the National Plan of Action against CSEC (Objective 3).

Covering all of these activities, ECPAT Cambodia also provides the following services:

- Establishing capacity-building training workshops of members and network staff on issues pertinent to other activities and to organisational management (all Objectives).
- Developing and strengthening the ECPAT profile, through website and other initiatives (all Objectives).
- Carrying out funding proposals and strategic planning (all Objectives).

ECPAT Cambodia is not involved in finding/providing funding for member NGOs.

### **2.3 Functions of ECPAT Cambodia according to the RAPID framework**

RAPID uses the network definition of Portes and Yeo (2001) which suggests that networks can fulfil six, non-exclusive functions: filter; amplify; invest/provide; convene; build communities; and facilitate. According to Bradley (2005: 8), 'networks may function in a variety of ways, but generally speaking, they aim to either bridge the gaps between different sectors and interest groups or else to build consensus and capacity within one particular group, so that it can advocate for its own agenda'. RAPID also details the supra-functions or roles which guide their work: **agency**, which 'denotes a network that is charged by its members to become the main agent of the change they aim to achieve' and **support**, which 'supplies the network members with the resources (goods and services) it needs to carry out their own research and policy advocacy'.

In terms of the **functions** of ECPAT Cambodia, an analysis of the above objectives and the roles and responsibilities of the various parts of the network shows that, to differing extents, ECPAT Cambodia covers all six of the functions mentioned above. This follows other networks studied. As with most networks, ECPAT Cambodia's objectives and activities do not fit neatly into a one-factor-per-function pattern; mostly, the functions carried out are covered by more than one activity.

#### *Filtering*

ECPAT Cambodia filters information from its members and from current events in its field to its members and the general public, particularly through meetings and website facilities.

#### *Amplifying*

ECPAT Cambodia plays an amplification role, in terms of producing research reports and situational analyses, which are released through advocacy to government and other interested organisations, or to the public through member organisations.

#### *Investing/providing*

ECPAT Cambodia provides capacity building to member NGOs and to its own network staff, on issues surrounding CSEC and on other areas, such as organisational management. No financial investment is made into individual NGOs.

#### *Convening*

ECPAT Cambodia fulfils a convening function within the network by organising the network meetings, annual meetings, external advocacy meetings and information exchange meetings.

#### *Building communities*

ECPAT Cambodia does not build communities directly, except in terms of its investment function above through capacity building to members.

#### *Facilitating*

ECPAT Cambodia carries out facilitation activities through its capacity building (investment) role, enabling staff of member NGOs to deal with advocacy etc.

In its **agency** role, ECPAT Cambodia carries out information exchange, leads advocacy, undertakes capacity building and represents the NGO community. In its **support** role, ECPAT Cambodia enables NGOs to build capacity through training and supports the advocacy Working Groups.

Please see Figure 2 for a breakdown of ECPAT Cambodia’s objectives, responsibilities, activities and functions.

**Figure 2: ECPAT Cambodia activities, responsibilities, activities and functions**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Functions</b>
Working for an understanding of CSEC issues and the adoption of appropriate legislation and advocating for the development and effective implementation of supportive and protective policies, child protection mechanisms and prevention measures against CSEC (awareness raising and advocacy)	Network staff, member volunteers	Production of materials to raise awareness of members and public through members; research, for the purposes of awareness raising; advocacy on the various CSEC issues, through lobbying of government on draft laws and on the adoption of Anti-Trafficking Day  Capacity-building training; developing and strengthening ECPAT profile; funding proposals and strategic planning	Filtering Amplifying Convening Facilitating Investing/providing <b>(Agency and Support)</b>
Coordinating the exchange of information and best practice, and maximising interaction among key actors involved at both national and regional levels in the cause of protecting children from CSEC (coordination and cooperation)	Network staff, member volunteers	Strengthening cooperation and coordination among main actors  Capacity-building training; developing and strengthening ECPAT profile; funding proposals and strategic planning	Filtering Amplifying Convening Facilitating Investing/providing <b>(Agency and Support)</b>
Monitoring the implementation of the Cambodia National Five-Year Plan against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children	Network staff, member volunteers	Monitoring the implementation of the National Plan of Action against CSEC  Capacity-building training; developing and strengthening ECPAT profile; funding proposals and strategic planning	Filtering Amplifying Facilitating Investing/providing <b>(Agency and Support)</b>

