

COMFREL

Annual Narrative Report

October 1, 2004 - September 30, 2005

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December 2005

COMFREL

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I. Executive Summary

From October 2004 to September 2005, COMFREL studied several laws related to Cambodian institutions, namely the National Assembly and the Senate. Through COMFREL's facilitation, the civil society working group provided recommendations focused on amendments of bylaws (internal rules) of the National Assembly and Senate election laws adopted by the National Assembly. However, most changes were not in response to our working group's recommendations. The National Assembly still needs to discuss and improve the mechanism of checks and balances of the current mandate's legislature leadership and power in response to our recommendations. The Senate has amended election laws. The law has been changed regarding the agreement of the ruling political parties (the CPP and FUNCINPEC) about politically biased appointments in the second legislature senate elections. The law set a calendar of elections to be held in January 2006.

During this period, listeners' and readers' support and understanding of COMFREL's advocacy issues increased and improved through dissemination of information through publications, broadcasting, e-mails, websites, and through local and international media. At least 50% of 2 million listeners understood their village chief election process and the importance of senate elections.

In the public forums conducted by COMFREL, around 50% of the problems raised by citizens in the local forums and 60% of the 40 cases raised in national forums were solved. The relationship between local residents and councilors is about 10% of local resident's engagement in commune work and the decentralization process. COMFREL also established 130 local watchdogs, by selecting participants of COMFREL's local public forums, and deployed them to observe their commune council's performance. Local people participated more in discussions on the general development of their commune councils, including decision-making in commune council meetings. They observed their councils and were more visible and active in public affairs. Councilors respond more effectively to the needs and requests of their local constituencies and increased their accountability. This led to a 30% increase in scheduled monthly meetings of commune councils. In addition, at the grassroots level, people were not afraid to talk about democracy and their own community issues and they were able to talk openly about them and submit lawsuits and complaints to local authorities or Members of Parliament [MPs] because they had gained information from COMFREL's public forums.

Some MPs recognized the credibility of COMFREL's Parliamentary Watch Report, which led to an increased number of MPs and their assistants who had contact with COMFREL's observers and provided information regarding their activities.

So far there has been an increased public awareness of rights and responsibilities, along with a realization of the importance of participation in democratization and the decision-

making process. About 2 million people received our information and gained knowledge through civic education programs and the media.

II. Completed Activities and Outputs

1. Advocacy/Lobbying (ALY)

1.1. Monitoring of Draft Laws and regulations



Seminar: consultations on the improvement of Commune Council elections on July 21, 2005 at Kandal province

From October 2004 to September 2005, COMFREL continued to cooperate with Cambodian human rights and democracy NGOs and legal experts/advisors. COMFREL focused on a study of the laws on commune council elections, village chief selection procedures, draft laws of the senate election, amendments to bylaws (internal rules) of the National Assembly and voter registration procedures. COMFREL continues to monitor amendments to the Constitution, such as the declaration of a one year extension to the first legislature

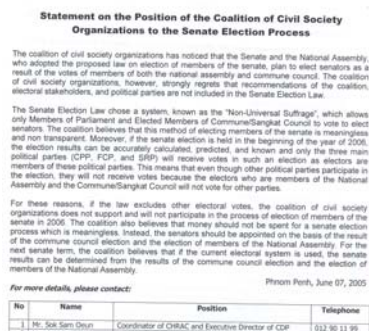
of the senate, the interpretation of organizational law and the functions of the constitutional council and court, the interpretation of amendments to the Constitution on meeting quorums for The National Assembly and Senate, the abrogation of a sub degree on the establishment of the Secretariat of the Supreme Council of the Magistracy and draft laws on anti corruption.

During this period, COMFREL established a Senate Working Group [SWG] and a Commune Electoral Reform Task Force [CERTF]. The SWG, comprising of 20 NGO participants, studied the draft law on senate elections and the CERTF, comprising of 15 (5 female) NGO leaders, studied the possibility of amending election laws. The CERTF established:

- An Expert Committee [EC], including legal experts, comprising of 9 (3 female) NGO representatives/leaders.
- A Secretariat of The Task Force [STF] comprised of COMFREL and NICFEC staff.
- A Delegation of 6 NGO/civil society member, who met with the special parliamentary commission, showed and defended its recommendations for amending the bylaws of the National Assembly. The Commission Members (a deputy and other two members) responded that bylaws were amended according to political parties' will and political agreement between two parties, the CPP and FUNCINPEC, in the protocol.

