

**World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Cambodia FY2025-2029**  
**Subnational Government Consultation Summary**  
**December 12, 2023**  
**Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra, Siem Reap**

The fourth consultation on the World Bank’s proposed Country Partnership Framework (CPF) FY2025-2029 with Cambodia was held on December 12, 2023 with 36 representatives from 14 provinces: (1) Siem Reap, (2) Kampong Cham, (3) Kampong Thom, (4) Pursat, (5) Battambang, (6) Tbong Khmum, (7) Kratie, (8) Mondulkiri, (9) Ratanakiri, (10) Stung Treng, (11) Pailin, (12) Oddar Meanchey, (13) Preah Vihear and (14) Banteay Meanchey. Approximately half of the participants were women.

**Overview:**

The consultation began with welcome remarks from Maryam Salim, World Bank Country Manager, Cambodia. Presentations on progress, challenges, and opportunities in Cambodia as set out in the World Bank’s Systematic Country Diagnosis alongside an outline of the proposed CPF were delivered by World Bank staff. These can be accessed on the [Cambodia CPF FY25-29 consultation website](#).

The room was then divided into breakout groups, assigned a High-Level Outcome (HLO) to consider, and asked to discuss four questions – the following is a collation of responses from that session:

**Question 1: What are the top three issues that the World Bank Group (WBG) should focus on in the next 4-5 years?**

**HLO 1** – There was suggestion to focus on increased community awareness of the importance of early education. The group also suggested greater support for the provision of daycare and early childhood education (0-3 years), nutrition, low skills, citing specific challenges with access to childcare in Kampong Cham province. Finally, participants discussed the need for improved local governance, citizen’s participation, gender and improved health services through frontline health worker training, equipment, and better pay.

**HLO 2** – Participants noted a need for greater digital skills, agricultural extension support including ‘smart’ agriculture, and the need to identify new markets for agriculture exports. There was a suggestion to focus on accessibility for people with disabilities in infrastructure projects, including schools, hospitals and health centers. The group concluded with the need for greater financial inclusion and access to lower interest rates for families and small businesses.

**HLO 3** – Participants suggested low returns from agriculture were having a serious impact on resilience and poverty in rural areas. It was suggested that the World Bank could assist in identifying markets and carrying out work that supports increasing agricultural incomes. The group assigned to HLO 3 also suggested the World Bank work to improve water resource management/ water security for agriculture and provide support to fisheries management to meet a stated concern about illegal and unregulated fishing in Cambodia.

**Question 2: What should the World Bank be doing less of in Cambodia considering the World Bank’s comparative advantage?**

**HLO 1 & HLO 2**– The groups had no recommendations of areas where the World Bank should do less. Rather, they focused on potential expansion, with concerted alignment with the government’s Pentagonal Strategy.

**HLO 3** – Participants suggested the oversight and management of World Bank projects could be streamlined and simplified to reduce the time taken for preparation (including feasibility study and safeguards) to allow adequate time for implementation.

**Question 3: What are your views of the proposed high level outcomes and objectives for the CPF?**

**HLO 1-** Participants agreed with the three HLOs but suggested a focus on inclusion and gender support so families could be better placed to provide education opportunities. There was also a suggestion that climate change, governance, strengthening institution and digital education be reflected as monitoring indicators under any of the proposed HLOs. The group also discussed the benefits of digital connectivity and social media usage in expanding engagement with project beneficiaries and citizens while supporting behavior change campaigns – a recent example was given involving waste management behavior change campaigns directed at young people.

**HLO 2 & HLO 3** – Participants suggested adding sustainability and inclusion into the resilience focus of the CPF to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations.

**Question 4: How may the World Bank better address the cross cutting challenges of:**

- **Climate change impacts**
- **Governance and institutional capacity**
- **Gender equality and inclusion**

**HLO 1** – Participants focused on supporting climate resilience of infrastructures including schools, hospitals, health centers; they shared their experiences of seeing a reduction in access to essential services following floods which had severe development impacts.

For equality and inclusion, respondents suggested improved health behavior change campaigns and strengthening information dissemination, particularly among young people, to train them for improved high skills for better income. Respondents also suggested limiting non-communicable diseases and health impacts related to drug, tobacco and alcohol use through stronger regulations.

**HLO 2** – Mainstreaming disability support in each sector was noted as having the potential for cross cutting benefits for inclusion. To address the cross-cutting challenge of climate impacts, respondents suggested more support for climate resilient agriculture. Regarding gender equality participants suggested more work on training and awareness for leaders, bringing more men into gender training, and expanding gender diversity in traditionally women-dominated sectors.

**HLO 3** – Respondents supported the cross-cutting challenges but felt more support should be directed to subnational level reforms alongside decentralization and deconcentration to build institutional capacity for human development at the local level. The group also suggested a greater focus on digital support, gender, and inclusion for people living with disabilities.