



ភាគជាដៃគូរបស់នៃអង្គការក្រៅរដ្ឋាភិបាល  
NGO EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

# Life Skills Practices in Cambodia

## A Review of Implementation by NEP Members

Prepared by: Ms. Paola Massa, Ms. Ali Lane, & Mr. Kurt Bredenberg

**FEBRUARY 2012**

### Funded by:

**Asia South Pacific Association For Basic and Adult Education  
(ASPBAE)**

### Through:

***NGO Education Partnership (NEP)***



## Table of Contents

<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	iii
<i>Executive Summary</i>	1
<b>1. BACKGROUND</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. LIFE SKILLS POLICY FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 General History	4
2.2 Definition of Life Skills and Local Life Skills in the institutional framework	5
<b>3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 General Description	7
3.2 Sample in details: Role and responsibilities	10
3.2.1 Ministry Level	10
3.2.2 Provincial and District Level	13
3.2.3 NGO Level	14
3.2.4 School Level	16
<b>4. DATA FINDINGS</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 General Knowledge of the Policy Framework	18
4.1.1 Familiarity with the Main Documents	18
4.2 Policy Strengths & Weaknesses	23
4.3 Implementation Issues	24
4.3.1 Actors Involved	25
4.3.2 Suggested and Most Popular Topics	27
4.3.3 Benefits of Life Skills Education	28
4.3.4 Main Challenges	29
4.3.5 Best Practices	32
4.3.6 Possible solutions and future plans	32
4.4 MoEYS Future Planning	33
<b>5. WORKSHOP RESULTS</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>36</b>
6.1 General Conclusions	36
6.2 Recommendations	36
<b>ANNEXES</b>	<b>40</b>

## List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBE	Cambodia Basic Education <i>project</i>
CDP	Curriculum development Policy
CEFAC	Commune EFA commission
CSEF	Civil Society education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCD	Department of Curriculum Development
DOE	District Office of Education
DP	Development Partner
EEQP	Enhancing Education Quality Project
EFA	Education for All
KAPE	Kampuchean Action for Primary Education
IBEC	Improved Basic Education in Cambodia
LLS	Local Life Skills
LLSP	Local Life Skills Program
LSS	Lower Secondary School
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
NFE	Non Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PB	Program based (budget)
PED	Primary Education Department
POE	Provincial Office of Education
PRD	Pedagogical Research Department

PTTC	Provincial Teacher Training College
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
RTTC	Regional Teacher Training College
SED	Secondary Education Department
TTD	Teacher Training Department
VOD	Vocational and Orientation Department
WE	World Education

## Executive Summary

In the last decade, Life Skills implementation has set some strong pillars and notable achievements, with the development of a specific Life Skills Policy in 2006 and specific time allocation in the National Curriculum, by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS). In 2009, the Government redefined the roles and responsibilities of MoEYS departments involved in the area of Life Skills and the Department of Vocational Orientation (VOD) has assumed a leading role.

At Ministry level the intention to improve the quality of the action is clear, but a lack of funds and coordination has jeopardized the effective implementation and a real impact at school level hasn't been perceived yet. Intensive training and periodic follow up is crucial too for the process. Stronger cooperation between Governmental bodies and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) would also allow for the achievement of better and faster results in the overall implementation.

The aim of the study was to analysis the status of Life Skills implementation within NEP members with a particular focus on implementation at basic education level (grades 1 -9) within the state school system. From a first analysis of the relevant documents, emerged the need to clarify and distinguish between the terms "Life Skills" and "Local Life Skills". Local Life Skills can be considered a sub-group inside the general group of Life Skills and addresses the practical side of life skills application and also the more immediate application. This represents the majority of the activities implemented so far in schools and is the part of Life Skills that the central government specifically encourages NGOs to help to implement in the framework. Outside of this, what is defined as "general life Skills and pre vocational skills", are in theory included in the National Curriculum and the central government therefore do not consider it a need for further implementation outside the normal teaching time. For this reason the study focused more on the implementation of the Local Life Skills Program (LLSP), even though it was found during the study that many NGOs disagree and currently teach general life skills during extra hours and as such some consideration is given in to life skills as a whole.

Local Life Skills activities are perceived to be skills that students acquire to support the family or their own income in the immediate present or in the future. The Life skills Policy issued in 2006 states that simple career activities are meant "to help learners to improve their family life or income ". Only a few informants read them as practical lessons that combine theory with practice and can teach students examples of how to develop personal life skills without having an immediate aim of economical gain.

It is essential to consider that basic economic needs and local life skills teaching can respond to these needs, transferring basic technical knowledge to children that represent a vehicle to reach families. A balance between real need and child rights to their childhood is a sensitive and vital point of reflection. For this reason LLS activities are not introduced in the first years of study, but there is a general consensus to introduce these activities gradually, maintaining always the pedagogical intent to prepare children for the future world of work.

The study highlighted a number of challenges to the successful implementation of LLS. For NGOs, MoEYS and the schools, the shortage of teaching modules and support material is identified as a key

problem that undermines the overall implementation at school level. Schools also indicate the lack of budget and lack of technical expertise as key barriers.

At the same time, local life skills are frequently perceived as non-compulsory by schools and this represents a considerable obstacle for both NGOs and Central Government. Increased awareness of the policy framework at provincial, district, and school levels is fundamental to defining a strong starting point for future implementation. Authorities need to be able to lead the process and facilitate school interventions. This awareness should be part of a capacity development process directed to Central Government as well as to school directors and teachers.

There are a number of LLSP interventions taking place which, whilst there may be some local government involvement, do not involve or report to the Ministry level. As such much of the knowledge base is being lost. It is essential for future sustainability that MoEYS are fully aware of pilot interventions being implemented and that experience and best practice is shared amongst all key stakeholders.

At present, there are only very few pilot projects that are running life skills activities in cooperation with MoEYS. MoEYS has been involved in monitoring some of these and helping to collect both examples of good practice and to modify the materials used for life skill implementation. If the results of these pilots are positive, a nationalization of the best practices found will be considered on the Central Government agenda.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Civil Society in Cambodia has the capacity and potential to empower the youth of this country to engage in productive employment by imparting life skills in schools. Cambodia is endowed with development partners (DPs), whose financial support to CSOs, in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Vocational Training, can bring real and lasting changes to the lives of Cambodian youths. In this regard, technical and financial cooperation between CSOs and DPs is of profound importance.

NGO Education Partnership (NEP) is a membership organization which considers it crucial to build the capacity of its members in order to ensure effective implementation of their projects, in line with the relevant ministries' policies and guidelines. NEP members should be able to assist MoEYS in implementing its policies, especially to help children to have access to schools and to help schools operate effectively.

NEP has implemented a number of activities to support its members, so that they are able to work more effectively with MoEYS, as well as to respond to the needs of children. Some of these activities include donor relationship building, project management and organizational development.

Life Skills Education has had a patchy history in Cambodia. Although MoEYS approved a policy for Life Skills Education in 2006, it has been acknowledged by many in government that the policy has been 'dead in the water' for many years. Some of the lessons learned in this respect include an excessive number of topics, too little structure in the curriculum, and lack of technical support for teachers. In recent years, donors have been assisting the Ministry to revitalize life skills education with the development and implementation of new pilots that try to address some of the lessons of the past. Some of these pilots are now approaching completion.

NEP, in collaboration with Kampuchean Action for Primary Education/World Education, has been raising awareness on life skills for NEP members through the lessons learnt thus far from the Improved Basic Education in Cambodia (IBEC) Project, funded by USAID. Activities during the last two years have included national workshops, field visits for NEP members to see activities at schools, and consultative workshops with MoEYS. NEP views this study as a crucial starting point to expand the Local Life skills project with its members.

With funding support and collaboration with the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE) and World Education (WE), NEP wishes to establish a pool fund for its members to help schools to implement life skills projects and promote the realization of the MoEYS' Life Skills Education policy goals. As noted above, there are a few major life skills education pilots currently in progress that are being implemented collaboratively with the Ministry. When the pilots are completed, implementation frameworks will be finalized and readied for promulgation. Thus, the existence of a Pool Fund would serve a very useful and relevant purpose to roll out the operational life skills frameworks recently developed in cooperation with Ministry. The pool fund would provide a bridge to CSOs to work more closely with the Ministry and strengthen the bond between civil society and government.

Therefore, KAPE was commissioned by NEP to carry out this study to investigate the actual implementation of life skills by NEP members in state schools at grades 1 - 9, and be able to define a clear base line for the pool fund definition with NEP member consensus and collaboration.

## 2. LIFE SKILLS POLICIES FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 General History

Within MoEYS, the former Pedagogical Research Department (PRD), now known as the Department of Curriculum Development (DCD), has been responsible<sup>1</sup> for the elaboration of policies and guidelines in relation to life skills. In 2001, the PRD elaborated a first Policy that presented a broad framework for further thinking but was not accompanied by resource packages.

In December 2004, MoEYS approved the Curriculum Development Policy (CDP) 2005-2009, an updated version of the then existing curriculum policy developed in 1996. For the first time a clear definition and clarification on the delivery of Life Skills education, including the new concept of Local Life Skills (LLS), was provided. It states that LLS are supposed to *“equip students with specialized local Life Skills, including where appropriate, local vocational training”*, distinguishing them from the broader definition of Life Skills as *“the intellectual, personal, interpersonal and vocational skills that enable informed decision-making, effective communication, and coping and self-management skills that contribute to a healthy and productive life”*.

In order to define the framework implementation of the LLSP, MoEYS revised the 2001 Policy and developed additional documents to complete the Policy on Curriculum Development 2005-2009, in collaboration with several donors. The main documentation available is the following:

1. Curriculum Development Policy 2005-2009
2. Policy for Life Skills Education in 2006,
3. Guidelines for Local Life Skills Program implementation for schools, communities and NGOs
4. Twenty Local Life Skills modules.

**Fig. 2.1: Main documentation elaborated on Life Skills by the MoEYS**



The 2006 Policy on Life Skills was developed by the DCD, based on the 2001 Policy prepared by the former Pedagogical Research Department.

The 2006 Policy presents a definition of life skills, distinguishing between “Life Skills” and “Local Life Skills”, referring to LLS as “specific”, “practical” skills, differentiating them from the “general”, foundational ones. The Policy provides details on the strategies, methodologies and guide for implementation for both the formal and non formal education context.

<sup>1</sup>It would seem that some of the responsibilities regarding life skills have shifted from the DCD to VOD following the approval of the sub-decree 84, 2009. This sub-decree redefines the responsibilities of different Departments regarding Life Skills.



The “Implementation Guide for Schools, Local Communities and NGOs” provides guidelines and instructions to all stakeholders on how to conduct LLSP implementation in accordance with the 2005-2009 CDP and the 20 LLSP Modules elaborated during the CBE project in coordination with RTI were meant to provide a practical guideline textbook for teachers.

As we will mention further in the study, although representing good efforts in supporting teaching work in schools, these Modules are not considered substantial enough for supporting the teaching in schools: they contain useful basic outlines for all the chosen topics, but are not structured as lesson plans. The majority of teachers are unable to develop the information and transform them in to full lesson plans for the students by themselves.

## **2.2 Definition of Life Skills and Local Life Skills in the Institutional Framework**

In the Curriculum Development Plan 2005-2009 (CDP), Life Skills and Local Life Skills are defined and clearly separated: life skills are “the intellectual, personal and vocational skills that enable informed decision making, effective communication, and coping and self-management skills that contribute to a healthy and productive life”, while Local Life Skills are topics that “will equip students with specialized local Life Skills, including, where appropriate, local vocational Skills”. In the CDP, 2 to 5 hours were allocated for LLSP. There are plans for the allocated time to be officially limited to 2 hours for both Primary and Lower Secondary levels in the near future.

In the Life skills Policy elaborated and approved in 2006 by MoEYS, we can find a classification of those life skills and LLS as described below:

### **A. Basic Life Skills**

“Basic Life Skills are necessary for all learners to get fundamental skills for their living, Basic Life Skills are:

- **General Life Skills** are personal hygiene, safety, planning for daily life, organization, relationship and being good citizens with high morals;
- **Pre-vocational Skills** that enable students to be productive contributors to the workforce or their communities including communication and mathematical skills, problem solving and team work. General and Pre-vocational skills are regarded as basic skills for all learners.”

### **B. Career Skills**

“Career Skills are selected by the learners to study as the stepping stone notion of fundamental vocation to the future specific career. Career skills are:

- **Simple Career Skills** are skills that require short training courses and simple techniques to help learners to improve their family life or income. Each learner has different approaches in developing these simple career-oriented skills as they depend on resources, local needs and individual interests.
- **Vocational Skills** are skills that required medium or long training courses and highly technical capacity to learners for future professions.”

Life Skills such as critical thinking, solving problems, ability to cooperate, etc, are therefore defined as **basic life skills** (general and pre-vocational skills) and hence are said to be incorporated into each of the subjects present in the National Curriculum, while LLS are defined as **Career Skills**, and subdivided between simple career skills (for Primary and Lower Secondary Education) and Vocational Skills, the correspondent of EVEP, the Elective Vocational Education Program and the Curriculum Development Policy defines a specific separate time for them.