1.2. Developing Recommendations

To improve the laws on commune council elections, village chief selection procedures, draft laws of the senate, amendments to bylaws (internal rules) of the National Assembly and voter registration procedures, COMFREL conducted studies and developed recommendations, which focused on the following:



Joint Statement

decentralization and de-concentration focusing on provincial and the district council election system. The Commune Council Support Project (CSSP) and COMFREL play an active leading role as members of the working group to study decentralization policy and frameworks and develop statements and recommendations to the government and donors through the CG meeting.

- Senate Elections, COMFREL helped to organize four meetings for civil society/NGO working groups meetings were on draft laws on senate elections at COMFREL central office. We also conducted campaign sessions to gain support from the people to petition for senate elections. Then the working group of the senate produced recommendations on senate elections focusing on the election system and the role and functions of the senate submitted to legislators and sent to the media. It was noted that there were 21 (6 female) participants of civil society/NGOs who participated regularly in the senate election and village chief selection meetings.
- Commune Council Election Reform. COMFREL cooperated with the NDI and NICFEC and helped to establish a Task Force on Commune Council Election Reform and conducted 12 meetings of the Task Force. The Task Force set up an Expert Committee including legal experts and secretariats. In cooperation with the Task Force member organizations, COMFREL helped to conduct three meetings of the expert committee to discuss and draft recommendations for commune council election reform and amendments of commune council election laws. It is noticed that there were 15 (5 female) regular participants from NGO/civil society groups who were members of the Task Force and 9 (3 female) NGO/civil society leaders. Nine (directors) are members of the Expert Committee and legal expert. The secretariat of the Task Force is composed of COMFREL and NICFEC staff.

So far, in cooperation with the commune election reform secretariat, COMFREL arranged four official meetings between the Expert Committee and the NEC and the three main political parties. The first meeting was with the Chairman, the general

secretariat of the National Election Commission (NEC) and other key officials on February 15, 2005 at NEC headquarters. They then met with, in three separate meetings, with high-ranking officials from the three main political parties. They then submitted an action plan. The meetings were held on the following dates and at the following places 1-) Chief cabinet and key election officials of the CPP at CPP headquarters on February 17, 2005. 2-) The SRP Secretary general, some members of parliament and key officials involved with elections at SRP headquarters on February 18, 2005, 3-) The FUNCINPEC Secretary General, key officials involved with elections at FUNCINPEC headquarters on February 22, 2005. The legal experts and the secretariats of the Task Force collected feedback from the provincial stakeholders related to the first draft recommendations and prepared the final legal recommendations for proposed amendments of commune council election laws.

- Commune Council conflict prevention, which COMFREL is currently involved in the forum of Conflict Prevention for Cambodian Election (COPCEL), which opens discussion and interacts with the government, the NEC and political parties. COMFREL plays a role as a key actor to provide election inputs and suggestions related to Commune Council election issues.

- Voter Registration Procedures. COMFREL wrote the minutes and recommendations of a roundtable discussion on improvement of voter registration procedures with key officials of the National Electoral Commission (NEC), four political parties (The CPP, FUNCINPEC, the SRP, and the Khmer Democratic Party [KDP]) and Civil society organizations (the Youth Council of Cambodia, NICFEC). The recommendation focused on voter registration procedures to improve efficiency and operations and appeal to the Ministry of Interior to produce and distribute identity cards to citizens. The recommendation was sent to the Ministry of Interior, the NEC, political parties and legislators.

- Gender equity for electoral representatives. COMFREL is involved in mobilizing civil society organizations to establish a movement or working group on gender equity for electoral representatives. COMFREL provided input on gender quotas for electoral representatives into the recommendations of the Task Force on Commune Election reform. The recommendation determines a quota of at least 30% female candidates on all political party's lists. This quota should also be part of the electoral legal framework and political party policy in order to provide women a more effective opportunity to take part in social and political affairs. Female candidate's names should alternate with male candidate's names starting from the top of the candidate list.

- Bylaws of the National Assembly. COMFREL mobilized a small team of six human rights and democracy NGOs and legal experts (lawyers and constitutional experts) to discuss and study the proposed amendment of bylaws of the National Assembly. From the discussion and study of the small team, COMFREL drafted legal recommendations on amendment to bylaws. The COMFREL board then consulted with the small team to produce final legal recommendations. The recommendations were submitted to 123 legislators. The recommendations focused on public access to draft laws, strengthening the role of National Assembly's checks and balances with government, parliamentarians' immunity, the government's responsibility to the National Assembly, constituency residences, and parliamentarians' categorization.

