

**Joint statement on  
Urban and rural communities call for inclusive development**

We, Phnom Penh communities, have faced eviction and relocation as a result of the rapid growth of private and foreign investment. We, rural land communities, have similarly faced eviction as a result of unfair and unjust development projects, often implemented by both foreign and local investors.

Urban and rural development must be conducted in accordance with Cambodia's laws, with fairness and equity, in order to create a foundation for true sustainable development.

Following our evictions, we have faced growing debts from microfinance institutions and banks; lost livelihoods; physical injuries; a lack of access to healthcare and education; and many other problems. These are the direct result of our unjust and unfair eviction and relocation. Land and housing are life, and without them our lives have suffered.

Eviction is a scary experience. Forced evictions are frightening, and authorities do not respect our human rights when they remove us from our land and our homes.

We have been removed from our homes and lost our land for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it was for city beautification, or improving order, or for increased security in society. But our forced relocations led us to resettle in areas that lacked public services and basic infrastructure, and moved us far from our livelihoods and workplaces. This has caused us to fall further into poverty and debt.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, communities in Phnom Penh and in the countryside have been pushed from their land, and are forced to deal with the issues of relocation while also struggling with the pandemic.

Authorities rarely consulted us first, and most times we were threatened and forced to relocate without prior consultation and compensation. We are wronged by local authorities, and we often turn to national institutions or the prime minister to resolve our conflicts. All we want is to have urban and rural development that is transparent, participatory, and prioritises equality and justice. We deserve this, as humans and Cambodian citizens.

On World Habitat Day 2021, we call on the government to:

- Promptly solve land and housing conflicts.
- Respect our right to life with dignity, and protect our land and housing rights.
- Stop the use of forced evictions, violence, and judicial harassment to threaten community members and land and housing rights activists.
- Conduct transparent and inclusive environmental and social impact assessments and proactively consult with affected communities before processing the development projects.
- Effectively implement housing policies focusing on upgrading existing poor community resettlements, rather than involuntary relocation.

**Community Names:**

1. Phlov Roth Phleung Community
2. 92 Community
3. Rolos Cheung Ek Community
4. Cheung Ek Group 3 Community
5. Cheung Ek Group 4 Community
6. Stoeung Meanchey Community
7. Borie Kila Community
8. Boeung Chhouk A Community
9. Mithapheap Community
10. Chroy Chongva Community
11. Samroung Tboung Community
12. Boeung Chhouk Community
13. Boeung Trabek Phum 4 Community
14. Phum 23 Community
15. Toul Sangke A Community
16. Trapeang Raingthmey Community
17. Sen Reakreay Community
18. Samroung Meanchey Community
19. Borey Mithapheap Community
20. Russey Srah Community
21. Samaki ROUNG ROEUNG Community
22. Prek Takong 60 M Community
23. Prek Takong 3 Community
24. Smor San Community
25. Borey Doeum Sral Community
26. Satrei Khlang Sang Community
27. Niroth Boeung Chhouk Community
28. Boeung Chhouk Meanchey Thmey II
29. Stoeung Kombot Community
30. Veal Sbov Community
31. Satrei Khlahan Community
32. Prek Takong ROUNG ROEUNG Community
33. Lor Peang Community (Kompong Chhnang)
34. Samaki Romeas Hek Community (Svay Rieng)
35. Meanchey Community (Svay Rieng)
36. Equitable Cambodia (EC)
37. Urban Poor Women Development (UPWD)
38. Cambodian Leagues for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO)
39. Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT)