



**2023 Australasian AID  
Conference and Study  
Tour**

Ponlok Chomnes

January 2024



# Agenda

Objectives

Delegation and Highlights

Testimony

Next Steps





# Objectives\*

- Increased understanding of Australian international development priorities
- Learn good practices and lessons learned from similar think tanks and research organizations in policy engagement
- Expand networks with relevant Australian think tanks
- Seek out new ideas on how to promote a 'research culture
- Promote the Cambodian knowledge sector in the international community
- Increased understanding of how evidence-informed policymaking works in Australia.

\*The trip was funded by Australia's Mekong-Australia Partnership initiative.







# Delegation

## Strategic Partners of the Ponlok Chomnes program:

- Dr Ngin Chanrith, Director, Centre for Natural Resources and Environment, Cambodia Development Resource Institute
- Ms. Charadine Pich, Deputy Director, Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace
- Mr. Ngo Sothath, Research Manager, Centre for Policy Studies
- Mr. Chea Dara, Young Researchers Program Coordinator, Future Forum

## GEDSI consortium:

- Ms. Mak Monika, Cambodian Disabled People's Organisation
- Mr. Mao Sokheng, Support Person for Ms. Mak Monika
- Ms. Eng Chandy, Gender and Development for Cambodia
- Ms. Kry Suyheang, Executive Director, Women Peace Maker

## SheThinks network:

- Ms. Khan Mouyleng, Managing Director, The Glocator Research and Consulting, and member of SheThinks network
- Ms. Nhong Sodavy, Research Assistant, Center of Natural Resources and Environment, Cambodia Development Resource Institute, and member of SheThinks network

## DFAT and TAF:

- Mr. Connor Floyd, Second Secretary, Australian Embassy in Phnom Penh
- Ms. Som Chanthida, Program Manager, Australian Embassy in Phnom Penh
- Ms. Dolgion Aldar, Program Director, The Asia Foundation
- Mr. Men Pechet, Program Manager, The Asia Foundation

**\*Total: 14 participants – 8 women, 6 men**



# Highlights:

Australasian Aid Conference, meetings with think thanks targeted for SPs and GEDSI Consortium, and cultural activities

<b>4-5 December Canberra</b>	Australian Institute	Global Institute for Women's Leadership	Australian Council for International Development  Asia-Pacific Development, Diplomacy & Defence Dialogue	Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions
<b>5-7 December Canberra</b>	Australasian AID Conference, Crawford School of Public Policy			
<b>8 December Melbourne</b>	Grattan Institute	Gender, Peace, and Security at Monash University	Climateworks Centre	International Women Development Agency
<b>Cultural Tours/Visit</b>	Cambodian Ambassador to Australia (4 December)	Parliament House (4 December, Canberra)	Migration Museum – on Food trail (9 December, Melbourne)	



# Cambodian Ambassador to Australia

The delegation was invited by the Cambodian Ambassador to Australia, H.E. Dr. Cheunboran Chanborey, to join a dinner reception at his residence together with Ms. Caroline Linke, Assistant Secretary of DFAT's Vietnam and Mekong Strategy Branch, the delegation from the Office of the Council of Ministers, the Council for the Development of Cambodia, and other ministries.







**Testimony**





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*The Study Visit to Australia provided me with a wonderful experience to learn more about Australian international development priorities and public interest advocacy work.*

*Participating in the Australasian Aid Conference 2023 afforded me an opportunity to **discover good practices** and emerging trends in locally-led development, as well as build connections with other researchers in Australia and from the region.*

*It is very worthwhile to meet and learn from the Australian think tanks and research institutes. This experience also enables me to **expand my network** with Australian counterparts.*

*- Mr. Chea Dara, FF*



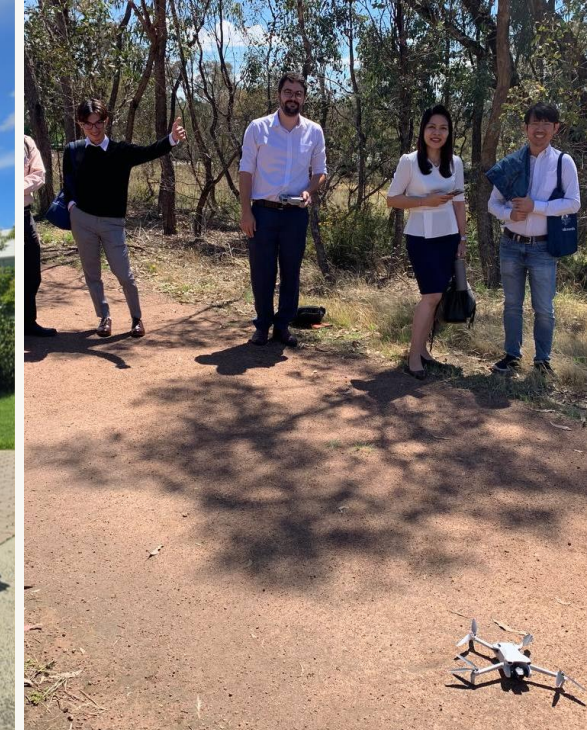


*The visits to the different types of research and advocacy institutions provided great learnings about how **policy-oriented research is conducted and communicated to influence policy making.***