COMFREL also produced and sent joint statements to the NEC, legislators, government officials, political parties, donors, the UN, embassies and the media to increase the awareness of the public and the international community through key statements that help them to understand the analysis of legal violations as follows:

- The powerful influence of political parties to dismiss their MPs.
- The lifting of immunity of three MPs from the opposition SRP party. The three MPs, on February 03, 2005, had their immunity "lifted" (suspended) by CPP and FUNCINPEC members of the 3rd Parliament, so as to open the way for the courts to start proceedings against them. H.E. Mr. Sam Rainsy and H.E. Mr. Chea Poch face court proceedings for defamation after making allegations of corruption, and H.E. Mr. Cheam Channy was accused of organizing an illegal army. The military police arrested H.E Cheam Channy soon after.
- Civil society's position and controversy of the Senate elections.
- Concern on the directives of the Ministry of Interior to restrict Commune Councilors rights to capacity building activities.

1.3. Seminars and Conference



A seminar and conference on "Impact of proposed village chief selection procedure" on November 18, 2004 at Hotel Le Royal comprising of 116 (21 female)

In conjunction with the Commune Council Support Project (CCSP) and NGOs, COMFREL helped organize a seminar and press conference on "The Impact of Proposed Village Chief Selection" on November 18, 2004 at the Hotel Le Royal comprising of 116 (21 female) participants including 66 (12 female) members of civil society/NGOs, 50 (9 female) students, Commune/Sangkat Council members, village chiefs, Ministry of Interior officials, the media, ordinary people and monks. The seminar and press conference led to improved cooperation with NGO/civil society

groups to increase participation, bringing civil society/NGO representatives, lawyers, legislators, and government officials to engage in active debate, analysis, share experience and demonstrate better understanding on advocacy issues such as Commune Council election reform, senate elections, village chief selection, gender quotas for electoral representatives, and improvement of voter registration procedures. At least 25% of participants actively expressed ideas and made comments during the seminar on "Proposed Village Chief Selection" and increased by 20% knowledge and understanding among the seminar's participants on advocacy issues related to "Proposed Village Chief Selection".

With the support of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), the working group helped organize a seminar on "The Proposed Senate Election System" on March 17, 2005 at the Sunway Hotel comprising of 90 (22 female) participants including 42 civil society/NGOs and the media. This seminar resulted in an improvement of understanding of 42 civil society/NGOs representatives and media during discussions in the "Proposed Senate Election System". At least 20% of participants of the seminar who expressed ideas and made comments during the seminar on the "Proposed Senate Election System" and increased by 15% the knowledge and understanding of all participants.

On behalf of the working group, COMFREL’s Executive Director joined the seminar conducted by a senator, delivered the working group’s recommendations on the Senate election system and also explained it to some Senators. Some Senators appreciated and valued the recommendations of the working group and promised to talk with political parties about the proposals.

Prior to the Task Force conducting Commune Council election reform consultations in provinces/municipalities, COMFREL also helped to facilitate instruction and orientation training for workshop organizers and facilitators who are members of the Task Force and Expert Committee of election reform on June 14, 2005 at COMFREL central office comprising of 24 (2 female) participants. Then, with the support of the NDI and in cooperation with the Task Force, we conducted 24 consultations on the improvement of Commune Council elections in 24 provinces/municipalities. In particular COMFREL carried out 7 workshops on “Consultation on Improvement of Commune Council Elections” in 7 provinces/municipalities comprising of 365 (95 female) participants including: elected political party members (FUNCINPEC and SRP - CPP did not attend the workshop even though invited by COMFREL), NGO/civil society groups, government officials, members of Commune Councils, the media, businessmen, judges, citizens in the communities, the NEC, police (civil and military), and governors (provincial/district). These workshops collected opinions, views and recommendations surrounding Commune Council election reform. This workshop increased discussions and consultation through more than 2,000 local election stakeholders on draft recommendations for Commune Councils. Consultation participants understood and provided feedback on draft recommendations, plus other input.

2. Media and Campaign (MCN)

To support our advocacy/lobbying campaign, we produced bulletins, press releases, newspaper articles and broadcasts and gave interviews to journalists as follows:

2.1. Publication



Bulletin of COMFREL,
Neak Kloam Meul No. 22

COMFREL published 4 issues of its bulletin (21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th editions), which focused on analysis of the above advocacy issues, reports of the National Assembly’s performance and fulfillment of its political platform and decentralization. 16,000 copies were distributed. These bulletins were distributed to COMFREL local networks (provincial executive group members/secretaries, district contact persons and commune activists), the government, election officials, political parties, civil society groups/NGOs, embassies other and institutions.

