



Cambodian  
Civil  
Society  
Partnership

The Training Handbook

# CITIZEN RATING REPORT



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This handbook would not have been possible without the support and assistance of a wide range of people who I would like to recognize and thank.

Special gratitude goes to:

- The people who contributed greatly in terms of enriching the content of this Citizen Rating Report (CRR) training handbook through their participation, and freely and frankly sharing their opinions and perceptions. This includes Commune Councillors, Local NGOs, local authorities, members of the Commune Research Team (CRT), and villagers;
- CCSP staff for their diligent program and logistic support in successfully completing the CRR handbook revision;
- Ms Harjinder Kaur, International Consultant, for revising and updating the CRR handbook to accommodate experience and lesson learned, and
- Last but not least, The Asia Foundation for its invaluable resource support for this important work.

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Phnom Penh, March 2013

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Law on Administration and Management of Commune/Sangkat states that each Commune Council (CC) should be governed in a manner whereby it is accountable to all residents, and should actively promote and coordinate the process of democracy by setting up a process for consultation with residents, civil society and community members, especially in the provision of basic social services with transparency and strong accountability. In the initial steps of the commune development planning process, CCs have to assess current level of people's access to basic social services. At the end of each fiscal year, CC must review and report on issues encountered in providing basic social services to commune citizens as well as make recommendations on improving basic social service delivery.

In line with its mandate to strengthen civil society and citizen participation in decentralization and local governance, Cambodian Civil Society Partnership (formerly Commune Council Support Project, CCSP) pioneered in Cambodia the implementation of the Citizens' Rating Report (CRR), a methodology patterned on the internationally acclaimed report cards that were implemented in Bangalore, India, and citizen satisfaction survey carried out in the Philippines. In international practice, report cards and surveys are usually applied as a national exercise, with external enumerators gathering data at the village level. However, a unique feature of the CRR is that it localizes the report card exercise, with commune citizens collecting, analyzing and acting on the results exposed by the initiative. CRR is an innovative strategy to increase citizen influence, improve responsiveness of service delivery agencies and ensure greater government accountability. The mechanism enables: understanding of local needs and concerns; reflection on and scrutiny of areas for improvement; encouragement of people's participation; promotion of critical dialogue at local level; and a reliable source of education and mobilization for public interest groups and the citizenry at large for facilitating citizen's voice in advocating for better delivery of basic public services.

### **Purpose of this handbook**

The primary purpose of this handbook is to build capacity of local Non Government Organizations (NGOs) and citizen groups to effectively implement CRR in order to be able to demand responsive local governance, increase people's participation, and promote effective public service delivery that benefits all citizens equally.

### **Why was this handbook developed?**

This handbook was thought out and developed by CCSP since the issue of social accountability gained increasing attention, from both state and non-state actors. The Royal Government of Cambodia has reiterated a strong commitment to create and enforce appropriate mechanisms to enhance and ensure social accountability in public service delivery as a hallmark of responsive governance. Effective service delivery is a central response to practical demands for good governance and this could be made real through citizen participation. This handbook was developed to document lesson learned, enthusiasm, suitability, authenticity and the refinements of CRR practice for better and wider replication.

The first version of the handbook was published in 2009 following the CRR implementation in 2007 to 2008. This second edition has been updated and revised by Ms Harjinder Kaur, International Consultant, through knowledge and experience shared by CCSP from the last three years including the implementation of the 'better public health services through social accountability' project in 2012.

### **What is in this handbook?**

This handbook offers theoretical and practical knowledge and information on the process for collecting citizen feedback on public service delivery and advocating for change. A case study and lesson learned, including suggestions and tips are also incorporated. It contains three chapters, which cover the basic knowledge for CRR, its implementation process and lesson learned from its implementation.

**Chapter 1:** explains the concept, objective and outputs, strategy and methods and the CRR implementation process. Practically, it provides a detailed guide for each step and activity in the process. It mostly addresses main requirements for implementation of the CRR, such as awareness raising, orientation, training, meetings, workshops, surveys, public debate and media mobilization, as well as a variety of grassroots advocacy tasks such as dialogue, analysis and presentation of findings, planning and organization.