### 3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION

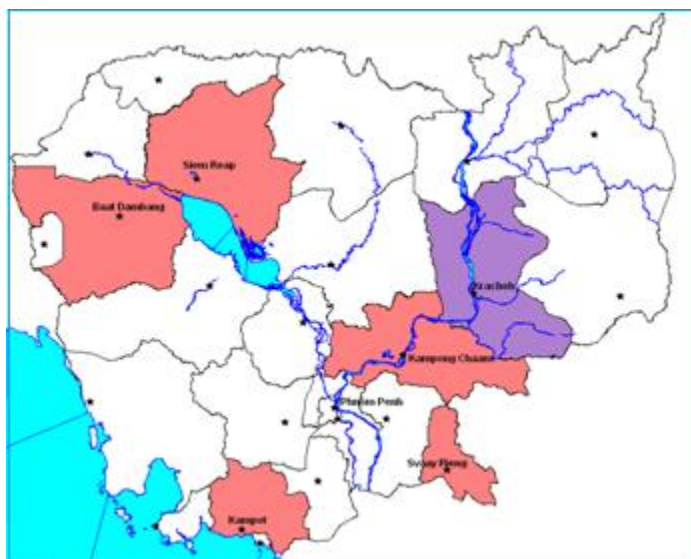
#### 3.1 General Description

In order to ensure an informed and accurate assessment of life skills practices within NEP members, including a general overview of the Ministry, Provincial and District Level involvement and detailed tasks, survey instruments were designed to generate data sets that cut across multiple variables. Multiple data collection methodologies were employed including face to face interviews, self administered questionnaires and structured questionnaires submitted to school Directors (see Annex 1), integrated with the analysis of material produced so far in the area of Life Skills (MoEYS' Policies, MoEYS' guidelines, Ministry decrees and life skills teaching material by NGOs and MoEYS).

These various methodologies were applied to 3 target groups – (i) Ministry, Province, District authorities and selected NGO staff, a different questionnaire was elaborated for each of them, and completed through carrying out semi-structured interviews (with up to 5 members of the same government department or NGO); (ii) All NEP members: were requested to fill in a self administered structured questionnaire (iii) school Directors: each NEP member was asked to interview at least two school directors using structured questionnaires (this included schools, which were already implementing life skills as well as those not yet involved in life skills activities).

The **semi-structured interviews** were carried out with all the relevant Departments in the Ministry of Education involved in Life Skills, a total of 5 Departments, while for Provinces and Districts a sample of 6 to 8 were chosen at each level, depending on the availability of the POE/DOE representatives, and a sample of 7 NGOs plus an independent consultant, chosen from some of the most experienced working in the field of Life Skills.

Figure 3.1: Survey coverage: Battambang / Siem Reap/ Kratie/ Kampong Cham/ Svay Rieng & Kampot



These **semi-structured** interviews aimed to provide vital information on their key roles and add depth to the understanding of the opinions of the main stakeholders involved in life skills in terms of definition, implementation and supervision of the framework, best practices and main challenges faced so far.

The **self-administered questionnaires** completed by NGOs were utilized to gain a broader information base on NEP member activities implemented so far, as well as on their challenges and best practices at school level. A total of **25** members, out of a total of 105, answered in time to be included in the survey.

The data collected from School Directors was administered through a **structured questionnaire** used to interview them through assistance from an NEP member organization. This was to provide additional information from the direct implementers/beneficiaries of life skills or to find out why some schools have not yet implemented life skills programs. A total of 47 schools were interviewed using the structured questionnaire.

Due to the limited timeframe and scope of the study it was not possible to interview individual students or student Councils. For future implementation of activities, it would be recommended to include student perceptions of life skills to complete the approach for effective planning and implementation.

Data collection methodologies used for each set of key informants are summarized in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Summary of Methodologies Employed with Various Key Informants**

Methodology	Ministry Level Departments	POEs and DOEs	Schools	NGOs	Independent Consultants
<b>Semi-Structured Interviews</b>	√ ( 5 ) 1. DCD 2. VOD 3. PED 4. SED 5. TTD	√ ( 6 POEs + 8 DOEs ) From: 1. Kampong Cham 2. Kratie 3. Siem Reap 4. Svay Rieng 5. Battambang 6. Kampot	x	√ ( 7 ) 1. CARE 2. World Vision 3. Room to Read 4. VVOB 5. Open Institute 6. World Education 7. KAPE	√ ( 1 )
<b>Self-Administered Questionnaires</b>	x	x	x	√ ( 25 )	x
<b>Structured Questionnaires</b>	x	x	√ ( 47 )	x	x

The informants at each level are described below. It should be noted, however, that it was not always the case that specific key target informants were present. Therefore, certain discretionary decisions were made to identify alternative informants as needed, as indicated below.

- For each Department either the Director or the Deputy Director was interviewed by the survey team members, although during the interviews sometimes other members of the department

also participated. Hence there were between 1 and 5 members present from each department during the semi-structured interviews.

- For each province surveyed, the research team or an NEP member met with the Director of the Provincial Office of Education (POE) or alternatively the Deputy Director or The Director in charge of Primary or Lower Secondary Education Office.
- For each district surveyed, the research team or an NEP member met with the Director of the District Office of Education (DOE) or the Deputy Director
- For each school surveyed, NEP member organizations met the Director, deputy director and/or teacher in charge of Life Skills to administer the structured questionnaire
- For the 7 NGOs and the independent consultant, during semi-structured interviews, the survey team met with between 1 and 3 members of the organization and carried out the semi-structured interview

## 3.2 Sample Details

### 3.2.1 Ministry Level

Methodology applied for the interviews: Semi-structured interviews

It was identified that there were 5 different Departments that were relevant to Life skills:

1. The Teacher Training Department (TTD)
2. The Department of Curriculum Development (DCD)
3. The Department of Primary Education (PED)
4. The Secondary Education Department (SED)
5. The Vocational Orientation Department (VOD)

The key roles and responsibilities of each of these departments as outlined by the informants from each department can be seen in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2: Key Roles and Responsibilities of Departments Overseeing Life Skills**

MoEYS Department	Role and responsibilities regarding Life Skills
Teacher Training Department (TTD)	Definition of material and Monitoring & Evaluation at PTTCs and RTTCs levels
Secondary Education Department (SED)	No longer involved directly. Its responsibilities were passed to the VOD. However, they still attend consultation meetings.
Department of Curriculum Development (DCD)	Have been responsible for the definition of Policies, guidelines and textbooks.
Primary Education Department (PED)	Definition of guidelines for Primary Implementation. Monitoring & Evaluation at primary level.
The Vocational Orientation Department (VOD)	Sub-decree 84 suggests, they are now responsible for the definition of all new Life skill policies and oversight of its implementation. They have the responsibility to report on life skill activity at the annual national education congress. The exact details of their responsibilities are in the process of being defined as they are a relatively new department created in 2009, following sub-decree 84.

One or more representatives from all 5 Departments were interviewed during the study using the semi-structured interview questionnaire. The aim of the interviews was to clarify the role and responsibilities of each Department, identify their perception of life skills programs and the actual implementation status, achievements and constraints identified so far as well as future plans.

All the Departments identified roles and responsibilities. However, the VOD is a relatively new department created in 2009, through sub decree 84, through which the Government re-established the competences of each Department in MoEYS and created the new Vocational Orientation Department. As such, this new Department is still defining what its specific role within the Government framework means in practice. The task is not easy as some of the other departments have previously been responsible for the life skill tasks which now seem to come under the remit of the VOD and due to the history of donor support to these other departments and a lack of understanding by some donors, NGOs and even some other ministry departments defining the exact role of the VOD in this respect is still proving to be quite a challenging and difficult process.

### **Teaching training Department (TTD)**

This Department stated that it is responsible to design, monitor and evaluate any intervention delivered in the Regional Teacher Training Colleges (RTTCs) and Provincial Teacher Training Colleges (PTTCs). They develop curriculum, monitor the implementation in the TTCs as well as in the practice schools.

At present they are working with VVOB to develop new Manuals for Life Skills, based on the TTC curriculum subjects: Agriculture (includes organic garden/fish raising and chicken farming) and Environment. At the time of interview, the 2 manuals for PTTC level were due to receive initial approval in November 2011, by the TTD.

The next step will be to introduce the material produced to all the PTTC and RTTC representatives, receive their feedback and finalize the document also integrate other NGO work, if relevant. After final approval, the manuals will be introduced to all Provinces and VVOB will directly support, monitor and follow up the PTTCs and practice schools work in Siem Reap, Kandal, Banthey Meanchey and Battambang.

Following this, they will revise and adapt these manuals for use with RTTCs, with VVOB support.

The TTD has also been collaborating with UNESCO to develop the new ICT curriculum for both PTTCs and RTTCs. They are in the process of developing support material for TTCs and schools (upper secondary) with the additional support from the Open Institute, although more focused on higher education level.

### **Department of Curriculum Development (DCD) – (formerly Pedagogical Research Department)**

The DCD has been responsible for developing all curriculum development policies and guidelines thus far. This has included policy development in life skills. They elaborated the Curriculum Development Policy 2005-2009 and consequently the Life Skill Policy, at first in 2001 and the present Policy on Life Skills was finalized in 2006. [It would seem however, that all future development of Life skills policy would likely come under the remit of the VOD. Please see section on the VOD below].

An important step was the inclusion of Life Skills and Local Life Skills in the Curriculum with a specific time frame to address implementation. With the support of the Cambodia Basic Education (CBE) project, the DCD developed the policies and a guideline document entitled “Local life skills Program, an implementation Guide for Schools, Local Communities and NGOs” and produced 20 modules to be used

by schools and communities. Funding for the program was withdrawn part way through the project and hence full implementation of the program was unable to be completed and the new material, although distributed and relevant, was not followed by adequate training and follow up. Hence the DCD feels that implementation was seriously hindered due to the cutoff of funds part way through the program.

In order to address the limits of the present framework, the DCD has been working on new guidelines for both Primary (recently approved in July 2011/UNICEF support), which addresses grades 4 to 6, and Lower Secondary (draft completed and to be submitted for approval/EEQP-ADB support at the time of interview).

The new guidelines for Secondary will probably group life skills as follows: Agriculture/Animal raising/ Services/Handicrafts. They felt that the classification needed updating based on current Cambodian needs.

### **Department of Primary Education (PED)**

The PED stated that Life Skills represents 1 of the 4 main areas of responsibilities of the Department (Libraries/Art and Sports/Life Skills/Information dissemination).

Lack of funds for Life skills has meant that the Department's ability to implement life skills activities has been severely limited. At the moment they are collecting data from all the primary schools on life skills implementation.

### **Secondary Education Department (SED)**

Until 2009, a technical office in the Department was responsible for life skills activities implementation in Secondary Level (Lower and Upper Secondary). After the promulgation of the sub decree 84, these responsibilities were transferred to the new Vocational Orientation Department (VOD). At the same time, a number of the SED staff moved to the VOD.

SED still participates in consultation meetings related to Life skills and they are informed about the process. The Department has the responsibility for producing examination level documentation: hence should life skills become an examinable subject, they would be responsible to prepare the test format and implement all the related examination processes. At the moment this process has not been considered though the Department feels that formal assessment could be an effective way to give relevance to the subject and increase the motivation of students and teachers in carrying out Life skills.

### **Vocational Orientation Department (VOD)**

As indicated above, the VOD is a relatively new department created in 2009 based on sub decree 84 and related Prakas 2791. The sub-decree organizes the structure of the VOD in to 3 offices, 1 for life skills, 1 for vocational training and 1 for administration. The VOD is in the process of further elaborating its own role and responsibilities, based on sub decree 84 and related Prakas 2791.



The Management team has been strongly motivated to improve life skills implementation but little support has been received so far for this Department, especially in terms of Capacity Development, which the Director sees as crucial, including in the area of life skills, as this is a new area of work for many of his team. The Department role in life skills still appears to be quite unknown by NGOs and donors, even though it seemingly has a crucial role to play in Life Skills, both in terms of development of any new life skills policy as well as the monitoring of its implementation. (One visible example of this is that this Department is responsible to report at the National Congress on life skills and in 2010 they received information only from one Project (IBEC implemented by WE/KAPE, funded by USAID). The interaction with civil society networks is still low but the Department has a strong interest in increased collaboration and would welcome donor support.

Since 2009, based on sub-decree 84, the VOD has overall responsibility for Life Skills, from the formulation of the Policies, to the implementation and monitoring of its implementation. However donor and NGO co-operation with the VOD in relation to life skills is very minimal, despite their official remit on life skills.

### **3.2.2 Provincial and District Authorities**

During the survey a total of 6 Provincial Officers of Education (POEs) representatives and 8 District Officers of Education (DOEs) were interviewed. The sample was defined considering time constraints and sample size and guaranteed the representation of 6 Provinces, 25% of the total coverage. Locations are summarized in Tables 3.3a and 3.3b below.

