



This case study was elaborated by PICOTEAM member Dr. Thomas Schwedersky.

Cambodia

Power redistribution through citizen participation and good governance

Correct Citation:

Schwedersky, T. (consultant), G. Geißler and G. Löffler (eds.) (2006) "*Cambodia – Power redistribution through citizen participation and good governance*", Sector Project Mainstreaming Participation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Germany, Eschborn: 28 pp.



Cambodia

Power redistribution through citizen participation and good governance

From the series: Promoting participatory development in German development cooperation

gtz

commissioned by



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Imprint

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH
Postfach 5180, 65726 Eschborn, Federal Republic of Germany

Sector Project: Mainstreaming Participation

On behalf of the
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Officer responsible

Dr Claudia Maennling, Strategic Corporate Development Department,
Policy and Strategy, GTZ

Consultant

Dr Thomas Schwedersky, independent consultant, Swisttal

Editors

Gabriele Geißler, Strategic Corporate Development Department,
Policy and Strategy, GTZ
Gundula Löffler, Strategic Corporate Development Department,
Policy and Strategy, GTZ

Layout

marung+bähr, Dresden

Printed by

Druckerei Wagner, Siebenlehn

Photos

InWEnt; GTZ, Cambodia

Contact address

partizipation@gtz.de
<http://www.gtz.de/participation>

With the support and assistance of

DED, EED, InWEnt, KfW and the political foundations HBS and KAS

Eschborn, Germany 2006



Cambodia
Power redistribution through citizen
participation and good governance



Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Contents | 4 |
| Foreword | 5 |
| Introduction to the series | 6 |
| The individual publications in the series | 7 |
| Participation for sustainable development – the conceptual approach | 8 |
| Cambodia: Power redistribution through citizen participation and good governance | 9 |
| Cambodia on the road to greater participation and democracy | 10 |
| › The political and institutional framework for democracy and participation is in place | 10 |
| › Decentralisation and deconcentration to bring government closer to the people | 10 |
| › The role of civil society in emancipating citizens | 12 |
| Approaches taken by German development cooperation to promote participatory development | 13 |
| › Institution building and capacity building for civil society organisations – EED and InWEnt | 16 |
| › Promoting democracy through capacity development – GTZ | 21 |
| Lessons learned | 23 |

Foreword

For some years now, participation has been one of the fundamental principles on which German and international development cooperation has been built. This is a result of the major role played by participation in determining the success or failure of development projects, and their sustainability. Participation is a crucial factor in the achievement of development-policy objectives. In the Development Policy Action Plan for Human Rights 2004–2007, this is expressed clearly and concisely: we do not speak for or about people. It is development policy's role to help people voice and assert their interests and rights. Participation plays a vital part in realising human rights, good governance and a living democracy. Citizen participation fosters transparent governance and puts an end to arbitrary rule and corruption. Moreover, participation in policy-making by the poorer sections of the population is indispensable if we are to combat poverty effectively. One important step on the road to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to realising the Millennium Declaration and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in our partner countries is that citizens can exercise active influence on the setting of priorities, on the distribution of resources and on access to public goods and services. And finally, the active participation of our partners is a precondition for effective development cooperation. Participation is the underlying element common to all principles laid out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. These are closely interwoven and mutually reinforcing. The principle of ownership in particular, the very foundation of legitimate, sustainable, results-based

development cooperation, is the result of successfully involving all the relevant actors. For these reasons, participation is a cross-cutting issue that must be taken into account in all projects.

This publication takes a realistic look at practical development cooperation. Selected projects implemented by various German development cooperation organisations in seven partner countries were studied in terms of the contribution they make to promoting participation, and lessons learned were identified. German development cooperation has given a positive impetus to participation in many areas. The promotion of participation in our partner countries has proved to be a lengthy and difficult process. A comprehensive strategic approach, cultural sensitivity and process-oriented flexible procedures are vital to provide effective support for the emergence of participatory processes in a difficult political and cultural setting. This publication aims to generate important impetus and provide ideas for work in this field. On the basis of lessons learned, the range of development instruments used has also been evolved, in particular to take into account the great diversity of actors involved in the political process. With this look at participation in programme-oriented joint financing, the series tackles a highly topical issue that will continue to be vitally important as we look to the future.

Dr Eduard Westreicher

Director of the Governance, Democracy, Human Rights and Gender Division at Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Introduction to the series

Promoting participatory development in German development cooperation – from a guiding vision to practical development work

The way participation is seen in development cooperation is subject to constant flux in this dynamic environment.

For a long time, participation was equated with the use of participatory methods, which continue to be indispensable in modern, sustainable development cooperation. Today, however, participation is seen as a constituent feature of successful democratisation and decentralisation. Thus participation finds its way into national political processes, and is becoming increasingly important as a political paradigm in partner countries.

In 2002, to take these developments into account, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) contracted the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH to implement a sector project entitled "Mainstreaming Participation". This project aims to focus and further develop the existing concept of participation, in line with the new understanding of the term. Moreover, the excellent experience gained by German development cooperation organisations in the field of participatory development was to be evaluated, and on this basis, recommendations for action devised for the operational work of German development cooperation. At a BMZ workshop at the end of 2003, German development cooperation organisations were invited to propose successful examples of promoting participatory development to be included in the evaluation to help ensure that the full spectrum of German development cooperation instruments and approaches were included in this look at participation in practice. When the case studies were finally selected, care was taken to ensure a broad regional and sectoral spread, so as to clearly illustrate the nature of participation as a cross-cutting issue. In line with the country case studies in question, a variety of depths and breadths of study were selected, and different evaluation methods used, leading to interesting results that highlighted a variety of good prospects. Implementing organisations and NGOs

agreed with BMZ on the following case studies: in Latin America, the promising approaches of the KfW Entwicklungsbank (KfW development bank), the German Development Service (DED) and GTZ in Bolivia, Ecuador and El Salvador were examined. In Africa, German and local consultants studied a cooperative project implemented by DED, GTZ and KfW in Mali as well as the input of German Agro Action (DWHH), one of Germany's largest NGOs, in Ethiopia. Finally, in Cambodia, the contributions of Capacity Building International, Germany (InWEnt) and the Church Development Service (EED) were evaluated, as were the inputs of GTZ in the People's Republic of China.