**Chapter 2:** provides a case study of CCSP's one year project entitled 'better public health services through social accountability' in 2012. The project was supported by The Asia Foundation (TAF) under the Non-State Actor Component of the Demand for Good Governance Project, and working in partnership with Local NGO partners and Commune Research Teams (CRTs) to implement a CRR on public health services in 30 communes in 5 provinces.

**Chapter 3:** presents lesson learned from the knowledge and experience of numerous individuals directly involved in the CRR implementation during the case study in Chapter 2, and relevant tips as well as highlighting general learning in each step of the process.

### **How to use the handbook?**

The process could be flexible but a good basis for implementation of the CRR is following the major strategic steps and lesson learned. It is designed for active learning. While conducting training, all trainers should decide how to adapt and amend the message each chapter according to the level of trainees. The trainer can select different parts from each chapter according to what s/he feels needs special attention. It is not necessary to teach participants everything contained in the handbook in a single training course. Apart from practical steps, the trainer can extract the critical and required parts only. It is not just a training handbook but equally useful as a reference guide. Finally, it takes time to introduce new initiatives such as CRR but the process is very rewarding.

## **WHAT IS THE CITIZEN RATING REPORT?**

For most citizens, the direct face of the state and of the government is public services. Whereby, a public service is all activities undertaken by the competent or delegated agency with a view to serving the public interest. There is a need for a fundamental rethinking of the ways in which citizens' voices are articulated and represented. Meaningful participation of citizens should result in increased demand for services and increased expectations from and pressures on the political and administrative systems. Unless the system responds, citizens may give rise to dissatisfaction, leading to serious challenges which could result to political instability.

The CRR is a mechanism that gathers perceptions on the accessibility, satisfaction and quality of public services based on the customer/client/citizens' experience, and aggregates these as a rating report. CRR is not just another public opinion survey; rather, it is a collective reflection of citizens' feedback on the performance of a service provider, shaped by their experience of having actually used a particular service for a length of time.

The rating reports are discussed by citizens themselves with the concerned service provider or decision makers. Citizens then express their perceptions on how things can be improved and suggest facilitating factors to enable better accessibility. In the course of this exercise, commune residents express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding social services and infrastructure projects, reveal reasons for their dissatisfaction, highlight deficiencies, weaknesses and interruptions in service delivery, and then offer recommendations on how could these be improved. This lays fertile ground in providing lessons and insights to citizens to demand basic services.

A very important step is to orient and collaborate closely with Commune Councilors (CCs), key informal leaders and citizens on the rationale for implementing the initiative. This is deemed very important considering that the support of the local government and the citizenry is instrumental to the success of the CRR. The strategy is also to train and coach local NGOs and CRTs through various learning events spread throughout the project life on the rationale, concepts and methodology of the CRR. In turn, they will train and assist commune residents to implement the CRR, covering data collection, analysis and ratings presentation through meetings, forums, dialogue and other forms of grassroots advocacy.

These rating reports, particularly data and information on citizen's dissatisfaction, are used as a take-off point to generate collective pressure and prompt commune officials and social service providers to respond positively to the civic call for improvements in service delivery. It provides an alternative form of public engagement between citizens and the government; it challenges the convention in representative democracy whereby citizens obtain an exclusive opportunity to express their preferences only during periodic elections. When the CRR is applied over regular intervals of time, it can help benchmark the changes over a period of time.

