

SOCIAL HEALTH PROTECTION

HEALTH SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE: SUPPORTING DECENTRALISATION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR

Challenges

There have been significant improvements in Cambodia's public health system over the past decade, but overall utilisation of public health centres and hospitals remains low. According to the 2014 Demographic and Health Survey, only 28 percent of Cambodians seek treatment at public facilities when they fall ill or are injured. The reasons behind Cambodians' preference for private health facilities are varied: some people believe that private facilities are better equipped, while others perceive that private providers are friendlier and more responsive to patients' needs. Many patients at public health facilities, by contrast, regard the quality of care as unsatisfactory or feel disrespected by health care workers.

The Ministry of Health of Cambodia has sought to improve the quality of the public health system by building the capacity of health workers, bringing health services closer to communities and reducing financial barriers to care. In its strategic plans, it has also emphasised the need to make health services more accountable to citizens and has called for the meaningful participation of communities and local authorities in health sector planning and decision-making. It promotes approaches aimed at raising awareness among three main stakeholder groups – health users, health providers and local authorities – of their roles and responsibilities in a decentralised health system and bringing them into regular dialogue with one another with the goal of improving the quality and responsiveness of health services.

The concept of social accountability is not well-established in Cambodia and citizens have little confidence in their capacity to influence decisions or bring about change. In addition, most Cambodians have limited knowledge about health and their right to receive proper, non-discriminatory care and treatment. The involvement of local authorities, such as commune councils, is therefore crucial for improving the dialogue between health

Project name	Social Health Protection
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Cambodia
Lead executing agency	Ministry of Health
Overall term	2015 to 2018

service users and health care providers. Yet despite assuming more responsibility for oversight of health services, most commune councils still have limited capacity to play an effective facilitation role between health users and providers. Health care workers, for their part, generally have a limited understanding of clients' rights in the health sector and of their own responsibilities as service providers. In addition, the majority work in both public and private facilities ('dual practice'), thereby sometimes neglecting to fulfil their duties as a public servants.

Our Approach

The Health Systems Governance component of the Cambodian-German Social Health Protection project, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), seeks to enhance the transparency and accountability of health services by strengthening the capacity of local governments and forms of citizen participation.

Building capacity to implement decentralisation

At the national level the project works in cooperation with GIZ's Decentralisation and Administrative Reform (DAR) programme



Feedback from clients helps to improve the quality of health services.



Dr. Vanny Peng
vanny.peng@giz.de
Tel.: +855 77 60 66 07

For more information about
GIZ Cambodia please visit:
facebook.com/gizcambodia

Raising awareness of clients' rights and providers' rights and duties

to advise the Ministry of Health in the development of standard operating procedures for the transfer of functions to sub-national administrations which will assume responsibility for managing health services in three pilot provinces. The project will also assist the Ministry to document lessons learned from the pilot for future scale-up.

Raising awareness of clients' rights and providers' rights and duties

At the provincial level, in Kampong Thom, Kampot and Kep, GIZ works to raise awareness of key health-related rights by supporting trainings and public meetings, disseminating educational materials, and facilitating mass media campaigns on clients' rights and providers' rights and duties. These target a wide range of stakeholder groups, including the general public, health care providers, civil society organisations (such as Disabled People's Organisations), and members of commune councils, Health Centre Management Committees and Village Health Support Groups. The project also fosters dialogue between citizens, local authorities and health providers through mechanisms such as public forums, meetings of the Health Centre Management Committees, and participation in structures such as the Provincial Technical Working Group on Health.

Linking client feedback to quality improvement

Client feedback mechanisms, such as client satisfaction surveys and suggestion boxes at health facilities, contribute to transparency and client-responsiveness in health sector governance by capturing the views of health service users. With support from GIZ, the Ministry of Health's standardised Client Satisfaction Survey tool is used to

collect information on a quarterly basis from patients (including persons with disabilities and older persons) who have used services at hospitals and health centres. The project works with health authorities and health managers to analyse survey findings, to integrate them into quality improvement plans at facility level, and to monitor the implementation of these plans. In addition, it is advising the national Ministry of Health on the incorporation of client satisfaction feedback processes into the national quality checklist tool used to assess health facility performance as part of the Health Equity and Quality Improvement Project (H-EQIP), a joint initiative of the Royal Government of Cambodia and development partners.

Strengthening local-level health planning processes

GIZ helps to build the capacity of subnational administrations at commune and district level to fulfil their health-related roles in the context of decentralisation. It trains members of commune and district councils on identifying health issues in the community – including those related to gender and disability – and prioritising them in local-level planning processes, such as commune investment plans and annual operational plans for health facilities. It also strengthens the ability of councils to oversee health centres and hospitals, to facilitate participatory planning processes which include representatives of vulnerable groups, to provide client feedback to health care providers and to monitor how this feedback is acted upon to improve the quality of services.

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Social Health Protection Project (SHPP)
GIZ Project Office at NIPH
P.O. Box 1238, #2, Street 289, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
T +855 23 88 44 76
F +855 23 88 49 76
www.giz-cambodia.com

Author(s)

Dr. Vanny Peng

Layout

Jenny Nickisch

Printed by

GIZ Cambodia

As at

November 2016

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

In cooperation with



Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Phnom Penh

On behalf of

Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Division

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

Addresses of the BMZ offices

BMZ Bonn Dahlmannstraße 4 53113 Bonn, Germany T +49 228 99 535 - 0 F +49 228 99 535 - 3500	BMZ Berlin Stresemannstraße 94 10963 Berlin, Germany T +49 30 18 535 - 0 F +49 30 18 535 - 2501
---	--

poststelle@bmz.bund.de
www.bmz.de