The results of these country evaluations have been processed and are compiled in this series. One publication has been dedicated to each country evaluated.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the German development cooperation organisations for their excellent cooperation. The series also contains conceptual and methodical studies and inputs, which look at the current state of the international debate on the topic of participation, and go into this in some depth. This includes the "knowledge architecture" available on CD-ROM, which gives interested readers more background information on the concept and history of this complex topic, along with a detailed analysis of case studies. A study of the way in which various bilateral and multilateral donors deal with the issue of participation and a discussion input on the key role played by participation in programme-oriented joint financing also help place the topic in an international context. The "building blocks for designing participatory systems of cooperation" and the study to link the issues of culture and participation help promote participation in development cooperation.

The entire publication is then rounded off with a summary, which recapitulates the key hypotheses to emerge from the country evaluations.

Dr Claudia Maennling
Sector project "Mainstreaming Participation"

The individual publications in the series

Promoting participatory development in German development cooperation



Promoting participatory development in German development cooperation

From a guiding vision to practical development work

- > Summary of the key hypotheses to emerge from the country evaluations
- > Report: Participation in bilateral and multilateral development cooperation organisations
- > Attached: CD on knowledge architecture "Participation for sustainable development"



Ethiopia

On the way from an authoritarian past to a democratic future

- > Attached: CD photo campaign "Take part – participate!"



Bolivia

Participation as a contribution to social justice



China

Authoritarian yet participatory? Hands-on governance in times of change

- > Attached: CD photo campaign "Take part – participate!", report



Ecuador

Power redistribution and inclusiveness across cultural divisions

- > Attached: CD photo campaign "Take part – participate!", report



El Salvador

Bridging political divisions with citizen participation

- > Attached: CD report



Cambodia

Power redistribution through citizen participation and good governance



Mali

Power returns to the people – participation and good governance at municipal level



Tools for actor analyses

Ten building blocks for designing participatory systems of cooperation



Cultural aspects of participation

Dialogue of equals



Participation in programme-oriented joint financing

Thematic paper

Participation for sustainable development – the conceptual approach

"Participatory development is defined as a process in which people are proactively and significantly involved in all decision-making processes that affect their lives." BMZ Participation Concept 1999

Participation is a fundamental principle of German development cooperation. The promotion of participatory development is becoming increasingly important as a goal in its own right in structural reforms leading to good governance and greater democracy in our partner countries. The realisation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD, March 2005) plays a crucially important part in this. All these reforms are geared to achieving measurable progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals as an overarching objective and thus tangibly reducing

poverty. Making globalisation inclusive and equitable, ensuring that human rights are respected, promoting the rule of law, conserving natural resource bases and designing a democratically and socially just society all make important contributions towards achieving sustainable development. The promotion of participation thus demands a holistic approach. German development cooperation promotes three aspects of participation; these three aspects are inter-related and mutually reinforcing.

Democratic participation

Enabling citizens to participate in a living democracy

Democracy needs citizen participation to survive. To this end, it is vital to empower and strengthen disadvantaged groups in particular. German development cooperation supports these people by improving their negotiating skills and facilitating their access to public services. We also help our partners focus their interests, establish networks and exchange knowledge and information. Tried and tested procedures include round tables, the promotion of local networks and multiplier training.

Participation as involvement in processes

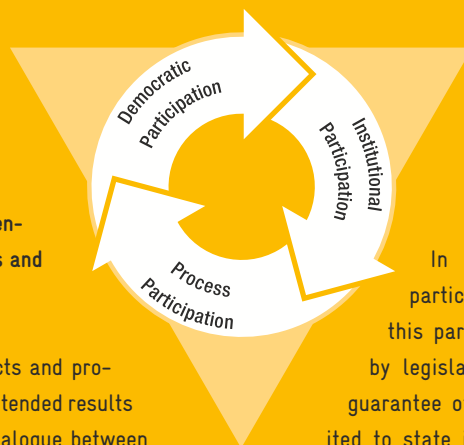
Involving stakeholders in the identification, planning, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes

Development cooperation projects and programmes and the concomitant intended results are the upshot of an ongoing dialogue between key stakeholders: those directly involved in the project, political decision-makers, civil society interest groups and the various donor organisations. The partner organisation plays a leading role in this. Joint responsibility for the project thus emerges, based on partnership. German development cooperation has developed a whole series of participatory instruments and methods to guarantee this participation throughout the entire cycle of a project or programme.

Institutionalised participation

Anchoring participation in rules, standards and legislation

In order to mainstream citizen participation in political processes, this participation must be underpinned by legislation, rules and standards. The guarantee of participation is thus not limited to state institutions, e.g. in the form of a financial or judicial reform. Instead, it covers the myriad inter-relations that link government, civil society and the private sector through lasting mainstreaming of a variety of forms of participation.