*I particularly enjoyed the meetings with the Australia Institute and the Grattan Institute and was impressed with how it is run and how they convey research outcomes to affect policy in various ways.*

*What I specifically learnt is to influence policy in an effective manner, research needs to be of high quality, integrity and independence, focusing on current pressing issues. Plus, findings need to be disseminated in different ways such as blogs, briefs, podcasts and easy-to-read reports, targeting specific audiences of interest.*

*– Dr. Ngin Chanrith, CDRI; Mr. Ngo Sothath, CPS*







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*The Australasian Aid Conference provided a great platform to learn about a wide range of issues from other countries, especially those from the Asia Pacific.*

*I learned about the **localisation** of development and **humanitarian work** and different forms of local governance in different aid contexts.*

*The conference was attended by people from different disciplines and areas of work and thus was a great avenue where I could network with those in my areas of work, namely climate and environment.*

*- Dr. Ngin Chanrith, CDRI*



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*Having the research report done and published is just halfway (in policy influence). The other half of the effort must focus on developing the communications materials and a series of outreach and interaction with the audience both the general public and policy circle.*

*As a means to influence policies, **think tanks must maintain good relationships with policymakers and their staff and advisors.** It is suggested that meetings with their staff and advisors are not less important than the meetings with the politicians who are ministers. It is at the end the ministers will listen to these staff and advisors.*

*- Mr. Ngo Sothath, CPS*





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*The study visits have opened wider opportunities for us to learn, share, exchange and connect with many leading actors in the field and gain new insights into the issues. We even discussed some possible **opportunity on how to collaborate** in the future, especially on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) as now that Cambodia government is preparing its first National Action Plan on WPS.*

*- Ms. Kry Suyheang, WPM*





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*Among the various organizations and discussions, the engagement strategies of Global Institute for Women Leadership (GIWL) were particularly impactful. Their approach to collaborating with government bodies and the public through diverse media channels resonated with me, especially considering the potential for **partnership with the SheThink network.***

*– Ms. Khan Mouyleng, SheThinks Network*







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*RMIT University's exploration of Gender Budgeting added a layer of practicality to my research. It revealed the significance of incorporating gender perspectives into budgetary processes as it illuminated the real-world implications of fiscal policies on different genders. While learning about the gap in gender data from Feminist Foreign Policy contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics in household data, fostering a more equitable and **inclusive approach to research and policy recommendation for policy formulation.***

- Ms. Nhung Sodavy, SheThinks Network





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*Further to learning from the Australian think tanks, I learnt a lot from my fellow participants.*

*The trip enabled us to interact both formally in meetings and informally during tours and free time. This provided great chances to learn about each other's work and build up professional relationships.*



*- Dr. Ngin Chanrith, CDRI*





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The program **provided me with a personal assistant (PA)**. It's a great support and useful for me to have a chance to move around for meetings and enjoy going around the city. It made me feel comfortable like **“leaving no one behind”**. Additionally, my PA could also have an opportunity to learn from the study tour and conference.

- Ms. Mak Monica, CDPO





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*“Gender Responsive Budgeting is always the great interesting topic for me. Meeting with Gender Lens Australia at IWDA office provided me the **advocacy plan** and future activities to improve feminist economist group and gender responsive budget movement in Cambodia.*



- Ms. Eng Chandy, GADC





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*The visit to the Parliament House was of particular interest to me. The Australian government even provided financial support to schools to bring young students all over from Australia to visit the Parliament to witness how the laws and policies are made and passed.*

*The **Parliament House** even has a **separate mirror room for those young students** to watch from above... What a symbolic act of how democracy should run! Democracy has to be rooted in the system and taught from a young age and be part of our way of life.*

*- Ms. Kry Suyheang, WPM*





Next steps



# Strategic Partners

Find ways to do collaborative research among the strategic partners on integrated/cross-sector issues of policy importance and significant impact.

To hold an internal discussion (key takeaways, established contacts, opportunities to build strategic linkage with ANU)

To contact Grattan Institute & The Australian Institute to share their communication strategies

Do exchange/fellowship (1-3 months) with Australian think tanks to gain hands-on experience in research communication and policy outreach.