In addition, COMFREL produced 5,000 folders and 5,000 brochures, which included information on COMFREL’s mission, activities and contact persons and distributed them to the public, especially to COMFREL’s network activists and other target groups.

2.2. Press Releases



Newspaper article

COMFREL produced 48 press statements including press releases, joint statements, and appeals to the King, the Government, National Assembly members, UN agencies, the donor community and the media. The press statements focused on these major concerns: freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, senate elections, village chief selection, and lifting the immunity of MPs. All these press statements were sent through COMFREL’s mailing list and posted on COMFREL’s website. There were 520 national and 988 international email subscribers to the mailing list.

2.3. Newspaper Articles and Broadcasting

COMFREL produced 38 weekly articles for the Neak Kloam Meul bulletin. Subjects included the situation on fulfillment of political platforms related to political reforms (judiciary reform, decentralization and governance), economic and social reform. These articles were sent through COMFREL’s mailing list and posted on COMFREL's website. There were 520 national and 988 international email subscribers to the mailing list



Mr. Koy Chandarith, Media Coordinator second from left, facilitating roundtable discussion aired live ON December 9, 2005

In cooperation with other NGOs, COMFREL hosted the Voice of Civil Society on radio stations, which included roundtable discussions, call-in shows, and the voice of voters. COMFREL shared radio programs for 6 hours per month with ADHOC and Star Kampuchea, (they hosted call-in shows focusing on human rights and labor rights) which were aired live and broadcast on FM 105, FM 90 and 5 provincial radio stations amounting to a total 346 broadcast hours (130 live shows).

Subjects included advocacy issues, democracy, decentralization, democratic governance, and draft laws discussed in National Assembly Committees. There were by 772 (30 female) direct callers and discussants and an estimated 2 million listeners during radio debates and roundtable discussions and people from various social groups read and listened to COMFREL’s Voice of Civil Society on TV/radio, through email alerts, and on COMFREL’s website. At least 10% of listeners understood and supported advocacy issues through publications, electronic media, and broadcasting that led to a regular increase of information to most target groups such as network activists, government officials, election officials,

embassies, media and other interested parties on electoral and political reform, democracy, decentralization and governance.

During this period, COMFREL gave interviews to local journalists and the number of articles published increased (more than 100 newspaper articles and 45 radio broadcasts including slots on Radio Free Asia, the Voice of America and Radio France International).

Interviews with COMFREL's executive director were also broadcast on Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America with focus on draft laws, regulations and policies.

3. Network, Capacity Building and Public Forums (NCP)

3.1. Training for Secretaries, Contacts and Activists (TSL)



Mr. Kim Chhorn, Senior Program Coordinator, provided presentation to Network Activists shortly prior the training started on April 2005 at COMFREL central office

To strengthen the capacity of network activists, COMFREL conducted 4 three-day workshops on a solid framework for local governance, decentralization, skills for conducting public forums to enhance people's participation in decision-making and skills for observing Commune Council's performance at COMFREL's central office.

At the same time, COMFREL invited speakers from Ministry of Interior, some civil society organizations including CCSP, to share information and knowledge on decentralization, rights to popular participation in local governance. The training was held regularly by using methodology such as brainstorming, group discussion and role-play. The participants in the training were 168 (34 female) local network trainers (provincial secretariats, district contact persons and selected commune activists) These trainings led to an increase of 15% of knowledge on local governance and decentralization and a 35% increase of knowledge of local network activists (provincial executive groups members/secretaries, district contact persons and commune activists) on facilitation and observation skills and how to conduct public forums.

In addition, COMFREL conducted training on communication skills including computers and the Internet to 26 provincial secretariats including 12 female participants on March 28, 2005 at COMFREL central office. After the training, most of provincial secretariats are able to use Internet and e-mail.

3.2. Training and Staff Development

3.2.1. Training and Staff Development

COMFREL is focused on continuing to increase its professional capacity on English communication skills of research and computer program and management. COMFREL staff is participating in the following programs to increase proficiency:

- Legal Officers attended fundamental advocacy classes.
- Two officers (Public Forum and Research) attended training courses on training and program needs assessment and planning for monitoring and evaluation.
- Four Program Coordinator and two Officers completed their English course at different level.
- Our Database Officer completed a training course on basic video technique/web base.
- Two staff of Administration was trained on computer programs for administration and human Resource Management.
- Our Administrative Assistant completed
- Our Accountant was trained in advanced financial management
- Four Officers from Network, Monitoring and Research program have completed training on Advance software for research, SPSS that will help COMFREL compile and analyze election data.