Cambodia: Power redistribution through citizen participation and good governance

Introduction

Cambodia is one of the least prosperous countries in South-East Asia. After years of violent rule by the Khmer Rouge and the subsequent civil war, the country is currently undergoing a complicated and dynamic transition process. The greatest challenge facing it at present is how to integrate poor sections of the population into the country's economic, social and political life. German development cooperation is providing support with the following focuses:

- Economic reform/development of the market economy
- Rural development
- Establishment of the health service¹

Good governance and promotion of democracy are cross-cutting tasks in cooperation with Cambodia. Within the scope of the sector project "Mainstreaming Participation", two German development cooperation projects have been examined in greater detail in terms of the contribution they make to fostering participation. During a two-week assignment to Cambodia in December 2004, consultant Thomas Schwedersky, whom we would like to thank at this point,

looked at the work of the Lutheran World Federation Cambodia Program (LWFC). The activities of this programme are receiving institutional support from Capacity Building International, Germany (InWEnt) in the form of capacity building measures, and from the Church Development Service (EED). The consultant also focused on the Rural Development Programme implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). The consultant's report is based partly on the evaluation of literature and documents. More important, however, were the immediate impressions of various stakeholders involved in the projects and of the population, voiced in meetings, interviews and discussions. The lessons learned were identified and discussed at a joint workshop. We would like to thank all the actors, whose active involvement, constructive criticism and valuable experience have benefited this study.



¹ <http://www.bmz.de/de/laender/partnerlaender/kambodscha/zusammenarbeit.html>

Cambodia on the road to greater participation and democracy

The political and institutional framework for democracy and participation is in place

Today, Cambodia is a parliamentary monarchy with a national assembly and a senate, which together are the most important institutions representing the will of the people. Although the authoritarian legacy of the past continues to shape political life in Cambodia, the country can be described as a fairly stable formal democracy.

The most recent parliamentary elections in 2003 were relatively free and fair, in comparison to the country's previous elections. The system of horizontal balance of power, however, is not yet fully developed. The country lacks an independent judiciary. Parliament is weak and thus unable to act as a proper system of checks and balances vis-à-vis the executive, and the media are still subject to far-reaching state controls. Opposition politicians and civil society organisations that criticise the regime are subject to repression, and party-political interests dominate political life since the two largest parties have been forced to work together in a coalition to reach the necessary two-thirds majority in parliament. Nevertheless, there is increasing democratic stability in Cambodia. The political climate is now less strongly marked by violence and unrest than it was a few years ago.

Decentralisation and deconcentration to bring government closer to the people

With the government agenda for decentralisation and deconcentration, which is putting in place a completely new state order, the preconditions for democratic participation and economic development have been improved in recent years.

There have been elected local government bodies at municipal level since February 2002. Various duties and resources have been delegated by central government to these bodies. In the wake of the incipient process of deconcentration, the provincial and district levels too are being strengthened, with the transfer of administrative duties and competencies. The growing role of local governments, in particular, offers the chance for citizens to participate effec-

tively. Services to reduce poverty and approaches to foster the economy and development can be geared directly to the needs of the people. Government actions become more transparent, and accountability vis-à-vis the population is increased. And that too is new in Cambodia, where accountability traditionally only exists vis-à-vis higher-level authorities or institutions. The process of decentralisation and deconcentration is still in its infancy and has not yet become firmly established. Obstacles and uncertainties mark the current implementation status.

Technical obstacles to participatory development

First and foremost both processes must be handled more effectively from a technical point of view. For instance, deconcentration is being implemented at a slower pace than decentralisation. As a result,

Transition performance as measured by the Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2006

Cambodia is accredited with unfavourable conditions for political transition on its path to achieving greater democracy and establishing a market economy.

Of the 119 emergent and developing countries included, Cambodia has slipped further down the list from its 2003 ranking of 74th to its current 87th place. As regards management performance, Cambodia does poorly (ranking 94th of 119). In this index too, the country has slipped 27 places from its previous 67th place.

The Bertelsmann Transformation Index examines 119 countries in terms of their current status and progress made towards achieving democracy and a market economy. The first index shows the present status of the countries examined on the road to democracy and a market economy. The assessment is based on a set of 19 criteria and 58 indicators, including political participation, the rule of law, the socioeconomic development level, etc. Social change for democracy and the market economy, however, is not an incidental or automatic process – there must be the firm political will to take this road and to shape the path taken. The management index shows how consistently and determinedly political stakeholders have followed the path towards a market economy and democracy. Criteria include management quality, ability to shape efforts, consensus building, etc.

For more information and detailed country reports, see <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/27.0.html>.

local government representatives still have to turn to national government. At this level, there is often little understanding or political will to transfer competencies to municipal level. An even greater problem, however, is the lack of training of elected representatives and the fact that posts are usually filled by party members and affiliates, meaning that party-political interests outweigh municipal ones. If municipal representatives and administrators at district and provincial level are to perform their work efficiently and effectively, wide-ranging further training measures will be needed. In the longer term, the municipalities too will need more funding to allow them to perform their work. This could mean allocating more funding from national level, or allowing them to generate their own funds with specific municipal taxes. More serious problems can be found at a sociocultural level, and these can only be overcome in the longer term.

Corruption is endemic at all levels of politics and society

Corruption must be seen as one of the most serious obstacles to participation. It is widespread in Cambodia and demonstrates marked system-retaining mechanisms. The people can have no trust and confidence in the new democratic state if patron-client networks continue to shape political life and society. It is difficult for municipal-level representatives to extract themselves from the web of corruption without being subjected to massive pressure. Poor groups in rural areas are particularly badly affected by the abuse of power and corruption in the administrative system. They suffer the most from physical uncertainty and lack of access to the legal system. They are particularly dependent on public goods and services, which makes them easy victims of corrupt practices. There has, however, been some promising experience with corruption-free areas in parts of the administrative system.

There is no culture of participation or freedom of opinion

A centralist mindset still prevails among both the political classes and civil servants. The poor, less educated sections of society have no basic understanding of democratic rights and civil liberties. They are not used to representing their own interests either. The experiences of the years of Khmer Rouge terror and the decades of civil war also continue to shape the climate of society. Most people will not voice criticism of public decision-makers or call for accountability because of their fear of reprisals. Submissiveness to authority, subservience and fear of the power of the state influence the way people think.



"Sustained peace ... can come only through equitable development to raise the standard of living ... by strengthening the bonds between civil society and the State and by empowering rural Cambodians to participate fully in the development process."

