

ACHR e-news

News from groups around Asia about what's happening in the region . . .

Asian Coalition for Housing Rights

e-mail : achr@achr.net

website : www.achr.net

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2014

- Cambodia's housing minister visits Bangkok on ACHR-supported learning tour
- The ACCA Program comes to the end of its second phase
- ACHR regional meeting scheduled for January 23-25, 2015
- Tom's Farewell

CAMBODIA'S HOUSING MINISTER TO BANGKOK

ACHR continues to collaborate with the Cambodian government as it sets up its first Housing Department, under the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction. The draft policy which is guiding the urban poor housing parts of the new department, follows very closely the kind of citywide, community-driven and partnership-based concepts we have been implementing in the ACCA Program, with the added element of community development funds to be set up or strengthened in each city, and the new national housing department supporting this housing development around the country. In the draft policy, which builds on the strength of the community processes and the community-city partnerships which already exist in many Cambodian cities, the role of the central government is small, and a big space is opened for municipal governments to work with the urban poor communities in their cities to work out citywide solutions to their problems of land , housing and basic infrastructure.

Over the past year, ACHR and the team from the National Community Development Fund Foundation (NCDF - formerly UPDF) and the Cambodia branch of UN-Habitat have been meeting with Mr. Im Chhun Lim, the Minister of Land Management, to discuss this. It was agreed that ACHR would continue to assist in the capacity building of the Ministry and staff in several ways, including facilitating ministerial and staff study visits to community upgrading projects in Thailand, organizing training workshops in people-driven citywide slum upgrading for government officers, supporting the Ministry to develop a five-year housing plan and developing some pilot projects in collaboration with all four organizations. To seal the deal, an MOU will be signed between the Ministry, the NCDF Foundation and ACHR in late December 2014.

In November, as part of this collaboration, ACHR organized a high-level study visit in which Cambodia's Minister of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (all under one ministry!) spent two days in Bangkok, where he and other Cambodian officials met their Thai counterparts (including a conference with Thailand's Minister of Social Development and Human Security, and meetings with the Director and staff of CODI), and visited community upgrading projects being implemented by communities themselves (including Bang Bua), with support from the Baan Mankong Program - which is one model for how a national government can support a citywide and people-driven slum upgrading process that happens on a national scale. This important intervention and study tour, which was managed in close collaboration with CODI and the NCDF Foundation, is a good example of the strategic role ACHR can play to help make change in the right direction, as a regional support organization.

For more information on the process of setting up the new Housing Department in Cambodia, please contact ACHR.