3.3. Local Public Forums (LPF)

To encourage and promote dialogue between local authorities and commune residents,

- 4445 participants attended (1232 female). Attendees included: citizens, Commune Council members, village chiefs, NGO representatives, local police, district authority members, and COMFREL network activists.
- The commune council members solved around 50% of the problems raised in the LPFs including the roles of Commune Councils, rights of villagers to participate with Commune Councils, security and public service, budget resources/contributions of villagers, commune funds, development of Commune Councils, administration of Commune Council members, the environment, land issues, illegal fishing, gangs, non-partisanship in politics and domestic violence.
- In the LPFs, COMFREL selected 130 (32 female) participants to become local watchdogs in order to observe elected officials' performance in their constituencies.
- According to the evaluation report of COMFREL's Local watchdog during the forum at local level shows that after the forums the people are able to participate with commune council and express their views rather than before. On the other hand, councilors seem to have more contacts openly with local people and NGOs. In addition, the problems raised by the people that councilors promised include infrastructure and security had been solved in high priority. After the forums, there were increased regular meetings of commune councils compared to report of 2004 because of councilors are aware of their work after participating the forums and better management rather than before.

3.4. National Public Forum (NPF)

To promote interaction and dialogue between the government and MPs to stimulate public interest and encourage public participation in the decision-making process, COMFREL conducted 11 national public forums in 11 provinces/municipalities. There were 1575 participants in attendance (397 female). Attendees included constituency residents, speakers, facilitators, provincial/district governors and COMFREL network activists. Constituent residents included MPs acting as speakers (FUNCINPEC and the

Sam Rainsy Party; unfortunately, the CPP did not attend the forums), and trainers from COMFREL central office.



National Public Forum on promotion of interaction and dialogue between the government and MPs to stimulate public interest and encourage public participation in the decision-making process on June 30, 2005 at Kompong Cham province.

The Director and central officers of COMFREL acted as facilitators and constituency residents from a variety of backgrounds (citizens, students, monks, civil society/NGOs) participated and discussed constituency issues on the roles and responsibilities of MPs. In the forums, MPs solved 60% of the 40 cases raised by citizens, such as suggestions and complaints submitted to the government and local authorities. The issues raised included land disputes, rice field, housing, security, road, unemployment, low salaries of

government servants, injustice in the courts, the high price of gasoline, International border, the trafficking of women and children, bandits, drugs and gangs.

3.5. Follow up Meetings, Reflection and Evaluation

3.5.1. Follow up Meeting

COMFREL conducted 4 three-day follow up meetings to provincial group members/secretaries. They provided an opportunity to share quarterly activity reports, information about the political and human rights situation at national and local level, and to discuss the lessons learnt and COMFREL's work plan. At least 102 people (38 female) provincial executive members, provincial secretariats and central office staff became aware of the political and human rights situation at national and provincial level, learned more about COMFREL's work plan and found out lessons learnt from COMFREL's previous activity implementation including outputs and outcomes at local level, and alternative organizing and control of implementation.

3.5.2. Reflection/Evaluation

Reflection

COMFREL conducted a staff retreat for central staff to reflect on COMFREL's management strength and weaknesses on January 7, 2005 at the Ratanak Hotel in Ratanakiri Province. The retreat comprised of 2 from the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, the Program Coordinator, the Management committee and all staff understood the strengths and weaknesses of COMFREL's management and suggested recommendations for future improvement including resource management, reporting management, capacity building plan, and quality management.

Evaluation

COMFREL's Research Team, with the cooperation of Norwegian People's Aid, conducted an internal assessment on COMFREL's capacity through group discussion. COMFREL staff and provincial secretariats filled in questionnaires from June to August

2005 in order to define the strengths and weaknesses of COMFREL's organizational base, its approach and organizational development. This evaluation found out that 23 COMFREL Provincial Secretariats and central office staff understood the strengths and weakness of COMFREL's human resource management including capacity building and personnel policy. COMFREL's management is aware of the need for future improvement.

4. Monitoring of Post Election Period

4.1. Monitoring of Commune Council Performance (CCP) Monitoring of Local Watchdog of Commune Council Performance

COMFREL assigned 130 (32 female) COMFREL's Local Watchdogs (CLWs) to observe the performance of Commune Council Members in 72 communes/sangkat and 72 districts/khan in 24 provinces/municipalities from October 2004 to September 2005. Because the CLWs are volunteers, only 24 of the 72 Communes/Sangkat of 24 provinces were observed by local watchdogs and sent reports to the central office. A report was compiled by the research Team. The assessments report on the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of COMFREL Local Watchdogs. Suggestions were made to improve local participation of local watchdogs to support decentralization, local governance and performance of Commune Councils.

