



Minutes of the Local Project Appraisal Committee Meeting Graduation Based Social Protection (GBSP) project

Date: 13 February 2026

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Venue: Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF)

1. Attendance

No.	Name	Title
UNDP		
1	Mr. Enrico Gaveglia	Resident Representative
2	Mr. Shakeel Ahmad	Deputy Resident Representative
3	Ms. Nimnuon IvEk	Assistant Resident Representative
4	Ms. Mao Meas	Programme Analyst
5	Mr. Theara Khoun	Policy Analyst
General Secretary of the General Secretariat for National Social Protection Council (GS-NSPC)		
1	H.E Chan Narith	Secretary of State of the Ministry of Economy and Finance and General Secretary of the General Secretariat for National Social Protection Council (GS-NSPC)
2	Mr. Choeurng Theany	Director of Operation Support
3	Mr. E Bunthen,	Director of Policy
4	Mr. Ear Sothy	Head of Research Unit
5	Ms. Kunthea Vannyday	Representative of the Digital SP secretariat
6	Mr. Nob Bronit	Officer
7	Ms. Moeung Monineath	Officer
8	Mr. Vorn Sereivuth	Officer
9	Mr. Taing Kimeang,	Officer

2. Agenda of the meeting

- 1) Update on the progress of the national GBSP program
- 2) Presentation of the GBSP project document
- 3) Discussion on rolling out GBSP project in UNDP system and resource mobilisation
- 4) Way forward to support the implementation of the national GBSP program

3. Update on the progress of the national GBSP program

The meeting commenced with an overview of the national Graduation-Based Social Protection (GBSP) Program, which was officially launched in December 2025. The update provided context on the program's overall objectives, implementation status, and strategic importance within the national social protection framework.

The Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) meeting was convened with the objective of assessing the quality and robustness of the project document. The appraisal was undertaken in line with UNDP programming quality standards. The LPAC review was conducted through a participatory and inclusive approach, engaging a broad range of stakeholders beyond UNDP and the key national implementing partner. This approach aimed to ensure comprehensive technical scrutiny, promote shared ownership, and incorporate diverse perspectives to strengthen the project's design and implementation readiness.

4. Presentation of the GBSP project document

Context and Rationale

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has made the eradication of extreme poverty at the centre of its development agenda, as articulated in the Pentagonal Strategy Phase I and the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) 2024–2035. While Cambodia has achieved strong and sustained economic growth, many rural households continue to experience chronic poverty, driven by limited productive assets, precarious livelihoods, and high exposure to economic and climate-related shocks.

Conventional social assistance remains essential for protecting consumption, yet on its own, it has not been sufficient to enable poor households to exit poverty permanently. Recognising this gap, the RGC has introduced Graduation-Based Social Protection (GBSP) as a national flagship approach, designed to transform social assistance from a safety net into a pathway toward sustainable livelihoods and resilience.

The GBSP Approach and Global Evidence

Graduation-based approaches have emerged globally as an effective solution for addressing extreme rural poverty while also stimulating local economic development. GBSP delivers a sequenced and time-bound package of support, typically 24 months, combining:

- Cash assistance to stabilise household income.
- Lump sum cash transfer for purchase of productive assets to enable income-generating activities.
- Skills development and vocational training tailored to local market needs.
- Individualised coaching and mentoring to guide families through the graduation process.

International evidence demonstrates that graduation programs generate lasting impacts on income, food security, nutrition, health, and asset accumulation, particularly in livestock, while strengthening productivity and resilience to shocks. These outcomes highlight GBSP's ability not only to address immediate poverty but also to build long-term self-reliance.

National GBSP Rollout and Project Alignment

Building on promising pilot results, the national GBSP program targets the poorest and most vulnerable households, providing integrated support that enables families to escape poverty on a sustainable basis. By addressing immediate needs while strengthening productive capacities, the program contributes to resilient rural economies and inclusive, sustainable growth.

United Nations Development Programme

To support this effort, the draft project document was shared with the General Secretariat of the National Social Protection Council (GS-NSPC) ahead of the LPAC meeting to facilitate informed and efficient discussion. GS-NSPC acknowledged receipt and provided initial feedback, noting that the proposed project is well aligned with the national GBSP program. GS-NSPC recommended proceeding with the project and implementing it in parallel with the national GBSP rollout planned for Q1 2026, in order to ensure coherence, policy alignment, and maximum impact.

Key Feedback: Sustainability and Governance

Initial feedback from GS-NSPC placed particular emphasis on sustainability and project governance. On sustainability, GS-NSPC highlighted that the long-term continuation and scalability of the initiative will depend on the demonstrated effectiveness of results under the national program. To strengthen the evidence base, GS-NSPC recommended conducting a mid-term impact assessment in early 2027. This assessment would inform decisions on program refinement and potential geographic expansion, particularly in areas with high concentrations of IDPoor households.

