Do No Harm in Cambodia

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This document was developed as part of a collaborative learning project directed by CDA. It is part of a collection of documents that should be considered initial and partial findings of the project. These documents are written to allow for the identification of cross-cutting issues and themes across a range of situations. Each case represents the views and perspectives of a variety of people at the time when it was written.

**These documents do not represent a final product of the project.** While these documents may be cited, they remain working documents of a collaborative learning effort. Broad generalizations about the project’s findings cannot be made from a single case.

CDA would like to acknowledge the generosity of the individuals and agencies involved in donating their time, experience and insights for these reports, and for their willingness to share their experiences.

Not all the documents written for any project have been made public. When people in the area where a report has been done have asked us to protect their anonymity and security, in deference to them and communities involved, we keep those documents private.
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INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the Do No Harm Project of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) set out to determine how Do No Harm (DNH) was being used in the world and whether that use was leading to more effective programming decisions. A series of reflective case studies was written in multiple countries to determine how practitioners in those places are learning, thinking about, using and spreading DNH. Some organizations are experienced and effective in applying Do No Harm principles and framework to their work, while others are struggling. This range of experience provides valuable lessons. Whether implementing Do No Harm in their daily work, in their program design and monitoring, or in shaping policies and organizational procedures, the cases look at where in their work people find it easy to use Do No Harm, where they find roadblocks, and how (or if) they overcame them.

This case study of Cambodia presents evidence gathered during one of the final field visits for the reflective cases. The case team was in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from March 29 to April 6, 2010. This case represents a ‘snapshot’ of DNH in Cambodia during this time. We gathered people’s reflections on the history of DNH in the country, but most of the early DNH training took place several years ago, and many of those who facilitated that early work have either left the country or moved on to different posts within Cambodia and were unable to speak with us. Throughout this visit, we met with development and humanitarian NGO professionals working in and around Phnom Penh. While we discussed projects in other parts of Cambodia, far from the capital city, we were unable to arrange for visits to those project sites.

Within this report, we use the terms, Do No Harm, DNH, Local Capacities for Peace and LCP interchangeably. Frequently, those interviewed referred to “LCP,” the original name of the Do No Harm Project at CDA. World Vision continues to use this language to refer to the DNH Framework and training materials. Many organizations in Cambodia which were initially exposed to DNH via World Vision refer to LCP rather than DNH.

When the visit detailed in this report took place there were two important legal issues dominating the news in Cambodia. First, the country was awaiting the final verdict in the first trial of a senior Khmer Rouge cadre, under the UN-supported Khmer Rouge tribunals. Kaing Guek Eav, better known as Duch, is the former commander of the notorious Tuol Sleng prison and torture chambers in Phnom Penh. The site is now a genocide museum. Some 14,000 people were sent from Tuol Sleng to their deaths in the nearby “Killing Fields” under Duch in the late 1970s. During the trial in 2009, he accepted responsibility for torturing and executing thousands of these inmates.

Second, in March 2010, 15 years after it was first proposed, the Cambodian Parliament unanimously approved an anti-corruption law. Four years earlier, a petition with more than 1 million thumbprints and signatures, representing one out of 14 Cambodians, was presented to the National Assembly, calling on them to urgently enact the law. The Parliament enacted the legislation only one week after making it public, outraging opposition parties and civil society groups within Cambodia who were not given an opportunity to weigh in on the legislation. The process and content of the legislation even drew rebuke.
from the United Nations. It is still too soon to know whether the law will help officials effectively fight graft, and critics of the law feel it will protect the corrupt, rather than punish them.

Immediately before we began interviewing people for this case, CDA held a DNH consultation in Phnom Penh, which many interviewees attended. Those interviewees gave CDA more than two days out of their busy schedules. We would like to thank them and the other individuals interviewed for this case study for sharing their time, their expertise and their stories with us.

CAMBODIAN HISTORY AND CONTEXT

It has been three decades since the Khmer Rouge period (1975-1979), during which roughly two million Cambodians were killed. Cambodia has faced numerous challenges since that time: civil war; eleven years of occupation by the Vietnamese; electoral violence; and attempted coups. Outright war ceased in late 1999, with the surrender of the remaining Khmer Rouge, and since then significant efforts have been made in peacebuilding and reconstruction. Even after 30 years, Cambodia is still in the process of building its economy and recovering from its past and unresolved challenges and conflicts remain.

One of the poorest countries in Asia, Cambodia is home to approximately 14 million people. The main ethnic group, the Khmer, make up 90 percent of the country’s population according to official statistics. They are the descendants of the ancient Angkor Empire. Though it is considered the most ethnically homogenous country in Southeast Asia, Cambodia is home to other ethnic groups including ethnic Chinese, who make up roughly 5 percent of the population, ethnic Vietnamese, whose estimated numbers range from 100,000 to 500,000, the Khmer Krom (ethnic Khmers from Vietnam), whose numbers are estimated at 1,000,000, the Cham, a Muslim minority, estimated at 200,000-300,000, and the Khmer Loeu, a hill tribe people, who number between 60,000 to 70,000.