Research

By March 2005, in cooperation with Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), the COMFREL Research Team, comprising of four staff, conducted in-depth surveys on the performance of Commune Council Members and public perceptions in five selected communes/sangkats.



Member of Research Team, interviewed a villager on strengths and weaknesses of Local Watchdog of COMFREL at Kompong Leu village, Kbal Trach commune, Krokor district, Pursat province on May 27, 2005.

By early April, the COMFREL research team developed tools and methodologies for assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of CLWs, and designed a questionnaire and updated guidelines for their assessment. The team conducted an assessment on the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of CLWS. They sampled 7 communes. The research team collected the information and consulted with NPA. In the second week of April, the team tested the questionnaires in Chrey Bak commune, Roleabear district, Kompong Chhnang Province. By mid-May, the team conducted field practice for data collection and interviews in 7 communes where COMFREL had previously conducted local public forums such as Rak Chey Commune in Prey Veng province, Tonrong Commune in Kampong Cham Province, Sras Raing Commune in Banteay Meanchey Province, Kbal Tach Commune in Pursat Province, Kraing Chek Commune in Kamong Speu Province, Prek Tnaot Commune in Kampong Speu province, and Pnov Commune in Kampong Thom province.

In conjunction with the NPA, the COMFREL research team conducted joint monitoring on local forums: the 1st phase of joint monitoring by COMFREL and the NPA was conducted in order to measure the progress of local public forums and in late June, joint monitoring 2nd phase of project implementation of CLWs.

By September, the research team developed a research plan aimed at understanding Commune Council performance and behavior in communes, which have councilors from NGOs or CBO backgrounds. The team is preparing questionnaires for this small-scale research and selecting communes to sample. By the 3rd week of September 2005, the team tested questionnaires with NGOs and CBOs in Rusey Chroy commune, Mouk Kampoul district, Kandal province.

4.2. **Monitoring of Fulfillment of Political Platforms and Promises and the Performance of Parliament** **Monitoring of Fulfillment of Political Platform**

COMFREL selected an external consultant team to develop indicators of 73 points of the government political platform.

COMFREL conducted a study to access political platform topics one by one and then produced and published the articles and a first six-month report.

To produce the annual report of fulfillment of political platform COMFREL has collected most of the secondary data related to the indicators including government reports, legal journals, and newspaper articles and research/study reports. COMFREL outsourced interviewers to interview key government officials and NGO leaders to comment on the fulfillment of political platforms. COMFREL produced more than 20 articles and printed 300 copies of the first six monthly report of fulfillment of political platforms and distributed them to the public through the media and legislators,

Parliamentary Watch



Mr. Neang Sovann, Monitoring Officer, monitoring the parliamentary session on June 14, 2005

24 of COMFREL's provincial observers observed MPs' field visits to their constituencies in 24 provinces/cities. The observers were assigned to communicate and contact with MPs, branch offices of political parties and MPs' offices in constituencies for additional information. Then they had to complete a mission observation checklist for monthly reporting to COMFREL central office. In addition, 3 COMFREL observers observed 43 sessions of the National Assembly (NA) as follows:

- Observed debates on draft laws held by 5 expert commissions of the NA and recorded attendance and opinions expressed by MPs related to their constituencies and national issues. It should be noted that recently our observers

have not been allowed to observe meetings at NA Expert Commissions. Hence, we were able only to get information related to their meetings and discussions on draft laws from some MPs.

- Contacted NA commissions, the NA general secretary, political parties and MPs in order to get information regarding the meeting process, discussions on draft laws, MPs' activities and other relevant information.

To follow up and monitor the performance of National Assembly, COMFREL published and distributed 4000 copies of reports including monthly, 2nd semester, 3rd semester, an annual report and posted them on COMFREL's web page. We also broadcast the Parliamentary Watch monthly reports live every month on FM 105 radio in participation with other observers from NICFEC, the Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC), and the Center for Social Development. Approximately 40,000 local residents read and heard about COMFREL's report and became aware of elected officials' performance and fulfillment of their political platform and promises

4.3. National Assembly Directory and Voter Registration

National Assembly Directory

In conjunction with NICFEC and the NDI and with technical support from PACT, COMFREL made a database and produced a Directory of the Third National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2003-2008. 1000 English and 2500 Khmer copies were printed and distributed to all Commune Councilors and other stakeholders.

