

STIMULATING PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (SPACE) – PHASE I



Live video of Klahan9 Roadshow Academy is being streamed on Klahan9 Facebook page, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. ©BBC Media Action Cambodia

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

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project is active participation of young Cambodian women and men in public life, which enables them to influence decision-making.

The aim is to achieve the following four outcomes:

Outcome 1: Young women and men have improved knowledge on civic issues and ways to participate in public life.

Outcome 2: Young women and men have increased skills, confidence, motivation and networks to participate in public life.

Outcome 3: Young women and men have sustained opportunities to express themselves and engage in constructive dialogue and discussion on public issues.

Outcome 4: More positive attitudes towards young women and men's participation in public life are held by parents, community gatekeepers and decision-makers.

BACKGROUND

Cambodia is characterised by a young population with approximately 60% under the age of 25. In contrast, the decision-making and shaping of Cambodia's future still lies with the older generation. According to recent studies conducted by BBC Media Action and the EU, young women and men report positive attitudes towards civic engagement but low practice. Common barriers that prevent young people from participating in public life include a lack of knowledge, low confidence, a lack of soft skills, and the perception that their voice and opinion is not valued by parents and decision-makers. This is linked to both a lack of access to information as well as limited availability of information. While an increase in the use of social media and messaging apps creates opportunities for self-expression, networking, and civic engagement, it also carries risks for Cambodian users, particularly if young people use social media as their primary source of information.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The first phase of SPACE limits its short-term objectives to strengthening the youths' skills, confidence and knowledge, to opening safe spaces for dialogue, and to influencing the decision-makers' attitudes towards youth's civic engagement. Some key outputs of phase 1 are as follows:

- Skills development of media practitioners to produce public interest content for young people on civic issues.
- Production at scale of public interest media

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

Duration
Phase I: May 2021 - Dec 2024

Budget
Total budget:
USD 5,370,000
Swiss contribution:
CHF 2,470,000

Implementing Agency
BBC Media Action (BBCMA)

Other partners
- Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC)
- Youth Resource Development Programme (YRDP)
- Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center (Bophana Center)

content providing young women and men with information on civic issues and creating opportunities for them to have constructive dialogue with decision-makers.

- Provision of offline opportunities and safe and inclusive online platforms for young women and men to build soft or transferable skills and develop their networks relating to civic engagement.
- Creation and convening of opportunities at community level for young women and men to collaborate with decision-makers on addressing issues of public importance.

The project’s media content and online spaces will be accessible nationwide. Offline, outreach activities will target 932 young women and men as direct beneficiaries in the target provinces. 45 media practitioners and filmmakers will be trained, and three media partners will receive targeted capacity strengthening from BBC Media Action.

APPROACH

SPACE is evidence-led and implemented through a unique combination of various approaches, ranging from mainstream media (e.g. TV show), a social-media platform and independent documentary films in combination with offline outreach activities. Among others, the project will use the current Klahan9 social media platform and build on this unprecedented reach, impact and understanding of young people to pivot towards civic engagement. BBC Media Action creates inclusive on- and offline spaces for civic engagement, encourages a dialogue of youth and decision-makers and strengthens the provision of media for youth. The component of community outreach includes support to civil society, including youth-focused organisations as well as media outlets and practitioners. Thematically, the project will focus on the main issues for youth, including education, health, economy and employment as well as others. It will support the development of critical thinking, media and digital literacy skills, and film production expertise. SPACE uniquely combines the media and communication expertise of BBC Media Action with the long-standing and deeply rooted community experience of local partners such as Youth Resource Development Program, Youth Council of Cambodia, and the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Centre. While the activities in phase 1 are confined to Cambodia, a scoping study on a potential upscaling to the regional level will be conducted.

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Swiss Cooperation Office and Consular Agency SDC
50, Street 334, Boeung Keng Kang, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Email: phnompenh@eda.admin.ch
Web: www.eda.admin.ch/cambodia
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KEY RESULTS AND INSIGHTS FROM PREVIOUS PROJECTS

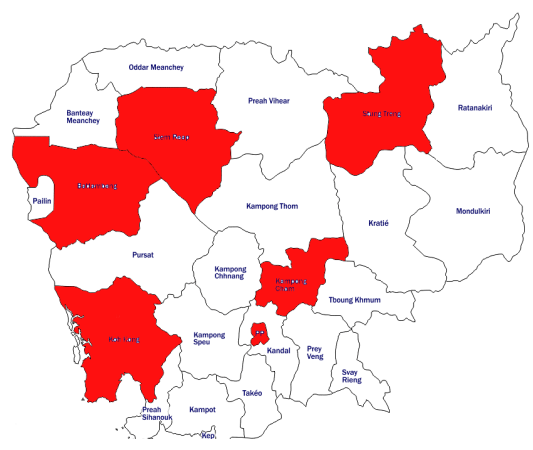
This project builds on BBC Media Action’s previous projects Loy9 and Klahan9. Loy9 improved the civic knowledge and electoral participation of over two million young Cambodian viewers. BBC Media Action drew on these achievements to build the Klahan9 project, supported by Sida. Klahan9 reaches 2.3 million people through TV and boasts over 1 million Facebook followers, supporting them to secure decent work by providing information about economic issues and employment opportunities, as well as by strengthening self-efficacy and motivation. Sound data prove the impact on knowledge and behaviour – 83% of young people who have seen/heard about Klahan9 say that they have learned something from its content and 57% say that they have made a change or taken action as a result.

TARGET GROUP AND PROJECT LOCATION

The direct beneficiaries targeted by the activities of SPACE fall into four groups:

- Youth that only have limited access to social media and low level of participation living in Koh Kong, Steung Treng, and Siem Reap;
- Youth with higher education living in Battambang, Kampong Cham and Phnom Penh;
- Young media practitioners and upcoming filmmakers;
- TV audience (aged between 15 and 55 years) and social media users (15-30 years).

Parents, community leaders, other decision-makers (e.g. councillors and governors at commune, district and provincial level) count as indirect beneficiaries.



Target provinces highlighted in red colour