**Table 3.3a: Locations of Key Informants at Provincial Level**

<b>POEs</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Deputy Director of Primary Ed. Office	Battambang
2	Deputy Director of Primary Education	Kampot
3	Director of Lower Secondary Office	Kampong Cham
4	POE Director	Kratie
5	Deputy Director of Lower Secondary Office	Svay Rieng
6	Vice Director	Siem Reap

**Table 3.3b: Locations of Key Informants at District Level**

<b>DOEs</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	DOE Director Battambang District	Battambang
2	DOE Vice Director in Kampong Trach District	Kampot
3	Director of Tbaung Khmum District	Kampong Cham
4	DOE Director Snoul District	Kratie
5	DOE Vice Director at Chantrea	Svay Rieng
5a	DOE Director at Svay Chrus	Svay Rieng
6	DOE Vice Director Varin	Siem Reap
6a	DOE Director Kralanh	Siem Reap

### 3.2.3 NGOs

The NGO sample can be divided into 2 main groups:

- Group 1: 7 NGOs, plus an independent consultant
- Group 2: 25 NEP NGOs (4 of the NGOs overlap with the first group)

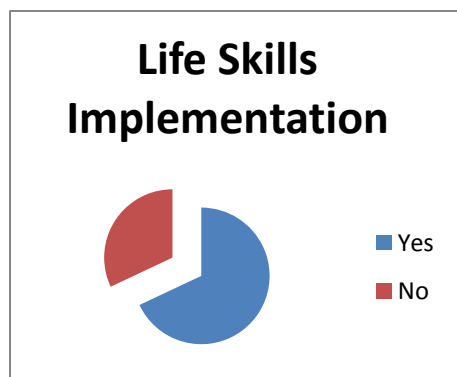
#### Group 1

NEP members were the main target of the research, defined by NEP, since the start of the research, with a particular emphasis to be placed on members implementing at Primary and lower secondary level. However, it was also agreed that the **group 1** sample should be created to include some NGOs considered experts in the area of life skills and to conduct a semi-structured interview to add depth to the information reported. Through semi-structured interviews it was possible to analyze in more detail crucial points and collect impressions and opinions over the main topics of interest. The group 1 sample can be seen in table 3.4.

#	Organization
1	CARE
2	World Vision
3	Room to Read
4	World Education
5	KAPE
6	Open Institute
7	VVOB
8	An Independent Consultant

All of these Organizations were chosen for their long term experience in life skills in Cambodia. The time restraints limited the sample, hence it was not possible to interview all organizations present in the Country that are conducting significant work in the area. Due to her long experience in Cambodia in the field of life skills in the non-formal sector, it was also decided to include one independent consultant.

#### Group 2:



**Figure 3.1: Group 2 NGOs Implementing Life skills**

Of a total of 25 NGOs completed the self-administered questionnaire. Of these, 68% of them were implementing life skills, while 32% were not currently implementing.

Of the NGOs implementing LLS in schools, 53% worked at Primary Level, 29% at Lower Secondary, and 65% focused their work in Life Skills in the Non formal Education sector. Only 1 of the NGOs interviewed worked at teacher training center level, at both PTTCs and RTTCs, in close coordination with the TTD.

Table 3.5 below gives details of the percentage of NGO respondents implementing at each level. Please note that some NGOs were implementing at more than one level, hence the total percentage appears to be over 100%.

**Table 3.5: Percentage of NGO Respondents Implementing Life Skills at Different Levels**

Level of Life Skills 'Intervention		%	Geographical area
Primary	9	53%	7 Provinces
Lower Secondary	5	29%	8 Provinces
NFE	11	65%	All provinces
PTTC/ RTTC	1	6%	Siem Reap, BTB, BTM, Kandal (Training all PTTCs and RTTCs)

As can be seen from the table above, the NEP members responding represent a number of different provinces. The exact provinces covered vary according to the level of intervention as follows:

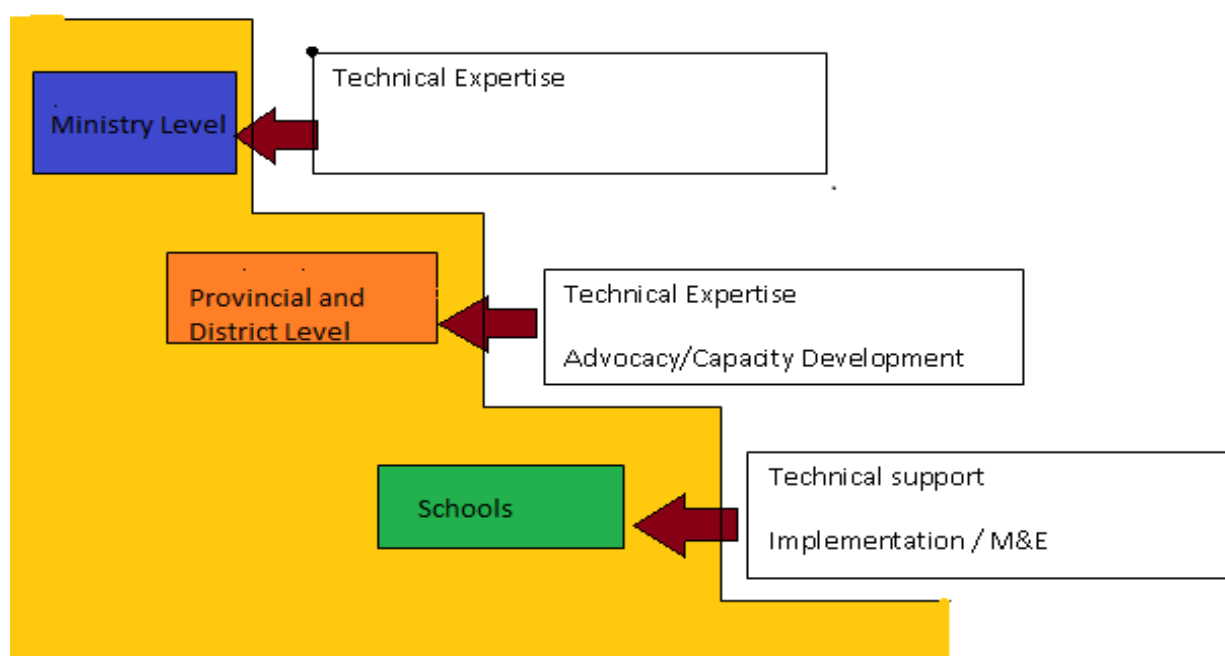
1. For **Primary level interventions**: Kompong Thom, Pursat, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kratie, Siem Reap, Koh Kong
2. For **Lower Secondary Interventions**: Kompong Thom, Koh Kong, Siem Reap, Banthey Meanchey, Battambang, Kratie, Kampong Cham and Mondulhiri
3. For **NFE**: All Provinces. However, it is important to underline that 1 NGO, Science of Life Studies 24/7, works in all the Provinces, hence it is stated that implementation covers all provinces. Excluding them, the number of Provinces would be 6 (Kompong Thom, Battambang, Banthey Meanchey, Kampong Cham and Kratie).
4. For **PTTC/RTTC**: VVOB is already present in Siem Reap where it has been piloting activities while finalizing the Manuals to use in the PTTCs, with additional activities in the Practice (*Anawot*) schools. After finalizing the support manuals, the materials will be distributed for use in all PTTCs in Cambodia and VVOB will provide support to implement them in 3 additional provinces: Battambang, Banthey Meanchey and Kandal. The intention is to try to find other NGO partners able to support the PTTCs in the remaining ones. Furthermore, VVOB and the Teacher Training Department are also planning to introduce the manuals in the RTTCs, once adapted.

**NGO: Level of implementation (Group 1 & Group 2)**

The sample NGOs in both Groups 1 and 2, work at a number of different levels of Life Skills implementation: some of them are directly involved in Ministry work, providing technical support and others at Local Authority and School level, as illustrated in the figure 3.2 below. The kind of intervention and support provided varies: from technical expertise and advice, to interventions on a more practical implementation level, including training and coaching.

Of the NGOs interviewed, only 1 works in close cooperation with Ministry Level in respect to Life skills, while all of them directly work with local authorities and in particular with schools. Ministry level work is mainly in regards to advocacy and consultations to facilitate the Department's work when requested by them, in specific finalize materials and developing a life skills Framework, while the elaboration of policies and other relevant documents is responsibilities of the Departments, with the support of external consultants normally provided by donors and International Agencies. NGOs are generally not directly involved in these kinds of processes, but there is a history of consultation in order to include their approach or best practices.

**Figure 3.2: Roles Played by NGOs at Different Levels of the Education System**



### **3.2.4 School Level**

Key informants at a total of 47 schools were interviewed during the survey. The sample in this case completely depended on NEP members' availability. In fact, each of them was asked to submit at least 2 questionnaires, preferably one involved at a school implementing Local Life Skills and another not involved in the implementation. The number of questionnaires received was quite modest because only 25 NEP members responded to the request from NEP, mainly due to the time constraints (2 weeks time) and that some NGOs were not implementing at grades 1 – 9 in state schools, but it still gives some interesting insights in to Local Life Skills implementation but it cannot be presumed that it will represent a nationwide reality. The details on key informants at this level are summarized in Table 3.6 below.

**Table 3.6: Details of Key Informants at School Level**

<b>Life skill Implementation Status</b>	<b>Primary Schools</b>	<b>Lower Secondary Schools</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Implementing Life skills	28	13	41
Not implementing LS	4	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>47</b>

## 4. DATA FINDINGS

### 4.1. General knowledge of the Policy Framework

The first part of each questionnaire or interview focused on asking the different Authorities and NGO representatives about their general knowledge on Life Skills and Local Life skills. Starting from their familiarity with relevant documentation, the study asked them for their own definition of Local Life Skills. This section allowed the researchers to assess the starting knowledge of each target group on Life Skills and local life skills concepts.

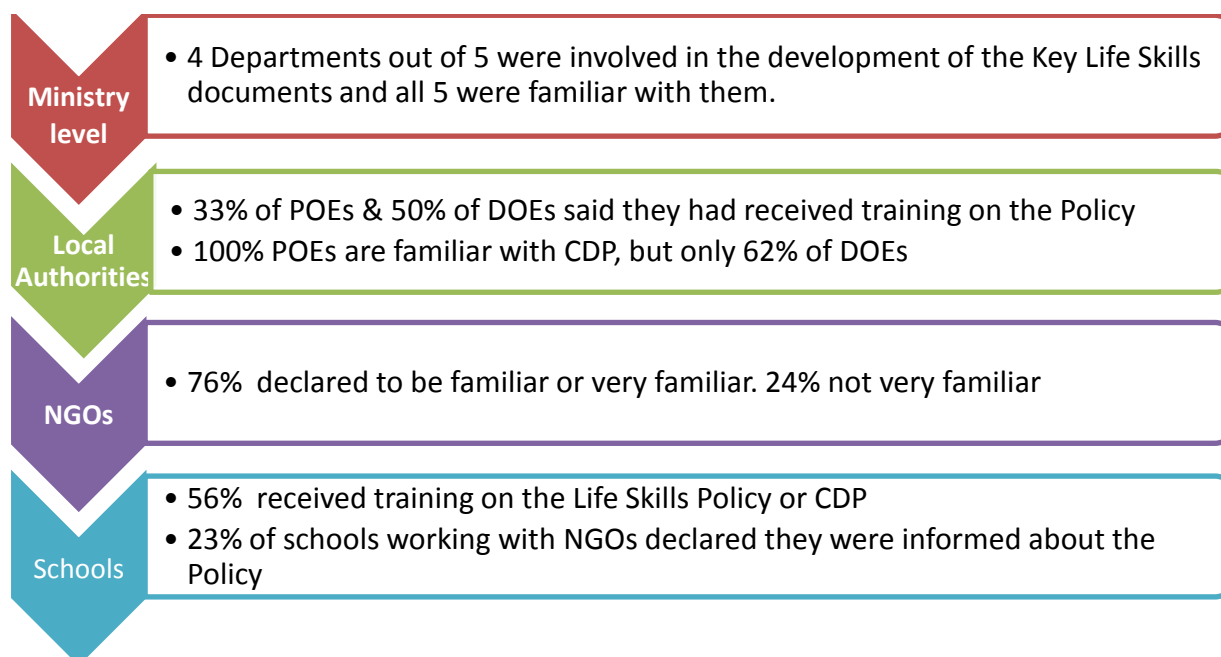
When asked for a definition of LLS at the level of local authorities and schools 33% of POEs, 12.5% of DOEs and 95% of Primary School Directors and 77% of Lower Secondary School Directors interviewed defined LLS as an extra curricula activity, showing a general misunderstanding as life skills is in fact a compulsory element of the curriculum.

#### 4.1.1 Familiarity with the Main Documents

A general knowledge of the policy framework is quite relevant for the stakeholders to be able to understand the actions they need to take and locate them in a context. For this reason, all respondents were asked about their awareness of the key policy documents produced and the type of orientation they had received, if any.

At Ministry level, due to direct involvement in the elaboration of the majority of the documentation, the interviewees were very familiar with the documentation. However, going down to field level, half of the interviewees showed little familiarity with the content of the policies, as shown in figure 4.1 below.

**Figure 4.1: Level of Familiarity with Policies and Guidelines Governing Life Skills**



**Ministry Level:** 4 of the 5 Departments interviewed were involved at some level in the definition of the documents and Policy. The main department responsible for the elaboration of the CDP, 2006 Life Skills Policy and Guidelines for Lower Secondary School was the DCD and the Curriculum guidelines for Primary education was instead elaborated by the PED with UNICEF support. The other Departments participated in consultative workshops to provide contributions to the final documents. Each Department representative interviewed was able to recall some of the key contents included in these 2 main documents, especially from the CDP.

**Local Authorities (POEs/DOEs):**

Regarding the Curriculum Development Policy, all the Provincial representatives interviewed were aware of the Policy and managed to provide examples of the content, even if not always correct and precise. On the other hand, only 62.5% of the District representatives knew the policy and 3 out of 8 were not able to explain the contents of the document.