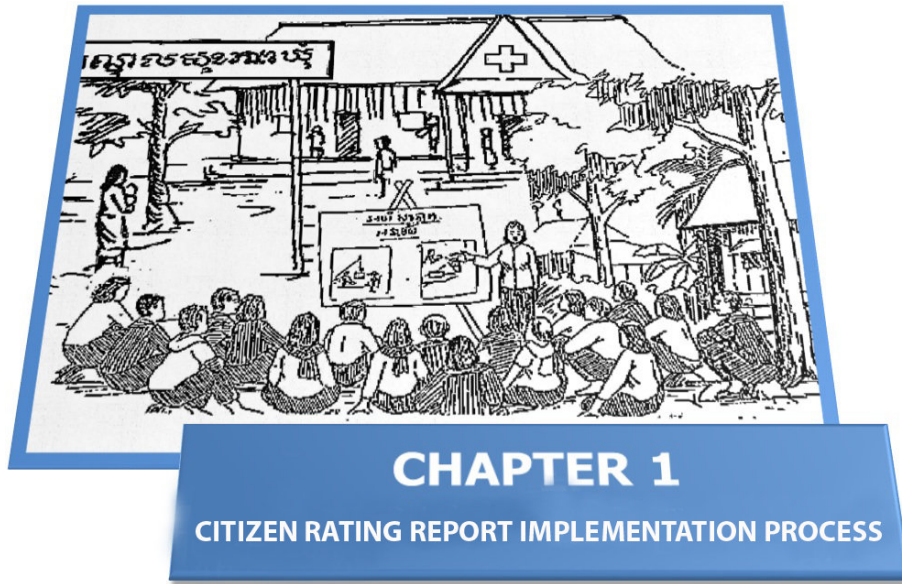
The results of the CRR can serve as a basis for critical dialogue with local government officials and other decision makers. Results are also shared with citizen bodies, other NGOs and the media. NGOs or NGO groups using ratings report are expected to educate and mobilize the media, other public interest groups and the citizenry at large to facilitate mechanisms for citizens' voices to develop and express themselves.

Indeed, the CRR can also be seen as a catalyst to build consciousness for responsive governance. In the beginning, external actors could use this initiative to provoke and activate local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and citizens to demand effective and accountable service delivery. Through the knowledge transfer, local CSOs can work independently with citizens. Then citizens understand and gain ownership, and can actively interact or negotiate with their local government for desirable basic services that meet their needs. Eventually, CCs will have sufficient information not only to respond appropriately to citizens' demands but also to be able to effectively monitor and coordinate service delivery responsibilities of deconcentrated (line) agencies of the government responsible for public service delivery within its territory.

The desired outcomes of the CRR intervention can take a longer or shorter time to materialize. This depends primarily on the level of capacity and consciousness of local citizens or local government.

The CRR provides a systematized and documented assessment of basic services, administrative services, infrastructure projects, budget expenditures, performance etc. Likewise, the CRR enhances public awareness on issues of service quality and empowers citizens to pro-actively demand greater accountability, accessibility and responsiveness from service providers. The CRR process also facilitates open and proactive discussion on the performance of public services and brings together citizens, CC officials, CSOs and government and civil society organizations in face-to-face meeting. At its highest level, it results in better or improved government policies through citizen campaigns and lobbying. Finally, it enables ministries and planning departments to streamline and prioritize budget allocations and monitor implementation. Ultimately, the CRR hopes to increase people's understanding regarding participation as the key factor for a healthy democracy in Cambodia.





## **CITIZEN RATING REPORT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

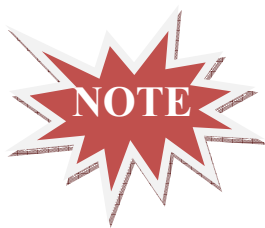
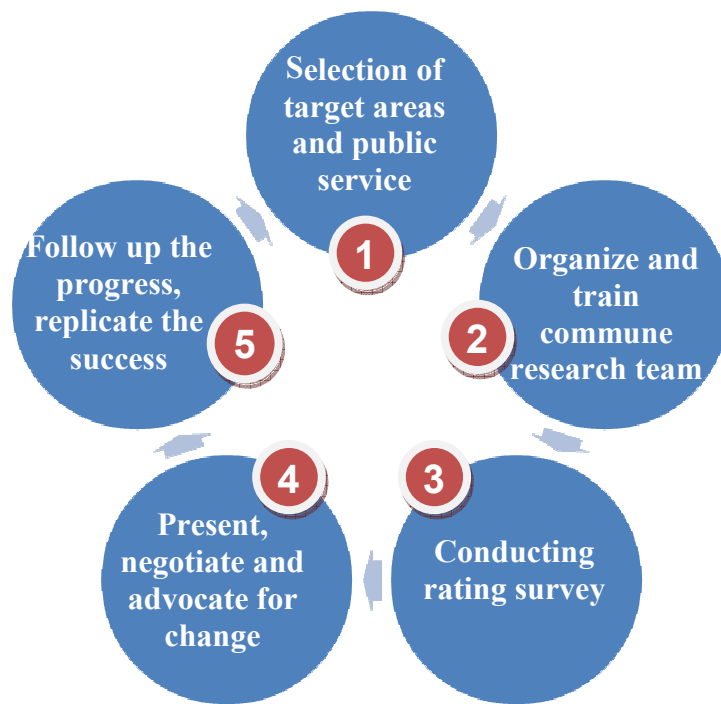
In the field application phase, local NGOs, CSOs or citizen groups will actually implement the CRR by selection of commune and public service, organizing and coaching CRT on CRR processes, actual data gathering organizing and analyzing and producing rating reports, presenting results to service provider and key decision makers and launching an advocacy campaign to address the issues identified in the CRR.