United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

The role of civil society in emancipating citizens

Against this background, a well organised and active civil society has a crucial part to play in the democratisation process.

Over the last ten years, a vibrant civil society has emerged in Cambodia, in spite of the hesitancy of government agencies to accord them any scope for participation. Civil society organisations see themselves as advocates of citizen participation at all levels. One important approach is to enable people at municipal level to play an active part in political processes, demand their rights and represent their own interests. The process of decentralisation can ultimately only be successful with strong citizen participation. There is a promising dynamism now in Cambodia in terms of the extent to which the population is organised both in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and in self-help organisations (community-based organisations, CBOs). An important basis in building civil society commitment are the Buddhist pagoda committees, which have a long tradition of assuming cultural, spiritual and economic functions within the social system. Nevertheless, a large number of Cambodian NGOs still have limited experience so far and are strongly dependent on the support of international NGOs.



Poverty

Thirty-four percent of the country's population of 13.7 million have to survive on less than one US dollar a day. Life expectancy is around 56 years, and the illiteracy rate is 26.4 percent. Forty-five percent of under-fives suffer under-nutrition, and sixty-six percent of the population has no secure access to safe drinking water. The rural regions are particularly badly hit by extreme poverty. The families who live there have benefited little from the significant economic growth that has occurred over the last decade.²

As regards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Cambodia has chalked up successes in some areas, such as raising the school enrolment rates and reducing the rate of HIV infection. Special efforts, however, will be needed to maintain and strengthen these positive trends. Poverty can only be halved if economic growth can be stepped up, and if rural families benefit from this too. The ongoing liberalisation of trade within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) must be seen critically in this context. Although trade liberalisation might have positive effects on textile exports, it also opens the doors to cheap competition from Thailand and Viet Nam in other sectors.

Cambodia has made major efforts to harmonise its National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) with other development strategies. The now completed National Development Plan 2006–2010 forms the binding political framework that embraces both the NPRS and Cambodia's contribution to achieving the MDGs. This process of bringing together all strategic approaches under one roof was actively monitored and supported by German bilateral development cooperation.

² UNDP, 2005. Human Development Report



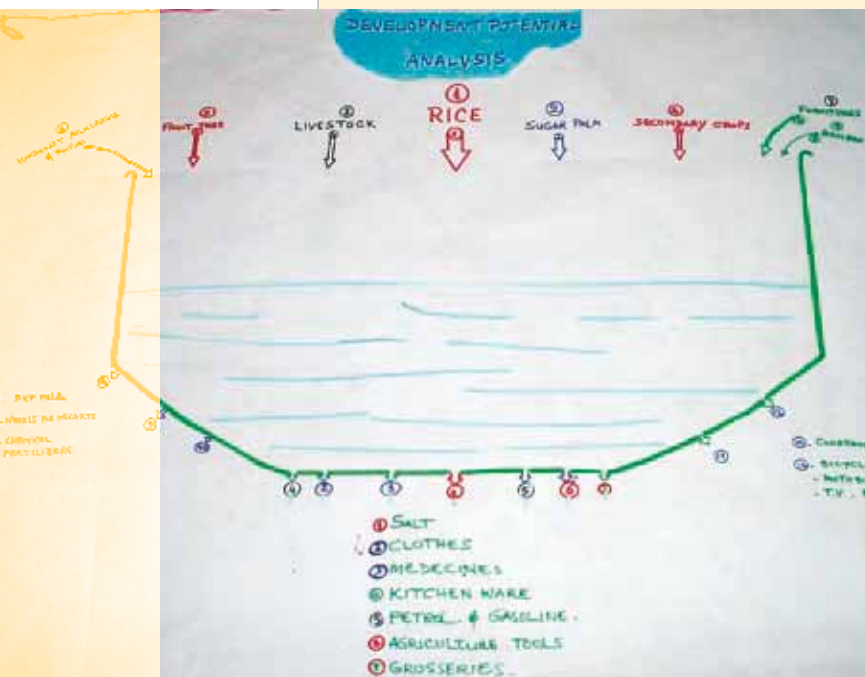
Approaches taken by German development cooperation to promote participatory development



Against the background of the outlined transition process in Cambodia, the promotion of democracy, civil society and public administration has been a cross-cutting issue of German-Cambodian cooperation since 2001. One of the challenges is that in a society shaped by fear, reprisals and corruption, participation must exist not only on paper, but must become a living reality. Both civil society and political representatives are currently going through a learning process in this regard, which development cooperation can support.

German development cooperation is working at different levels with a variety of stakeholders and methodological approaches.

At institutional level, for instance, participation is being strengthened by anchoring participatory mechanisms in legislation. The GTZ-assisted project to promote the rights of women is an example of this. Other projects focus on enabling stakeholders to participate in political processes. In the projects of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) implemented in cooperation with the organisation Buddhism for Development (BFD) and GTZ's Rural Development Programme (RDP), representatives of municipalities and villages (e.g. representatives of community-based organisations) are being trained. They learn to use participatory approaches in order to allow the people to participate, and to enable them to participate themselves at a higher level. Empowerment of civil society is the focus of the projects of the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) and the Lutheran World Federation being implemented with the support of InWEnt and EED. The cooperation between the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) and the Club of Cambodian Journalists is helping establish a culture of openness, fighting for freedom of the press and offering a protected forum for exchanging views and experience. The Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) is pursuing an important approach and providing microcredits for micro-entrepreneurs in cooperation with a commercial bank. Economic security and the exercise of and demand for political rights are closely linked.



