Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) in collaboration with partner organizations and donors, supported by Trocaire, organized a fourth Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Impacts (EISEI) meeting on January 30, 2009 at World Vision Cambodia in Phnom Penh with 57 international and national participants and communities.

Mr. Mam Sambath, DPA Executive Director and also a speaker at the meeting, says, “The meeting is conducted to present on role of SC and members of the network, to vote for SC members and to present on mining law and case study from Pheah Vihea and Stung Treng working group. Also, it is opportunity for NGOs to report to the Government to understand the issue of communities related to EISEI.”

Mr. Sambath reminded that the result of 3rd meeting on the role and responsibilities of members and steering committee we have discussed and already put into several items of ToRs. So, now it is an appropriate time to vote for an official SC to effectively implement the network and to officially represent the SC to raise concerns and response to the media agencies on the issue of EISEI.

The last meeting with participation from the community representatives, civil society organizations and donors was to finalize the Terms of Reference (TOR) in order to set up the national level Network on EISEI in Cambodia  

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A fourth Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Impacts (EISEI) meeting on January 30, 2009 at World Vision Cambodia in Phnom Penh

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Strengthening Partnership With Indigenous Communities in NRM

With supported from Ministry of Rural Development, provincial authority, local authority as well as collaborated with networks and partner organizations such as; 3SPN (Sesan, Sreh Pok and Sekong river), CANDO, CLEC, NGO forum, CORD, Highlander Association, ICC, ICSO, NTFP, VSG, UNDP and Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) organized a conference on “Strengthening Partnerships with Indigenous Communities in Natural Resources Management” with financial supported from Heinrich Boll foundation.

This two-day conference was organized from 18th to 19th February, 2009 in Ratanakiri province. There were about 210 international and national participants who joined under the presidency of H.E. Soem Son, secretariat of Ministry of Rural Development and H.E. Chey Sayoeun, deputy governor of Ratanakiri province and local authorities.

The aims of the conference were to (1) share perspectives on culture and traditional authority of indigenous people as they relate to the development paradigm, (2) share experiences among communities and development practitioners in the northeastern provinces regarding progress and challenges experienced by natural resource dependent indigenous communities, (3) explore strategies and directions for development practitioners and partners for future working relationships with indigenous communities to protect their natural resources and (4) advocate to government institutions and development partners to
On 06th March 2009, there was a 99th Anniversary of International Women Day on "Supporting Women Participation in Social and Economic Development" in Pluk village, Sesan district of Stung Treng province, there was a 99th Anniversary of International Women Day, 8th March, on "Supporting Women Participation in Social and Economic Development". The forum was organised by Department of Stung Treng Women Affaires and under supported by DPA with 256 participants from Pluk and Ban-Bung villages, Sesan district.

“This is one of forums which reflect roles and women right in social and economic development work. The promotion and value of women has reminded about heroines in the world who devoted their lives just to free from discrimination,” said Mr. Phrum Sarim, Sesan district governor.

Luk Chumtav Kong Sipha has reflected government’s vision that, “Government has provided job opportunity to women through promoting implementation and gender equity and women priority at all sectors, women discrimination, as well as to ensure women right in active participation and equally to men to develop country.”

Women’s capacity building to be able participating in social development activities is one the important agenda in DPA’s gender integrated activities. With this, DPA has also included many activities: right awareness, democratic, skills, health and sanitation to women to acknowledge and stable in living life and away from poorness, violence and physical and mental violation.

According to Ms. Chrea Sandan, gender and Development officer, “The economic empower to women through training, small business, credit creating and saving, women capacity building in leadership role, decision making are the result/achievement of DPA. Hence, 8 women in DPA target areas and 12 women in partners’ target areas were elected to be commune council in the third mandate 2007.”

DPA has strong collaboration with government and women network to better in promoting Cambodia women’s working situation. DPA also participated in adopting draft laws which were already approved including law on Prevention of Trafficking and Sex and other laws.

DPA will continue in collaboration with Department of Women’s Affairs and propagate the relevant laws to protect women right, so that they will live in safety, value and harmony in the society.
Mining sector is new topic for Cambodia and especially it interests many public audiences not only in national and international levels. With this extractive industry has become a big concern among Cambodian people and society as a whole. Therefore, information, knowledge and understanding of mining related laws are vital to the people and community.

