CAMBODIA



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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY FOR CITIZENS IN CAMBODIA (ISD) - PHASE I



Female councillors' discussion in a Regional Workshop on Strengthening Female Councillors' Voices and Network2 Photo©GIZ

BACKGROUND

Cambodia started building its governance structures almost from scratch only in 2000. A first decentralisation reform established democratically elected commune councils with the first local elections held in 2002. In 2010, the government adopted the first National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development 2010-2020 to pursue the reform of sub-national administrations at district and provincial level. At present, the decentralisation reform is still impeded by inconsistencies in different reforms combined with low capacity and lack of resources for sub-national administrations to effectively implement their duties. Sectoral ministries are still reluctant to transfer meaningful functions to sub-national administrations, while financial resources transferred are also limited.

The next phase of the reform will focus on strengthening these new sub-national structures through the second National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development 2021-2030 (NP2). Special attention will be paid to the coordination of all key reforms at the national level, and to simplifying relevant procedures for sub-national administrations. remains Gender equality insufficiently addressed in Cambodia due to a general lack of political attention. Women representation in local decision-making bodies and in subnational administrations is around 20%. SDC's engagement aims to tackle the deficit of equitable and inclusive service delivery. Currently, many ongoing initiatives, including SDC's support to both ISAF and the SPACE project, strengthen citizen engagement and participation – the demand-side of accountable and inclusive governance. Hence, this new initiative mainly focuses on strengthening the capacity and system of the sub-national government (supply-side).

This project forms an integral part of the Swiss Cooperation Programme in the Mekong Region 2022-25.

OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of ISD is "Districts and municipalities in the three selected partner provinces use strategies and improved processes for service delivery in priority sectors".

The overall goal shall be reached through five outcomes:

Outcome 1: The National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development uses recommendations prepared by its secretariat for the further implementation of national decentralisation programme..

Outcome 2: Reforms of the One-Window-Service Offices (OWSOs) have been implemented in districts and municipalities in accordance with the requirements of the national decentralisation programme.

Outcome 3: Selected districts and municipalities in the three partner provinces have strategies in place to shape their water and waste management in a climate

Outcome 4: Citizens' access to decisionmaking processes and complaint mechanisms at the level of districts and municipalities are strengthened.

Outcome 5: The soundness of local finances with respect to the funding of service delivery as well as the financial management is strengthened.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

Duration

Phase I: 01 Mar 2022 - 31 Dec 2025

Budget

Total budget: USD 11,800,000 Swiss contribution: CHF 5,350,000

Implementing Agency

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbei GIZ

Other partners

- Secretariat of National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Imprint

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The expected results for this phase include:

- 1. The influence of women district councillors inexercising th eir political functions is strengthened.
- 2. The number of administrative services provided per year by the OWSOs in the partner provinces increased by 25% on a monthly average.
- 3. In 6 districts or municipalities in the partner provinces, activities based on local waste management strategies have been implemented, benefiting 640,750 citizens.
- 4. In 4 districts or municipalities in the partner provinces, activities based on their local water management strategies are implemented.
- 5. In response to citizen complaints forwarded by ombudsmen offices, 20 decisions for the improvement of public services have been taken by district, municipality or provincial councils of the partner provinces.
- 6. The additional self-generated revenue [in USD million] by national, regional, and municipal administrations is increased.

APPROACHES

Switzerland, together with Germany, supports ISD, which is implemented by GIZ. The project will be implemented in close cooperation with the responsible partner institutions at the national level, mainly the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDD-S), line ministries, and the district and municipality administrations in the three provinces. The project uses a multi-level approach, combining technical assistance and process amelioration at the national and subnational level through short- and long-term experts, and addressing implementation gaps and challenges in service delivery in priority sectors (health, water and waste management) at the sub-national level. It supports ten districts and municipalities in improving their institutional capacity to self-generate additional revenues and perform their duties and functions, which have been and will be transferred from the national level, including One-Window-Service Offices (OWSOs) and ombudsmen offices. Relevant thematic matters, i.e. digital governance, gender quality, climate change adaption, and disaster risk reduction are included in the project interventions. At the national level, the project will support NCDD-S and relevant line ministries in the further development and implementation of the NP2 while also contributing to the development of national regulations and guidelines that provide orientation on the functional implementation for municipalities and districts. In addition, SDC and Germany will continue their policy dialogue with the Royal Government of

Cambodia (RGC) in the frame of the Technical Working Groups on Decentralisation and Deconcentration (D&D TWG) and Public Finance Management (PFM TWG). The TWGs consist of different actors involved in the decentralisation reform and public finance management reform, and serves to monitor and influence the reforms. Coordination and synergies with different stakeholders in the same sectors and geographic areas, including SDC's ISAF and NURTURE projects, will be ensured through regular exchange

KEY RESULTS AND INSIGHTS FROM PREVI-OUS PHASES

SNDD reform has achieved promising results during the previous two phases (2011-2018). These inc Prior to this project, GIZ implemented a similar project on "Decentralisation and Ad-ministration Reform", funded by Germany. The key results were: 1) Framework on functional assignment; 2) Structure and working procedures of OWSOs; 3) The district complaint mechanism/ombudsmen offices; 4) Leadership capacity and women empowerment of district administrations and councils; and 5) Strengthened civil society engagement and partnership with district administration in local governance. Another project, implemented by GIZ and cofunded by SDC, was on "Regional Economic Development". This project successfully piloted multi-stakeholder engagement mechanisms such as district sub-committees. ISD includes all lessons learned and builds on the results of these two previous projects.

TARGET GROUP AND PROJECT LOCATION

All citizens living in the three provinces of Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Siem Reap with around 2.76 million inhabitants (53% women) will benefit from improved service delivery. In addition, around 9,570 public officials (28% female) including councillors, staff of administrative and sectoral units, ombudsmen offices and OWSOs will benefit from capacity development interventions.



Target provinces highlighted in red colour