

# CAMBODIA



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

## SUPPORT FOR SUB-NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN CAMBODIA (SNDD) - PHASE III IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK (ISAF)

new NP-SNDD 2021-2030 (NP2). ISAF remains an integral part of the reform.

SDC supported the government's SNDD basket fund from 2013 until 2017. As a response to significant changes within the political context (the dissolution of the main opposition party CNRP by the Supreme Court, and the banning of its main politicians), SDC decided to earmark its contribution to ISAF. The focus on ISAF is an appropriate and relevant mechanism in pursuing a democratic dialogue allowing SDC to channel its funds through the World Bank trust fund.

This project forms an integral part of the Swiss Cooperation Programme in the Mekong Region 2022-25.

### OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of ISAF is to improve the performance of public service providers (primary schools, health centres, and communes) through improved transparency, strengthened citizen engagement, and responsive action. The overall goal shall be reached through four outcomes:

**Outcome 1:** Performance of public service providers is improved.

**Outcome 2:** Responsiveness of public service providers is improved

**Outcome 3:** Citizen participation in monitoring of public service providers and engaging in actions for improvement is enhanced

**Outcome 4:** Citizen voice in engaging with local public service providers is enhanced

### EXPECTED RESULTS

Key expected results of ISAF include:  
1. Citizens are better informed on service delivery standards, budgets, and performance.



Community Accountability Facilitator presents service standards for communes  
Photo©World Vision

### BACKGROUND

Cambodia's decentralization reform was introduced in the year 2000 which led to the establishment of democratically-elected commune and Sangkat councils as bodies of the sub-national administration. In 2008, the reform was extended to the province and district level with the first indirect election of councils held in 2009. As of 2010, the process was guided by the National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development 2010-2020 (NP-SNDD), which combines the processes of de-concentration and decentralisation with the overarching objective of achieving democratic, inclusive, and equitable development.

The Implementation of Social Accountability Framework (ISAF), with technical support from the World Bank, was adopted in 2015 as a mechanism to facilitate participation and service delivery at the sub-national level, and was integrated as an important element in the NP-SNDD 2010-2020. In pursuit of the decentralisation reform, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has recently launched a

**PROJECT AT A GLANCE:**

**Duration**  
 Previous phases: 2013 – 2019  
 Phase III: 01 Jun 2019 – 31 Dec 2023

**Budget**  
 Total budget:  
 USD 32,522,623  
 Swiss contribution:  
 CHF 4,200,000

**Implementing Agencies**  
 - World Bank  
 - Royal Government of Cambodia, represented by the Secretariat of National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development  
 - World Vision International Cambodia

- Subnational government officials and service providers are better informed on the priorities and views of citizens regarding governance and public services, and thereby share a common understanding of priority actions needed to improve local service delivery.
- The capacity of citizens to productively engage the government in improving services and enhancing accountability is strengthened, while subnational government and service providers are willing and able to engage with citizens meaningfully.
- Community Accountability Facilitators are will and able to effectively lead accountability-related outreach, monitoring, and engagement processes at local level.
- Identifiable changes are made to policies, guidelines and/or practices of state and non-state actors as a result of learning from social accountability activities.

**APPROACH**

Switzerland, together with Germany and Australia, supports ISAF through a trust fund managed by the World Bank. ISAF is implemented through an annual series of facilitated, participatory activities at community level that include: 1) Enhancing citizen access to information on public service standards, performance, and budgets; 2) Independent citizen-led monitoring and assessment of public services; and 3) The creation and implementation of agreed Joint Accountability Action Plans (JAAPs) to improve public service delivery (with particular attention to the needs of marginalised groups). These actions are supported by on-going 4) Training and capacity development of (voluntary) Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) and local government actors; and (5) Program management, monitoring, and learning activities. NGOs that receive financial support from the trust fund are key actors in facilitating activities of citizens (demand side) through CAFs, while the Secretariat of the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDDS) of the RGC coordinates the activities of sub-national government and service providers (supply side). The Partnership Steering Committee, chaired by the Ministry of Interior, ensures oversight of the joint implementation of ISAF, and makes decisions on policy matters, program planning, implementation, financing arrangements, target areas, sector expansion, and functionality of the framework. The funding parties have created a coordination committee to discuss policy implications, experiences and lessons learned, and to approve financial

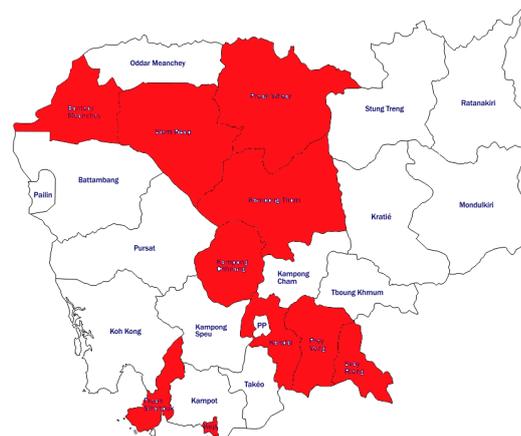
and operational reports of the trust fund.

**KEY RESULTS AND INSIGHTS FROM PREVIOUS PHASES**

The SNDD reform has achieved promising results during the previous two phases (2011-2018). These include the establishment of Sub-National Administration (SNA) structures with the deployment of nearly 10,000 civil servants, and production of large number of acts, decrees, guidelines, manuals, and technical documents; among them also the ISAF plan. Additionally, gender equality was mainstreamed across all guidelines and manuals, providing the basis for their application. Based on the adopted instruments and framework, SNAs have consequently improved their performance and are better involved in the activities of the line ministries in their jurisdictions. They acknowledge their decision-making power and contribute to a more responsive service delivery. ISAF was implemented in 98 districts (of 159), 786 communes (of 1410) and achieved noticeable results, including well-established and strengthened partnerships and cooperation between supply-side (state) and demand-side (civil society) actors, enhanced transparency of public services, raised awareness regarding citizen rights and service standards, and strengthened citizen voice on service delivery. This has considerably improved relations and trust between citizens and public service providers.

**TARGET GROUP AND PROJECT LOCATION**

The target group includes the service providers (supply side) of nationwide sub-national level (commune/Sangkat and district/municipal administrations, health centres, and primary schools), and all citizens, both men and women (demand side) in ten provinces of Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Preah Vihear, Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Prey Veng, Kandal, Svay Rieng, Preah Sihanouk, and Kep.



Target provinces highlighted in red colour

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