

Developments and reflections on P4H field coordination issues 2013/2014

Source: P4H advisor/coordinator Bart Jacobs

In Cambodia a series of P4H-related activities happened in the past year, not all of them well documented (or communicated). These events occurred for a variety of reasons, principal amongst them being new players in the field together with a situation requiring careful consideration and approach. All concerned activities aimed at stimulating collaboration and coordination amongst the development partners engaged in social health protection-related activities in the country.

The first activity was the reinstatement of a defunct structure geared towards enhancing dialogue. For this purpose the **Contact Group** was reinstated. This is a forum to exchange information amongst all parties interested in universal coverage/SHP in Cambodia, be them bilaterals, multilaterals, NGOs, NGO Networks, philanthropic organisations. Meetings are held on a monthly basis and well attended. The secretariat consists of P4H.

Following restoration of the communication line, collaboration and coordination could be embarked on. The **original arrangement, endorsed by GiZ, ILO, AFD and WHO, was reconfigured** to a group focusing on the formal sector social protection scheme, namely the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), under the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training. These four partners were complemented by GRET –that piloted a health insurance scheme for factory workers that is taken over by the Ministry- and one CIM person. They meet quarterly and plan joint operations, in support of NSSF. A joint meeting under the P4H umbrella was held with the new Minister of Labour with all concerned partners.

In addition to the original P4H members, other donors appeared on the scene. For this reason an additional forum was created, the **Exchange Group**, with representatives of the Australian Department of Trade and Foreign relations, the World Bank, BMZ, USAID, Koica and WHO. P4H operates once again as secretariat while GiZ together with KfW (conducting a voucher programme) and URC (implementing the USAID programme) are invited as implementing agencies. Since May, meetings are also held on a monthly basis.

The **last coordination mechanism** to be established is between development partners and the Ministry of Health, as the sub-Technical Working Group Health Financing. This platform is to be part of the Technical Working Group Health, the main forum for dialogue and consultations between Government and development partners working in the health sector. The Technical Working Group Health (TWGH) has been established as a mechanism for the Ministry of Health and its development partners jointly to identify priorities, harmonize activities, discuss and address technical issues, improve utilization and mobilization of resources, and facilitate monitoring of progress.

A survey in 2012 (Wilkinson D. Review of the Functioning of the Technical Working Group Health), however, found **nine Sub-TWGH** (though none for health financing/social health protection), “four health sector support task forces (RMNCH, communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, health systems strengthening), plus various other health sector working groups and committees, including: IMCI Working Group, Micro-nutrition Working Group, IYCF Working Group, PMTCT Working Group, Midwifery Working Group, Subcommittee for Immunization, National Sub-Committee for Infectious Diseases, Reduction of Unsafe Abortion Working Group, Newborn Care Task Force, Sexual and Reproductive

Health Working Group, Dengue Coordinating Committee, TB Inter-agency Coordinating Committee, Avian Influenza Working Group, Working Groups on Continuum of Prevention, Care and Treatment, Working Group on Boosted Linked Response, Working Group on M&E, Working Group on Surveillance and Research on HIV, Health Financing Working Group, Health Information System Strengthening Working Group, Service Delivery Monitoring Group, Contraceptive Security Working Group.”

Understandably, the Ministry has some reservations to create another coordination mechanism.