To this day, political and nationalist tensions exist between Cambodia and its neighbors. The Khmer and the Vietnamese have a long history of animosity and tension. For the ethnic and migrant Vietnamese living in Cambodia this means many of them face daily discrimination and live in fear, according to a conflict assessment report by the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh.1 There is no official figure available for the Vietnamese who live in Cambodia; numbers are difficult to pinpoint because many Vietnamese are migrants who move frequently, and because ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia are not counted by government censuses; they are not allowed to own land or vote, are not considered full citizens, and face frequent discrimination at the village level.

During the past decade, Cambodia’s relations with its western neighbor, Thailand, have also deteriorated into an ongoing conflict over Preah Vihear temple. In January 2003, rumors that a Thai actress said that Angkor Wat temple belonged to Thailand triggered riots in Phnom Penh. Many Thai businesses and the Thai embassy were attacked and looted. The Cambodian government made compensation payments to Thailand for the destroyed embassy and relations stabilized somewhat. However, in July 2008, when Preah Vihear temple in northern Cambodia was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, tensions flared again.

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1 “Cambodia: Adjustment or Instability?” Interagency Conflict Assessment. April 2009
The temple had been the source of an ongoing dispute between the two countries, despite the 1962 World Court decision that the temple is in Cambodian territory, not in Thailand. After the UNESCO designation, both countries deployed troops to the disputed border area and there have been deadly clashes. Relations between the two countries further deteriorated in November 2009, after the Cambodian Prime Minister appointed the fugitive former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra as his economic advisor and refused to extradite him to Thailand.

Another important source for conflict in Cambodia is rampant corruption. The country is regarded as one of the most corrupt in the region, and Transparency International ranked Cambodia 158 out of 180 in its 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index.

On the surface, the Cambodian government is a democracy. In reality, decisions are made through deals between political leaders and the business elite. The country has a long history of dictatorships, totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. The current Prime Minister Hun Sen is one of the longest-serving prime ministers in the world and has been in power since 1985. The U.S. Embassy report classifies the Cambodian system as an “Elite Patron-Client System,” in which society is organized around a powerful man who supports society’s basic needs in exchange for political support.

This corruption affects society at all levels and many people’s basic needs are not met. People often need to pay teachers directly to educate their children or bribe firemen when they arrive to put out fires. Corruption among the powerful elites often involves land grabbing and economic concessions. Land grabbing, and the resulting displacement of Cambodian villagers from their homes, is becoming more common, often involving military and police forces. There has not yet been widespread outrage or violence toward the government over land grabs because many people in the older generation endured the difficulty of the Khmer Rouge period and are accustomed to coping with difficult physical conditions and the lack of government support. They view instability as not worth any potential benefit. This could all change though with the rise of Cambodia’s youth: 39 percent of the population is below the age of 15 and approximately 70 percent of Cambodians are under age of 30. The younger generation of Cambodians has rising expectations for their government and a desire for change. It is possible in the future that they just might demand it.

DO NO HARM IN CAMBODIA

The Do No Harm Framework was developed in 1996 by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, an organization based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. After the initial development of the Framework, organizations in several countries were a part of the Implementation and Mainstreaming phases of the Project. CDA staff travelled to these locations, trained staff in DNH, and assisted them in their use of the tool and advised on the incorporation of DNH into the processes of the organizations themselves. Cambodia was not one of the countries involved in the Implementation and Mainstreaming phases of the DNH Project, but many organizations involved in that phase also have operations in Cambodia. CDA staff have not had a direct influence on the training or implementation of DNH in Cambodia. One of the

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2 http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009
primary objectives of the interviews performed for this case study was to determine how DNH arrived in Cambodia and how organizations there are using it.

**TRAINING and MAINSTREAMING**

“The biggest complaint I have with peacebuilding training is that people do a one-shot training then go away and think that everybody got it. After a training, people have a new concept running around in their brain and they are looking for a place to attach it. People need something to link training to.”

Josephine Barbour, Church World Service

As we spoke to individuals using DNH in Cambodia, we asked about their experiences of being trained in DNH. When we spoke to trainers, we asked about their experiences training others. We wanted to hear about different training methods organizations had designed and what the outcomes of these methods were. We always asked about an interviewee’s first exposure to the tool, and how they remembered their first reactions.

In many cases, when people spoke about their initial exposure to DNH, they said that they did not fully grasp the tool. Some people felt it was too technical or that it did not apply to the type of work they did (we heard this mainly from development workers who saw DNH as a humanitarian tool). Many people said that it took multiple exposures to the tool through reading, trainings or participation in assessments and workshops, before they were fully able to understand the DNH framework. Once grasped, however, most people said, “It became a way of life,” or, “It changed how I think.” Some people who experienced this initial lack of clarity about DNH told us that they had little experience in the field when they were first trained, so they had no point of reference for the tool. Others said that while Dividers and Connectors are concrete and easy to understand, other parts of the framework were more subtle and required either more exposure to the tool, or a better training module to more fully develop the concepts.

