

Chris Minko
National Volleyball League Disabled
Speech to the VAPP – 11MSP (Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2011)

After first Video –

Thank you for opportunity to speak...

Introduction / CM – founder + Sec Gen – will step aside in next 5 years with Khmer replacement / only Cambodian to receive UN best practices / Patronage of Samdech Hun Sen / close cooperation with MOSVY and ICRC

CNVLD very honoured that eminent Academy Award winner Sir Roland Joffe, Director of the “The Killing Fields” will return to Cambodia to make another feature film based on the remarkable achievements of the CNVLD National Volleyball Team which now has the working title of “The Playing Fields”

In July 2011 the Cambodian National Volleyball team reached No 2 in the world – recognized as the nations true sporting heroes their efforts were watched by the whole nation including 14 hours of live broadcast of all Cambodian Games – We will continue to work towards the No 1 – we never give up – step by step forwards is our motto

Having limited time I want to raise 2 issues

I have read many articles this week related to this conference with reference towards the funding difficulties. that funds are being reduced for mine clearance and landmine survivor assistance. I believe the focus needs not to be on funds being reduced but on asking how effective is the expenditure of funds to date

Having worked 16 years at the grass roots level do hope this conference will consider some of the following issues as I have worked with nearly all of the major Landmine rehab organizations operating in Cambodian and I know the shenanigans well – very well if I may say so !!

Like so many other key international social issues, HIV, Human Trafficking, There are many within the Aid and Development sector, myself included who ask “why is it that in the final analysis, 80 % of total income goes to the world of consulates, academics, endless conferences, the chronic duplication and the endless reviews and evaluations that gather dust on a shelf after being completed and the administration of the many INGO’s who have now become multimillion dollar business, the obscene lifestyles of the INGO county directors on their ¼ million dollar + packages and the endless purchases of the latest 4 wheel drives – I counted 60 +- INGO vehicles (Lexus and the likes) coming in at the value of a cool ½ million.

With the remaining 20 % one can comfortably estimate that 10% disappears with the frameworks of local corruption leaving a pathetic 10 % which actually reached the intended beneficiaries - the landmine survivor

Following the funding trail – although the original task hasn't been completed its amazing how the big INGO become experts in other fields overnight when grants are available – I watched VI and HI become CBR experts overnight – truth is the so called Trumpeted CBR usually means the INGO delivers a karma and some rice and that's about .

The CNVLD has managed to set up a national program working with over 5000 + persons with a disability without a 4 wheel drive or a villa – we use public transport and have even been known to travel by Horse and cart to meet one of teams based in an isolated village on the banks of the Mekong – some organizations may genuinely need a 4 wheel drive – most don't

Localization and the need to provide direct support to effective and productive local NGO's and cut out the middlemen INGO's who are taking the majority of the funds meant for Cambodian Landmine survivors

Localization – why is HI still working here after 20 years ? – where is the exit strategy – why have ICRC been able to successfully and effectively localize all their Centers with the Govt yet HI keeps going – why – because Cambodia is a lucrative cash cow when it comes to fundraising and HI don't want to lose that base - after all – they have set up a multi Million \$ operation working in 40 nation now haven't they ? - through the pain of Cambodia – exploitation by the expat INGO at its best I would say

My ongoing observation of the big 3 rehab mafia: HI / CT and VI – they always present a unified face at conferences such as at this conference but when its over – its back to the fierce competition between the to undermine each other as they compete for the funds available for donors – all this results in an unproductive, uncoordinated approach that hinders the development of a proper national infrastructure for the PWD's of Cambodia

I do hope that this conference is taking such important, in fact vital, issues into consideration and again – I say this from the grass roots level where we, as always, are desperately seeking funds to meet the huge demand for the CNVLD's programs.

The second issue

Sports and the lack of recognition of the unique ability of sports to foster positive social change and its key role within the rehabilitation of landmine survivors – how often have I been told by donors and aid agencies “Sorry Chris – It's Just sport”- From the CNVLD's perspective: “It's much more than Sport”? From the obvious benefits of physical rehabilitation to team sport building and reconciliation, as was the case in the early years of the CNVLD where teams of ex

Khmer rouge soldiers competed against teams made up from demobilized royalist and government soldiers and goodwill was fostered between old foes. To restoring an individual's self esteem through a better health and participation in a disciplined teams sports program and most of all giving Cambodians with a Disability that all important element of hope in life. Donors still fail to recognize the unique power of sport to foster civil society and to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of the individual.

A few years ago, one major donor nation to Cambodia that shall remain unnamed (however I was born there), called me into a meeting and informed me that "to their regret they would be unable to provide support to the CNVLD as the focus of their funding for the next 5 years would be health" – and this came from a nation that has preventative health measures as a pillar of its national health policy and the key vehicle for the implementation of this policy is none other than: Sport. I politely said "Thank you", and left the Embassy accordingly.

Again – I hope these issues can be noted at this conference

In finishing I want to congratulate the many initiatives that have worked as it's not all exploitation although sadly this is what happens with the majority of the funds – lets all keep a close eye on – and listen to the grass roots level.

The *next video* is a very powerful example of how effective the role of sport is with the rehabilitation of Cambodian PWD's and this is a new program of the CNVLD that focuses on women with a more sever disability

Please enjoy and I thank you for the opportunity to speak here today at this conference and wish all visitors and wonderful stay here in Cambodia