**Table 4.1: Are you familiar with the Curriculum Development Policy 2005-2009?**

POES	Number of Respondents	%
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
I'm not sure	0	0%

**Table 4.2: Are you familiar with the Curriculum Development Policy 2005-2009?**

DOES	Number of Respondents	%
Yes	5	62.5%
No	2	25.0%
I'm not sure	1	12.5%

83% of the POEs received training from the Government, including 33%, which had also had training by NGOs. 50% of DOEs had received training by the Government and 50% were not sure if they'd had training on it or not. This already begins to highlight the discrepancy in cascade training, with District level showing the first gaps.

**Table 4.3: Who provided the training on the Curriculum Development Policy?**

POE Responses	%	DOE Responses	%
Government	83%	Government	50%
NGO. Please Specify which one	33%	NGO. Please Specify which one	13%
Other	0%	Other	0%
I'm not sure	0%	I'm not sure	50%

In reference to the Life Skills Policy, the general knowledge decreases considerably at each level: only 33% of the Provincial representatives and 50% from the District received any sort of training on the

Policy and hence did not know the contents of it. Furthermore, the training received was mainly conducted by the MoEYS: at Provincial level 67% were trained by Government, at District level 50%, while training by NGOs was not even mentioned by POEs and by only 25% of DOEs.

**Table 4.4: Responding Patterns about Life Skills among POEs and DOEs**

POEs			DOEs		
Did you receive any training on the Life skills Policy (2006)?					
POEs	Total	%	DOEs	Total	%
Yes	2	33.3%	Yes	4	50.0%
No (but they received the material)	2	33.3%	No	3	37.5%
I'm not sure	2	33.3%	I'm not sure	1	12.5%
Who provided you the training?					
POEs	Total	%	DOEs	Total	%
Government	4*	67%	Government	4	50.0%
NGO. Please Specify which one	0	0%	NGO. Please Specify which one (RTI, KAPE, WE, SCN)	2	25.0%
Other	0	0%	Other	0	0.0%
No training	2	33%	No one	3	37.5%

\*The total number of 4 includes the answers of the 2 informants that in the previous question that answered they were not sure if they had received life skills policy training. Although they did not receive training themselves, they think that the Government had previously provided it to somebody else.

#### School level:

At school level, the knowledge on the relevant documentation was higher than at provincial and district level, this seems to be due to the complementary training provided by NGOs. (The percentage of schools receiving training was 54% of the sample, with the majority of this training being delivered by NGOs (64% in Primary and 89% in Lower Secondary Schools) or by both NGO and Government). NGOs mainly provided training at school level, which could lead to the consideration that they act where the State is less present.

**Table 4.5: Have you ever received any training of the Life Skills Policy (2006) and the Curriculum Development Policy (2005-2009)?**

Primary	%	Lower Secondary Schools	%
Yes	54%	Yes	64%
No	46%	No	36%
I'm not sure	0%	I'm not sure	0%



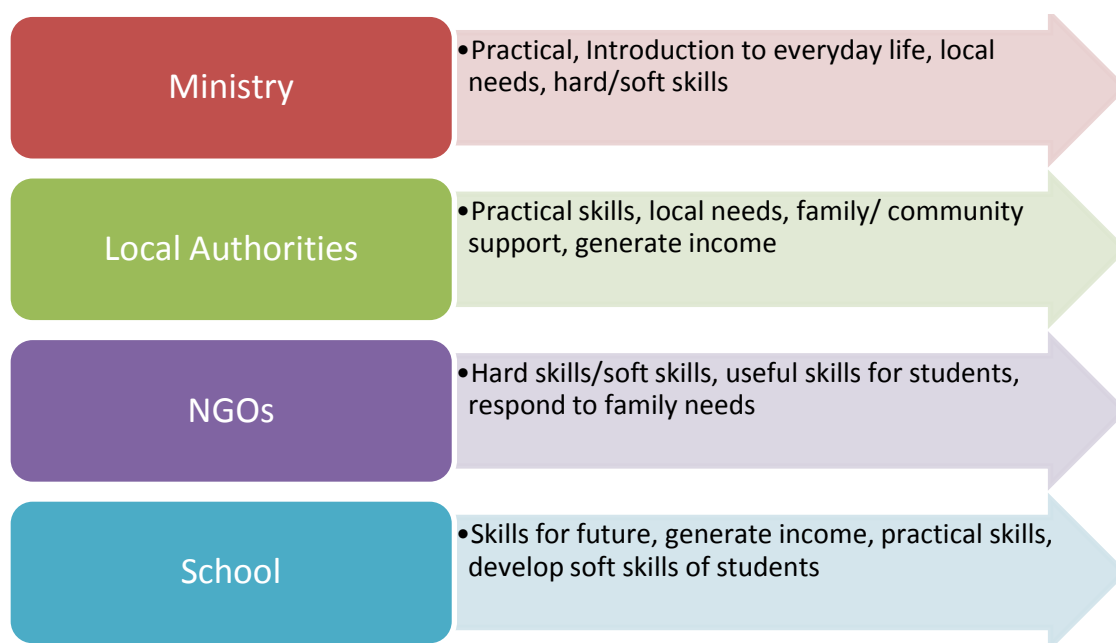
**Table 4.6: If yes, who provided the training?**

Primary	#	%	Lower Secondary Schools	#	%
Gov	7	50%	Gov	2	22%
NGOs	9	64%	NGOs	8	89%
Other	0	0%	Other	0	0%

Almost half of the schools had a copy of at least one of the relevant documents in their office.

Lack of intensive training at all level implies a gap between the knowledge of the contents and the comprehension and ownership of them. Some informants could recite parts of the Policy but were not really able to explain the meaning. This is illustrated by the fact that when the informants were asked to provide their own interpretation of life skills, and specifically on local life skills, they listed a wide range of different definitions, although some common ground can be identified. Some of the key words used to define life skills, at each level of informant can be seen in the chart below.

**Figure 4.2: Sample Definitions of ‘Life Skills’ Given by Key Informants at Different Levels**



As listed in the chart the predominant concepts are:

- USEFUL skills
- PRACTICAL skills
- Skills that can generate income for the students, but in the immediate sense as support for the family
- Skills that respond to community needs
- Skills that are relevant in the local context

In general, the overall definitions and examples of LLS provided were very practical: fish and chicken raising, vegetable or mushroom growing or sewing and hair dressing, etc. The activities listed were all examples of specific skills needed to “equip students with valuable skills for the future”. Often they were seen to be valuable in the sense that the skill learnt could directly result in them being able to use the specific skill learnt to earn money. In general, not much attention or explanation was given to the content or methodology of the activity in terms of pedagogical intent.

It is however, important to keep in mind that the Life Skills Policy itself defines that simple career skills are meant to help “to improve their family life or income”, hence the fact that informants tended to refer to practical topics is not surprising. The knowledge that students acquire at schools is often seen as a great resource for the **family**, which often practices farming or other activities, often without applying the correct techniques. The students become key vectors for transferring technical practices to their family members and the **community**.

More “extreme” positions mentioned that LLS can support students that will drop out from school. Even if the final goal of any educational institution is to prevent drop out before completion, in the current situation many of the interviewees, perceive it as a real, everyday reality that students will drop out, particularly from lower secondary school level and above and hence the LLS can help them prepare to support themselves in the future.

**Local context** is in general considered as an element in choosing and describing LLS, as mentioned in the 2006 Policy and CDP, as well as in the name itself: “**Local**-Life Skills”. This concept recognizes that different areas in Cambodia have different needs, different practices and hence diversified skills needed to contribute to each specific environment. It was felt that communities should be consulted in defining the topics chosen in schools, and the ministry should maintain a framework that allows flexibility in meeting these local needs.

Less popular, but present from one informant at Ministry Level and a number of NGOs was the distinction made between **SOFT and HARD** skills. However, it should be noted that all the informants were asked to define **Local** Life Skills and not Life Skills in general. Hence this could well be the reason why not all groups mention soft skills, which are more easily associated with abilities that are supposed to be taught inside the compulsory subjects, and hence included in the National Curriculum and referred to as **Basic** Life Skills.

In fact, these kinds of skills (soft skills) according to the ministry framework are said to be included in the other National Curriculum subjects, and hence any attempts to improve the acquisition of general life skills should be integrated into the rest of the curriculum, rather than discreet modules designed for students to acquire these skills. However, the reality is that many NGOs expressed the need to be able to work more on the basic (soft) skills, as they feel these are not yet developed enough through the general curriculum, in the LLS time or, as it happens in practice for many, during extra curricula time. Indeed some NGOs were working completely outside the government life skills framework as they felt it just did not equip students with the basic soft skills they would need to cope with future life.

Most of them consider that these soft skills, despite been integrated in the National Curriculum (NC), need more attention, both in the National Curriculum in general as well as in the *approach* applied to develop LLS.

This lack of focus on soft skills was identified as a major weakness in the policy by a significant number of NGOs, with suggestions to focus more on the definition.

Soft skills (basic skills) can be defined as personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. Unlike hard skills (career skills), which are about a person's skill set and ability to perform a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are interpersonal and broadly applicable skills which can be used in a wide variety of contexts and situations.

A solution to this dilemma, which would remain within the Ministry framework, but still address the need identified by some NGOs for more of a focus on soft skills, is that a topic chosen for LLS could be really practical or vocational (e.g., vegetable growing, hair cutting etc), but the methodology used to train this aims to challenge the students in order to develop abilities to cooperate, analyze situations, understand mechanisms and develop other “soft-skills”, that could be use in different situations, in an active learning environment.

#### **4.2 Policy Strengths and Weaknesses**

Both the Ministry and NGOs stated during the semi-structured interviews that the life skills Policy could be considered a useful framework that was previously missing. It provides a clear definition of Local Life Skills and for the first time Local Life Skills were included in the National Curriculum with a definition of the number of hours to be assigned to them. Furthermore, it explicitly mentioned that NGOs can collaborate with the Ministry to support the implementation when requested and needed).

The suggestions on Policy Strengths and weaknesses were mainly provided by the Ministry and NGOs. A number of NGOs have faced problems and challenges in adapting their interventions into the framework outlined in the Policy, particularly in regards to them feeling there is a need to focus more on soft skills outside of the integration of them in to the other national curriculum subjects. Only 18% of the total NGOs in **group 2** consider the MoEYS Policy contents complete, 59% suggest that it can be improved and 12% consider they do not provide a clear framework. The remaining 12% were not sure. The strengths and weaknesses suggested by Ministry departments and NGOs (groups 1 and 2) are summarized in the following chart.

**Table 4.7: Summary of Policy Strengths and Weaknesses Suggested by Ministry and NGOs**

Ministry	NGOs
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a framework</li> <li>• Defines Local Life Skills</li> <li>• Includes LLS in the Curriculum</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to define specific guidelines</li> <li>• The teachers do not have the skills to develop detailed modules or lesson plans as suggested in the Policy</li> <li>• Need to provide modules for teachers and students</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a framework</li> <li>• Defines Ministry &amp; NGO Coordination</li> <li>• Highlights importance of community participation</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are not provided with detailed modules and lack the skills to develop lesson plans and activities as required in the policy</li> <li>• Life Skills are perceived as optional</li> <li>• No focus on ‘soft skills’ because they are considered to be already included in the regular curriculum</li> </ul>

The main weakness identified by all the informants is that the policy defines the framework but does not provide specific enough guidelines or detailed enough modules to be used by the teachers. The Policy gives teachers the responsibility to develop the modules. The problem identified at all levels is that in the informants’ experience, practice has shown that many teachers or community members are not able to prepare a precise module or lesson plan. The expertise needed to achieve this has exceeded the general ability of many teachers. As a result, in many cases, LLS are not taught without significant external support.

Another concern, expressed by the majority of NGOs and Ministry representatives, is that LLS are perceived as **optional**. This consideration is reinforced by the survey data, which confirmed that 95% of Primary School Directors and 77% of lower secondary directors consider LLS extra curricula activities, even though the Policies specify the time available in the Curriculum. The weakness can be identified both as a misinterpretation of the relevant documents as well as a weakness in the enforcement of the policy itself.

Furthermore, the research showed that several NGOs are not comfortable with the standard definition provided by the Life Skills Policy of Life Skills and LLS. Many argued that is too general and implies it is not clear where to fit the different activities. Specifically, as outlined above, the concerns are in regards to the definition and the exclusion of “soft skills” as part of the LLS. Soft skills are included only as part of the general basic skills, hence included in the National Curriculum and not part of LLS.

### **4.3. Implementation Issues**

Based on the findings, local life skills education has been carried out in two ways thus far: applied in the regular school curriculum during the LLSP time allocated, or implemented during extra curricula time.

On the other hand, general Life skills are carried out in three different ways: integrated into the four core subjects of the national curriculum, applied in the regular school curriculum during the LLSP time allocated, or implemented during extra curricula time.

As the main focus of the study of LLS implementation within NEP members was defined as being for those working at primary and lower secondary levels in the state school system, the data collected mainly focused around LLS implemented during school time (2-5 hours per week) or during extra curricula time for students at primary and lower secondary school level. The study analyzed the main actors' involvement in the implementation, modalities, best practices and challenges.

Schools implement LLS at different times of the week, but the majority follow the general guidelines of the Government which suggests schools work on LLS activities on Thursdays, the day that is also used to organize the technical meetings in schools once a month. In addition, of those schools that indicate that they currently implement life skills, almost half of the schools spend 2 hours per week for LLS, while 22% spend 1 hour and 17% between 3 and 4 hours, whilst none spent 5 hours on life skills.