### **3. External environment: challenges**

Findings in this sector come both from interviews with the network and member NGOs, and also from research analysis of current conditions. However, this is an overview of general conditions in Cambodia, not a specific review of issues that may have occurred within the network. This section primarily reviews challenges, particularly in the child rights area, which could impact a network's operations. Much of the base information here is drawn from the previous study on COSECAM and is reflected in the reports on the other networks, as external environment challenges are similar for all networks.

#### **3.1 Cultural challenges**

According to Bradley (2005: 36), 'it is important to consider Khmer culture and how it can affect networks and their functioning'. Cambodian culture has been through a difficult recent history. This is exemplified most famously in the Pol Pot era and its tearing asunder of local relationships and communities. As villages were separated and as the population was turned against one another during the purges and the 're-education' of the era, so trust between people became impossible. Families were compelled to betray each other; marriages were forced; and the paranoia of the central regime meant that nobody was safe and anybody could disappear at any given time. This regime was then followed by years of poverty, instability and guerrilla warfare from the deposed Khmer Rouge.

This has had an effect on present-day Cambodian society and its institutions. All interviewees responded that trust was a big problem in networking in Cambodia. Although organisations in Cambodia may be working towards a common goal, the issue of jealousy and suspicion leads them to hide their work from other 'competing' organisations, making it difficult for local NGOs who are interested in networking to cooperate with others. In some cases, it is difficult to organise workshops or meetings because participants do not want to share information or do not trust other participants because they do not know them. But, even when people are known, trust can be absent: as one interviewee stated, 'I don't trust anyone in my country, except my family, and often not even them'. This is also identified in Bradley (2005: 43), 'according to a member of the Forestry Network, "Some people are active, while some are free riders. For example, I myself tried to develop a proposal and then other members copied from me. Some people do not accept others' ideas for improvement.'

This is exacerbated by other aspects of Khmer culture: some of these are traditional and some have been adopted as a result of the recent history of the country. As Bradley (2005: 36) states, 'many Khmers hesitate to ask others for help ... questioning is not common in Asian culture. Questioning may be perceived as a way of accusing or looking down on someone.' This is a part of the wide Asian concept of 'losing face' and often leads to actors preferring not to communicate with others so as not to seem lacking in knowledge, or to them agreeing with something without really being committed. Khmer reluctance to 'lose face' means that participants are often not motivated to join training or to admit failure. Capacity is growing steadily, and many Cambodians are fully involved in building the capacity of other Cambodians. These actors can be treated with suspicion or jealousy. Capacity is generally seen as low of local NGOs in the countryside: it is hard to attract staff with capacity to fill jobs outside the capital, as conditions are poor and infrastructure is weak. It can be difficult to reach those outside Phnom Penh with capacity building. Khmer society is also hierarchical, which means that people build relationships within the patron-client system so that they can obtain 'security and opportunities in return for support and agreement with his/her decisions. This system makes it very difficult to ensure genuine participation' (ibid: 37).

#### **3.2 Challenges in the NGO climate**

It is often hard to motivate people to attend meetings; in some cases, participants will not attend without receiving a per diem, even if the meeting is close by and short. This is in

particular because of the high prevalence of NGO meetings and jargon in Cambodia, much of which is difficult for members of local NGOs to cope with and which can contribute to workshop/bureaucracy overload. This has an effect on efforts to coordinate among members, particularly if they are outside the capital and the network is heavily centralised: Cambodia is sometimes as seen as the 'Republic of Phnom Penh' because of the difference in infrastructure and conditions between the capital and the provinces.