# GEDSI Consortium

Sharing the reflections and learnings from AAC and the study tours with colleagues and networks including 77 OPDs

Invite Gender Responsive Budgeting and Feminist Foreign Policy working group to share with the networks in Cambodia (GADNet)

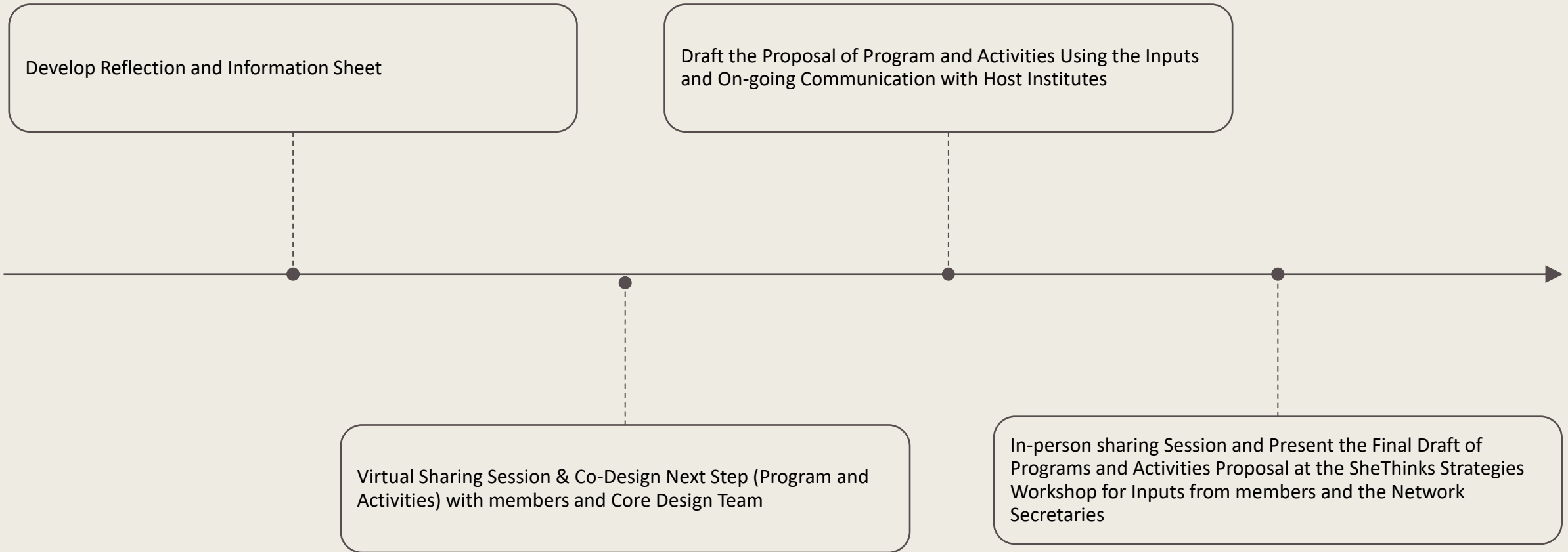
Organize Online GRB training with Prof. Tanja from RMIT

Explore opportunity to work with feminist economist and researchers in Cambodia

Explore opportunity to use gender data program to gain insight into gender equality in Cambodia



# SheThinks Network





# Communication

## Facebook:

- [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid02K7n1wAvVoA9b1KeFzdQeYwMb1ACVM216ZJ7ahDe4nusTZd9jW6qfjGRKLBCijd7LI&id=100065398960212](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02K7n1wAvVoA9b1KeFzdQeYwMb1ACVM216ZJ7ahDe4nusTZd9jW6qfjGRKLBCijd7LI&id=100065398960212)
- [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid023xCUptHehyDAAhKSdjRbCPHfDEUhVrzd4WUG4mKTcxuGQR4FeU5kzsnt3oPUTfVsl&id=100065398960212](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid023xCUptHehyDAAhKSdjRbCPHfDEUhVrzd4WUG4mKTcxuGQR4FeU5kzsnt3oPUTfVsl&id=100065398960212)
- [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid02fWQwm6b2xCAouLjoLvNB532xRBMWJQQUwMX2wjqmS1f6u9SZ9FPrxxc9F1rKbHahl&id=100067146608738](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02fWQwm6b2xCAouLjoLvNB532xRBMWJQQUwMX2wjqmS1f6u9SZ9FPrxxc9F1rKbHahl&id=100067146608738)
- [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid02fWQwm6b2xCAouLjoLvNB532xRBMWJQQUwMX2wjqmS1f6u9SZ9FPrxxc9F1rKbHahl&id=100067146608738](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02fWQwm6b2xCAouLjoLvNB532xRBMWJQQUwMX2wjqmS1f6u9SZ9FPrxxc9F1rKbHahl&id=100067146608738)

## X:

- <https://x.com/PonlokChomnes/status/1734102966389571600?s=20>
- <https://x.com/PonlokChomnes/status/1734103846891499605?s=20>
- <https://x.com/AusEmbPP/status/1734117737822347649?s=20>

## LinkedIn:

- <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7137993248211423232>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7139866181414305792>



Thank you!