<b>Table 4.8: When do you normally teach Life skills? Which day(s) of the week?</b> <i>Note: some schools implement in more than 1 day</i>	Total	%
Monday	6	15%
Tuesday	4	10%
Wednesday	3	7%
Thursday	22	54%
Friday	2	5%
Saturday	7	17%
Not specified	15	37%

<b>Table 4.9: # of Hours for LLS implementation</b>	Total	%
<b>1</b>	9	22%
<b>2</b>	20	49%
<b>3</b>	1	2%
<b>4</b>	6	15%
<b>5</b>	0	0%
<b>Not specified</b>	5	12%

### 4.3.1 Actors involved

As mentioned above, in regards to Policy Strengths, one of the key points raised is the explicit role of Communities in LLS, however practice still shows their involvement to be low. When specifically asked which stakeholders were involved in choosing LLS at school, community members were not even mentioned. The same was true for the question that aimed to define all the groups involved in the decision-making process – that none mentioned community members. There was however some involvement by the school support committees (32% at primary school and 46% at lower secondary) and CEFAC (4% at Primary and 15% at Lower Secondary) and these committees do usually involve some members of the community. Communes and CEFAC commissions are mentioned only in projects that specifically target them in specific capacity building activities. The decision making process was mainly

the responsibility of school staff (School directors and teachers) or other school bodies. Provincial and District Education representatives often attend the meetings (see table below).

<b>Table 4.10: Who chose which life skills topics should be taught at your school?</b>	<b>Primary School</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>LSS</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>School Director</b>	21	75%	10	77%
<b>Teachers</b>	23	82%	12	92%
<b>School Support Committee</b>	9	32%	6	46%
<b>Children/student council</b>	15	54%	5	38%
<b>NGO</b>	4	14%	4	31%
<b>POE</b>	7	25%	3	23%
<b>DOE</b>	6	21%	2	15%
<b>Commune</b>	1	4%	1	8%
<b>CEFAC</b>	1	4%	2	15%
<b>Other(Please specify)</b>	0	0%	0	0%

Community involvement reappears during the implementation, where 23% stated that community representatives teach LLS in Primary or Lower Secondary Schools, compared to 20% of NGO staff and 100% of **teachers**.

<b>Table 4.11 Who is responsible for teaching life skills in your school?</b>	<b>PS</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>LSS</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	28	100%	13	100%
<b>Community members</b>	9	32%	2	15%
<b>NGOs staff</b>	8	29%	2	15%
<b>Other (Please specify)*</b> *Students council/School Director	2	7%	2	15%

Community involvement was seen as even more important when informants were asked about possible sustainable actions for LLS activities. When schools were asked how they were planning to continue the activities 71% of Primary and 60% of Lower Secondary Schools answered through Community support and 43% Primary and 100% of LSS schools mentioned their MoEYS provided Program Based (PB) budget. The high percentages indicating both of these methods show that some schools intend to use a combination of these methods. The full results of how schools intend to make LLS sustainable can be seen in the chart below.

<b>Tab. 4.12</b> Who is involved in your plan to make the local life skill activities sustainable?	<b>PS</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>LSS</b>	<b>%</b>
Community contribution	20	71%	6	60%
Fund raising activities in school	1	4%	3	30%
PB budget	12	43%	10	100%
Commune funds	2	7%	2	20%
Other (please specify) <i>Fish raising/NGOs sell</i>	0	0%	2	20%
Not yet made a plan	5	18%	2	20%
Not implementing	4	14%	2	20%

We can conclude that even if community participation is considered a key element for the implementation of LLS, its involvement, other than very minimal involvement by those supposed to represent the community as a whole, is extremely low. In particular, schools tend to ask the community for contributions, both in money and time, without involving them in the decision making process. Community members, and particularly parents, need to be part of the decision making, need to understand what the benefits are for them and their children, if schools aspire to receive their long term active support.

#### **4.3.2. Suggested and Most popular Topics**

While investigating if it was possible to classify the activities identified as the most popular for students, aggregated by boys and girls, the study concluded that is not. The choice depends on the local area, so each context has its specific priorities and consequently LLS choices. Many NGOs had quite a narrow choice of LLS that they could offer. Through the structured interviews it was apparent that these choices were often decided by the NGO and then the schools were able to “choose” what was suitable for them to implement, rather than the initial ideas coming the community. Where a large number of topics are on offer, this could be considered to be more of a real choice, where few topics are on offer, it is difficult to know if these would have been the topics chosen had a free or wider choice of options been on offer.

All groups taking part in the research consider LLS important for the students. Furthermore, 100% of both NGOs and schools not currently implementing LLS, declared they would be interested in starting to implement if funds and expertise were available.

It was reported that the vast majority of teachers (95% of primary and 77% of lower secondary) were happy to implement LLS at school and if not, the main reasons for not being happy to do this was a lack of support material and lack of supplementary salary.

<b>Tab. 4.13</b> Are teachers happy to teach LLS in your school, in your opinion	PS	%	LSS	%
Yes	21	95%	10	77%
No	1	5%	2	15%
Not sure	0	0%	1	8%

<b>Tab.4.14</b> If you are not happy teaching Life Skills, could you explain why? (Tick all that apply)	%
Not enough time	67%
Not enough supporting material	100%
Not able to develop teaching modules by themselves	67%
Work overtime and no supplementary salary	67%
Other	0%

### 4.3.3 Benefits of Life Skills Education

For all respondents, it was easy to identify what they felt the benefits of LLS for children were.

There is a general tendency, to associate LLS with practical gain, in the form of economic benefit for the family in the future, when the student will start applying what they have learnt at schools, normally referring to subjects such as agriculture, fish raising, chicken raising or mushroom growing, when they leave school and start to become responsible for generating income for their own family.

Nevertheless, It's also perceived that students can transfer technical knowledge to the family members immediately, hence they can generate more income by improving their techniques, starting from the assumption that generally families have poor technical expertise, lacking innovative and more advanced techniques. Hence the increased income which can result helps parents keep supporting their children to stay in school.

44% of POEs answered that LLS are "Useful skills for themselves [students] in the future" and 28% consider that they are "useful skills for supporting their family and community". 51% of DOEs think that LLS provide skills for the future and 11% for "support their [students] family".

**Tab. 4.15 POEs and DOEs identified benefits from Life Skills Education**

POEs			DOEs		
1	Learn useful skills for themselves in the future	44%	1	Provide/have skills for the future (soft and hard )	39%
2	Learn useful skills for supporting their family/community	28%	2	Support their family	11%
3	Decree drop out	6%	3	To release some work from Gov	6%
4	Improve students soft skills	6%	4	Share experiences	6%
5	Generate income for the school	6%	5	To decrease the bad behaviours in the society	6%
6	Feel confident about their [of the student] study	6%	6	School gets some profit	6%
7	No answer	6%	7	No answer	28%



**School** answers were along the same lines: 100% of schools, both Primary and LSS, consider LLS useful for students. The reasons given were varied but the main focus was always on learning skills to use in everyday life, helpful for them [students] and their families and possibly to be applied to support the community, during a learning process that combined theory with practice.

On the other hand, NGOs were divided in their emphasis between stressing the need to focus solely on soft skills and the need to provide students with practical-useful skills to support their families. Most, but not all, NGOs tended to be more focused on students’ future ability to deal with everyday situations, problems and challenges that should arise, than providing a solid hard skill that could help them to generate income to support their everyday needs. Nevertheless, there were some attempts to try to combine both these elements: future inspirations and practical everyday needs supporting students in developing abilities to solve problems and generate ideas.

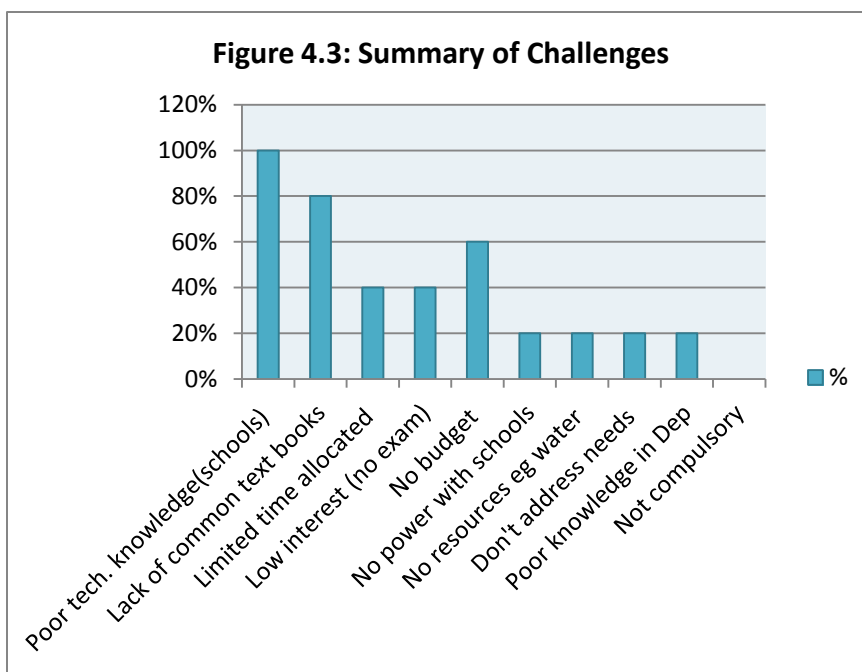
Likewise, the Ministry underlined the benefits for students and their families in everyday life as well as developing abilities for the future.

It was noticeably more **difficult** for respondents to identify what they thought the benefits of LLS were for teachers: 47% of the local authorities were unable to identify any benefit for them (interestingly this is in contrast to 89% of schools reporting that teachers are happy to teach life skills, suggesting that there are some benefits to teachers).

It’s important to take into consideration teacher interest in implementing LLS because it could represent a strategic point for facilitating the introduction of LLS in schools. If teachers can see personal benefits, like learning something new that can help them in their everyday life, rather than only been seen as providing benefits for the students, this could create an incentive for them to start LLS implementation.

#### 4.3.4. Main Challenges

All the MoEYS departments agree that the Policy is quite general and could be further elaborated with practical indications to support the implementation process. The weakest points of the Policy identified seem to be the lack of teachers’ technical knowledge, the amount of time assigned to LLS, 2 hours was felt not to be enough to teach any practical “specialized” skill; and especially the assumption that teachers



can develop their own curriculum. The absence of detailed text books or materials is a general concern and one of the first priorities to be solved, if implementation is to be realized throughout the country.

The chart below gives details of the main challenges identified by the 5 MoEYS departments to the successful implementation of the current life skills policy.

For NGOs, the shortage of teaching support material is also identified as a key problem that undermines the overall implementation at school level. Other reasons, as summarized in the table below are in regards to the shortage of teachers, lack of appropriate space, low community involvement or lack of reimbursement for overtime payments for teachers.

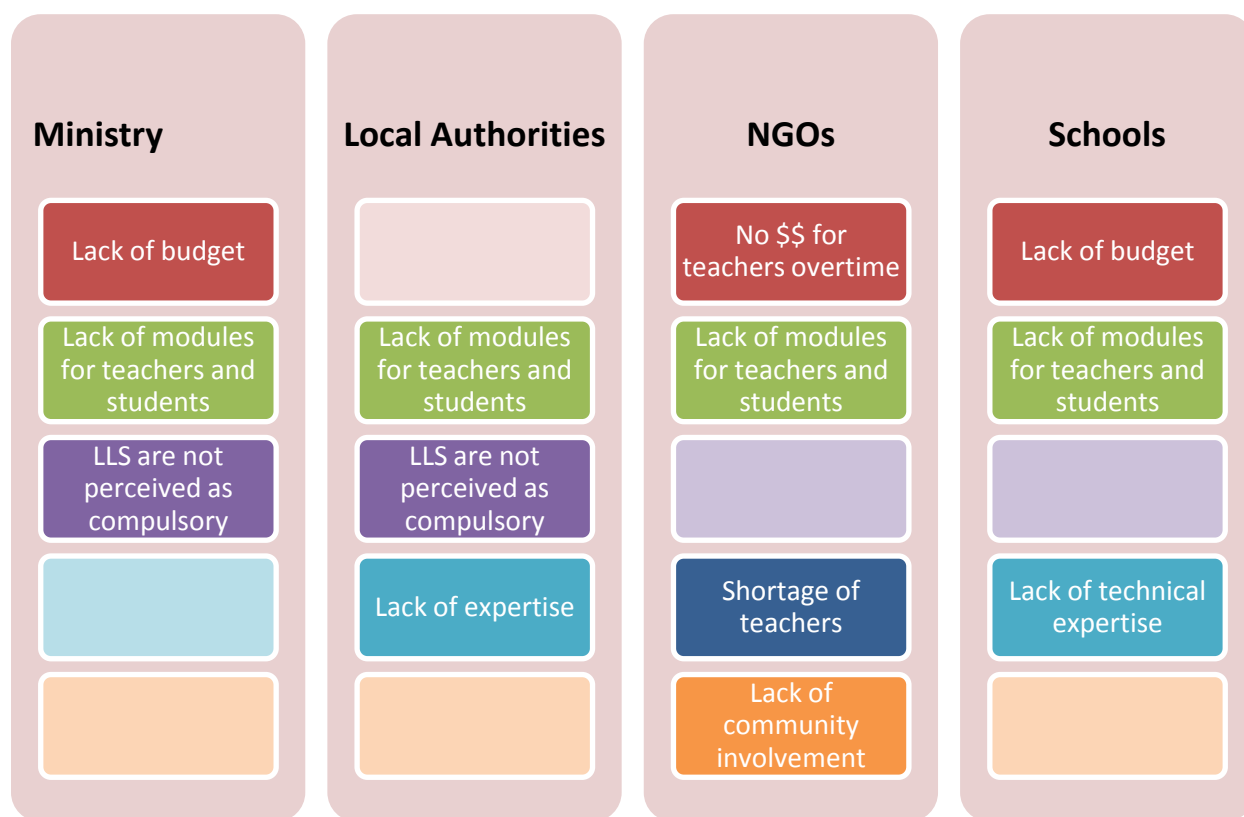
NGOs mentioned again that the problems faced in overtime reimbursement definitely needed to be further clarified with the Ministry.

