



## **Kingdom of Cambodia**

### **Opening remarks by His Excellency Chhay Than, Senior Minister and Minister of Planning, Cambodia**

#### **Using data in evidence-based decision making: Launch of DevInfo version 6.0 in Asia and the Pacific**

02 February 2010, 9:00 am  
Sokha Angkor Resort, Siem Reap, Cambodia

Respects to:

- His Excellency Mr. Douglas Broderick, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Cambodia
- His Excellency Mr. Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy, distinguished keynote speaker and Director General, Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring, Ministry of Plan Implementation, Government of Sri Lanka
- Prof. A.K. Shiva Kumar, distinguished keynote speaker, Prof. at Institute for Human Development and Adviser UNICEF India
- Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

Today, I have great honour and pleasure to participate in this Regional Event on Using data in evidence-based decision making: Launch of DevInfo version 6.0 in Asia and the Pacific, where participants here representing government institutions and UN agencies from 20 countries around the Asia and Pacific region. On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I welcome you to Siem Reap. This is an appropriate location to host an international event, due to the abundance of services available here, and our proximity to the magnificent ancient temple complex of Angkor Wat, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the prides of our nation. I hope that you will have the time during your stay here to visit some of the beautiful monuments, which are only about 15 minutes away.

As you know, we are gathered here this week to discuss the important topic of using data for evidence-based decision making. This is an issue that is not new, for planners have always required some amount of statistical data for their everyday work. However, there is now a renewed urgency on the topic in response to the principles of the new aid environment, as expressed in the 2005 Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action. Namely, national governments and development partners alike, now view nationally-owned results-based management systems to be central to the development process. We must be committed to achievement of national goals, and to supporting national statistical systems for regular, accurate monitoring of those goals. Only with appropriate, high quality data can we measure progress and make the policy choices that are necessary to steer the course for our future.

In Cambodia the Ministry of Planning is well positioned to comment on the production and use of data for decision making. The ministry is the Royal Government arm in formulation concepts, strategies, policies in determining priorities for national development, preparing and monitoring the National Strategic Development Plan. This is an important document that spells out how the poverty reduction and development agenda of the Royal Government is to be operationalized. By placing the General Directorate of Planning and the National Institute of Statistics under one umbrella, the ministry is able to effectively integrate the national statistical system into the monitoring and evaluation framework of the national development plan, which includes the indicators for monitoring achievement of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals.

Many of you here are either policy makers that use data, or statistics experts that produce data. We hope that by bringing you together here in Siem Reap, we will be able to engage in stimulating dialogue on how we can work more closely together to improve the evidence-base for our national development plans and policies. We should be ready to exchange positive and negative lessons learned from our various countries, so that we may apply appropriate measures for our specific contexts.

We feel honored to host this regional meeting in Cambodia and to launch the new version of DevInfo software, version 6.0. You may know that Cambodia's statistical system was destroyed during the period of civil strife in the 1970s and 1980s. International donor support to statistics resumed after the elections of 1993, and we now have a functioning system that provides for the regular needs of national planners and policy makers. Cambodia has adapted DevInfo to its own needs by creating CamInfo, our national socioeconomic database, since 2003. The database is updated each year with the latest data from national surveys, censuses and line ministry administrative systems. Currently we are planning a release of CamInfo version 4.0, based on the DevInfo version 6.0 platform, to include the results of our General Population Census 2008, based on new administrative area divisions that were mandated by Royal Government policy in 2009. We are pleased that DevInfo provides a platform for a national socioeconomic database that is flexible to the evolving needs of national statistical systems. Launch of CamInfo v4.0 will take place later in 2010, but our colleague His Excellency San Sy Than, Director General of the National Institute of Statistics, will present on the use of census data for policy making in Session 1 later this morning.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, please allow me to take this opportunity to thank the various agencies of the United Nations who have worked actively over the past few months to organize this event. I can see now that your diligent preparations have paid off.

Once again, I wish you all a pleasant stay in Siem Reap, and hope that you may carry the discussions you will have here back to your places of work to advance the agenda of using data for evidence-based decision making.

Thank you.