| German Organisation | Partner Organisation | Objective | |
|---|--|--|--|
| GTZ | | Mainstreaming participation opportunities in the elaboration of legislation | |
| Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) | Buddhism for Development (BFD) | Strengthening citizen participation at municipal level | |
| Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) | ACLEDA-Bank | Promoting economic independence by providing microcredits | |
| Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) | Associations of Nuns and Laywomen of Cambodia | Strengthening traditional civil society structures | |
| Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) | Club of Cambodian Journalists | Strengthening a free and independent press | |
| Capacity Building International, Germany (InWEnt), Church Development Service (EED) | Lutheran World Federation, Cambodia Program (LWFC) | Capacity building for civil society organisations | |
| GTZ | Pagoda Cooperation Committee (PaCoCo) | Capacity development for holders of political office, the administration and civil society | |

Projects

GTZ is using its project "Promoting Women's Rights" to help mainstream participation rights for affected groups in legislative procedures for laws relevant to women's rights. In doing so, the project makes use of the entire spectrum of instruments available in policy advisory services. Innovative steps were taken in the elaboration of a law to protect women against domestic violence. Various workshops on elaborating the legislation were held in which civil society organisations were able to become actively involved.

Along with its partner organisation BFD, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) is helping to support local self-government bodies and in particular to strengthen the structures and mechanisms used to ensure citizen participation. BFD works with village advisors, who also make an important contribution to conflict resolution at local level. Particular importance is attached to various programmes to build the capacities of elected local representatives and employees of local government bodies.

In conjunction with its partner, ACLEDA Bank, KfW is promoting the range of microfinance services available as a major element in local economic development. ACLEDA Bank is making use of its closely knit network of consultancy services in rural areas and is adopting simple handling procedures for loans. This allows it to offer interested parties a reliable range of microcredit services at competitive interest rates. Citizen participation is fostered indirectly, since economic and political liberty are very closely linked.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) and its partner, the Association of Nuns and Laywomen of Cambodia, are promoting democratic participation by strengthening traditional conflict regulatory mechanisms and by promoting cultural cohesion at local level. Well-established and socially accepted structures are being strengthened and further developed. Members of the partner organisation play a major part in managing conflicts within and between families.

Through its partner, the Club of Cambodian Journalists, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is making an important contribution to strengthening critical and independent journalism. This is a demanding undertaking in the Cambodian context, in which critical journalists must fear reprisals. The Club offers a protected space and also acts as an important forum to bring critical issues to the attention of the general public. Civil commitment depends directly on a free and critical press.

The Church Development Service (EED) is providing institutional support for the Lutheran World Federation Cambodia Program (LWFC), while Capacity Building International, Germany (InWEnt) is helping with capacity building services. The main thrust involves learning to work with participatory methods, which LWFC uses in its field work; the objective is to help villages participate at municipal level after having learned to use participatory methods on a smaller scale.

One important component of GTZ's Rural Development Programme in Cambodia is to support efforts to realise the decentralisation reform. GTZ is working at several levels. One important approach is to establish innovative forums for policy design processes, in order to strengthen the dialogue between civil society and the various political levels.

Institution building and capacity building for civil society organisations – EED and InWEnt

Capacity Building International, Germany (InWEnt) and the Church Development Service (EED) are working closely with the Lutheran World Federation Cambodia Program (LWFC) in Cambodia.

EED has been providing institutional support to LWFC for ten years, with EED inputs accounting for some 26 percent of the total LWFC budget. In 2004, EED contributed USD 476,545, making it the third largest financier.

With its capacity building measures, InWEnt is supporting the ongoing initiatives to foster popular participation in rural areas.

Lutheran World Federation Cambodia Program

LWFC promotes popular participation by strengthening village self-help organisations and projects at municipal level. A further-reaching objective is to promote the ability of community members and local government employees to participate by teaching them participation methods on a small scale. The learning strategy involves tackling village tasks jointly.

LWFC fosters commitment at municipal level, e.g. elaborating village development plans, setting up municipal savings banks, associations, irrigation committees, etc. or user groups for the community forest. The population is trained by community development workers to use participatory planning techniques and participatory monitoring and evaluation instruments.

LWFC also supports village development committees, which coordinate all activities. They too are trained in the use of participatory techniques with a view to both citizen involvement and their own participation in the work of the next highest organisational body, the municipal council.

In recent years, LWFC has increasingly been working in the field of advocacy, representing the concerns of partner villages at national level. This concerns the awarding of land concessions to industrial timber concerns without the affected rural families having a say in the matter, for instance.

inWEnt

Internationale Weiterbildung
und Entwicklung gGmbH

+ eed
Evangelischer
Entwicklungsdienst

Participation can be learned

This photo shows how the Lutheran World Federation Cambodia Program (LWFC) is creating learning opportunities for participation, which are used to a great extent by families in the communities.

A women's group has set up a so-called Farmer Field School (FFS) as a forum for self-managed agricultural research and extension. Group members are seen working on the planning matrix for the next agricultural cycle. Since not all group members can read and write, visual elements are used to allow illiterate women to be involved too. The woman kneeling down on the left-hand side of the picture has been helping group members to use participatory techniques. She in turn was trained by LWFC field officers.



Capacity building concept

About InWEnt

Introduction

In international cooperation, capacity building means developing the capabilities of individuals and organisations. Knowledge is central to this. InWEnt systematically organises access to international knowledge and harnesses it for partners as a strategic development resource. Through dialogue, training and advisory services delivered to experts and managers, InWEnt supports the change processes of organisations and institutions, as well as reform processes in the realms of industry, politics and society.

Capacity building – individuals shape organisation and policies

InWEnt takes its lead from the guiding vision of globally sustainable development, which is reflected equally in economic performance, social equity, ecological viability and political responsibility. The aim of our work in Germany and elsewhere is to foster the problem-solving capacities and pro-active capabilities of individuals at various levels in change and reform processes, and to strengthen the necessary structures, foster the assumption of social responsibility and organise systematic access to knowledge as a strategic development resource.