**For the schools,** the key challenges in implementation mentioned were in regards to the lack of budget, lack of modules for teachers and students and lack of technical expertise.

<b>Table. 4.16</b> What are the main constraints you face during the implementation of LLS at school?	<b>%</b>
Shortage of teaching support materials	67%
Shortage of teachers	53%
Lack of appropriate space	33%
Lack of community involvement	33%
No reimbursement of teachers overtime	33%
Lack of interest from students	27%
Lack of interest from teachers	20%
Lack of interest of School Director	13%
Other	7%

In conclusion, all the interviewees identified many of the same problems that need to be addressed to improve the implementation. The details of these challenges are summarized in the diagram below.

Figure 4.4: Confluence of Challenges among Stakeholders



### Overtime Payments and Their Role in Life Skills Education

Although the results of the survey demonstrated that every time POEs and DOEs requested reimbursement for overtime payments, they obtained it, the research team decided to analyze and look in to this point in more detail, considering it as crucial for future LLS implementation and sustainability.

It was found that it is possible to present an overtime request to MoEYS only if the 3 following criteria<sup>2</sup> are present:

- a student text book approved by MoEYS is present for the subject for which the overtime is requested
- teachers session plan is present for the subject for which the overtime is requested
- the schedule, submitted by the school director for the whole school is present and shows that all the teachers in that specific subject area are all fulfilling their full quota of teaching hours (hence no one in that subject has available time within their regular schedule)

<sup>2</sup> This information was gained during a semi-structured interview with an NGO

Local Life Skills do not have any student textbooks officially approved by MoEYS for national level, hence any request of overtime for Life Skills is in theory not possible to request.

In practice, considering that LLS has been implemented and taught in many schools already and the overtime has been paid, it can be deduced that schools tend to overcome the problem attributing the overtime request to other subjects instead of Local Life Skills, knowing that otherwise it would not be accepted.

This provisory solution cannot become a common practice. Reality is showing that at this point of the implementation there is a real gap between the Policies guideline and the actual practice: from one side the Policy of Curriculum Development and the Policy of life Skills include LLSP in the National Curriculum, allocating from 2 to 5 hours and making it compulsory, but on the other hand, overtime payment for LLSP implementation cannot be requested because official textbooks haven't been approved yet.

Furthermore, teachers cannot be paid for the time used to teach LLS and this obstacle could jeopardize consistent, countrywide implementation.

#### **4.3.5 Best practices**

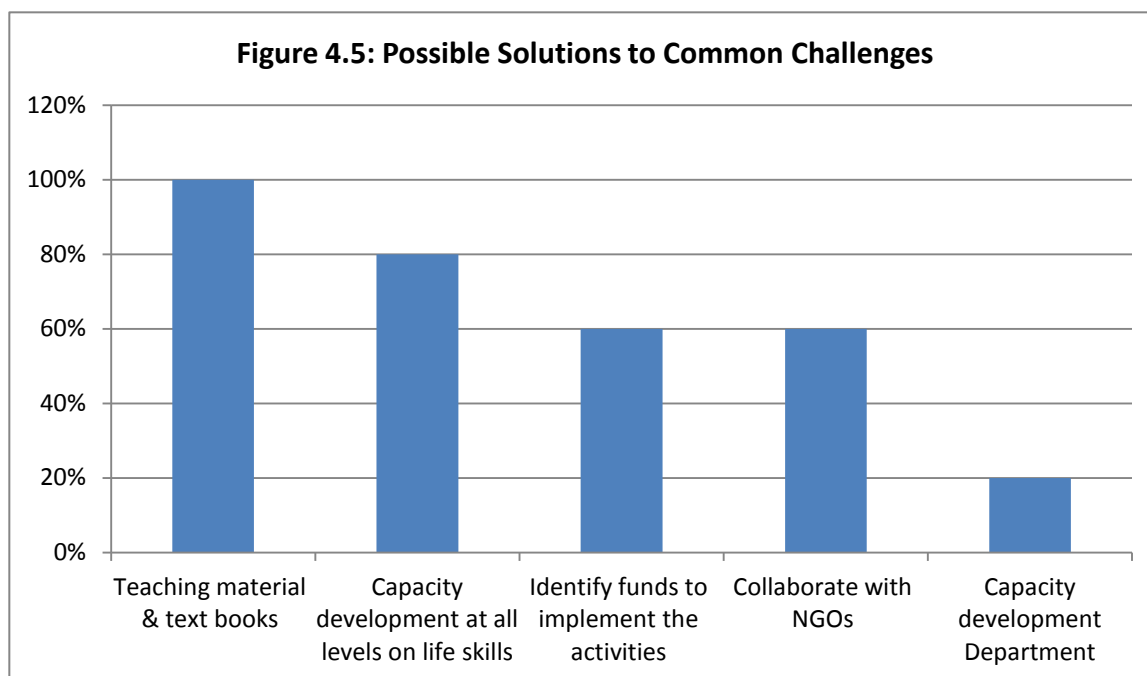
Pilot projects implemented by NGOs and government are being monitored by MoEYS to be used as resources and set good practice for the future. Following completion the Ministry will decide how to follow up and integrate the best practice in its work on life skills in schools, at both Primary and Secondary levels.

It's possible to extrapolate from the survey common elements that were used often to define best practices on the field of life skills, as listed below.

1. Relevant to the local Context
2. Student Involvement in planning and monitoring
3. Community Involvement in planning, implementation and monitoring
4. Technical Expertise/Detailed modules present
5. Training and periodic follow up

#### **4.3.6 Possible solutions and future plans**

The most popular solution in the Departments is to include text books to help teachers during teaching. One of the main concepts currently included in the Policy and subsequent guideline documents, is leaving the teachers (or members of the community) to develop their own lesson plans and this seems to have caused a number of problems and in particular is now recognized by all departments as a limit for the implementation of life skills, especially LLS in schools as they do not have enough material available to them to develop these plans.



Following on from this, 99% of NGOs and Departments, were in favor of possible standardization of the documents in use, but in maintaining a certain flexibility in the choice of topics to teach so that they were of relevance to the local area.

From the Ministry level it was suggested to concentrate on the capacity development of teachers and local authorities, with specific attention to Primary teachers. The training has to be included in the TTCs, as this has already been planned by the MoEYS. Although VOD also identified a need for capacity building for its staff, as the department is relatively new and many of the staff in the office that now has responsibility for life skills are new to the subject.

4 of 5 departments explicitly mentioned the importance to collaborate with NGOs, particularly in relation to starting to collect the material available on life skills.

Several NGOs suggested to focus more on soft skills implementation, seeing these as crucial skills for students' ability in coping with new challenges, and on developing the capacity of education staff at all levels, (including their own NGOs staff), in order to guarantee ownership of the methodologies used in the educational interventions.

#### **4.4 MoEYS Future Plans**

The 5 Departments involved in Life Skills have already planned future activities to improve their intervention in this specific field. While being interviewed, they clearly express their intentions but their general constraint remains budget allocation. The study also suggests that the various Departments should meet to clarify further the roles and responsibilities of each of them in relation to life skills, based on the implications of sub-decree 84, as a first priority.

During the study it emerged that they are planning to:

1. Disseminate the new curriculum guidelines (DCD) for both Primary and Lower Secondary
2. Extend LLS implementation in schools following research and a plan of action (PED)
3. Search for additional donors for life skills (All)
4. Develop internal capacity (VOD), develop a policy on employability skills
5. Apply the new modules developed for PTTCs and RTTCs, and coordinate with NGOs for implementation and monitoring (TTD) for those colleges which are not yet funded
6. Provide longer training and follow up for trainers and teachers (with specific attention to Primary teachers)
7. Produce modules for Life Skills (DCD, VOD)

## 5. WORKSHOP RESULTS<sup>3</sup>

A presentation by KAPE on the initial findings of this research, held on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2011 in Phnom Penh, was made at a workshop organized by NEP. NEP members, donors and the 5 government departments were invited to participate in the event. The participants were asked to join and contribute to 4 different working groups. The input from these groups represent the starting point for the further development of the recommendations proposed in this document. Each group was asked to work on a different question, as outlined below:

- Working group 1: Do you think that capacity development is needed to improve life skills development, monitoring and implementation? If so, who should be the target groups? Who should be responsible? How can we ensure we make it effective?
- Working group 2: How should data collection and best practices at all levels of implementation be tracked? What would be the best way to coordinate among the 5 MoEYS departments and between the 5 MoEYS departments and NGOs to ensure effective implementation of life skills?
- Working group 3: What are the steps and who should be involved to create better Module standardization? What kind of materials could be kept on a life skill database? Who should be responsible for this?
- Working group 4: If a life skills Pool Fund is developed, how could this be organized? What criteria should be used to select NGOs? Who should take part in the selection process? What life skill activities should funds be allocated for?

---

<sup>3</sup> The details of the working group discussions can be found in the Annex 2

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusions

This research allowed the KAPE research team to acquire specific knowledge and understanding on the implementation of LLS in Cambodia, with a special focus on NEP members working at primary and lower secondary school levels. The results clearly showed that at all levels the interest and intention to improve the implementation is present, but basic needs have to be fulfilled. First of all the creation of modules to simplify the work of teachers in schools with the improvement of the capacity of all the stakeholders involved in the process, starting at Ministry level until root level at school and communities. The understanding of the process is a key element for success, in combination with adequate funding, which, at the moment is not present.

Stronger coordination between civil society and Government would also guarantee better implementation and understanding of the process, sharing experiences and best practices. Policies should always be developed in collaboration with experts that are familiar with the Cambodian context, in order to avoid repeating models that are not suitable with Cambodian context and ways of working, in particular trying to produce specific documentation that represents clear guidelines for the implementation, step by step, especially for teachers and students.

### 6.2 Recommendations

The recommendations that follow tend to be directed primarily to NEP members, however there are also specific recommendations made to Donors and Central Government, being the key stakeholders in designing and implementing local life skills. Schools essential contribution in the implementation suffers constraints that are mainly considered to be consequences of the above cited stakeholder actions (lack of funds, lack of expertise or teaching material). For this reason there are no recommendations that are given directly to schools.

#### Donors

- Provide additional support in the area of life skills. In particular:
  - provide capacity support to the VOD in more clearly defining and establishing their roles and responsibilities in respect to life skills, as well as being able to clearly establish the changes in roles of the other departments within MoEYS that have traditionally had responsibility for life skills roles that now appear to be the responsibility of the VOD, following the issuance of sub-decree 84 and related Prakas 2791. Currently there also appears to be limited understanding of this latest reform by some donors and NGOs in working with the VOD in relation to life skills following the sub-decree, so it is crucial that roles and responsibilities are redefined more clearly.
  - provide sufficient support to NGOs working in the field of local life skills, as well as relevant government departments to ensure that the local life skills part of the curriculum can be implemented countrywide. The mechanism for future training and



sustainability of this training needs to be considered. Particularly who should teach and how this will be incorporated in to the operational plans of the government.

