

# IDENTIFICATION OF POOR HOUSEHOLDS (IDPOOR)

## Helping to target support to the households most in need

Approximately a 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. As a response to this challenge, poverty reduction is the overarching goal of the development strategy of the Cambodian government. However, for poverty reduction programs 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 organizations 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, transparent and equitable way.

Since 2005, Cambodia's Ministry of Planning has developed a standardized questionnaire and procedure to identify poor households in rural areas, with support from GIZ and other development partners such as the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the European Commission and Unicef. This standardised process is now better known as "IDPoor". Thanks to IDPoor, regularly updated data is now available on poor households and their poverty level for almost all rural areas, throughout Cambodia. This information can be used by policy decision-makers, government institutions and non-governmental organisations to plan poverty reduction programmes and to target their support to the poorest areas or households in Cambodia, such as female-headed households, which are statistically poorer.

Project name	Identification of Poor Households (IDPoor)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Cambodia
Lead executing agency	Ministry of Planning

## Strengthening national structures – at all levels

Since 2006, GIZ advisory staff has been working hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Planning to develop, implement and improve the IDPoor process, which takes place in several provinces each year. Currently GIZ (funded by AusAID and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) also advises the Ministry of Planning on how to develop a new, 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 formats of data provided to interested organisations and relevant service providers.

Last but not least, GIZ provides various training and capacity development measures to Ministry of Planning staff and other actors involved in the IDPoor process, to enable them to successfully implement and sustainably manage the programme. This includes providing training for stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels.



Pg. 1 Photo left: Village Representative Group member interviewing a household

Pg. 1 Photo right: Training the Village Representative Group

Pg. 2 Photo left: Commune Council meeting to review and endorse the Final List of Poor Households

Pg. 2 Photo right: Entry of data into the Database of Poor Households



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At the national level, Ministry of Planning staff 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, because by 2015 the Cambodian government wants to manage the IDPoor programme without external support and fully finance it from the government budget.

## Involving communities

The IDPoor process relies on villagers to assess 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 round of IDPoor implementation an estimated 35,000 persons are actively involved – from the national to provincial and community level. In 2011, 35 percent of 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 education scholarships for girls and boys from poor households; access to public works programs that provide cash or food; and food aid, to name a few.

As a result of the programme's success, the Government of Cambodia has declared IDPoor as the standard procedure to be used for targeting programs to poor households and areas. GIZ supports the Ministry of Planning in promoting the use of IDPoor data by different governmental and non-governmental organisations, so that more and more services will be made available to the households identified as poor through the IDPoor process.

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