In addition, the NGO climate in Cambodia is hard to work in. The format for proposals and reports for local NGOs is difficult to master, and concepts such as indicators, objectives and other are not widely understood. As such, it is difficult for participants to understand or agree on comprehensive approaches and strategies. Capacity is growing, but donors find that preparation of the necessary documents, accountability and monitoring are still weak. Furthermore, 'donors have a disproportionate amount of influence over policy process in Cambodia and therefore research needs to be aware of donor considerations' (ODI, 2005a). There is a high level of competition for funding; CSOs, donors and the government often blame each other for a lack of trust between stakeholders; and 'more money often equals a louder voice' (ODI, 2005b). At the same time, there is a 'general environment of mistrust, and 'finger pointing' between CSO community and the government'. CSOs are sometimes seen as confrontational, rather than as engaging with the government and providing constructive criticism (ODI, 2005a).

### **3.3 Challenges in the political arena**

As Bradley (2005: 8) suggests, 'In Cambodia, civil society has been given a relatively large degree of freedom to form associations or networks, both formal and informal.' However, the recent political climate in Cambodia has made it difficult for people to speak out or to perform advocacy activities. At the end of 2005, human rights activists were jailed for defamation of political authorities; some prominent figures were forced to flee (Development Weekly, 6-12 Feb 2006). All have recently been released, pardoned and/or allowed to return, and Prime Minister Hun Sen has made claims that he is going to work towards decriminalising defamation. Many believed that such actions were orchestrated for the benefit of donors prior to the Consultative Group meeting whereby donors allocate aid to Cambodia (Cambodia Daily, 2006b, 23 February). Whether or not this is the case, the temporary stability appears at the current time to be holding, although it can still be difficult for NGOs to appear to be criticising the government. This makes it hard to hold dialogue and promote advocacy.

Corruption still plays a big role in Cambodian politics. In terms of addressing sexual exploitation of children, it is vital to impact policy, particularly because it is alleged that high-ranking officers are involved in trafficking and other issues. There is a need to clarify the trafficking stance at all levels, especially government. There have been problems also in the area of the CNCC, which has a lack of personnel and is acknowledged as low in capacity and difficult to make contact with (NGOCRC, 2006: 49). There is a need for the CNCC to receive further human and financial resources, to implement an effective information management system, and to hold an institutional position. Without these factors, it is difficult for it to operate and, consequently, for networks to communicate with it and advocate/affect policy.

The judicial system is weak and the legislative power suffers the burden of heavy bureaucracy. There are often many actors involved and issues can cross ministries. For example, the Ministry of Justice has drafted the anti-trafficking law; the Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection Department exists within the Ministry of the Interior to address trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children; there are also departments within the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) (ActionAid Vietnam, 2006 unreleased: 9) which deal with the issue. This can cause confusion, leading to a lack of enforcement of existing laws. Laws for minors/juveniles are currently stuck at negotiation stages, and there is no juvenile court and no real understanding of child-sensitive approaches in legal issues.

## 4. Strengths and weaknesses

This section arises from the interviews with the staff of the network and the member NGOs, and an analysis of the information supplied by the network. It concludes by summarising the strengths and weaknesses according to the six functions it carries out (see Figure 2). Although in Section 1 we saw 'Monitoring the Implementation of the National Plan of Action against CSEC' as an objective, here it is included an activity within Objective 1 (awareness raising and advocacy), simply because it works towards the same purpose, and strengths/weakness will be identical. Capacity-building training, developing and strengthening the ECPAT profile, and working on funding proposals were activities that crossed objectives; these are analysed separately, for clarity.

### 4.1 Awareness raising and advocacy

#### *Strengths*

ECPAT Cambodia has been identified as strong on the production side of the awareness raising it carries out. A great deal of publications and materials have been produced, including the newsletter, distributed to NGOs, government institutions, UN agencies, embassies and other relevant institutions. Awareness raising meetings are held for network members, and various research reports have been generated, including a situational analysis on media reports of rape and trafficking, which was published widely in the Cambodian national newspapers. Work on the monitoring of the implementation of the National Plan of Action against CSEC has been strong, with many questionnaires sent out to government and NGO partners. Awareness-raising meetings have been held with government and with the private sector, including with hospitality companies on child safe tourism.