Multi-level approach

In order to achieve significant (i.e. broad-impact, exemplary, structure-building) political, economic and social impacts, InWEnt uses its human resources and organisational development measures to target three levels; these are linked within a system of systemic development management in projects and programmes: the individual, the organisation and the system.

The individual

InWEnt strengthens the individual hands-on competence of decision-makers, young managers and experts. Sector-specific knowledge is systematically linked to competencies in the political and legal packaging of responsibility among organisations and vis-à-vis the population.

The organisation

InWEnt boosts the performance capacity of businesses, organisations and administrations. They are the true partner structures of InWEnt. At national and international level, they include

- › industry: associations, chambers and private businesses
- › civil society: organisations representing specific interests of the population within society
- › the government: institutions at national and decentralised levels, as well as regional groupings.

It is the task of InWEnt to identify partner organisations that have the potential to achieve objectives relevant for development in their respective contexts, and to analyse with them what contribution they can make to achieving the said goals.

The system

InWEnt promotes proactive capabilities and decision-making abilities as well as responsibility at a political level by exploring scope for action and alternative options in a dialogue with various political actors, and by discussing policy design strategies in the interests of achieving international development goals.



Since the end of the 1990s, InWEnt has consistently supported emerging initiatives to foster citizen participation and good governance in Cambodia.

A wide spectrum of capacity building measures have been used. The primary goal of InWEnt's input was to reduce poverty in rural areas. One crucial lever that can be used is the involvement of hitherto disadvantaged population groups in development projects within the scope of national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

InWEnt has been cooperating extremely closely with LWFC over a period of several years. The activities realised jointly with InWEnt address both national employees of LWFC itself and representatives of state facilities and civil society. The major learning goal of the dialogue and further training activities was to familiarise multipliers and decision-makers with participatory strategies and methods of poverty reduction. At the same time, they were enabled to initiate and anchor participation processes at the level of rural communities, the province and last but not least at an overarching political level.

InWEnt has also provided LWFC with financial support and technical assistance in training non-English-speaking community development workers. The latter have been trained both in participatory methods and in strategies and methods of empowerment.

A particular focus of attention was the exchange of experience regarding successful models of citizen

participation and good governance beyond national borders in the region. Numerous events were held in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, with participants coming from all three countries. They were able to broaden their horizons in this way, consolidate their proactive skills in an international context, and form cross-boundary networks.

What has been achieved?

The "train the trainer" concept proved positive, as reflected in the results of an impact assessment conducted by InWEnt in 2004. Participatory methods of dialogue and further training promoted joint learning in the real world of poor groups in rural areas. By training carefully selected multipliers, who were firmly rooted in the organisational structures of LWFC, many villages could be reached and a broad impact achieved. LWFC enjoys an excellent reputation within the population, which certainly does much to facilitate its work with the rural population. The unlimited support of LWFC executives in the practical application of the skills acquired was also an important factor in the success of the intervention.

InWEnt Cambodia

Institutionalisation of participatory processes in poverty reduction strategies

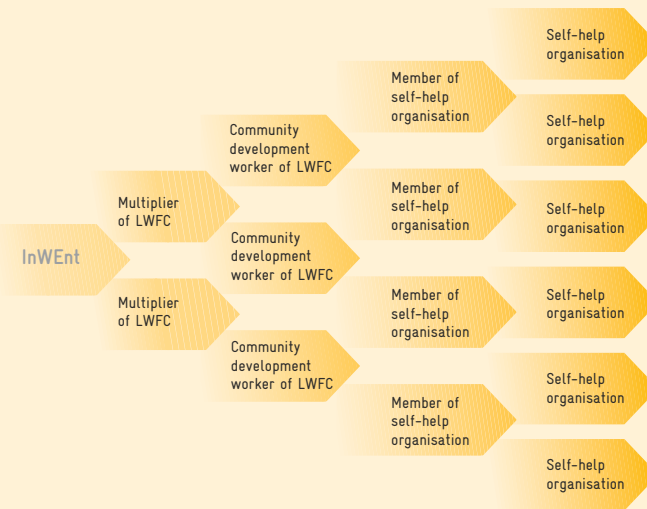
Term: January 2003 to December 2005

Project objective: The project aims to reduce poverty in rural parts of Cambodia, Viet Nam and Laos by improving participation opportunities for poor groups in political and economic decision-making processes and by institutionalising participatory procedures in rural organisations.

Partner organisation: in Cambodia, among others the Lutheran World Federation

Contact: Lüder Camman, lueder.camman@inwent.org

"Train the Trainer": cascade effect of further and advanced training



Participatory competencies in demand

In the municipalities supported by LWFC, a process of rethinking is apparently taking place as regards the capabilities required of political representatives.

Municipal employees are increasingly expected to have proved themselves in civil society organisations that work with participatory methods. It is thus no accident that in those areas in which LWFC works, municipal councillors were elected who have worked in village development committees (VDCs) or CBOs, or who are still working for these bodies, and have earned their spurs there.



The InWent Profile

Capacity Building International, Germany (InWent) is an organisation for human resources development, further training and dialogue. InWent uses this instrument to make an integral yet specific contribution to structure-building for sustainable development within the framework of international cooperation. This dimension of programme-oriented capacity building invests in a very specific manner in human potential. The political mandate focuses on the practice-oriented training of managers and specialists.

Promotion primarily addresses elite groups in positions of authority or highly specialised posts. Trainee executives from the realms of politics, administration, industry and civil society are also a target group. Political decision-makers are offered networks in order to strengthen their proactive skills in the fields of reform and change processes within the framework of a dialogue or exchange of experience.

InWent's key tasks thus include opening up access to innovative knowledge, networking experience and training managerial staff. All these activities have the common objective of strengthening the proactive competencies of managers in political, organisational and in-company change processes.