In every commune, a CRT will receive training from local NGOs in the provinces. The idea of forming the CRTs is to institutionalize local people as pressure groups in each commune to keep alive relevant issues affecting them and conduct grassroots advocacy work to demand solutions and improvement. Local NGOs, together with CRT members, will facilitate the rating survey including mapping existing local services, identification of service beneficiaries or users, and key constraints or problems in the delivery of targeted services. Based on these inputs, they can develop a draft interview schedule, subject to be pre-tested prior to its actual exercise.

Ultimately, the target beneficiaries are ordinary citizens (service users) in the communes, whose awareness and understanding of rights and responsibilities as citizens have to be either changed or enhanced through information and education and, consequently, by implementing initiatives to demand responsiveness and accountability from those they voted into power. The CRR also targets local NGOs whose capacity to promote social accountability can be enhanced through various learning events. Local government and service providers are the advocacy targets. Finally, the mass media are targeted as a support mechanism and are expected to play a critical role in articulating advocacy issues identified by the CRR.

**Five step process of the CRR implementation:**





Sets of activities in each step are not necessarily and the order of execution can be flexible. Some activities take place continuously and therefore crosscut all steps and some others can be carried out simultaneously.

## Sets of activity in each step

### **Step 1: Selection of target areas and public service/entry points**

- Identify scope and purpose
- Rapid assessment and selection of target areas and public service/entry points
- Negotiation and lobbying for endorsement and launching
- Identification, selection and validation of basic services and the unit of service delivery to be assessed
- Develop sampling frame/ determine which segments of the population will be sampled
- Designing of questionnaires

### **Step 2: Organize and train commune research team (CRT)**

- Selection of local implementing organization
- Organizing the CRT
- Preparing official MOU and contracts
- Training, coaching and orientation on CRR concepts and methodology
- Promotion of CRR in CCs and in public

### **Step 3: Conducting rating survey**

- Prepare action plan for field rating survey
- Conducting field survey
- Validation, analyze data and production of report
- Monitoring and continuing technical assistance

### **Step 4: Presentation, negotiate and advocate for changes**

- Commune assembly meeting for presenting survey results
- Organize advocacy work

### **Step 5: Follow up the progress, replicate the success**

- Strengthen local networks, maintaining sustainability
- Follow up and evaluation activities
- Dissemination of findings and replication

**The detailed guide for each step**

# STEP 1

## Selection of target areas and public service

### 1.1 Rapid assessment and selection of target communes

The implementing organization of the CRR initiative should conduct a rapid assessment in order to check the appropriateness of implementing the CRR in the commune. This assessment will be an opportunity to observe and appraise perceptions of CCs, commune residents and other local development players regarding selection of the proposed commune for CRR implementation. This requires a participatory approach to allow CCs, local leaders, civil society representatives and residents to assess the suitability that will lead to identify the target communes undertaking the CRR initiative. The assessment is guided by a rapid assessment scorecard and will look at whether the following preconditions prevail or not:

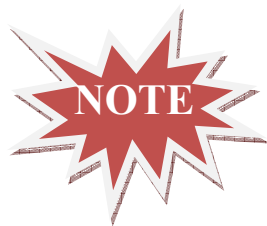
#### Some conditions included:

1. Willingness of CCs to respond to feedback
2. Leadership orientation of CC chief/ CC members
3. Level of civic dynamism or high level of commune activism
4. Presence and strength of NGOs etc.
5. Existence or availability of basic social services
6. High local demand
7. Very low level of development
8. High level of dissatisfaction
9. Appropriateness
10. Timing Acclamation Accessibility of media Other facilitating factor/s

Staff must be proactive in preparing scorecards and questions and making appointments in advance. The implementing NGO should arrange meetings with individual CC officials separately or a joint meeting can be arranged. Aside from their staff, commune based implementing organizations can request village chiefs, CCs, local CSOs or citizens to assist in the arrangements.