Such documents also contribute to strengths in advocacy. For example, the situational analyses advocate for stronger law enforcement and for the adoption of the anti-trafficking law; the wide dissemination of such information is seen as an advocacy success. ECPAT Cambodia was also involved in a workshop organised jointly in 2005 with NGOs and INGOs to discuss draft laws on CSEC, involving lawmakers, government officials and NGO actors. This had the participation of the British Ambassador to Cambodia.

In 2005, ECPAT Cambodia's national workshop in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and World Vision Cambodia on child safe tourism enabled officials from 24 provinces and municipalities to begin to produce action plans on this issue. Advocacy and awareness raising in this way has led to the adoption in government of an official reporting format on child sex abuse cases. This has also led to greater cooperation among such actors, particularly the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

#### *Weaknesses*

It was noted that activities towards the monitoring of the implementation of the National Plan of Action against CSEC had faced many obstacles, particularly in terms of responses to questionnaires from NGOs and government (at the end of 2005, only 20% of NGOs had returned the questionnaires and only two government ministries had done so: time factors and lack of human resources were quoted as one reasons behind this – it was difficult to follow up on such activities without dedicated staff in place). ECPAT Cambodia is to set up a system of Working Groups/committees to cover the monitoring of National Action Plan implementation.

Moreover, ECPAT Cambodia has noted a need to widen its approach to advocacy and to give it more commitment and focus. The lack of dedicated Working Groups means that this is difficult to do. ECPAT Cambodia has not mentioned any future plans to set up an advocacy

Working Group (only the one on monitoring the National Action Plan), or in other areas where they might encourage further implementation of activities.

Moreover, across activities, there were issues in terms of member involvement. Only a few key actors were involved in activities; many members often did not know what ECPAT Cambodia was for, did not attend meetings, and saw membership as 'useless'. As with other networks, members often thought that ECPAT Cambodia acted as a funder. This leads to narrower implementation of activities than might be possible. See Section 4.3 for ways ECPAT Cambodia is attempting to deal with this.

## **4.2 Coordination and cooperation**

### *Strengths*

ECPAT Cambodia's above activities in awareness raising and advocacy had a great effect on coordination and cooperation activities, leading to increased profile and better communication among government institutions, network members, NGOs and INGOs. Various ECPAT Cambodia activities are carried out jointly, which leads to better engagement and more coordinated activities. Many meetings have taken place along with field visits by ECPAT International to member NGOs, which strengthen coordination within the network. The ECPAT Secretariat has also conducted visits to provincial members, in order to increase understanding on areas of work and to enhance solidarity and relationships between organisations.

### *Weaknesses*

Weaknesses as in Section 4.1 are also reflected here. Again, there were still great issues in terms of member involvement, despite the efforts made by the network staff and ECPAT International to clarify the purpose of the network and the objectives and to drum up local support. Only a few key actors were involved in activities; many members often did not know what ECPAT Cambodia was for, did not attend meetings, and saw membership as 'useless'. As with other networks, members often thought that ECPAT Cambodia acted as a funder. This leads to narrower implementation of activities than might be possible. See Section 4.3 for ways ECPAT Cambodia is attempting to deal with this.

It has also become clear through the course of these studies that many of the same activities/objectives are carried out by COSECAM and NGOCRC networks in the area of child rights. It seems that there is great potential here for needless duplication, where better coordination or joint networking may have a greater impact. This could result from Cambodia-specific factors, such as the reluctance to share information with 'outsiders' or to work together (see Section 5.7).

## **4.3 Activities that cross all objectives**

### *Strengths*

ECPAT Cambodia prioritises staff training and development, and in 2005 trained its staff on monitoring and evaluation; accountancy; project management; and management information system database, all through external training. Training of trainers also took place, with the Executive Director and Project Manager completing courses on Child Safe Tourism. Training of member NGOs occurs through meetings and workshops conducted alongside the other objectives, in areas such as child safe tourism, CSEC issues and other relevant topics. These were carried out by ECPAT Cambodia and ECPAT International.

In terms of developing and strengthening the ECPAT profile, a full website has been put in place according to activities carried out, particularly the questionnaires on the National Plan of Action (as they come in).