- Support the Reinforcement of coordination mechanisms between different Departments and Department with CSO, considering the creation of a database for local life Skills material
- Maximize the wealth of existing experience in the Country, from both government and NGO partners in terms of human resources and best practices at all stages of Policy/guideline formulations to ensure that future developments build on this knowledge, rather than rely too much on short-term foreign consultants, which can result in the same mistakes or short comings being repeated.
- Strengthen follow up mechanisms from central to provincial level, starting from a collection and update of all the information related to local life skills implementation at field level

### **Ministry Level**

- Consider reviewing the life skills policy to make it clearer that LLS are compulsory and that it is eligible for overtime payments in line with usual overtime rules. It would also be useful to clarify the exact number of hours that should be allocated to life skills, as the current range of 2-5 hours suggests that it is to some extent voluntary and it is difficult for the government to allocate adequate resources to ensure teachers are paid to implement this part of the curriculum
- Increased capacity development program for National staff, with special attention to monitoring and follow up of trainers and teachers
- Increase direct consultations with key NGOs working in the specific area of implementation in the definition of key documents and implementation models, possibly through working groups, to minimize overlap and short comings
- Consider allowing NGOs and schools to work on **soft skills** during the Local Life Skills time allocated in the national curriculum, and especially encourage them to emphasize soft skills as part of the pedagogical teaching aim in general local life skills modules (for example having activities that encourage team working, communication skills, problem solving and critical thinking skills in the teaching methodology)
- Whilst it would be very difficult to make LLS an examinable subject, as the nature of these topics mean that the content varies from school to school, MoEYS could consider giving more value to the LLSP by carrying out an end of module assessment, or credit for regular attendance, with the points contributing to the monthly test scores at grades 9 and 12. A working group, which could include NGOs working in the field that have experience of designing assessments related to LLS, could be created to establish how this would best be realized

## Implementation

- Standardization of life skills modules (but still with a good choice of options) to ensure strong pedagogical intent and ease of use: teachers need to be provided with relevant modules and materials that are easy to understand and implement, as well as making sure that key skills, including soft skills, are imparted to the students as well as the more immediate LLS subject
- Simplify the mechanism to request overtime payment for Local Life Skills activities
- Use different channels to inform civil society of Departments work, plans and needs (e.g. NEP network)
- Develop LLS modules which respond to new trends as well as existing local needs (it was suggested for example to increase IT and English (for lower grades))

## **NEP Members/NGOs**

- Work in close collaboration with government partners, including in building capacity, at all levels to train and monitor life skills policy and implementation to ensure sustainability. In particular focus on:
  - minimizing the current negative impact that results from cascade training, whereby understanding is reduced at each level, by ensuring adequate follow up support provided right down to the monitoring conducted at school level, including support to existing monitoring bodies and structures such as DTMTs, Cluster networks, CEFAC and SSCs to ensure they know how to provide adequate support and feedback to the schools
  - Ensure that knowledge of life skills policy is strengthened so that schools are clearly aware of their responsibilities in implementing local life skills
  - Ensure that thought is given to who will give training to teachers in the long term – i.e. how training modules will be incorporated in to the government’s on-going training plan
- NGOs should report life skills implementation, particularly good practices, achievements and numbers of government partners, schools and children involved to the VOD during November and December each year to ensure that the Ministry is aware of the work being done in life skills at each level and province. The VOD is responsible for reporting on Life skills at the annual education congress, hence it is vital the VOD are properly informed of life skills activity if achievements are to be disseminated
- Try to prevent duplication of materials by collaborating, sharing and improving on existing documentation with the Ministry and other NGO partners and NEP rather than recreating brand new materials which already exist
- Work within the government framework, rather than creating parallel systems. If it is felt that more emphasis is needed in developing soft skills, then this can be incorporated in to the teaching methodology used to teach local life skills by ensuring activities practice skills such as problem solving, communication skills, team work and critical thinking

- Focus on the capacity development of their own NGO staff, as well as government partners, to ensure that there is real deeper understanding of the benefits and concepts behind the training methodology, including in the soft skill pedagogical concepts behind LLS topics by making the soft skill methodology really explicit, rather than a hidden pedagogical approach. Many times, crucial activities can be dropped “to save time” and hence lecturing or direct explanation takes place, rather than cooperative learning, so the intended soft skills are not developed at all. This is a difficulty faced not only in the teaching of life skills, but in the general teaching of all curriculum subjects
- Concentrate attention on LLS modules which respond to new trends as well as existing local needs (it was suggested to increase IT and English (for lower grades))
- Support active community participation in Local Life Skills activities, especially in the planning phase, through existing bodies as the School Support Committees, CEFAC, PTA

#### **NEP**

- Keep an up to date database of life skills materials available at all levels in both formal and non-formal education and ensure the existence of this database is communicated regularly and shared with MoEYS. 99% of the NGOs interviewed answered positively to the idea of sharing materials and are willing to share their material produced on the subject
- Develop a pool fund for NGOs wishing to support the government in implementing LLS to apply for, as well as providing capacity building opportunities for members working in the area of life skills
- Disseminate clearly to NGO members and to donors the role of the VOD, following sub-decree 84 and related Prakas 2791.

## ANNEXES

### Annex 1, Questionnaires

#### NGOs

##### Introduction

KAPE is currently conducting research on life skills, on behalf of NEP, with its members. The study aims to highlight strengths, constraints and challenges in the actual implementation at basic education level and present a proposal to establish a pool fund for its members to help schools implement life skills projects and promote the realization the MoEYS' Life Skills Education policy goals.

##### General Information

NGO's NAME:

Name of the interviewee:

Contact (e mail):

Phone:

NGO Main target areas of life skills intervention:

In how many schools you work?

Do you implement Life Skills? *(If yes, please go to SECTION B)*

Yes       No

##### SECTION A - For NGOS not implementing Life skills activities

##### Why you do not implement LLS activities?

- Not relevant to our programming       Lack of funding       Lack of interest from schools  
 Lack of technical expertise       Lack of training material       Other priorities  
 Other (Please specify)

.....  
**Would you be interested in implementing life skills in the future?**

Yes       No       I'm not sure

**Do you already have a plan to implement life skills in the future?**

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

**Would you be interested in having access to a database of life skills modules and resources?**

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

**Section B - For NGOs implementing Life skills**

**1. Do you implement LOCAL LIFE SKILLS (LLS) in**

- Primary Schools     Lower Secondary     RTTC/PTTC     Ministry Level     Non Formal Education

**2. Are you familiar with the MoEYS Life Skills Policy Framework?**

- Very Familiar       Familiar       Not very familiar

**3. Do you think the MoEYS Policy contents (Life Skills and Curriculum Development) are...**

- Complete       Can be improved     Lack a clear framework

**4. What are the weaknesses/ strengths of the Life Skills Policy/Curriculum Development?**

Weaknesses	Strengths

**5. Who do you work with in the implementation of Local Life Skills (LLS) in schools?**

- POEs     DOEs     Communes     School Director     Teachers  
 Community members     Other (please specify).....

i. Are they informed about the MoEYS Policy framework?

- Yes       The majority       Few of them       I'm not sure

ii. Did you provide any training to explain the Policies?     Yes       No

**NOTE: If you work at Ministry level only, please skip the remaining questions**

6. What are the areas in which do you implement LLS? (Please tick ✓ all that apply)

Areas	Primary	LSecondary	PTTC	RTTC	Non Formal
Agriculture/Fish raising/Mushrooms					
Simple Career Skills (e.g. Bicycle repair/hairstyling....)					
Social awareness (eg. Drug abuse prevention/domestic violence awareness and prevention,...)					
Cultural (eg. Minority awareness/multicultural topics,...)					
Health/HIV AIDS					
Business and Economic (money management/book keeping/world of work...)					
Other (Please specify here) -----					

7. Do you classify the LLS in different groups following the MoEYS indications?

BASIC SKILLS → General life Skills/ Pre-vocational Skills

CAREER SKILLS → Simple career skills/ Vocational Skills

Yes                       No                       I don't know

If no, why?    We don't use any specific classification                       We use our own classification

8. Which subjects are chosen most by the students? (List minimum 1, maximum 3 for each Level)

Level	Boys	Girls
<i>Primary</i>		
<i>Lower Secondary</i>		

9. Why do you think they are chosen the most? (Tick all that apply)

Only option available                       It's a low cost activity  
 Because students enjoy it                       Matches the most common occupation of the area

- It can help to raise family income  Matches local gender expectations
- Meets a local skill gap (eg. Dancing in a area with a lot of tourists)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you use any supporting material for the teaching of LLS?  Yes  No

If yes, who produced the material?  Our NGO  Other -

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please list the material, or provide list as an attachment if the list is too long (please give details about the kind of material (eg. Manuals, CDs-VIDEOS, Posters for teachers/students ...)*

.....

.....

11. Would you be interested in sharing life skill material you produced?  Yes  No

12. What do you think about trying to standardize the LLS material, to avoid duplication of manuals?

- Useful  Not very useful  Not sure

13. In which grade do you think LLS should start?

\_\_\_\_\_

14. What are the main constraints you face during the implementation of LLS at school? *(Tick all that apply)*

- Shortage of teachers  Shortage of teaching support materials
- Lack of interest from teachers  Lack of interest from students
- Lack of interest of School Director  Lack of appropriate space
- Lack of community involvement  No reimbursement of teachers overtime
- Other

\_\_\_\_\_

15. What do you consider your main achievement through LLS implementation?

.....

.....

16. What are the **three** most important elements that contribute to LLS best practice in your opinion?

Why?

**17.** Who was involved in developing the life skills topics implemented at the schools? (*Tick all that apply*)

- Students       Parents       SSC committee       Teachers       School Director  
 NGO staff       DOE       POE       CEFAC       Other \_\_\_\_\_

**18.** Do the teachers receive any supplementary salary for teaching LLS?

- Yes       No

If yes, from who? (*Tick all that apply*)

- NGO       MoEYS       Commune       Parents/Community members       School  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Specify how much and how often

**19.** Realistically, do you think that schools will continue implement life skills after your support finishes?

- Yes, all       Yes, most       Yes, a few       No       I don't know

**20.** Do you have a sustainability plan for your life skills program?

- Yes     No    (If YES, please describe below)

.....  
.....



## NGOs: semi structured interview

### Introduction

KAPE is currently conducting research on life skills, on behalf of NEP, with its members. The study aims to highlight strengths, constraints and challenges in the actual implementation at basic education level and present a proposal to establish a pool fund for its members to help schools implement life skills projects and promote the realization the MoEYS' Life Skills Education policy goals.

### General Information

NGO's NAME:

Name of the interviewee:

Contact (e mail):

Phone:

NGO Main target areas of life skills intervention:

Do you implement Life Skills? (If **yes**, please go to SECTION B)

Yes       No

### SECTION A - For NGOS not implementing Life skills activities

**Why you do not implement LLS activities?**

- Not relevant to our programming     Lack of funding     Lack of interest from schools  
 Lack of technical expertise     Lack of training material     Other priorities  
 Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Would you be interested in implementing life skills in the future?**

Yes       No     I'm not sure

**Do you already have a plan to implement life skills in the future?**

Yes       No     I'm not sure

**Would you be interested in having access to a database of life skills modules and resources?**

Yes       No     I'm not sure

**Section B - For NGOs implementing Life skills**

1. Do you implement LOCAL LIFE SKILLS (LLS) in

- Primary Schools     Lower Secondary     RTTC/PTTC     Ministry Level     Non Formal Education

2. Are you familiar with the MoEYS Life Skills Policy Framework?

- Very Familiar     Familiar     Not very familiar

3. Do you think the MoEYS Policy contents (Life Skills and Curriculum Development) are...

- Complete     Can be improved     Lack a clear framework

Why?

4. What are the weaknesses/ strengths of the Life Skills Policy/Curriculum Development?

Weaknesses	Strengths

5. Who do you work with in the implementation of Local Life Skills (LLS) in schools?

- POEs     DOEs     Communes     School Director     Teachers  
 Community members     Other (please specify).....

i. Are they informed about the MoEYS Policy framework?

- Yes     The majority     Few of them     I'm not sure

Please give details:

ii. Did you provide any training to explain the Policies?  Yes  No

What kind? To who?

**NOTE: If you work at Ministry level only, please skip the remaining questions**

6. What are the areas in which you implement LLS? (Please tick ✓ all that apply)

Areas	Primary	LSecondary	PTTC	RTTC	Non Formal
Agriculture/Fish raising/Mushrooms/...					
Simple Career Skills (e.g. Bicycle repair/hairdressing....)					
Social awareness (eg. Drug abuse prevention/domestic violence awareness and prevention,...)					
Cultural (eg. Minority awareness/multicultural topics,...)					
Health/HIV AIDS					
Business and Economic (money management/book keeping/ work readiness)					
Other (Please specify here) -----					

In total how many Modules do you have for each subject?

7. Do you classify the LLS in different groups following the MoEYS indications?

BASIC SKILLS → General life Skills/Pre-vocational Skills

CAREER SKILLS → Simple career skills/Vocational Skills

Yes  No  I don't know

If no, why?  We don't use any specific classification  We use our own classification

Specify details of classification:

8. Which subjects are chosen most by the students? (List minimum 1, maximum 3 for each Level)

Level	Boys	Girls
Primary		
Lower Secondary		

9. Why do you think they are chosen the most? (Tick all that apply)

- Only option available
- It's a low cost activity
- Because students enjoy it
- Matches the most common occupation of the area
- It can help to raise family income
- Matches local gender expectations
- Meets a local skill gap (eg. Dancing in a area with a lot of tourists)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Give details:

10. Do you use any supporting material for the teaching of LLS?  Yes  No

If yes, who produced the material?  Our NGO  Other -

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please list the material, or provide list as an attachment if the list is too long (please give details about the kind of material (eg. Manuals, CDs-VIDEOS, Posters for teachers/students ...)*

.....

.....

11. Would you be interested in sharing life skill material you produced?  Yes  NO

**12.** How do you think that can be done best?

**13.** What do you think about trying to standardize the LLS material, to avoid duplication of manuals?

- Useful                       Not very useful                       Not sure

Specify:

**14.** In which grade do you think LLS should start?

---

Why?

**15.** What are the main constraints you face during the implementation of LLS at school? *(Tick all that apply)*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shortage of teachers                | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortage of teaching support materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of interest from teachers      | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of interest from students         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of interest of School Director | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of appropriate space              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of community involvement       | <input type="checkbox"/> No reimbursement of teachers overtime  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other                               |   |
- 

Explain:

**16.** What do you consider your main achievement through LLS implementation?

**17.** What are the **three** most important elements that contribute to LLS best practice in your opinion?

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

Explain:

**18.** Who was involved in developing the life skills topics implemented at the schools? (*Tick all that apply*)

- Students       Parents       SSC committee       Teachers       School Director  
 NGO staff       DOE       POE       CEFAC       Other \_\_\_\_\_

How are they involved?