The commune is the primary target and the entry point for this initiative. After rapid assessment, the implementing organization could identify which communes are suitable for implementing the CRR. The selected communes must meet at least half of the above prescribed conditions. The implementing organization may consider choosing communes where it works or may decide to select new communes. This way can start from one commune until it is satisfied with the number of desired target communes. The maximum number of desired target communes depends on appraisal of manageability. Three to five communes should be manageable for one implementing organization. Calibration could be based on results of the rapid assessment or baseline information that the implementing organization has related

using simple preferred criteria. In case of the need to choose new communes, the implementing organization can approach CCs for endorsement or district or provincial authorities for assistance. It is advised that the implementing organization takes a large number of communes for consideration and then, following a proper screening process, selects the number it wishes to administer.



**Identification and selection of target communes are connected to the simplicity or difficulty of the CRR operation. The number of communes selected should fit the ability of the implementing organization, its staff, financial resources, time and managerial capacity.**

**The implementing organization must clearly state that political representation is not a criterion for selection.**

## **1.2 Negotiation and lobbying for endorsement, and launching**

### **1.2.1 Negotiation and lobbying**

Rights of citizen for participation are guaranteed in the Constitution, law and government policies on decentralization being adopted by the government. Since its pilot phase, the Ministry of Interior has provided authenticity and encouragement to the CRR initiative. At the local level, however, the implementing organization needs to make consultations with CCs or commune chiefs regarding launching the CRR activity in their respective commune.

The implementing organization should set a formal special meeting with the CC or make a request to propose the CRR subject on the agenda in the regular CC meeting or spend a maximum of half an hour presenting the proposed CRR initiative to lobby for councilors support. In some areas, the implementing organization can speak to the commune chief before formally bringing the issue to the meeting. If needed, the implementing organization may seek approval from the district or provincial authority.

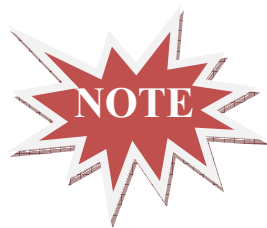
Explain about the project clearly: note that it simply aims to score the quality of services, disregarding whom these are provided to. The project should be seen as a support mechanism for the service provider such as providing feedback and helping to collect information rather than, for example, investigating wrongdoing, criticizing and/or confronting. Be clear that the CRR initiative is similar to any other local development activity, and make it very clear that this has nothing to do with politics and as such has no affiliation with any political party or group.

Promote the initiative as a good mechanism for collecting public opinion which provides constructive reflection on what CCs have done, to help CCs in designing better plans and projects. Make sure CCs welcome the initiative fearlessly and with interest and do not look at it as an instrument for public embarrassment and insult.

**In what ways does the CRR initiative support the CC? Some relevant explanatory points for implementing organizations:**

1. It helps CCs be aware of the needs and concerns of people
2. It provides a link to connect people with CCs
3. It supports CCs to achieve success through constructive monitoring and reflection, the best way to ensure success
4. It tells communes what is right, what is wrong

CRR is not a tool of conventional resistance to local government but it helps improve its performance not only in administrative affairs but also in the delivery of basic services. It also enhances its reputation as responsive government. The special and importance of CRR is promotion of transparency, responsiveness and participation.



**How easily CCs accept the CRR can depend on history of the partnership between the implementing organization and the CC. A good record of cooperation and trust relieves the CC and builds a favorable environment for CRR operation. In the beginning, CCs may feel the project comes to criticize and interfere in council activities, and to pump up the people to investigate the “doings” of the CC. CCs may also worry about the unpredictability of CRR results, which may criticize them, or become confused about whether it is supportive or instigative. A proper explanation of the purposes of the project can clear up such confusions.**

### 1.2.2 Launching

The CRR launching ceremony is normally organized at the national or provincial level if the implementing organization feels it necessary to do so. In most cases, organizations just start the process. Following CC endorsement, for coordination purposes and to get the CC fully on board, the implementing organization needs the CC's informal confirmation, verbally or by letter, of the schedule of CRR activities