Administrative structure in Cambodia

Democratic mandate

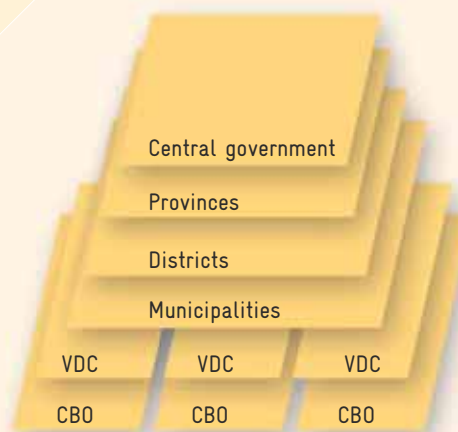
Subordinate administrative level (not elected)

Subordinate administrative level (not elected)

Elected municipal governments

Village Development Committee

Community Based Organisations (self-help organisations, including village banks, irrigation committees, etc.)



Tackling corruption and demanding transparency with self-confidence

It has transpired that representatives of local organisations are increasingly raising their voices to openly criticise those in authority. This is particularly true as regards the distribution of funds from the municipal development fund. Municipal administrations and councillors who fail to act in a transparent fashion must now expect to encounter opposition on the part of the village development committees.

This is also partly because coordination between village development committees and municipal councils has been improved. This means that the concerns of the village development committees are better taken into account in the municipal development planning process, for instance. In many cases, municipal councillors have taken part in enabling measures organised by LWFC.

Germany – the place to learn

Some training courses were held in Germany itself in order to give the LWFC multipliers first-hand insight into the fundamental principles and methods of involving citizens in a living democracy. In Germany, the Cambodian experts were able to gain specific impressions at first hand and elaborate visions for promoting citizen participation in their own country that could then be transferred. A wide variety of examples were made available to participants. Thus LWFC participants explored a broad spectrum of institutionalised forms of participation in Germany in small teams: they attended the meetings of municipal councils and conducted lively discussions on legal frameworks and the mechanisms of democratic representation of interests with mayors of municipalities in Upper Bavaria.

They talked to members of associations for farmers and women in agriculture, as well as to representatives of nature conservation societies and regional interest groups about their objectives, and the methods and ways used to advance their causes. They sat for hours with members of mothers' clubs, who were only too happy to provide information, and with active youth groups, to find out more about their motivation, organisation and objectives. They sought out central actors in village development programmes in Bavaria in order to obtain specific information about the participation of inhabitants in the planning, implementation and evaluation of change processes. They held discussions with representatives of political parties to gain a clear impression of their agendas, campaigns and successes.





Promoting democracy through capacity development

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) promotes the population, municipal councils, and public and private service providers in the social and economic development of rural areas in the provinces of Kam-pot and Kampong Thom. It is being implemented in cooperation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the German Development Service (DED). Support for decentralisation reforms is an important component of the Rural Development Programme. GTZ is targeting several different levels. One important approach is the establishment of innovative forums for policy design processes, so as to strengthen dialogue between civil society and the various political levels using a multi-level approach.

Provincial and district levels:

Bodies are being upgraded, and decentralised planning, financing and coordination procedures practised in cooperation with the population.

Municipal level:

Municipal representatives are being upgraded and assisted in exercising their new duties, with the involvement of the local population.

Village level:

The population and organisations are being promoted, to help them focus their interests and articulate them vis-à-vis municipal representatives. Self-help measures are also encouraging the people to set up self-help and interest groups.

Municipal councils and the population become familiar with their new roles and duties

The focus of support for decentralisation reform is on upgrading newly elected municipal councillors. As well as organising and supervising national training courses, the project supports the elaboration of municipal development plans and their practical implementation. The open attitude of the municipal councils to popular participation is an important learning field. In the municipalities too, civil society institutions are being informed about new opportunities for participation, and helped to become involved in local planning processes.

Participation in round tables

The municipal councils are being strengthened by establishing a forum that brings together all municipalities at district level (district forum). There, municipal councils can share their experience and ideas, learn from one another and develop ideas on how to shape their own roles and duties within the



Rural Development Programme Kampot and Kampong Thom

Term: 26 September 1995 to 31 March 2008

Objective of the programme: The rural population, their village organisations and self-governing bodies make full use of their development potential, use improved services offered by state and private providers, and expand their economic activities to embrace new, income-generating areas.

Lead executing agency: Ministry for Rural Development, Cambodia

Contact: Dr Angelika Fleddermann,
angelika.fleddermann@gtz.de

new decentralised structure. The network also offers the opportunity to join forces to represent shared interests vis-à-vis the district, provincial or national levels.

Civil society raises its voice

Within the framework of the project, the participation of civil society in local self-government is also being strengthened. In this context, GTZ is working with the traditional civil society structures, the "pagoda committees".³

The umbrella organisation of the pagoda committees, the Pagoda Coordination Committee (PaCoCo) is an important contact for municipal councils. PaCoCo also plays a vitally important role in representing the interests of civil society at district and provincial levels. In some municipalities, the communication channels between the PaCoCo and the municipal level have now been put on a formal footing. Thus PaCoCo informs municipal representatives about activities and meetings, allowing them to take part in the meetings. In turn, members of PaCoCo are invited to the meetings of municipal representatives once a month.

On the road to improved communication and sharing experience and ideas

The last three years since the municipal representatives were elected in 2002 have shown that it is indispensable to establish forums to exchange experience and ideas as well as formalised channels of communication for participation. In Cambodia in particular, these structures and mechanisms help the people to become familiar with participation. When the district forums were established, it became clear that participants found it difficult to express



their opinions freely, particularly in the presence of government representatives. They do not find it easy to develop their own ideas, accept responsibility and represent positions together. Only a longer learning process can change cultural attitudes and social behaviour patterns. Initial successes can, however, already be seen, as discussions and negotiations in the forums become steadily more open, and municipal representatives become more self-assured in their dealings with representatives of the district and provincial levels. The facilitation skills they learn help them in their day-to-day work in the municipality.