Organizations in Cambodia have used different methods to bridge the span between training DNH and learning DNH. Church World Service has designed a DNH training regime for staff that begins with a three-day DNH workshop, immediately followed by a three-day DNH field assessment, to give trained staff immediate practice doing DNH analyses. One CWS trainer said, “We have a five-day workweek, but we ask staff to participate in six consecutive days of training. Even though it was longer than the workweek, staff said that six days was not enough. They wanted more time for analysis and to complete their reports. We need nine days, not six.” When new staff start at CWS, they receive a one-hour DNH orientation, and once there are 20 new untrained staff members, they hold the six-day training. In the meantime, however, “new staff learn the concepts from their team members.”

Mrs. Touch Norneath, one of the trainers at CWS, was originally trained by World Vision in 2004. Since 2004, Norneath, “was involved in every initiative that World Vision hosted for LCP.” She was invited to Mindanao, Philippines to take part in a DNH field assessment with World Vision staff for ten days in 2005. According to Norneath, her participation in that assessment, “influenced how I do trainings at CWS.”
For CWS, DNH was “the right tool at the right time.” Josephine Barbour, the outgoing director of CWS at the time of the field visit, told us, “LCP/DNH would have fallen on deaf ears except that we (CWS) had been through two years of VBNK’s Creativity in Development and CHART Project. 4 CHART taught us that development begins with the development worker’s attitude and behavior. DNH became the tool.”

World Vision Cambodia (WVC) has incorporated DNH into their staff training programs in two different ways. Initially, WVC started the Peacebuilding project, to train and coach field staff in DNH. The Peacebuilding project was a pilot with a three-year life-cycle, after which, the project was phased out. By all accounts, the Peacebuilding project was a success. Though the project had a staff of just three people, Bill Forbes, Mark Channsitha and Chhay Toeu, they managed to train field workers across all of WVC’s projects in Cambodia, as well as a handful of DNH trainers. Within World Vision International, there is a two-week training course for DNH trainers. Without going through this course, trainers are not considered certified to train others within World Vision on DNH.

Through the Peacebuilding project, WVC opened up DNH training to their partner organizations in Cambodia. WVC and Bill Forbes, the Senior Program Manager for Peace and Justice, who ran the Peacebuilding Department, “gave us repeated opportunities to experience the tool, there was always a next layer, and a next layer,” said Josephine Barbour of CWS. Forbes also ran a short DNH orientation for senior and expat staff at WVC to get buy-in from the management and top-level staff in the organization.

The Peacebuilding project was tasked with integrating DNH into all of WVC’s projects. To test how this could be done, DNH was initially integrated into two start-up Area Development Programs (ADPs), one in Battambang Province and one in Phnom Penh. In each of these settings there were religious and ethnic divisions that staff needed to understand in order to do their work effectively. Eventually, DNH training was rolled-out to all ADP learning zones through the Peacebuilding project. The staff of the Peacebuilding project trained all staff in DNH with a series of workshops and then provided accompaniment during their project design.

When I started at World Vision, I had no experience with humanitarian and development aid. I had not been an implementer before, I was an administrative officer; I wrote reports. When I was brought on board at WVC, I was given the book, Do No Harm. I read it, but the concept was still not clear. In 2001, I was hired as the Peacebuilding Project Manager, with the mandate of integrating LCP into WVC projects. I attended a 3-day LCP workshop and the Peace and Conflict Regional Workshop for Peace Practitioners. Later I was sent to Mindanao, to the LCP Center of Learning to use LCP to assess WV Projects in Mindanao. We were doing an evaluation of the integration and mainstreaming of DNH into their development projects. That was when I really got the concept of LCP, when I was listening to people who had seen the impact of the tool.

Mark Channsitha, former WVC Peacebuilding Project Manager

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4 The CHART (Creative Holistic Action for Relationship Transformation) Project was initiated by VBNK, a Cambodian learning and capacity-development organization. “Facilitating Change: The CHART Project” by Nigel Goddard, 2006
In 2005, the structure of WVC changed radically with the development of a new five-year strategy for the organization. Before then, Peacebuilding, Gender and Monitoring and Evaluation Departments were under the umbrella of Program Quality. With the new five-year strategy, Peacebuilding and LCP were sidelined in favor of more justice projects, including issues of child protection and sexual trafficking. Along with this change came a new focus on Learning for Transformation (LFT). Dinah Dimalanta, the Senior Operations Manager for Sector Programs at WVC said, “We knew the weaknesses in the development model we were using; we were still doing predominantly service delivery. We organized a task force to think about thinking shifts for development projects. We found that the gaps were in the capacities of our frontline staff and we conceived LFT to build the capacities of our development staff.” LFT was given three years of funding as a pilot project of WVC to “change the paradigms and practices of development facilitators to address systems and structures gaps in their work. Transformational development focuses on the physical, mental, spiritual and relational development of World Vision staff and the communities they work with. LCP contributes to relationship building; it fits into the transformational development cycle. Relationship building is at the heart of transformational development,” said Dimalanta.

