

DECENTRALISATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM PROGRAMME

Achieving Democratic Development

Government responsiveness to the needs of its people requires individuals, organisations and systems at all levels to become more transparent, accountable, gender-sensitive, participatory and inclusive.

In order to assist Cambodia in its efforts to achieve these core elements of good democratic governance, Decentralisation and Administrative Reform Programme (ARDP) was set up to contribute to bringing the Government closer to the people and to develop an accountable and effective civil service.

Centralised service delivery and a lack of understanding of democratic accountability represent challenges for reaching Cambodia's development and poverty reduction goals. However, progress is being made to improve conditions and to create an enabling environment.

To support this, GIZ provides assistance to two key reforms of the Royal Government of Cambodia: the Public Administrative Reform and the Sub-National Democratic Development Reform.

Bringing Government Closer to the People

To support the national reform that aims at democratic development at the sub-national level, three European Union Member States and the European Commission (EC) are working together. The joint EU approach, also known as, EU-SPACE' focuses on Strengthening Performance, Accountability and Civic Engagement through elected sub-national councils.

Project name	Decentralisation and Administrative Reform Programme (ARDP)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Cambodia
Lead executing agency	Secretariat of the National Committee for Democratic Development (NCDD-S) Ministry of Civil Service (MCS)

Within this framework, the European Commission (EC), the Governments of Sweden and Germany commissioned GIZ to provide policy and process advice and support capacity development for a wide range of actors at the national and sub-national levels.

At the national level, GIZ supports the Secretariat of the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development in developing effective policies and the legal framework with democratic accountability at their core in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This includes the development of a government-wide approach of transferring central government responsibilities, personnel and resources to sub-national councils.

As citizens, sub-national councillors are expected to know the needs and make informed decisions on priorities, providing also responsive services for women in consultation with the Women and Children's Affairs Committees at provincial and district levels.



Photo left: A female councillor confidently expressing herself - despite being the only female member in this district council.

Photo right: Training of trainers on the legal framework of decentralisation reform to the non-governmental organisation Star Kampuchea.



Study tour of four ministries and the National League to Indonesia on the decentralisation of central government responsibilities, personnel and resources to local governments.

Training on the legal framework of decentralisation reform for staff of the General Secretariat of the Senate.

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Indirectly elected councils are responsible for decision-making at the provincial, capital, municipality and district levels. Appointed governors are now accountable to and have to implement decisions taken by these councils.

GIZ supports the Government in establishing a country-wide coaching system for these councils and its male and female members in order to improve their capacities in holding effective meetings, actively engaging with citizens and overseeing the administration. A handbook for councillors is jointly developed and tested with councils in two provinces and made available for country-wide utilisation.

An Accountable Civil Service - a Crucial Aspect of Any Democracy

GIZ also supports the Public Administrative Reform that aims to improve human resource management, public service standards and a compensation reform for the civil service, including the entry to the civil service of women, people from ethnic minorities and those from remote rural areas. The Ministry of Civil Service coordinates the reform among all ministries and agencies at national and sub-national levels.

ARDP assists the Ministry to develop policy frameworks jointly with representatives of sector ministries as well as practical guidelines

for human resource management. Moreover, the Ministry's capacity to plan, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the administrative reform is strengthened with support from GIZ.

Linking the two key governance reform processes, ARDP supports the inter-ministerial National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development in developing a policy and the legal basis to provide sub-national councils with the authority for the management and development of their administrative personnel.

Overall, governance reforms in Cambodia are a work in progress, requiring a flexible, learning-oriented (or step-by-step) approach. With gradual more transparent and accountable structures and actors at both national and sub-national levels, the Government will be able to better serve the citizens and be more responsive to their needs.

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