

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



Female councillors' discussion in a Regional Workshop on Strengthening Female Councillors' Voices and Network2
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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. Gender equality remains insufficiently addressed in Cambodia due to a general lack of political attention. Women representation in local decision-making bodies and in sub-national 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 decision-making 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.