Nigel Goddard, the Manager for Gender under the Peace and Justice Project, co-led the task force which developed the LFT curriculum. According to Dimalanta, “Nigel was not an LCP enthusiast. He had a thinking and learning focus.” In the original draft of the LFT training modules, there was no reference to LCP/DNH. “We really insisted that he incorporate LCP,” said Dimalanta. LCP was incorporated as the seventh of twelve training modules of the LFT training program. An LFT training takes place over three months, one module per week. After the course, participants are asked to reflect on what they learned during the week. The modules are designed to build upon one another over the three month training cycle. Twelve LFT trainers have trained nearly 600 WVC field staff in modules 1 through 11. A member of the LFT staff told us, “Field staff are already familiar with LCP tools, so Module 7 is often a review for them.”

LFT is in the middle of a one-year transitional period from mainstreaming to support. The LFT team is currently six staff from over twenty during the mainstreaming phase. As the three-year project phase closes, this smaller LFT staff will focus on coaching and support to the field staff trained in the LFT modules.

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<td>Learning for Transformation</td>
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Many of the original World Vision LCP trainers trained during the Peacebuilding project have left World Vision, changed posts within WVC or moved to another World Vision office. The LCP trainers who have remained at WVC in new positions, however, told us that they do not always feel empowered to use LCP in their work. They feel they have limited buy-in from management since the people who had initially pushed LCP at the top levels have left. “Bill was a champion. He got top level buy-in. After he left, the energy behind DNH slowed. It takes a lot to restart it.” Management was identified as a group whose support is necessary for implementation of DNH. Some WVC staff members feel that not enough training was done with management. “They are so busy with their other responsibilities, their job descriptions do not include DNH training,” one staff member told us. “We need to backup mainstreaming. We need champions. Champions and mainstreaming work together.”

The energy for DNH has been waning since the Peacebuilding project phased out. LFT is not tasked with mainstreaming DNH. “The LFT staff’s role is not to make sure DNH is integrated, it is to improve relationships with communities,” an LFT staffer told us.

Other individuals working at different organizations in Cambodia have had more independent exposure to DNH. When the Country Director for American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Cambodia, Patricia DeBoer, took up her post in 2001, she learned about DNH through AFSC’s Local Capacities for Nonviolence Project, which focused on connectors in villages, “the Do No Harm framework was the origin of that.” Not knowing about LCP/DNH and Connectors, DeBoer read Mary Anderson’s book, Do No Harm, “to try to understand what this type of peace work means, and what the process looks like.” During our interviews in Cambodia, we were unable to determine how the Local Capacities for Nonviolence Program got its start within AFSC or how DNH had been introduced to the organization. After her initial exposure to the DNH framework, DeBoer used the tool in her work in post-tsunami Aceh, “It was easy learning the tool. It’s descriptive; it validates choices you want to make. Learning from the experiences of others helps to validate approaches that are not the standard model.”

**USING DO NO HARM IN CAMBODIA**

“I was amazed at how [Cambodian staff] saw LCP to be relevant in their context.”
Dinah Dimalanta, WVC (expat from Mindanao, Philippines, learned DNH in Mindanao)

“The DNH framework itself is useful. By just reflecting, reading stories, and considering dynamics, it all seems rather obvious. It has made a reality so obvious. You do not have to struggle with it, but you also cannot ignore it anymore.”
Patricia DeBoer, AFSC
Practitioners told us there were a wide range of DNH applications in Cambodia. They also told us a number of stories where they did not use DNH and, upon reflection, were able to identify why a project failed to have its intended positive impact. Some of the stories we heard about DNH use were about training community leaders, community development committees or other community members in DNH and inviting them to participate in the project planning or monitoring processes. Other practitioners spoke about using DNH for beneficiary selection or project redesign. Each person we spoke to told us of different ways they found the tool to be of use in their work.

**Church World Service-Cambodia**

“Peacebuilding needs to be at the core of everything we do.”

Church World Service-Cambodia provides both material and technical support to communities in rural areas of Cambodia. They employ DNH in their material resource distribution as well as providing direct DNH training to community members. As its core principle, CWS-C works on reducing conflict in the communities where it works. In one project, staff provide agriculture tools and materials to communities. “These resources can create conflict, most people in the community need the resources but free goods become a big problem.”

A CWS-C staff member told us, when staff provide training to communities, “dividers can be too political. Some trainers are afraid to do LCP analysis with communities because sometimes it raises conflicts between participants, but those disagreements can teach us about the conflict in the community. When we provide training, people find dividers hard to talk about, but they identify lots of connectors.” Staff members are developing new materials for training communities to make the DNH concepts easier to understand. In the design of training sessions, staff members “bring their DNH lens.” When CWS-C staff do training in the community they carefully consider schedule and timing. Many of the communities where trainings take place are rural farming communities. “We need to fit our trainings to the community’s schedule.”