ECPAT Cambodia has also identified the need for clarity in terms of the objectives of ECPAT Cambodia, and as such has organised a congress with member organisations to discuss and obtain feedback on the strategic direction for 2006-2010. Members were very actively involved here, and their comments are to be incorporated into the draft Strategic Plan. In addition, the structure of ECPAT Cambodia has changed to deal with the lack of management structure. ECPAT Cambodia also identifies the need to look at funding proposals and reports as key, and highlights its inputs into this area (it is not common for NGOs in Cambodia to accept the significance of high capacity in the area of writing proposals and reports to donors).

#### *Weaknesses*

Weaknesses again are that it is not yet clear what impacts these activities have had, and that member involvement is still low. However, it is clear that ECPAT Cambodia is aware of this, and is making efforts to deal with this problem.

#### **4.4 Summary: strengths and weaknesses in implementation of functions**

- The network is identified as being quite strong in **filtering** information in terms of its materials etc. However, there was a need to encourage more NGO member involvement, and a shortage of staff to carry this out. There were also no dedicated staff (such as Working Groups) to deal with specific issues, which seriously impeded implementation of activities.
- The network is identified as quite strong in **amplifying**, although there are again some problems of human resources and focus, which hindered activities.
- The network is identified as strong in **investing (building communities)**, with many trainings taking place and a strong network staff understanding of strategy and direction. There was less understanding in the member NGOs, and as a result a clear need to focus on member capacity building.
- The network is identified as quite strong in **convening**, although it was stated there was a great need to increase NGO participation and interest.
- The network is identified as quite strong in **facilitating**, although it was again noted that there was a need to increase NGO participation.

It is to be noted here that the main issues here include encouraging NGO member participation and clarifying the role of ECPAT Cambodia. Additionally, there was a lack of staff members from network NGOs or the network itself working on dedicated issues in Working Groups or similar, and a need for more network human resources in general. Dealing with these factors would lead to increased implementation of activities. It should also be noted that weakness outlined in this section have already been acknowledged for action by ECPAT Cambodia actors. The new structure for the network already represents an effort to clarify management structure and objectives.

## **5. Impact of form on function**

According to RAPID, it is necessary 'to define how [a network's] structural characteristics (organisation, skills, resources, etc), or organisational practices affect its capacity to carry out its functions satisfactorily'. Here we use RAPID's key factors to analyse their contribution to the strengths and or weaknesses detailed above. These are: governance; localisation and scope; capacity and skill; resources; membership; communications; external environment; and strategic and adaptive capacity.

### **5.1 Governance**

Governance in ECPAT Cambodia is identified as strong and improving. There is a strategic planning process underway, and this will include a specific governance agreement in the future. ECPAT Cambodia also is aware of requirements in terms of funding and reporting, and prioritises this.

The recent restructuring of the network has led to greater clarity and transparency here and, although there are still some weaknesses in this area, it has been shown that a focus has been given to findings solutions. Structurally, the lack of Working Groups is a cause for concern; ECPAT Cambodia has noted the future aim to put in place a Working Group on the monitoring of the implementation of the National Action Plan on CSEC. However, it seems that there is a need to consider the addition of further dedicated groups, not only to increase implementation of activities but also to encourage member participation. Members are currently not interested in participating and are confused about objectives; perhaps some participation agreement, as MEDiCAM has, might be useful here, along with further clarification from the network regarding the organisation's role.

ECPAT Cambodia has a high profile, often because of its links with the international arm, ECPAT International. It is widely known, although it does duplicate activities of NGOCRC and COSECAM to some extent, which causes some confusion as to its, and the other networks', remit. See Section 5.7.

### **5.2 Localisation and scope**

ECPAT Cambodia has an office in Phnom Penh, and is very much a centralised operation, with all activities taking place in the capital. The only provincial link is offered by the activities of its few provincial members. Interviews with staff showed that funding was too short to encourage provincial NGOs to participate and to carry out activities nationally, but that the Executive Director was very keen to work in the countryside, as he saw the value of information flow in these areas.

As a result of this, activities are limited mainly to national policy processes, where ECPAT Cambodia works at all levels. However, it owns to having problems regarding widening its approach in advocacy. Currently, scope is limited and stretched over the four levels of the policy process.