Regarding governance, stakeholders underscored the importance of inclusive and coordinated institutional arrangements. It was recommended that relevant line ministries and sub-national administrations be actively engaged in the project's governance structure. Their participation will enhance national and sub-national ownership, strengthen inter-institutional coordination, and ensure full alignment with national GBSP implementation mechanisms.

5. Way forward to support the implementation of the national GBSP program

LPAC members emphasised that, while the GBSP is designed as a national program, the project document must be fully aligned with national policy and institutional frameworks to ensure national ownership, coherence with existing systems, and sustainability. They also highlighted the importance of adequate and predictable financial and technical resources to support effective rollout at scale.

LPAC provided constructive recommendations to strengthen implementation, with particular emphasis on governance and coordination at national and sub-national levels; ensuring that operational systems, SOPs, and MIS are fully functional and resourced prior to scale-up; and strengthening inter-ministerial and sub-national engagement.

As a next step, UNDP, in close collaboration with GS-NSPC, will address LPAC comments by refining the project document, aligning ongoing and pipeline initiatives to support core GBSP program, and pursuing proactive resource mobilisation for medium and long-term implementation. LPAC further encouraged a coordinated partner engagement strategy to build a strong financing and partnership base for the GBSP's 10-year ambition, ensuring effective implementation, scale-up, and sustainability within Cambodia's social protection architecture.

Below is the summary of the LPAC members' comments and way forward to support the implementation of the national GBSP program.

Key Comments	Action
During the meeting, the UNDP Resident Representative informed of resources being allocated from UNDP projects to support the establishment of operational systems and processes for the rollout of the national program and incoming resources from the Green Climate Fund, funded Early Warning 4 All, which embed GBSP supported activities as part of shock responsive social protection	• UNDP technical team will work closely with the GS-NSPC technical team to jointly organise the roundtable discussion. This collaboration will cover the development of the concept note, the design of the discussion format, and other related

United Nations Development Programme

program. It is proposed with new funding from GiZ and a solid pipeline with a potential donor, UNDP will establish a dedicated GBSP project in the system. To the achievement of the GBSP's 10-year ambition, he emphasised that the crucial next step would be proactive and dedicated resource mobilisation efforts. He proposed several strategies for discussion. These included: 1. Organising a roundtable discussion with potential donors and strategic partners to present the GBSP program, showcase its objectives and expected results, and explore opportunities for financial support and programmatic partnerships; and 2. Adopting a bilateral engagement approach, whereby UNDP and GSNSPC would directly reach out to prospective partners and donors on a one-to-one basis to explore collaboration opportunities, particularly for those who are unable to participate in the proposed roundtable discussion. 3. Joint communication strategy to promote visibility of the donors and the GBSP program	technical arrangements. It is envisaged that the roundtable discussion will be convened as soon as possible, ideally in early March. • Develop a comprehensive GBSP visibility and communications package for donor engagement, including tailored presentation materials, key messages, and briefing content to support effective roundtable discussions and bilateral meetings.
As this is a national program, His Excellency Secretary of State emphasised that a formal implementation mechanism must be led and channelled through the Government. He expressed his strong willingness to work closely with UNDP in mobilising the resources, as UNDP would play a critical role by providing technical assistance and supporting the management of development funds, thereby ensuring effective and coordinated program delivery.	Explore potential engagement with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) where needed
Regarding public financing, His Excellency Secretary of State, added that government investment decisions will be guided strictly by evidence. In particular, the government will consider investing only if there is clear and credible evidence demonstrating that the program is sufficiently robust, effective, and ready to deliver results. He further noted that, should this evidence be established, there is a possibility for government co-financing, at least for the program's core or basic components.	The program will be positioned as either investment-ready or clearly progressing toward investment readiness, based on available evidence and alignment with government systems. Co-financing should be framed not as an immediate expectation, but as a gradual and evidence-driven opportunity that can evolve over time. The emphasis should be on building government confidence through demonstrated results, fiscal feasibility, and institutional readiness. Initial co-financing could focus on limited or basic program components, with the potential to expand as evidence strengthens and systems mature. This approach respects the government's cautious, evidence-based investment stance and reinforces the principle that public financing decisions are sovereign, deliberate, and grounded in proven value for money.

United Nations Development Programme

6. Final LPAC recommendation:

- The Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) approved the project for implementation, confirming that it meets the required quality standards and is aligned with national priorities.
- To support effective resource mobilisation, the LPAC further recommended the development of a comprehensive GBSP visibility and communications package and conducting the roundtable discussions and targeted bilateral meetings with potential donors and partners to mobilise financial and strategic support for the project implementation.

Prepared by:

Mao Meas

Programme Analyst

Approved by:

Enrico Gaveglia
Resident Representative