



World Bank Cambodia Country Office



---

## Press Release

### The Parliamentary Network on the World Bank Field Visit to Cambodia 11- 16 November 2007

From 11-16 November 2007, a high level delegation of 13 parliamentarians from countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America visited Cambodia to witness on the ground Cambodia's development efforts. "Cambodia is probably the most striking example of successful emergence from conflict and destruction in the world" says Quentin Davies, a parliamentarian from the United Kingdom and member of the International Development Committee of the House of Commons, who led the delegation. "It is sustaining growth rates of 10% per annum and this is a fine achievement by any standards."

The visit was hosted by the National Assembly of Cambodia and co-organized by the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (PNoWB), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the World Bank. Parliamentarians were able to visit projects in agriculture, public health, education, and infrastructure. Agriculture and agricultural research remain of paramount importance to the Cambodian economy, as Blake Ratner, a CGIAR representative in Cambodia points out: "We need policy makers to strengthen the vital role agriculture plays in poverty reduction." Further, the visit included in-depth discussions with Cambodia's major stakeholders, including government officials, delegations led by the speaker of the National Assembly and the head of Senate, local PNoWB members, civil society, representatives from the donor community and the private sector.

In an open debate with the Parliament, represented by the head of the nine parliamentary commissions, delegates praised the government for its exemplary achievements in development but also raised several issues of concern, including the need to strengthen governance, fight corruption as well as to address problems of deforestation, natural resource management and better representation of women in the decision-making process. "The World Bank in Cambodia is dedicated to promote development, fight poverty and to improve the live of Cambodian people. Therefore, it is very important for us that Parliamentarians as elected

representatives can see by themselves if and how World Bank programs are effectively reaching their objective, contributing to poverty alleviation and better governance”, Nisha Agrawal, Country Manager for the World Bank in Cambodia says.

The field visit program is one of the PNoWB’s key activities, organized jointly with the World Bank and supported by a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. Its purpose is to foster a better understanding among Parliamentarians of development activities and the role of the World Bank and donor coordination in recipient countries. Since its inception in May 2000 as an informal network of individual parliamentarians, the PNoWB has strengthened the voice of parliaments in the development debate. It has grown to include more than 1000 parliamentarians from 110 countries and mobilizes parliamentarians in the fight against global poverty, promotes transparency and accountability in international development, and offers a platform for policy dialogue between the World Bank and parliamentarians.

###