### **5.3 Capacity and skill**

Secretariat capacity is identified as strong. Network staff are clued in to their roles and the organisational needs of a network, and show themselves as aware of the directions in which they need to move. Staff also are highly knowledgeable on the background issues to their work. All staff are Khmer, with expatriates only in the position of volunteers. However, staff also acknowledge that there is a need to employ further staff to cover all roles, as currently there is a lack of expertise in certain areas. For example, there are no dedicated experts in advocacy or communications, nor any legal experts. With the lack of Working Groups (see Section 5.1) this makes for low ability to implement activities beyond a general point. However, ECPAT Cambodia is aware of this, and has noted it as an area for future action.

## **5.4 Resources**

ECPAT Cambodia currently has secure funding and good access to technology. As noted, there is a shortage in terms of human resources.

## **5.5 Membership**

Membership criteria are in existence (seen in more detail in Section 2). The membership fee could increase buy-in (although this is waived for those who cannot pay), although it has been seen that there is still a large problem in terms of member participation. Members have no obligations when they join, beyond being required to work to complementary objectives. This could have some role to play in the lack of participation.

## **5.6 Communications**

ECPAT does not have a dedicated communications strategy and staff members responsible for it, although the strategic plan for the next five years is aiming to deal with this. Currently, ECPAT Cambodia does not make full use of its technology; there is a large amount of information sharing, but a greater focus on communications could enable more.

## **5.7 External environment**

A great deal of the information on the external environment has been covered already, in Section 3 of this report. One of the major factors affecting work in Cambodia is the cultural milieu. Trust has been identified as significant in impacting both the network and the policy arena. Generally, relations between individuals, both in and outside a network, are traditionally hierarchical, such as patron-client. Young give way to old and less powerful give way to more powerful, regardless of experience or education. This can lead to difficulties in generating a participatory process, whereby all voices are heard. Added to the issue of distrust in Cambodia, both within and outside the network, this can impact the success of functions of the network. It is difficult to maintain a horizontal structure against the traditional culture.

Weak networking has been noted among CSOs in Cambodia, with a lack of harmonisation of research and advocacy efforts. In addition, there is a general environment of mistrust, and 'finger pointing' between the CSO community and the government (ODI, 2005a). 'CSOs are sometimes not willing to work together ... [and] CSOs, donors and the government blame each other for lack of trust between the stakeholders' (ODI, 2005b). Lack of trust makes it difficult for actors to work together and to share work.

In addition, the NGO climate in Cambodia is peculiar, as 'donors have a disproportionate amount of influence over policy process in Cambodia' (ODI, 2005a). Seeking funding can be competitive; this also has an effect on fundraising, as does the requirement by donors for those seeking funding to go through complicated funding processes which are hard for those with fewer skills to understand. As noted, smaller NGOs can often be drowned in the process of trying to influence policy: 'more money often equals a louder voice' (ODI, 2005b).

Many of the same activities/objectives are carried out by ECPAT Cambodia, COSECAM and NGOCRC networks in the area of child rights. It seems that there is great potential here for needless duplication, where better coordination or joint networking may have a greater impact. This duplication often results from Cambodia-specific factors, such as the reluctance to share information with 'outsiders' or to work together. This leads to confusion in work and jealousy/suspicion, fuelled by competition for donor funding.

All member NGOs stated that these issues were significant, but it was difficult for them to detail how this affects the functions of the network or the implementation of activities. It is important to be aware of the impacts of these factors in programming; as Bradley (2005)

states, 'encouraging the openness of networks ... ensures that the network broadly reflects community interests', and this can lead to better implementation of all functions.

### **5.8 Strategic and adaptive capacity**

The network was identified by all interviewees as able to deal with changes in interests, but only to the point where interests still followed the common goal. ECPAT Cambodia is also able to deal with external changes, which reflects positively for all of its functions, keeping work relevant and pertinent. ECPAT Cambodia has shown itself able to deal with reform in a number of areas through self-assessment, although there is room for further assessment by members. The network is flexible and covers a number of functions, and has the capacity to adapt further. Decisions are made by the whole network, by members and by the network itself.