During the week, all CWS-C field staff stay overnight in the villages where they work to gain a deeper understanding of the context. This practice is called Village-Based Community Development. “When we are trying to express our organizational values, what we do is more important than what we say.” Still, staff identified that one of the most important challenges they face is describing their work and introducing themselves to the communities where they work. “We are very clear about explaining our value and mission to people in the field, to make sure they understand, when we go to the villages, that CWS does not have a Christian mission, despite its name. When we were working in the province on the Thai-Cambodia-Laos border in the region where there is a dispute [between Thailand and Cambodia] over an ancient temple, one village chief told people that CWS would try to convert them to Christianity. It took a long time before we were able to work in that area.”

One aspect of project design in which CWS finds DNH particularly useful is in beneficiary selection. They have applied DNH to beneficiary decisions in both relief and development programming. “Beneficiary targeting is very important. When you are working with smaller target groups it is not easy for the NGO to exit, but when you work with larger groups, multiple families, an NGO can hand the project over to
the community. Also, working with more people in the community helps us not to duplicate efforts that community members are taking to develop their villages and it involves more people in the success of the project.”

CWS-C staff said, “We feel that first you should think about dividers and connectors and not bringing conflict to communities.” During a post-flood relief project, CWS distributed rice to community members. Staff observed that other organizations distributed one 50 kilogram bag of rice to each family. Families in the district varied in size; some families received a surplus, while other, larger families had insufficient rice to meet their needs. CWS-C changed their beneficiary criteria, and began to distribute 5 kilograms of rice per family member.

In development projects, the organization tries to limit its work with single families, or small groups of the neediest beneficiaries. In one project, the CWS-C was building wells for poor families. However, placement of the wells became problematic, and the staff questioned their information. “Sometimes we do not get clear information and people can react with anger at CWS if the analysis is bad. It is better for CWS to work with communities to think through the dividers and connectors. In this case we decided it would be better for CWS staff to work with the community to monitor the project.”

Regardless of the challenges they identify in using DNH, CWS-C staff found the tool transformative. “DNH and peacebuilding changed my outlook. It made me realize that people are not very different. Our work can be win-win. ‘Their’ thinking may be different than ‘ours,’ but they are the same. If I want them to understand what I want, I need to explain, we need to learn from each other.”

“We want DNH to continue in CWS. Even if we forget about peace, we need to remember not to increase dividers. We can work together to solve problems.”

Touch Norneath, CWS Peace Trainer

World Vision Cambodia

“The tool is useful for us—not just for field workers—in relief and development work. It helps us to think about the way we are doing things to not cause conflicts or jealousies.”

World Vision International is committed to the principle of conflict sensitivity. Apart from training its field staff in DNH for micro-level conflict analysis, WVI has developed its own tools for conflict analysis at the macro-level, Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts, and at the meso-level, Integrating Peace and Development.

Within World Vision Cambodia, DNH has been built into the design, monitoring and evaluation processes. Specifically, questions about dividers and connectors have been added to the ADP redesign process. DNH has been incorporated as a major part of the peacebuilding agenda of World Vision. Peacebuilding is one of the themes that cut across all projects and programmes of the organization (the other cross-cutting themes are Gender, Disability, HIV/AIDS, Environment and Child Protection). Yet, some staff are unclear on the links between peacebuilding and DNH, or DNH and the other cross-cutting themes. Several WVC staff told us, “Clarity on these linkages will help us to mainstream DNH.”
One ADP started a food distribution program for communities in a drought-ridden area. The distribution of food was to take place at the village chiefs’ homes. The homes were central locations in the community, and all members of the village knew where they were. ADP staff began the project with a DNH analysis. Using this analysis, they saw that there were several different ethnic groups in each village and that the chiefs were not always non-partisan. “We realized that we needed to find a different location, because the chief’s house is a political location and not open to everyone in the village.”

WVC field staff find DNH language useful as a means of communicating their project goals and details to communities: “At the ADP level, people still talk about Dividers and Connectors. They feel they can communicate these with commune councils, village chiefs and government officials. DNH helps staff sustain relationships with community members.” Many staff and DNH trainers in WVC told us that DNH was a good tool for preventing jealousy between beneficiary groups. Often, different ethnic or religious groups in Cambodian villages are not in conflict with one another, but jealousy between them can derail a project or cause latent conflicts to flare up. Staff also said, “DNH helps us sustain relationships with community members when we go into communities.”

While visiting a drought-ridden area, World Vision staff brought bottled water with them. It was a place where there was very little access any water, much less clean drinking water. The staff drank their bottled water in front of the community and used it to wash their hands. After returning to the office, the staff reflected on their behavior and the needs of the community they were working in. “We realized when we washed our hands with clean water in the field, we were doing something that separated us from the people, so afterwards, we tried to use our resources more carefully.”

