

Press release: Germany committed to ending poverty in Cambodia – Governmental negotiations successfully concluded

Berlin – Social protection, rural development and decentralisation remain the priorities of Cambodian-German development cooperation. Germany will provide a loan for rural infrastructure, a grant for nutrition and social accountability, and increase its capacity building efforts in public health and rural development. This is the result of today's bilateral negotiations in Berlin, Germany. The negotiations were headed by Norbert Barthle, Parliamentary Secretary of State with the German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, and Chhieng Yanara, Minister attached to the Prime Minister and Secretary General of CRDB/CDC.

Norbert Barthle: "The Cambodian-German friendship remains strong. Ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity are our common goal."

The new loan for rural infrastructure will be a joint project with the French Agency for International Development AfD and the European Union. The total project volume is expected to exceed 80 million euros (out of which 30 million euros will be funded by the German grant). With this truly European effort, the project will make a big difference for the livelihoods of Cambodia's rural population.

The respect for human rights – social, economic, and political – is the basis for German development cooperation. This is why Germany and Cambodia engaged in an extensive dialogue on the issue during the negotiations. While perceptions differed, both sides agreed to the importance of opening political and civic spaces in the Kingdom.

Norbert Barthle: "If political and civic spaces open up, Cambodia can avert the withdrawal of EBA preferences. National law and practice need to be brought in line with international human rights obligations such as the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly. I am convinced it can be easily done."

The new commitments add to a total of 48.6 million euros for 2019 and 2020:

- Contribution to the World Bank multi-donor trust fund to support the implementation of the Social Accountability Framework: 5 million euros (grant);
- Identification of Poor Households (ID-Poor Programme): 1.3 million euros (technical assistance);
- Social Health Protection: 2 million euros (technical assistance);
- Rural Infrastructure Programme: 0.1 million euros (grant);
- Rural Infrastructure Programme: 30 million euros (concessional loan);
- Regional Economic Development Programme: 8 million euros (technical assistance);
- Study and Expert Fund: 2.2 million euros (technical assistance for studies).

Through its global "One World No Hunger" initiative, Germany commits an additional 10 million euros to the Cambodia Nutrition Project, a joint endeavor of the World Bank, the Global Financing Facility, Australia and Germany.

The summary records of the negotiations will be publicly available on the website of the Council for the Development of Cambodia.