## 2. POEs questionnaire

### General Knowledge

1. Did you receive any training on the Life skills Policy (2006)? Yes No  I'm not sure

Who provided you the training?

Government

NGO. Please Specify which one.....

Other

2. Are you familiar with the Curriculum Development Policy 2005-2009?

Yes  No  I'm not sure

Can you briefly explain what it says about implementing life skills?

.....  
.....  
.....

Who provided you the training?

Government

NGO. Please Specify which one.....

Other.....

3. Do you consider Local Life Skills (LLS) an extra curriculum activity?

Yes No  I'm not sure

4. Could you try to explain what Local Life Skills are for you?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**School Level**

5. Are life skills activities implemented in your Province?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

If **YES** which ones? (Please list the local life skills (LLS) implemented in the schools. If you have a long list define the key areas). *Eg of areas/activities: PRACTICAL LIFE SKILLS (Activities: Agriculture, Fish raising, vegetable growing,...), HEALTH , ENVIRONMENT (Activities: explain about pollution, wild life, ....), SIMPLE CAREER SKILLS (Activities: Hair dressing, bicycle repair,.....)*

#	Area/Activity	N. of Districts	Approximate number of schools	Ngo support? (if YES, give name of NGO)

Continue chart on the other side of the paper if not enough space

6. Are they implemented in (Tick all that apply):

- Primary Schools       Lower Secondary       PTTC       RTTC  
 Non Formal Education       Other (please specify).....

7. Are you involved in any life skills activity in schools?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

a. If yes, please indicate what your role is

- Monitoring and Evaluation  
 Coordination within schools and communities  
 Supporting financially the activities  
 Advocating for more support  
 Other (please specify).....

8. Have you ever requested overtime payment for LLS teachers?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure



a. If YES, what happened?

- The request was accepted
- The request was not accepted
- I don't know

9. Could you list 3 possible challenges schools face in the implementation of LLS in schools?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

10. Could you list maximum 3 possible benefits for students in studying life skills?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

11. Could you list maximum 3 possible benefits for the teachers in teaching life skills?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

12. Which do you think are the most needed Local Life Skills for students in your Province?

- 1.....Is it implemented at the moment?  Yes  No  
 I'm not sure
- 2.....Is it implemented at the moment?  Yes  No  
 I'm not sure
- 3.....Is it implemented at the moment?  Yes  No  
 I'm not sure

a. If you have NGO support do you realistically think the activities will continue after NGO support stop?

- Yes, all
- Yes, most
- Yes, a few
- No
- I don't know

13. Do you have a sustainability plan for your life skills program?

Yes     No     I'm not sure (If YES, please describe below)

.....

.....

a. Who was involved in developing the sustainability plan?

- |   |   |                                |                               |
|---|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Directors | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers             | <input type="checkbox"/> SSC   | <input type="checkbox"/> DOEs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> POEs             | <input type="checkbox"/> NGO Children Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |                               |

### 3. DOEs questionnaire

#### General Knowledge

14. Did you receive any training on the Life skills Policy (2006)? Yes No  I'm not sure

Who provided you the training?

Government

NGO. Please Specify which one.....

Other

15. Are you familiar with the Curriculum Development Policy 2005-2009?

Yes No  I'm not sure

Can you briefly explain what it says about implementing life skills?

.....  
.....  
.....

Who provided you the training?

Government

NGO. Please Specify which one.....

Other

16. Do you consider Local Life Skills (LLS) an extra curriculum activity?

Yes No  I'm not sure

17. Could you try to explain what Local Life Skills are for you?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**School Level**

18. Are life skills activities implemented in your District?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

If **YES** which ones? (Please list the local life skills (LLS) implemented in the schools. If you have a long list define the key areas). *Eg of areas/activities: PRACTICAL LIFE SKILLS (Activities: Agriculture, Fish raising, vegetable growing,...), HEALTH , ENVIRONMENT (Activities: explain about pollution, wild life, ....), SIMPLE CAREER SKILLS (Activities: Hair dressing, bicycle repair,.....)*

#	Area/Activity	Approximate number of schools	Ngo support? (if YES, give name of NGO)

Continue chart on the other side of the paper if not enough space

19. Are they implemented in (Tick all that apply):

- Primary Schools       Lower Secondary       PTTC       RTTC  
 Non Formal Education       Other (please specify).....

20. Are you involved in any life skills activity in schools?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

a. If yes, please indicate what your role is

- Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Coordination within schools and communities
  - Supporting financially the activities
  - Advocating for more support
- Other (please specify).....



a. If you have NGO support do you realistically think the activities will continue after NGO support stop?

- Yes, all       Yes, most       Yes, a few       No       I don't know

26. Do you have a sustainability plan for your life skills program?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure (If YES, please describe below)

.....

.....

a. Who was involved in developing the sustainability plan?

- School Directors       Teachers       SSC       DOEs  
 POEs       NGO       Children Council  
 Other

#### 4. School Directors

Name

School name

School Level:  Primary

Lower Secondary

#### General Knowledge

1. Have you ever received any training of the Life Skills Policy (2006) and the Curriculum Development Policy (2005-2009)?  Yes  No  I'm not sure

If **YES**, who provided you the training?

- Government  NGO  Other (please specify).....

2. Do you have a copy of the Life Skills Policy and the Curriculum Development Policy in your office?

- Yes  No  I'm not sure

3. Do you have any modules or materials in your school that could help you implement life skills?

- Yes  No  I'm not sure

If **YES**, which materials do you have?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. Can you explain what you think Local life skills are?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**School level**

Do you implement local life skills (LLS) activities in your school?

- Yes
- No (if you answer is **No**, go to **section 2**)

If **YES**, which ones and at which grades? (Please list the Local Life skills) LLS you implement in schools. If you have a long list define the areas as Agriculture/Social/Health/Business/Economic/etc)

- 1..... Grade(s).....
- 2..... Grade(s).....
- 3..... Grade(s).....
- 4..... Grade(s).....
- 5..... Grade(s).....
- 6..... Grade(s).....
- 7..... Grade(s).....

5. Do you cooperate with any NGO in the implementation of Local Life Skills (LLS) activities?

If **YES**, which one/ones?

- 1.NGO: ..... Key area of local life skills:.....
- 2 NGO: ..... Key area of local life skills:.....
- 3 NGO: ..... Key area of local life skills:.....

6. What type of support do the NGOs give:

- Purchase of materials
- Payment of teachers
- Provision of modules
- Training of teachers
- How to plan with communities
- Other (Please specify).....

7. Do you consider learning local life skills useful for children? Yes  No  Not sure

Please, explain:

.....

.....

.....

.....



8. From which grade do you think LLS should be taught?.....

9. Are teachers happy to teach LLS in your school, in your opinion?  Yes  No  Not sure

If **Not**, Why? (Tick all that apply)

- Not enough time
- Not enough supporting material
- Not able to develop teaching modules by themselves
- Work overtime and no supplementary salary
- Other (Please specify).....

10. Do you consider LLS an extra curricula activity?  Yes  No  Not sure

11. When do you normally teach Life skills? Which day of the week? How many hours per week?

.....  
.....

12. Who chose which life skills topics should be taught at your school? (Tick all that apply)

- |   |                                   |   |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Director            | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> School Support Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children/student council   | <input type="checkbox"/> NGO      | <input type="checkbox"/> POE                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOE                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Commune  | <input type="checkbox"/> CEFAC                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other(Please specify)..... |                                   |   |

13. Who was involved in choosing the local life skills (LLS)? (Tick all that apply)

- |   |                                   |   |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Director            | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> School Support Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children/student council   | <input type="checkbox"/> NGO      | <input type="checkbox"/> POE                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOE                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Commune  | <input type="checkbox"/> CEFAC                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other(Please specify)..... |                                   |   |

14. Who is responsible for teaching life skills in your school? (Tick all that apply)

- |  |  |                                     |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Community members | <input type="checkbox"/> NGOs staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify)..... |  |                                     |

15. Are there any life skills topics that you do not teach now that you think could be more useful for your school?

- Yes  No  I'm not sure

If YES, which topics?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

16. Do you have a plan to make the local life skill activities sustainable?

- Yes       No       I'm not sure

a. If Yes, how? (Tick all that apply)

- Community contribution       Fund raising activities in school       PB budget  
 Commune funds       Other (please specify).....

b. Who was involved in the sustainability planning? (Tick all that apply)

- School Support Committee       Teachers       Students       POE  
 DOE       Commune       CEFAC       NGO  
 Other (please specify).....

**Section 2. Only for schools who do NOT implement LLS at the moment)**

21. Why don't you implement LLS? (Tick all that apply)

- Not enough resources in the school (teachers/trainers/budget)
- The school needs support from local authorities/communities or NGOs to implement LLS
- No teaching support and teachers cannot develop the material with the Community
- Because it's optional and teachers are already very busy
- Because children do not need them
- Because the school is not interested

17. Would you be interested in implementing LLS in the future?    Yes     No     Not sure

18. Which subjects do you think could be useful for your school?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....

19. Do you have good relationship with the local Community?    Yes     No     Not sure

20. Who do you think should be involved in the design/planning of LLS in your school?

- Local authorities (MoEYS/POE/DOE/Commune). Please specify
- School Director
- Teachers
- Community
- NGO
- Children/student council
- Other.....

21. In your opinion, are local life skills an extra curricula activity?     Yes     No     I'm not sure

## **Annex 2. Local life skills workshop**

### **Group 1:**

**Do you think that capacity development is needed to improve life skills development, monitoring and implementation? If so, Who should be the target groups? Who should be responsible? How can we ensure we make it effective?**

### **Group Discussion:**

**1. Do you think that capacity development is needed to improve life skills development, monitoring and implementation?**

Yes, very important

**2. If so, Who should be the target groups?**

Teachers and students at Primary school to upper secondary school (grade 1-12) should be the target groups

**3. Who should be responsible?**

- VOD
- DCD
- Teacher + pupils
- Community
- NGOs

**4. How can we ensure we make it effective?**

- M&E
- Reflection and feedback
- Promotion (sharing lessons learnt)
- National budget allocation to sub-national level to implement local life skill
- Allocation of budget to NGOs to implement local life skill program
- Strengthen collaboration with related institutions.
- Provide technical capacity on local life skill to teachers/ related NGOs
- MoEYS should have a clear standard curriculum local life skill for each grade
- Research –development and update policies based on research
- Need decentralized budget to implement life skills
- Encourage donors to allocate budget – not just to government but need input from civil society
- Should be surveys to update the program to find the aspects to improve
- Give incentives to schools that have best practices (through annual conference organized by MoEYS)

## Group 2

How should data collection and best practices at all levels of implementation be tracked? What would be the best way to coordinate among the 5 MoEYS departments and between the 5 MoEYS department and NGOs to ensure effective implementation of life skills?

### Answers:

1. Data collection should be tracked:
  - Need cooperation between MoEYS and NGOs, especially the DCD and VOD and schools and establish a working group on life skills.
  - Working group could go to schools
  - Forming a working group
  - Schools should report the progress of implementation to MoEYS.
  - Visit the schools to track the implementation of life skills program
  - Produce a form of tracking system
  - NGOs could work with the VOD to collect data on what schools have implemented
  
2. The best ways to coordinate among the 5 MoEYS departments:
  - 5 departments of MoEYS should have an agreement to create a working group to track the implementation of program
  - Work closely with NGOs to implement the program.
  - Create a schedule for tracking and final report
  - Each MoEYS department needs a clear separate plan – the TTD need to know what their plans are, VOD need to know their plans
  - NGOs have budget so they must help the Ministry
  - Ministry must ensure that all 5 departments help to implement the life skills program.
  - MoEYS should arrange a timeline to do M&E

Comment on this group from the director of VOD: Until now, VOD had thought that things needed to be done from the top down, but this strategy could change and it could in fact be bottom up and this could be better.

### Group 3

What are the steps and who should be involved to create better Module standardization? What kind of materials could be kept on a life skill database? Who should be responsible for this?

#### Answers:

1. MoEYS has developed life skills policy but some modules of Development partners are not officially recognized by MoEYS yet. In addition, the Ministry already has some modules. Modules developed by NGOs should be further developed and approved by Ministry before further dissemination.

Next, publication and distribution should be done to school nationwide. And then any topics should be selected and taught in schools in respond to available resources. Working group with NGOs could help to create standardized monitoring tools

2. Kinds of materials could be kept on a life skill database are as follows:
  - Life skills policies
  - A detailed curriculum
  - Modules of life skills developed
  - A research report/ other relevant reports
  - Instruction of implementation, monitoring and evaluation
  - Documents of best practices from development partners
- Relevant Departments in MoEYS , NEP and development partners should be responsible for this. Training should be provided to all relevant stakeholders.
- There should be a responsible person in charge at district level

Suggestion: other implementers should be trained by experts from Department of Vocational Orientation on principals and instructions of life skills.

#### Group 4

If a life skills Pool Fund is developed, how could this be organized? What criteria should be used to select NGOs? Who should take part in the selection process? What life skill activities should funds be allocated for?

#### Answers:

- The pool fund should not only be for NGOs, it should also be available to the government
- Only local NGOs (and not international NGOs) should be eligible for the fund as International NGOs are more able to access funds
- Selection of awards from pool fund should be made by the Board of NEP with representatives from MoEYS
- Funds should be focused on Local life skills
- Funds should focus on grades 7-9 as then when they finish school they will have a skill which can help them get an income.