Village-level structures, such as PaCoCo, have managed not only to improve participation in municipal planning, but also to give villagers a better general understanding of the spectrum of duties of municipal councils, their role in economic and social development, and their own rights and responsibility for the community.

³ Pagoda committees are traditional self-help organisations closely based on the Buddhist ideal of mutual assistance and security. Over and above their cultural and spiritual duties, they play an important economic role. For instance, the pagoda committees have set up "rice banks".

Lessons learned

A customised promotion strategy with a special combination of instruments is required.

Measures to develop rules and procedures as well as to promote the participation capacities of the country's citizens must be well balanced. There is no point in establishing formal opportunities for participation if the population is not aware of its rights, does not demand them, and has no capac-

ity to participate. It is thus essential both to mainstream participation rights and to initiate empowerment measures. In this context, the different German development cooperation organisations should work hand in hand, and gear their work to a common strategic objective. The various entry points and competencies can thus be packaged such that they complement one another in the most expedient way possible.

Cooperation with credible actors determines the success or failure of further training or consultancy measures.

The selection of the right partner is of major importance in development cooperation if the support provided is to be effective. Along with the ability to understand the culture and the mindset of the people, the trust and confidence enjoyed by a partner organisation within the society is an important criterion to take into account. The loss of cultural heritage and values as a result of the people's experi-

ence of dictatorship and their lack of trust in state structures mean that there is a need for credible organisations and values. Religious organisations and structures, such as the pagoda committees or the Lutheran World Federation, can base their work on traditional religious values and pass these values on. Because of the high level of acceptance they have among the population, they can work more successfully and more convincingly than can state organisations. Development cooperation can achieve a broad impact by selecting credible and competent partners and suitable multipliers.

Formal government and administrative structures can be changed more simply than the underlying political and cultural norms and traditional values.

Experience now evaluated proves how important it is for citizens to be aware of their rights and to demand them, for them to represent their own interests openly and to make use of participation opportunities. It is not enough simply to train political office bearers in

the use of participatory techniques either. This must go hand in hand with a change in the way of thinking and social behaviour patterns. Politics must become more open, to allow civil society to help shape politics too. It has emerged that effective empowerment to promote participation can only have a positive effect if the empowerment itself is organised along participatory lines.

Citizens expect participation to bring benefits.

Citizens making use of the participation opportunities available at local level expect local government action to bring a positive impetus to economic development. This is particularly true of poor sections of the population, for whom active participation entails costs or lost earnings. Participation for the

sake of it is not an attractive option for these people. This should certainly be borne in mind when devising measures to promote the participation capabilities of the people. A worthwhile development cooperation contribution should manage to achieve an astute balance between measures to strengthen local economic development and interventions to promote civil commitment.

Popular participation can be effectively promoted by socially and culturally appropriate forums.

In parts of the world in which participation is not taken for granted, formalised channels help stakeholders to practice participatory procedures. One example is provided by the district forums, in which all the key actors, including organised civil society, come together at one table. It is a top priority to develop round tables, councils, etc. specifically for

the respective context. Generally speaking, they will initially need help in organising appropriate empowerment measures. It is vital that the structures of the actors involved be seen as expedient and important. They must accept ownership if the structures are to survive once external support is discontinued. When introducing institutional arrangements, experience gained in other countries can be an invaluable help. It should not, however, merely be taken over and used as a blueprint.

German development cooperation organisations still do not promote interest representation/lobbying skills to an adequate extent.

Poor rural families have limited options to bring their concerns to the attention of those who matter, when important political and economic actors are involved. Advocacy organisations, such as LWFC or BFD, thus play a major role by representing the interests of the poor through lobbying. At the same

time, the abilities of the poor to make their concerns heard themselves should be fostered. Those development cooperation organisations which work with state partners should step up their efforts to act as brokers for popular participation. More priority should be accorded in policies and government advisory services to ensuring citizen participation. Key topics such as accountability and transparent budget management belong firmly on the development cooperation agenda.

Development cooperation organisations enhance the effectiveness of their measures if their own organisational culture is shaped by participatory principles.

The more internal participation options offered by an organisation, the more probable it is that employees of that organisation will be good promoters of participation in their work with cooperation partners

and beneficiaries. Experience has shown that the quality of participation suffers significantly if an organisation adopts double standards. The promotion of participation inside and outside the organisation should thus go hand in hand. The LWFC has particularly promising experience to contribute in this context. It enjoys a high level of credibility among donors and partners alike.



Abbreviations

| | | |
|--------|-------|---|
| AusAid | ..... | Australian Agency for International Development |
| BFD | ..... | Buddhism for Development |
| BMZ | ..... | Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| CBOs | ..... | Community-based organisations |
| DED | ..... | German Development Service |
| DWHH | ..... | German Agro Action |
| EED | ..... | Church Development Service |
| FFS | ..... | Farmer Field School |
| GTZ | ..... | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH |
| HBS | ..... | Heinrich Böll Foundation |
| IFAD | ..... | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| InWEnt | ..... | Capacity Building International, Germany |
| KAS | ..... | Konrad Adenauer Foundation |
| KfW | ..... | Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau |
| LWFC | ..... | Lutheran World Federation Cambodia Program |
| MDGs | ..... | Millennium Development Goals |
| NGOs | ..... | Non-governmental organisations |
| NPRS | ..... | National Poverty Reduction Strategy |
| PaCoCo | ..... | Pagoda Coordination Committee |
| PRSP | ..... | Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers |
| RDP | ..... | Rural Development Programme |
| UNCDF | ..... | United Nations Capital Development Fund |
| VDC | ..... | Village development committee |
| WFP | ..... | World Food Programme |



Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65760 Eschborn
Federal Republic of Germany

T +49 6196 79-0
F +49 6196 79-1115
E info@gtz.de
I www.gtz.de

