

Briefing Note

The Senate Region 1

Developing and Implementing 5 Year Development Plans and 3-Year Rolling Investment Plans at the Sangkat Administrations in Phnom Penh

Researcher in charge:
Assisted by:

Ms. Tan Sokunkolyan
Mr. Theng Nan
Ms. Has Khuneary
Mr. Chhan Paul

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1. Introduction

This briefing note was prepared in response to a request from Senate Region 1 for organizing a forum on "Reports on the results of the implementation of Sangkat development plans" in December 2016. The briefing note provides, input to the forum, on the following: (1) successes and challenges concerning implementing 5 year development plans and 3 year rolling investment plans for Sangkats in Phnom Penh, (2) successes and challenges in terms of ID card provision and voter registration at the Sangkat level, and (3) update on the implementation of Sangkat Safety Policy focusing on education, suppression and prevention strategies concerning illegal drugs.

It should be noted that to prepare this briefing note only desk reviews were conducted. While efforts have been made to search for recent relevant documents i.e. from 2015 or 2016, these were not available. Therefore, the briefing note provides information on data available from earlier dates considered as useful inputs for the forum.

2. Development Plans & 3 Year Rolling Plans

This section looks at the results and challenges of the implementation of 5 year development plans (CDP) and 3 year rolling investment plans (CIP) of Sangkats in Phnom Penh.

According to the Trimester Report on the implementation of the 1st 3-year implementation plan (2011-2013)¹ of National Programs for Sub- National Democratic Development (IP3) of the Planning and Investment Office, Phnom Penh City, 2012, Sangkat councils have learned how to develop CDP and CIP and properly implement them.

With regards to the status of the implementation of projects funded by Sangkats' budgets in 2015, 101 contracts², which are all infrastructure development projects, have been signed, but to date, none of the projects has been implemented. While 97 contracts on infrastructure projects were signed in 2014, only 66 projects were 100% completed; 3 projects were 50% completed; and 28 projects have not been started. The reasons for this delay have not been identified³ and needs further research in order to identify challenges and solutions.

According to the report on the results of regional forum of Senate Group Region 1 on 30 March 2016, some challenges were reported as follows:

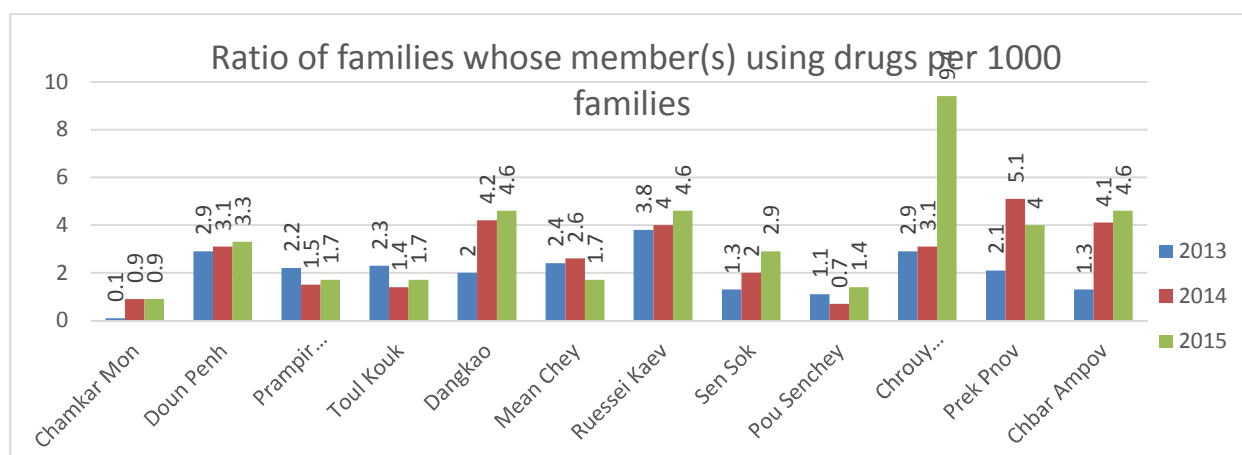
- Problems of withdrawing cash advances due to the Sangkats' unfamiliarity with cash advanced procedures at both the national and sub-national level which resulted from the recent public financial reforms;
- Limited capacity, and increasing workloads of Sangkat clerks has led to delayed cash advance flows;⁴
- Lack of companies participating in project bidding;
- Insufficient Commune/Sangkat budgets, which leads to less emphasis on social services; and

- Communes/Sangkats are tasked with more and more roles and responsibilities. Besides CDP & CIP planning and implementation, and local service provision, Communes/Sangkats are, for example, required to implement commune/Sangkat safety policy and to be involved in voter registration.

