

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE



Cambodia

The context:

Since the first national election in 1993, there have been gradual steps towards a more participative society in Cambodia: the emergence of the communes as a decision-making mechanism; significant empowerment of civil society in the area of gender, human rights and electoral reform; and some opening towards a multi-party culture. In the mid 1990s the government started a move from centralised governance towards a more decentralised set-up. Despite these progresses, concerns linger over impartiality of the electoral administration, equal access to media, and limited opportunities and avenues for participation.

There are few institutionalized mechanisms to allow for the participation of civil society. This is particularly true for youth and women. Gender norms prevent women from participating in decision making and fulfilling their rights. Although democratic institutions have been established (parliament, council, league of councils), there is not enough focus on how these hold decision makers to account.

Reducing poverty and meeting CMDG targets depends in part on the ability of citizens and society, including the private sector, to organize to voice their needs, increase pressure for policy change and monitor government's performance. Access to information about government programmes, plans and budgets and challenges like climate change and decentralization is vital to allow civil society to play an active role.

Our vision:

To allow Cambodians to voice their concerns and decision makers to better prioritize citizens needs, UNDP works to promote more effective mechanisms for dialogue, participation and representation of all people in democratic decision making.

UNDP will support processes to increase interaction and accountability of elected representatives to citizens at national and local levels. UNDP will help parliament and local councils **reach out to constituencies** to better understand and respond to their needs. School outreach programmes for parliamentarians will increase interaction with youth.

UNDP will strengthen civil society, the media and political parties to mobilize people to engage and interface with government. Civil society networks and the media will support **access to information** on the CMDGs, decentralization reform and climate change adaptation. **Media programmes** will report issues of concern for the rural poor and indigenous people in a balanced way.

Young women leadership programmes, along with measures to be adopted by the five main political parties, are expected to increase the proportion of women candidates in commune and national elections to 25 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively thus contributing directly to CMDG3 attainment.

UNDP will support the next stage of decentralization and de-concentration reform in Cambodia, with the objective of enabling the newly established sub-national authorities to take over increased functions. These reforms can help promote a more democratic and accountable state and improve quality, efficiency, effectiveness and outreach of public services which are key to CMDG attainment. By allowing local economic development planning, there is now also the potential to reduce socio-economic disparities between regions.

CPAP 2011-2015: Democratic Governance at a glance	
Strategic Priorities	Key Results
Support to Sub-National Democratic Development Reform (decentralization and deconcentration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District CMDG-based forums track progress, gathering elected officials, councilors and citizens in 50 districts;• All 193 district councils have capacities to implement local programmes and deliver services to the people;• Empowered local Government associations can defend the interests of local government.
Broadening democratic space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil registry established to improve the quality of voter registration• 3 million young voters reached with civic education campaign for participation in local elections in 2012 and national elections in 2013• CMDG forums gather local councilors, parliamentarians and citizens to track progress in 50 districts a year.
Gender equality: Moving from good policies to effective implementation and results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender-responsive policies, programs and budgets exist in five sectors.• Increased proportions of women civil servants (40%), commune councilors (25%) and parliamentarians (30%).• Women's Development Centres to provide women with market-oriented and life skills and access to markets.• Network of one-stop service centres for rehabilitation of victims of gender based violence.

In support of acceleration of CMDG3 to reduce gender disparities in participation and economic growth, UNDP will support the adoption of gender-responsive national policies, programmes and budgets, increased access to business development services for small business women entrepreneurs and scaling up preventive and remedial responses to gender-based violence.

UNDP in action:

In its Country Programme 2006-2010, UNDP has achieved results in democratic governance in the following areas:

Strengthening Local Governance

- ▶ Since 2006 USD 252 million of small scale investment at local level increased people access to markets and social services. Citizen satisfaction surveys show that 80% believe that communes respond to local needs.
- ▶ 1,600 elected commune councils are able to plan and implement small-scale infrastructure and social action initiatives.
- ▶ The newly established league of commune councils is able to better advocate the interests of the commune councilors.

Promoting good governance and democratic space

Democratic Space and citizen participation

- ▶ 2008 elections saw a voter turn-out of 75% and an increase of the proportion of women MPs from 12% in 2003 to 22% in 2008 and of the proportion of women councilors from 8% in 2002 to 14.6% in 2008.
- ▶ 123 newly elected Parliamentarians received induction to their new functions. 27 CMDG events increased MP's awareness about the MDGs, which were largely unknown.
- ▶ Parliament's outreach to their constituencies increased through school programs reaching 160 children, forums reaching 360 youth and 40 field visits reaching 4500 constituents. This contributed to better understanding of community issues and narrowing the gap between MPs and young people.

Improved Access to Justice

- ▶ New alternative dispute resolution mechanisms at commune and district level were expanded in six provinces, prompting the Government to embark on the design of a mediation law.
- ▶ Community conversations were piloted in 89 villages and reduced incidence of domestic violence.
- ▶ Customary rules of indigenous people were compiled and shared with judges, lawyers, police, legislators and students to increase legal empowerment of the poor.

Mainstreaming gender equality

- ▶ 18 government institutions have developed gender mainstreaming action plans and 11 line ministries received national budget allocation to implement them.

- ▶ The civil service affirmative action guideline led to a 2% increase in the number of female civil servants in just one year.
- ▶ 245 female leaders from 24 government institutions benefited from the leadership training program and about half of them were promoted to a higher position in their ministries.

GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO:

Legislative Assistance Project (LEAP)

Budget: US\$ 1,615,532
Duration: 2007–2010
Implementing agency: Parliament

Strengthening Democratic and Electoral Procedures (SDEP)

Budget: US\$ 9,282,457
Duration: 2006–2010
Implementing agency: UNDP

Project to Support Democratic Development through Decentralization and Deconcentration (PSDD)

Budget: US\$ 55,355,375
Duration: 2007–2010
Implementing agency: National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development

Strengthening Democratic and Decentralized Local Governance (DDLG)

Budget: €10,900,295
Duration: 2006–2011
Implementing agency: Ministry of Interior and National League of Commune/Sangkat

Access to Justice (A2J)

Budget: \$3,268,410
Duration: 2006–2010
Implementing agency: Council of Judicial and Legal Reform in partnership with Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior

Partnership for Gender Equity (PGE)

Budget: US\$ 4,767,608
Duration: Phase I: 2004-2006; Phase II: 2006–2010
Implementing agency: Ministry of Women's Affairs

European Fund for Micro-projects (EFMP)

Budget: US\$ 2,312,942
Duration: 2006-2009
Implementing agency: Ministry of Interiors and NLCS