Hence, two-day conference from 18th to 19th February, 2009 on “Strengthening Partnerships with Indigenous Communities in Natural Resources Management” organized by DPA with supported from Ministry of Rural Development, provincial authority, local authority as well as networks and partner organizations has provided chance for participants, especially indigenous people and those were from mining sites, to ask and express their concerns including problem with companies’ study and research; impacts on society, environment and natural resources. In addition, mineral resource exploitation has also affected to community living lives, health, water supply, farm or rice filed, wildlife shelter, secret and ancestor forest and national identity.

According to Chapter I: General Provisions of Law on Mineral Resource Management and Exploitation

Article 3:

Mineral resources include any substance, whether in solid, liquid or gaseous form, naturally originated by a geological process or as a result of mining in or on the land, or in or on the sea or seabed, including gemstones, coals, metal and non-metal mines, mineral water, rock, gravels, sand, clay, petroleum and gas.

The mining operation includes the prospecting, exploring and exploiting of mineral resources.

Prospecting is the preliminary exploration of the land surface by using simple instruments, involving only minor ground disturbance, in order to determine the presence of mineral of possible commercial value which may be subjected to an application for the mineral resources exploration and exploitation license.

Exploration is an investigation for the purpose of discovering and testing mineral indexes by prospecting, geological, geophysical and geochemical surveying, excavations, drilling, removal and analysis of soils, silts, water, rock and mineral samples, to determine the potential, extent, quality, quantity and economic and exploitation feasibility.

Exploitation of mineral resources is the mining operation whereby minerals are extracted from any mineral deposit processed, transported, sold or exported for commercial ends. Sale, exportation and importation of valuable metals and gemstones in raw state and after transformation shall be governed by the provisions of laws in force of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

According to Chapter II: Mineral Resource License of Law on Mineral Resource Management and Exploitation

Article 5:

No legal entity or natural person shall conduct mineral resource exploration or exploitation without a mineral resource license issued by a competent institution except for any owner or lawful occupant of private land who may use gravels, sand, rock or clay without the license, but is not allowed to transport out of the owned land boundaries for exploitation.

Any person of Khmer nationality may prospect for minerals on the State land which is not held under such license issued by the State to another person.

According to Chapter VIII: Penalties of Law on Mineral Resource Management and Exploitation

Article 33:

Any person who conducts the operation of the mineral resource exploration without a mineral resource license shall be liable to a fine ranging from 500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand) Riels to 1,000,000 (One Million) Riels.

In case of recalcitrance, the penalty shall be from 1,000,000 (One Million) Riels to 2,000,000 (Two Million) Riels, or such person shall be punished by 1 (one) month to 1 (one) year imprisonment, or both punishments.
with active participation from CSOs which are varied in their nature and approaches to advocacy and to exchange information from member organizations on their Extractive Industry Network.

After a long discussion, 9 NGOs were elected as members of Steering Committee (SC) including DPA, EWMI, IRAM, SCW, YRDP, CCIM, CPN, MVI, and ICSO.

The process of the meeting was smooth and participants actively participated in sharing ideas and in group discussion, especially in voting the SC. The representatives from SC expressed their commitment to work with national level and in the next process after selecting the SC.

Mr. Mam Sambath said that DPA together with relevant civil society organizations will put all effort in working, monitoring and disseminating information on the issue, so that the public and community people will better know and understand of the extractive industry.

recognize, value and respect the rights of indigenous communities in natural resources management.

According to Mr. Mam Sambath, DPA Executive Director and also an orator of the conference addressed that, "This conference was continued from other changes and discussion in conference since 2001 and 2004". "Through visions sharing between development partners, were changed startled problem become a certain development issue in communities and afforded to help communities by strengthening capacity to ensure that their rights was respected especially in natural resources management activities", added Sambath.

The conference also was give opportunity to all participants attend in group discussion on main topics such as; land tenure, land conflict, hydropower dam, logging, fishery, mining, experiences and culture changing, youth and elder working together, communication between development organizations and communities, strategies of ethic people and development organizations in natural resources management, traditional and cultural impact, and political participation of indigenous women. Besides, it also has traditional performance, music player, and prayer shows of Charay ethic group.

"Government has been continuing to take care and promote indigenous communities by giving opportunities and rights to express their concerned in purpose to participate actively in social development through improving all fields and some of these works are also the obligations and responsibility of Ministry of Rural Development like; rural road construction, water clean supplier, sanitation, baseline health care, credit giving arrangement to communities use to improve their family’s income", said H.E. Sim Sun form a state authority’s point of view and directly task to fulfill in future.

"Conference report and discussion results will cause the activity plans that we can work together from now and future. Voice and all concerned of indigenous communities will echo and discuss to renew of traditional, culture, identity, and livelihood of them", said Sambath.