3. Sangkat Safety Policy

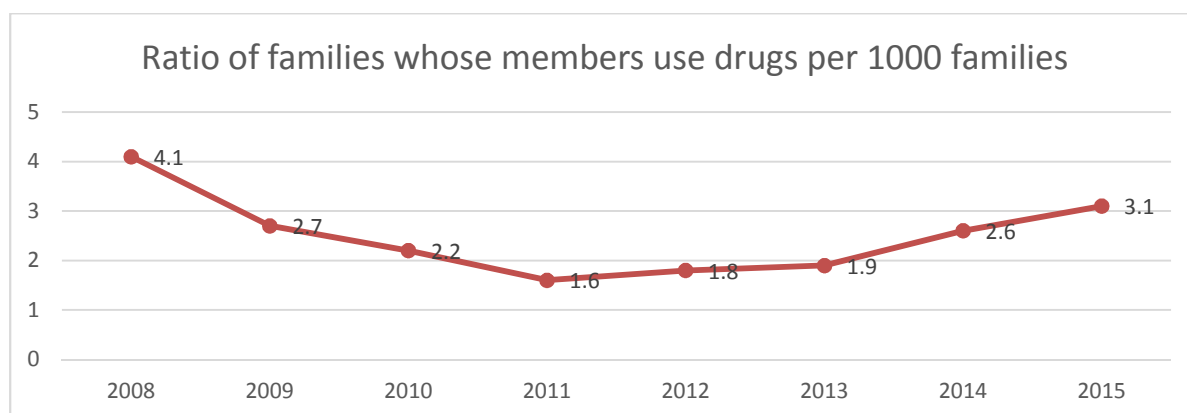
The report of Senate Region 1 dated April 2016 mentioned that drug issues have caused many problems in society such as stealing, robbery, violence and so on⁵. This section looks at the situation of illegal drug use in Phnom Penh and other issues related to illegal drugs.

Situation of illicit drug use in Phnom Penh



Source: Provincial department of planning capital: Profile on economic and social, Phnom Penh and Commune Database

The figures indicate that only one khan, Chamkar Mon, has a steady and low drug use rate while all other Khans have increasing rates and with Chrouy Changvar having the highest. The monthly report released by Phnom Penh police shows that 463 drug crimes were suppressed in Phnom Penh in 2015, which was an increase of 255 cases from the previous year.⁶ Therefore, it appears that the police have made more effort in combating drug issues.



Source: Provincial department of planning capital: Profile on economic and social, Phnom Penh and Commune Database

Education, prevention and rehabilitation

Although there has been high expectations from Sangkats in terms of implementing Sangkat safety policy, Sangkats have limited and complementary roles in relation to the police who have the primary role in this regard.⁷ The Sangkats' role includes: participating in organizing forums to raise citizens' awareness about the policy and prevention of crimes; organizing networks of voluntary citizen guards, who volunteer to educate citizens, and working with the Sangkats' police in terms of education and crime prevention.

According to the report of Senate Region 1, local authorities try to deal with drug issues through law enforcement, education, community-based drug treatment services and rehabilitation centers⁸. Furthermore, the report of the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) shows that in Phnom Penh, a program of disseminating needles/syringes has been implemented; educational banners on drug uses have been set up at health centers; and educational programs through schools, Radio, TV and concerts⁹ have been implemented. To prevent and to suppress drug-related offences, four kinds of measures are used(i.e. general police force, patrolled police force, interventional police force and ambush police force during the day and nighttime.¹⁰

Challenges

- As noted earlier, Sangkats have to respond to high expectations of their citizens while they have limited and supporting roles in fulfilling their duties. Successful implementation of Sangkat safety policy relies largely on the performance of the Sangkat police and the working relationship and collaboration between Sangkat administrations and the Sangkat police.
- In addition, reviews of Sangkats plans reveal that there are no allocated budgets for the implementation of activities of the Sangkat safety policy.
- Treatment and rehabilitation services are able to treat and rehabilitate only 3 percent of all drug users and therefore, there is a need for more community-based drug treatment services, and for close collaboration between local authorities and these local services.¹¹
- There is a lack of Police Posts¹², Police officers, Khans' security guards, and networks of voluntary citizen guards, and in particular, a lack of incentives and materials/equipment to support these operations.¹³
- Mechanisms to monitor drug use and enforcement at the sub-national level are not yet strong and still not clearly defined.
- Training of local officials on law enforcement is limited.¹⁴

4. Challenges and successes in terms of ID cards and voter registration at the Sangkat Level

Communes/Sangkats work in collaboration with voter registration groups, which are local organizations of the NEC. The important roles of communes/Sangkats include determining the number of voter registration stations, number of eligible voters, monitoring the

registration process, making sure there are observers from all political parties, issuing identification documents, and receiving complaints, etc.¹⁵

The National Election Committee estimates that there are 9,664,216 eligible voters.¹⁶ Voter registration for the commune/sangkat election 2017 has been opened since 01 September 2016. By 29 November 2016 the number of people registered was 7,832,721 (81.04% of the total number of eligible voters); 53.54% of them are female.¹⁷

Some challenges have been identified concerning voter registration, including :

- The Ministry of Interior planned to issue 10.9 million ID cards before the 2017 commune election.¹⁸ To date 6.4 million cards have been issued, which means another 4 million cards need to be issued before the 2017 commune election.¹⁹ In addition, some ID cards issued in 2012 have become unglued, and require replacement before the 2017 commune election.²⁰
- Citizens holding both old ID and new ID cards are allowed to register, causing concern that there will be duplications in registration since the old ID cards do not have biometric chips containing the holders' personal data.²¹
- According to the NEC' spokesman the voter registration process has encountered some minor problems such as: (1) lack of electricity in some communes in the countryside which requires purchasing 80 generators²²; (2) lack of experienced computer operators in some communes ; and (3) slow internet connection in some communes, which makes transferring data via internet difficult.²³ However, these minor problems have been addressed over time.

5. Conclusion

D and D in Cambodia are relatively young. However, local administrations such as Communes /Sangkats have been fully operational and have been receiving more and more roles and responsibilities and additional budget allocations. Besides developing 5 year development plans, 3 year rolling investment plans and implementing them, Communes/Sangkats are involved in other tasks such as providing services to local citizens, implementing communes/Sangkats safety policy, and being involved in voter registration. To address the challenges face by Commune/ Sangkats, they require more support in terms of finances, capacity building, and more collaboration with ministries, institutions concerned, and higher tiers of administration.

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