The network is dependent on (steady) international NGO/donor funds, but is also driven by membership fees. These are only used to help with funding activities. It is not yet possible to see a situation where ECPAT Cambodia can be completely sustainable in financial terms.

## **6. Brief conclusions**

This paper has given a brief review of one network in Cambodia, detailing its form, its functions, its strengths and weaknesses, and the effect of these on the former.

The network is identified as a fairly strong one, despite some weaknesses in a few areas. It is noted that ECPAT Cambodia is particularly strong in that it is able to identify and deal with its own problems. Moreover, implementation of many of its activities is thorough and broad.

Its weaknesses are mainly in the internal structure, although restructuring is underway, and in member participation, which should be improved through activities surrounding the restructure. Additionally, problems exist in terms of implementation of some activities. This too should be solved to some degree by restructuring. There is also an issue of crossover with other networks: it would be useful for ECPAT Cambodia to consider this issue.

ECPAT Cambodia shows awareness that the above issues are the key factors in the improvement of the network, and it seems certain that the new focus on dealing with these areas will lead to clearer implementation of activities in the future.

## **Annex 1: References**

### **Networks**

ODI RAPID programme website: [www.odi.org.uk/rapid](http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid)

Portes, R. and S. Yeo (2001) 'Think-net: the CEPR model of a research network', CEPR [http://www.cepr.org/aboutcepr/CEPR/CEPR\\_think.pdf](http://www.cepr.org/aboutcepr/CEPR/CEPR_think.pdf)

Elijah Danso, Kyeretwie Opoku and Elvis Adikah (2005) 'Understanding Civil Society Networks in Ghana: Constraints and Opportunities for Evidence-based Policy Influence', report to ODI.

### **Cambodia**

ActionAid Vietnam (2006 unreleased) 'Research on Trafficking of Vietnamese Women and Children: Cambodia',

Asian Development Bank (2000) *Cambodia: Enabling a Socioeconomic Renaissance*, Country Operational Strategy, Manila: ADB.

Cambodia Daily (2005) 'US to Begin Sanctions October 1 Due to Trafficking', 23 September.

Cambodia Daily (2006a) 'Hun Sen: Defamation should be Decriminalised', Wednesday 15 February.

Cambodia Daily (2006b) 'Rights Groups Call for Closer Donor Scrutiny', Thursday 23 February.

Development Weekly (2006) 'Self-exiled Union Leader Chea Mony Returns', Press Review Issue 78, 6-12 February.

NGOCRC (2006) 'Child Rights', NGO Statement to the 2006 Consultative Group Meeting on Cambodia, Phnom Penh, 2-3 March.

### **Cambodian networks**

Bradley, A. (2005) *Natural Resources Management Networking in Cambodia: Status, Lessons Learned, and Future Possibilities*, Community Forestry International.

ODI (2005a) 'CSOs, Evidence and Policy Influence', Lessons Learnt from the Africa, Asia and Latin America Consultations, February to September.

ODI (2005b) 'CSOs, Evidence and Policy Influence', Summary Report of National Workshop, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Inter Continental Hotel, 21-22 June.

### **ECPAT documents**

ECPAT International (2001) Question and Answer About the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (an information booklet)

ECPAT Cambodia website ([www.ecpatcambodia.org](http://www.ecpatcambodia.org)).

## Annex 2: ECPAT Cambodia members

AFESIP	Agir pour les Femmes en Situation Précaire
AIDéTous	Association International pour le Développement, le Tourisme et la Santé
CAMP	Child Assistance for Mobilisation and Participation
CLA	Children & Love Association
COC	Children of Cambodia
CRF	Child Rights Foundation
CSF	Children Support Foundation
CSP	Child Survival Partnership
CWDA	Cambodian Women's Development Agency
Hagar (for women and children in crisis)	
HCC	Health Care Centre for Children
KDFO	Khmer Development Freedom Organisation
KHEMARA (Cambodian handicrafts NGO)	
KTO	Kaksekor Thmey Organization (child labour)
KYCC	Khmer Youth Camp for Culture
LAC	Legal Aid of Cambodia
Mith Samlanh Friends (for street children)	
PJJ	Protection of Juvenile Justice
PTD	Help Street Families
PVT	Promvihearhor Organization
SCA	Save the Children Australia
SCN	Save the Children Norway
SIT	Save Incapacity Teenagers
VCAO	Vulnerable Children's Assistance Organization
WP	Wathnakpheap
WVC	World Vision Cambodia