The WVC Humanitarian Emergency Affairs uses DNH as a core tool in its work. HEA staff emphasize DNH particularly during the planning phase of humanitarian response. In development projects, field staff train key community members, village development committees and village leaders, about power over resources. WVC staff reported positive results from holding DNH trainings for community members overall. During community-based trainings, trainers focus heavily on dividers and connectors. WVC staff noted that they needed to be particularly careful about who was in training sessions because government officials and politicians were often mentioned as dividers. This had occasionally caused the trainings to disintegrate or some participants to walk out.

In one training session, members of the local government from two political parties, the majority Cambodian People’s Party and the opposition Sam Rainsy Party, were in attendance. During the training, on a session covering Implicit Ethical Messages, party politics was raised by one of the participants as a means of sending negative messages and increasing dividers. The following day, the officials from the Cambodian People’s Party did not return to the training, “because they didn’t want to hear the other party’s opinions,” according to the trainer who facilitated the workshop. It took many conversations with CPP members in the area for ADP staff to convince party members that they did not want them to be excluded from the training, but now, “they realize that WVC wants to work with all political parties.” The ADP team learned a lesson from this incident, “IEMs are political with mixed groups. If we separate communities and local authorizes, it is easier to impart the understanding without causing conflicts.”
In one village beneficiaries of a WVC project were selected by the village leader. The ADP team discovered that the leader was selecting only his family and neighbors to participate in the project. When they requested information from the village leader about how the project was progressing, they heard only good news, but there were complaints directly from other community members.

The ADP team decided to take the village leader with WVC staff to the field to meet with the community. People spoke openly to the ADP team and the village leader, and most of what the group heard was criticism of the leader’s ability to run the project. “When we took the leader into the field with us and heard complaints about him, he accepted the criticism and said he would do better.”

Many of the original DNH trainers trained during the Peacebuilding programme have since left WVC, or moved to new posts in the headquarters office in Phnom Penh. One DNH trainer we spoke to admitted that in her new role, she no longer uses DNH, though she still feels the tools are useful at the ADP level. In their new assignments, trainers find it difficult to incorporate DNH due to time constraints or lack of support or perceived lack of support from management. “We need a DNH person to support it, to collect stories. But we really need support from management. After Bill and Sitha left it seems like we forgot DNH.” In addition to internal staff turnover issues, many people mentioned that the focus of World Vision International seemed to be shifting away from DNH. “World Vision as an organization has moved away from its DNH focus. It is not as focused on the framework as it was before. The mission has changed to ‘empowering children for peacebuilding.’ PaxNet (World Vision peacebuilding community of practice) meetings used to focus on DNH, now they are changing to talk about children. The conversation is changing.”

At the ADP level, staff still use DNH as a project when training communities and as a process when planning other projects, but the messages about its importance from Phnom Penh has been mixed. One ADP Staff member trained by the Peacebuilding project, then later by LFT told us, “LCP is not important compared to the other activities. The LFT facilitator said that it was apart from the project.” As WVC has moved away from peacebuilding and towards more justice-oriented projects, since the close of the Peacebuilding program, there is less direct emphasis on conflict sensitive programming, despite the fact that it is included in the LFT training modules. WVC maintains its commitment to conflict sensitivity, but many staff still feel that DNH is an add-on activity, so it is frequently a low priority.

“I think it is important to think about dividers and connectors. Before we only saw dividers, now we take time to reflect on connectors.”

Yim Chansopha, TDF Team Leader, Ponleu Knong Chet ADP Phnom Penh

**American Friends Service Committee**

“Dividers and Connectors has become the language we use when we talk about things that can bring people together, but we use it more in the livelihoods and development programs.”

American Friends Service Committee-Cambodia does not explicitly use DNH in their work, but many of their projects incorporate elements of the DNH lessons and framework. In Cambodia, AFSC has three main areas of work: Integrated Sustainable Livelihoods; Community work with disabled people; and
Local Capacities for Non-violence. The DNH framework was the origin of the Local Capacities for Non-violence program.

One of the major projects of the Local Capacities for Non-violence program was the reconstruction of salabons, communal structures traditionally used for worship and celebration, in Cambodian villages. Salabons had been quite common for centuries in Cambodia, but during the war they became less and less common. In many villages where AFSC worked, people said that they did not know, or trust outsiders who had recently arrived in their villages to work. AFSC heard from villagers that building a salabon may increase trust and solidarity within communities. The organization arranged for members of villages to travel to hear the experience of another village with a functioning salabon, and it made small contributions toward construction of new salabons. Most of the cost and all of the labor came from within the villages. AFSC has reflected on the changes in the villages, “They know they have the resources and ideas within themselves, their culture and traditions to build peace and trust in their villages.”

On the southern coast of Cambodia, near Sihanoukville, people in small communities have long earned their living from fishing. But a few years back, large fishing trawlers began to arrive from Sihanoukville, scooping up all of the fish and wiping out the local industry. Western donors, anxious to support traditional fishing and farming methods, stepped in. Working with traditional fishing communities, there was a push from NGOs to establish traditional fisheries.

