

IDENTIFICATION OF POOR HOUSEHOLDS

Helping in Targeting Support to Households Most in Need

Approximately one-fifth of the Cambodian population is poor. Poverty is particularly wide-spread in rural and remote areas, and is more likely to affect women, girls and people from socially disadvantaged groups.

With rapid urbanisation, poverty in cities is also becoming an increasingly pressing issue. As a response to this challenge, poverty reduction is the key objective of the social protection strategy of the Royal Cambodian Government. However, for poverty reduction programmes to work efficiently and effectively, policy-makers and programme planners first need to know which households are poor and most in need of support. Previously, different organisations used different methodologies to identify poor households in Cambodia. This was not only costly and a burden on communities, but also meant that data was not comparable and that support was not targeted in a unified, equitable and a transparent way.

Since 2005, Cambodia's Ministry of Planning has developed a standardised questionnaire and procedure to identify poor households in rural areas, with support from GIZ and other development partners such as the Australian Government, the European Commission and UNICEF. This standardised process is now known as "IDPoor".

Thanks to IDPoor, regularly updated data is now available on poor households and their poverty level for all rural areas throughout Cambodia. This information can be used by policy makers, government institutions and non-governmental organisations to

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plan social protection programmes and target their support to the poorest areas or households in Cambodia, such as female-headed households, which are statistically the poorest.

Strengthening National Structures at all Levels

Since 2006, GIZ advisors have been working hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Planning to develop, implement and improve the IDPoor process taking place in eight provinces each year. Currently GIZ (funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) advises the Ministry of Planning on how to develop a new and complementary tool to identify poor households in urban areas. Moreover, GIZ helps the Ministry of Planning to promote the use of IDPoor data, including gender-disaggregated data, by improving the accessibility and different data formats provided to interested organisations and relevant service providers.



Photo left: Village Representative Group member interviewing a household

Photo right: Training the Village Representative Group



Commune Council meeting to review and endorse the Final List of Poor Households

Entry of data into the Database of Poor Households

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At the national level, the staff of the Ministry of Planning receive training on every step of the process – from planning to budgeting, management, engaging and coordinating different stakeholders, monitoring and policy advocacy. At the sub-national level, pre-existing structures - such as the provincial Departments of Planning, district and commune councils - are strengthened as they play a key role in supervising, monitoring and managing the IDPoor process in each province. Building national capacities is crucial, as the Cambodian Government is now managing routine IDPoor operations for rural areas as a fully government-funded programme.

Involving Communities

The IDPoor process relies on villagers to identify who is living in poverty in their community. In each village, villagers select representatives, who are then trained, conduct the household interviews and present draft lists of poor households to the community for feedback and validation. This participatory and consultative process promotes transparency and accuracy of the results. In each yearly round of IDPoor implementation an estimated 35,000 persons are actively involved – from the national to provincial and community level. In 2014, a quarter of all village representatives involved were women.

Improving Access to Services for People Living in Poverty

Households identified as poor through the IDPoor process receive 'Equity Cards'. These cards include a photograph of the household members, a household code, the household's poverty level, the card's validity period, and general information on how to use the cards. Poor households can use the Equity Cards to access a range of services provided by the government and other organisations.

In the health sector, poor households can use the Equity Card to receive free health care financed from the Ministry of Health's Health Equity Funds for the poor. Other services and benefits include e.g. education scholarships for girls and boys from poor households; access to public works programmes that provide cash or food; food aid.

As a result of the programme's success, the Royal Government of Cambodia has declared IDPoor as the standard procedure to be used for targeting programmes for poor households and areas. GIZ supports the Ministry of Planning in promoting the use of IDPoor data by different governmental and non-governmental organisations to increase service availability for households identified as poor through the IDPoor process.

For more information, please visit: www.idpoor.gov.kh

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