NB: taken from ECPAT Cambodia website, 10 July 2006

## **Annex 3: ECPAT Cambodia details**

### **Contact Information**

ECPAT Cambodia  
#36B Street 99  
Boeung Trabek  
Chamkarmorn,  
Phnom Penh  
PO Box 2582  
Tel/Fax: 855 23 213 021  
Website: [www.ecpatcambodia.org](http://www.ecpatcambodia.org)

### **Staff**

Mr Chin Chan Veasna, Executive Director  
Mr Chin Kosal, Database Manager  
Mr Phang Chanda, Project Manager  
Ms Mak Chansarikraingsey, Admin/finance Manager  
Mr Eang Seng Eav, Driver/Interpreter  
Ms Ou Chhorda, Volunteer

## **Annex 4: Interviewees**

### **ECPAT Cambodia**

Mr Chin Chan Veasna, Executive Director  
Mr Chin Kosal, Database Manager  
Mr Phang Chanda, Project Manager  
Ms Mak Chansarikraingsey, Admin/finance Manager  
Mr Eang Seng Eav, Driver/Interpreter  
Ms Ou Chhorda, Volunteer

### **Members**

Ms Buth Saman, Director, Children and Love Association  
Mr Ken Bunchann, Director, Rural Aid Organization (based in Svay Rieng province)  
Mrs Siv Lay Hoy, Director, Pteas Teuk Dong Association (based in Battambang province)

## **Annex 5: Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is a summary of questions asked: it was adapted as necessary, and more questions were posed as necessary as seen on the RAPID function-form webpage. Interviews were carried out in Khmer and English as necessary.

### **A: Background**

1. When was the network formed?
2. Why was it formed?
3. Who are its major donors?

### **B: Functions**

1. What are the main objectives of the network?
2. How do you rank them in terms of importance?
3. What activities have you carried out/do you carry out to fulfil each objective?
4. What else does the network carry out, outside its objectives?
5. Does the network have a long-term business plan? What is it?

### **C: Management and organisation**

1. Do you have a governance agreement? Including what? Is it a formal document?
2. What kind of management system is there? Are there incentives? Is there a clear structure? What is it?
3. What kind of organisational mission is there?
4. Is the network centralised? What work does it do outside Phnom Penh?

### **D: Resources and communications**

1. Does the network have access to research from non-members?
2. Does the network have access to databases and sources?
3. How is knowledge shared within the network and outside?

### **E: Staff**

1. Are there staff employed specifically to network and make links with others?
2. Do staff have relevant skills and capacity?
3. Are there staff capacity-building initiatives within the network? What kind?
4. Does the network as a whole have sufficient and adequate staff?

### **F: Membership**

1. Is membership voluntary, free, fee-based, means-tested, open, or by invitation only?
2. How diverse are the members?

### **G: Strategic and adaptive capacity**

1. Can the network address differences in the interests/values of its members?
2. Can the network respond to opportunities in the policy context?
3. Is the network sustainable? How?
4. Does the network have the capacity to adopt new skills?
5. How does the network make decisions?

### **H: External environment**

1. At what stage of the policy process does the network intervene (agenda-setting, formulation, implementation, M&E)?
2. Who are the key policymakers and institutions?
3. How does the policy process work?
4. What is the extent of civil and political freedoms?
5. What difficulties are there with advocacy?

6. What determines the attitudes inside and outside the network? Are people united towards the common goal?
7. Does the issue of trust/unwillingness to share achievements affect ECPAT Cambodia? How?
8. Does the issue of trust/unwillingness to share achievements affect the network as a whole? How?
9. Does the issue of trust/unwillingness to share achievements affect the policy arena? How?
10. Is there a demand for the network's products and services? Who demands it? Government, civil society, donors?

**I: Other**

1. Please can we have as much documentation on the network as possible (annual reports, website address, organisational chart, mission statement etc).