Voter Registration Monitoring

During the period October 1–December 31, 2004, COMFREL trained and deployed 113 observers including 43 provincial/municipal executive groups and 70 district contact persons to cover 13% of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) registration stations (208 out of 1,621 communes). They were provided with manuals and monitoring forms. While monitoring voter registrations, observers were asked to visit voter registration stations, interview people and fill in forms and report. COMFREL's nationwide network of observations at 208 stations is equal to 13% coverage of the NEC's voter registration stations (1,621). They showed that 87% of the monitored voter registration stations (172 out of 208) ran smoothly, with minimal technical irregularities. COMFREL found no serious problems and irregularities. It should be noted that for the first annual voter lists revision and the voter registration, eligible voters (those not previously registered or those who just turn to 18 years old) who registered were only 290,088 or 45% of estimated eligible voters of 647,452.

Along with monitoring activities, COMFREL observers also helped to conduct voter registration information through disseminating information to the people in order to encourage them to go to register. They were asked to observe the general situation around the communes.

COMFREL also conducted a roundtable discussion with key officials of the NEC, major political parties, and election monitoring organizations, held on January 2005 at the Imperial Garden Hotel. Then COMFREL submitted the report of its findings and

suggestions to the NEC and other election stakeholders. The NEC and the Ministry of Interior received a report on low turnout of newly registered voters. The NEC agreed to change the procedure of the voter registration to extend the calendar of preparation of registration for 9 months from January to September.

5. Civic Education (CEN)

5.1. Printed Material and Distribution (PMD)

COMFREL printed education materials to strengthen popular participation as follows: 15,000 copies of picture books on "Rights and The Role of People's Participation In Society And Politics", 45,250 copies of new picture books on "Rights and Responsibilities of People's Participation in Commune Council/Sangkat" and 20,250 copies of 2005 calendars on "Rights of People's Participation in Commune Councils".

Materials were delivered to 93847 direct receivers, national and international NGOs, COMFREL network activists, villagers, students, house to house, at dissemination sessions, on national holidays such as the annual Water Festival, NGO workshops, during campaigns and at public forums. Direct receivers were expected to echo information and increase awareness to another estimated 300,000 people.

Moreover, COMFREL produced 166 t-shirts on "Our Role of Popular Participation in Commune Council Development" to attendees who correctly answered questions during dissemination sessions and who correctly answered questions on the radio Call-in Show (60 minutes), COMFREL network trainees in Phnom Penh and LNGOs.

5.2. Radio Call-in Show

The civic education media section hosted a Call-in Show aired live on FM 105. There were 90 broadcasts of two programs, namely "60 Minutes in Participation" and "Vote Ownership". The program provided an opportunity to the electorate to comment and ask questions about their rights and responsibilities in participation in decision-making, assessment of the fulfillment of political promises, issues of decentralization and deconcentration and voter registration.



Civic Education Coordinator, middle, facilitated Call-in Show aired live about gender quotas for electoral representations and in politics on September 1, 2005.

On the shows, speakers such as leaders of civil society organizations were invited to share their views with the audience. Through live broadcast, the publics were better informed and increased their knowledge and understanding through the interaction of callers and leaders. The radio program reached more than 2 million indirect beneficiaries of people who increased awareness of their rights and responsibilities along with realization of the importance of participation in democratization and decision-making.

5.3. TV/Radio Spots

COMFREL produced a four minute 50 second TV/radio spots on “Rights to People’s Participation including rights to evaluation of commune council performance” and broadcast them ten times on nine TV channels. In cooperation with NICFEC, COMFREL recorded twelve minute-video/radio spots (recorded last year) on “Rights and Responsibility to Participation” to show and broadcast in towns and villages in 12 provinces/municipalities from October 2004 till March 2005. An estimated 70,100 (31,150 female) people viewed/listened to them. In cooperation with the COMFREL network they were showed through 72 COMFREL local public forums with 4445 (1232 female) participants and awareness was increased to another 75,049 villagers (32,493 female) and through local public forums of COMFREL and showing a NICFEC film.

5.4. Training for NGO staff



Civic Education Coordinator, provided presentation to participants of dissemination session shortly prior to the training started on June 10, 2005.