AFSC helped fishermen using traditional fishing methods organize. By 2004, they were able to achieve recognition of a ‘traditional fishing zones’ from provincial authorities. The fishery was also given support from local authorities to fine or arrest and detain illegal trawlers who were using nets and gears that had been outlawed in the demarcated fishing areas. “The result was that the surrounding communities hated us, absolutely hated us,” said an AFSC representative.

Local human rights activists got involved when rumors of improper arrests and beatings of detained trawler crews surfaced. Stories about community fishing patrols engaging in “torture” and human rights abuses hit the local papers. Meetings were held immediately between the AFSC, human rights groups, the community fishermen and the trawlers, but six months later there was a mass attack on the community fisheries site. Trawler crews burned and looted houses and the community fisheries headquarters; fortunately no one was killed or seriously injured. “This community effort because of its success had become a divisive issue.”

In response, AFSC decided to immediately change their program, to work with the other communities, their organizers and the human rights activists. Staff trainings were held on conflict response and analysis, and there was much reflection on what the communities had in common. The NGO provided vests and helmets to all groups. Trawlers still come into the area, but there is clearer boundary marking and a system for stopping rumors by contacting a point person by radio, since unfounded rumors largely sparked the attacks. There is also a system in place to contact other communities when crews from their village are arrested.
Staff from AFSC Cambodia were sent to Aceh after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Patricia DeBoer told us, “When the tsunami hit it was time to get out the [Do No Harm] book again. DNH was not explicit, but the book did provide guidance and a sense of validation for how we wanted to work in communities. It helped us to better describe our work to headquarters, who wanted stories and photos of what we were doing in Aceh.” Using DNH principles, the AFSC group chose to work on projects that closed gaps between people and government in Aceh. The team submitted a six-page description of the Aceh context to make the case for changing AFSC’s strategy in Aceh. The document, “does not mention the DNH framework, but it is inspired by it. We tried to look at the resources and capacities so we could use our projects to strengthen those.” The new strategy was accepted, “we began to work on trauma and trust between people and the government while trying to strengthen and revitalize traditions.”

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Many organizations have used DNH in their monitoring and evaluation procedures for projects and programs. Some individuals talked about the challenges they faced in using DNH for M&E and others talked about the challenges of monitoring for DNH use among field staff.

At CWS, staff face a challenge of developing indicators for DNH in order to include DNH in their standard M&E procedures to report against their logframe. “The problem for CWS is that we are funded by standard funders and we function under a logframe. There are no indicators for DNH, and there is no reinforcement when projects are being evaluated. If anything has to give, it is peacebuilding.” CWS staff based in Phnom Penh visit project sites often to assess project impacts using DNH, and especially looking at dividers and connectors. However, in adding DNH to their monitoring process for field projects, CWS has felt some resistance from their field staff. “Staff feel that when we make field visits, we are looking for weakness in their work. But if we wait to visit a site, it can be too late to change negative impacts. When we visit our project sites, we remind staff that we’re there to reflect on their work.”

Each year, CWS staff go through an ARLP cycle (Action, Reflection, Learning and Practice [Planning]) to determine the strong and weak points in their projects. CWS hopes in the future to build in more time for their field and headquarters staff to reflect on project impacts. “We want to do more reflection on DNH, to call field staff together to talk about challenges with DNH and tell stories.” After the March 2010 DNH consultation hosted by CDA and Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in Phnom Penh, CWS plans to hold its own internal consultation for staff. Also, following the March consultation, World Vision and CWS and other organizations are planning to meet for a one-day workshop to discuss challenges of monitoring. “We want to discuss how we do monitoring and why. What is the change we are looking for? What are the indicators?”

Within World Vision the LEAP tool is used for design, monitoring, evaluation, redesign and assessment. “Peacebuilding, has been built in as one of the five cross-cutting themes of LEAP. During design and redesign ADP managers need to consider the cross cutting themes. DNH is part of the peacebuilding theme.” Although LEAP is used to evaluate all projects in WVC, staff still feel they have limited time, and a desire to use DNH more in their monitoring processes and be more connected to other practitioners.
“We could take LCP forward some more. There are heavy demands on our time, this is precisely the problem with cross-cutting themes.”

Despite those demands, WVC staff have used DNH to analyze the impacts of their child sponsorship programme. “Field staff say that the framework helps to analyze family issues.” Staff sat down with staff and the sponsorship coordinator to reflect on activities, “we found errors in our programming activities.” After the Peacebuilding Project was phased out one WVC staff member used DNH to analyze the impacts of the child sponsorship programme in general. Dinah Dimalanta told us, “Child sponsorship has proven to be the most reliable long-term method for engaging people from countries who can give with children who are needy. It has also proven to cause jealousy and envy in communities. We wanted to see how LCP could address this issue.”