Instead of training NGO staff, COMFREL held 20 dissemination sessions providing information on the rights and responsibility to participate in democratization and decentralization. During these sessions, COMFREL showed TV spots and explained the contents of picture books and posters to 504 (111 female) participants from NGOs/civil society organizations. Their knowledge and understanding on the concept of rights to participation in commune council process (decentralization process) was increased by 50%. Most of them

will be able to use COMFREL’s education materials and echo knowledge to their partners and target groups. At each of the sessions, COMFREL gave rewards (T-shirts) to participants who answered questions correctly.

5.5. Gender Group

COMFREL established its gender group to study COMFREL’s gender issues and prepare COMFREL’s gender policy and gender integrated program activities. The group also helped to coordinate COMFREL’s advocacy program on gender quotas for electoral representations and in politics. Findings of COMFREL’s study showed that an increasing number of COMFREL’s staff and network activists are female. The head office in Phnom Penh has 27 staff of which 10 (38%) were female. 7 members of the Executive Committee (management team) of which 3 (43%) are female.

Additionally, COMFREL has its network in 24 provinces (73 Provincial Executive Groups and 23 Provincial Secretaries⁰ of which 53 (55%) were female, 186 District Contact Persons of which 56 (30%) were female, 1621 Commune Activists of which 648 (40%) were female).

6. International Mission

In strengthening the international network and international cooperation and improving of the capacity of the Director, Management Committee, Officers and staff of COMFREL the following took place:

- Miss. Kieng Piseth, Legal Officer, attended the Fourth ASEAN Peoples' Assembly in Manila, the Philippines on May 11-13, 2005.
- Mr. Kaing Sovannaren and Miss. Kieng Piseth, Legal Officers made a study tour on follow up report and evaluation of advocacy study programs in Sri Lanka on 1-10 October 2005.
- Mr. Mar Sophal, Monitoring Coordinator, joined an international mission of the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) on Parliamentary Election Observation on Dec 3-14, 2004 at the invitation of TFD-ANFREL in Taiwan.
- Mr. Dav An San, Media Officer, attended a conference and study trip at the 3rd Konrad Adenauer Foundation Summer School on "The good guys and the bad guys?", Democratic parties and an active civil society in Germany during September.
- Mr. Koul Panha, the Executive Director, joined an international mission of ANFREL on Parliamentary Election Observation on September 10-24, 2005
- Mr. Koul Panha, the Executive Director, attended an EU conference on election support and achievement and another meeting on draft declaration of principles and a code of conduct for international observers in his capacity as representative of COMFREL and the Asian Network for Free and Fair Elections (ANFREL) in Brussels on September 27-3 October, 2004.

III. Financial Report (Summary)

SUMMARY OF COMFREL'S FINANCIAL REPORT
For the period of October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005

RECEIPTS

1. OPENNING BALANCE.....	\$145,690.86.....	28%
2. Receipts in this period		
■ NOVIB.....	\$158,823.53.....	31%
■ FORUM SYD.....	\$70,431.00.....	14%
■ NPA.....	\$61,263.00.....	12%
■ TROCAIRE (Disbursed on Aug 8, 04 in amounting of \$30,670)		
■ OXFAM HONG KONG.....	\$30,000.00.....	6%
■ NDI.....	\$53,785.73.....	10%
■ OTHER (CIDSE, WORLD BANK).....	\$12,662.00.....	2%
Subtotal-Receipts in this period.....	\$386,965.26.....	75%
3. BANK INTEREST.....	\$1091.57.....	0%
4. FUND RETURNED (OXFAM HONG KONG, NDI).....	(\$17,326.28).....	(3)%
TOTAL RECEIPTS.....	\$516,421.41.....	100%

DISBURSEMENTS

1. CORE ADMINISTRATION.....	\$78,184.91.....	20%
2. CORE PROGRAM		
■ ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING.....	\$27,626.55.....	7%
■ MEDIA and CAMPAIGN.....	\$43,900.55.....	11%
■ LOCAL NETWORK.....	\$111,090.84.....	28%
■ MONITORING IN POST ELECTION.....	\$36,370.38.....	9%
■ CIVIC EDUCATION.....	\$52,930.94.....	13%
■ EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE.....	\$20,244.90.....	5%
■ OTHER (depreciation, contingency, audit fees).....	\$13,601.20.....	3%
Subtotal CORE PROGRAM.....	\$305,765.36.....	76%
3. SPECIAL PROJECT ON VOTER REGISTRATION.....	\$16,454.70.....	4%
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS.....	\$400,404.97..	100%

FUND ENDING OF SEPTEMBER 2005.....	\$116,016.44..	22%
	of Total Receipts	