The study, which was conducted over six months in seven of WVC’s active ADPs (two new ADPs and five which were established), offered a series of recommendations for making the child sponsorship program more conflict sensitive. The study specifically identified beneficiary targeting and community consultation as areas for improvement in this regard. From this internal study, WVC started a new pilot project to integrate child monitoring standards into the work of their sponsorship projects. The organization no longer provides exclusive benefits to sponsored children, rather, it provides shared direct benefits (e.g. health centers) that can be utilized by both sponsored and unsponsored children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While everyone interviewed expressed appreciation for Do No Harm and felt it was a useful tool, there was also an array of recommendations and/or requests for CDA to help aid workers use the framework more effectively in Cambodia. One reoccurring theme in our conversations was the need for DNH champions within organizations, especially World Vision. While this is an internal organizational issue, aid workers we spoke with requested help and support to keep DNH relevant. One staff member, for instance, requested a DNH field assessment by CDA. “Maybe an evaluation can inform what the future of DNH is in the organization,” she said. She also requested a case study or a tool that would be useful in the Cambodian context. One example she gave of such support is a way of teaching trainers to explain corruption to villagers or others without creating problems for the NGO. “Corruption examples are serious and can create conflicts between NGOs and the government,” she said.

Josephine Barbour, the outgoing director of Church World Service and a major DNH champion, had a training-related suggestion. She advised dedicating at least a half-day of DNH training to logframes. Participants would receive individual advice from DNH trainers on their logframe charts, analyzing indicators and walking them through the process. “The person would then leave with a tool and proof to take back to their managers: ‘Look, here’s how I can do it.’”

Mark Channsitha of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, formerly on the Peacebuilding project at World Vision, had a simple request for more contact with CDA. “World Vision Cambodia had no direct

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contact with CDA. Sometimes communication was not returned. CDA was a bit distant in faraway Boston," she said.

One former-NGO worker who now works for an international agency requested that CDA hold trainings of DNH for government officials. Most of the NGOs understand DNH principles, he thought, but the government does not and that’s where the real power lies. “It’s like you want to catch a tiger, but you don’t dare go into the forest, how will you catch it?” he said. “This country belongs to the government, not the NGOs. Some projects deal only with NGO staff, but they are the small fish in the river.”

He also expressed some confusion about DNH and said that the dividers and connectors were sometimes hard to clearly separate.

**CONCLUSIONS**

At present, DNH does not appear to be used by most organizations working in Cambodia. This was especially notable in organizations that have used DNH in their work elsewhere and are not currently making use of the tool in Cambodia. Among these were Trocaire and Save the Children. While people we spoke to at these organizations recognized Do No Harm language, they had no specific training in the tools. One person told us that World Vision and CWS were the only organizations in Cambodia using DNH. This was supported by another interviewee; however we also saw that AFSC, while not strictly applying DNH to their programs, has made programming choices based on DNH principles.

Those people who do use DNH not only find it useful for programming, but find it sufficiently compelling to train community members as well. Interviewees who use the tool regularly requested additional support from CDA for assessments, translations and convening consultations. Following the DNH consultation, representatives from CWS and World Vision planned a meeting to discuss the challenges of monitoring and how they could design a process that would monitor for DNH. CWS representatives also told us that they hoped to hold an internal DNH consultation with their staff to keep people’s interest in DNH piqued.

Without the work of motivated individuals within World Vision’s Peacebuilding project, DNH in Cambodia would not be as strong as it is today in WVC as well as CWS. Many CWS staff told us that WVC was a strong proponent of the tool and made training available to their partners. However, WVC’s enthusiasm for DNH as an organization seems to have waned in recent years as the organization made a conscious shift from peacebuilding to justice projects. Though individuals still find the tool useful, they have decreasing space and freedom to use it in their work or reflect on its use in an institutional way. WVC staff expressed a strong desire to do DNH assessments and studies, but said there is a lack of time and support from leadership to make these a reality.

A challenge that all organizations we spoke to face with DNH is training: how much training is enough and who needs to be trained? The organizations that are actively using DNH, WVC and CWS, have approached training in two very different ways. WVC attempted to train all field staff in DNH through two pilot projects, Peacebuilding and LFT, both of which had three-year project cycles. Each WVC field staff received a DNH workshop and had coaching and support from the project (Peacebuilding and LFT)
staff in Phnom Penh. CWS has taken a different approach, they provide training to all staff and reinforce the workshop with a field assessment. This approach provides a basic level of training to all staff, but also continually updates the context analyses upon which their projects are based.

Finally, in Cambodia, we met DNH champions in each organization we profile here. These individuals not only use DNH in their work, but they are constantly encouraging their colleagues to think in conflict sensitive ways and consider options, not only for program choices, but for creating space for reflection on project impacts within their organization. In the NGO world, it is a rare individual who maintains a position for many years. People are promoted, reassigned or resign their posts to move to different agencies. As this turnover occurs, it has implications for DNH within an organization, but also for DNH in other agencies and departments, as individuals take the tool with them. These champions are challenging their organizations to be better and to do better in many ways, and their work and the work of their colleagues deserves special praise.