#### **Mobilizing and using media, here!**

**During the initial phase of CRR implementation, it is important to mobilize the media. This helps inform the government at national and local levels about the CRR and convince officials of the sincerity, good intentions, importance and usefulness of the CRR. The media helps build a conducive environment and disseminate the CRR to the public. This could raise public awareness and prepare**

**people to take part enthusiastically in the CRR process.**

### **1.3 Identification, selection and validation of public services**

There are many entry points for the CRR project. It can probe into basic social services, administrative services, infrastructure projects, budget expenditures, performance etc that are relevant to citizens at local level, regardless of who is doing or providing the service.

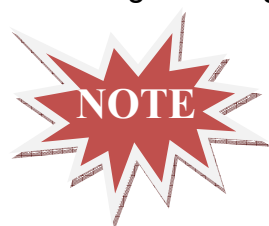
The primary purpose of the CRR is to rate a number of basic social services and some subjects related to CC performance. The kind of services to be evaluated must be identified and selected in a participatory way. It is advisable to hold consultation meetings with CCs, village chiefs and citizens. In fact, selection of services should be based on existence in communes, especially in rural areas. In this regard, existence of services is a precondition to selection.

#### **Example of services that could be selected for the rating survey**

1. Health services
2. Primary education
3. Potable water systems
4. Small scale irrigation
5. Rural road projects
6. CC meetings
7. Administrative services etc.

In each commune, the implementing organization may select two to three services for the rating survey. The selected services can vary from one commune to another depending on existence and availability. In some communes, selected services may be the same but they may differ with respect to size and other measures.

The identification and selection of service must be relevant and match the needs of local residents as well as communes. Services should also be in the mandate or under the management provision or supervision of the CC. For this reason, selection requires participation of CCs and citizens, especially vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women.



**In most cases, services are not delivered by CCs, but they hold the authority to coordinate and facilitate provision. Therefore, CCs are also accountable to people with respect to service delivery even where they do not directly provide a service to residents.**

### **1.4 Sampling of respondents**

Determine an appropriate sampling design, size and scope. The number of respondents per commune varies from commune to commune, depending on the size of commune and the number of villages within each commune. The implementing organization should look to work with 10-20 families per village, so that the total number of respondents in each commune equals 10-20 families multiplied by the number of villages within each commune.

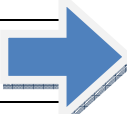


Methods for selection of respondents may differ according to the implementing organization. These could include random selection, simple selection, representation selection, geographical selection and lucky draw selection. Implementer can use one of these. The table below reflects the different numbers and methods in CRT selection and CRT activities.

<b>Size of CRT</b>	<b>5-10 people</b>
<b>People interviewed per CRT member</b>	15-20 people
<b>Time spent with each respondent</b>	30 minutes on average
<b>Number of respondents per commune</b>	20-30 families/village x # of villages/commune
<b>Methods for selection of respondents</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Random selection</li> <li>2. Simple selection</li> <li>3. Representation selection</li> <li>4. Geographical selection</li> <li>5. Lucky draw selection</li> </ol>

## 1.5 Design of questionnaires

Determine the structure and size of the questionnaire(s) and for simplicity sake, questionnaires should be designed individually for each service. The number of services selected in each commune determine the number of different sorts of questionnaires to be used in each commune. **Example:** If one implementing organization selects three communes to implement the CRR and in each commune two services are identified and selected for evaluation, some services may overlap and some may be different. The number of different sorts of questionnaires depends on the number of different kinds of services.

<b>Communes</b>	<b>Service in each commune</b>	<b>Total of different kinds of services</b>
Commune A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health services</li> <li>• Primary education</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health services</li> <li>• Primary education</li> <li>• Potable water system</li> <li>• Rural road projects</li> </ul>
Commune B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health services</li> <li>• Potable water system</li> </ul>	
Commune C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary education</li> <li>• Rural road projects</li> </ul>	
<p><i>There are 4 different kinds of services in total in this case. So the implementing organization needs to design 4 different questionnaires for the rating survey. The amount of questionnaires used depends on the total number of respondents selected for each service.</i></p>		

A good way of designing the questionnaire is to hold focus group discussions involving users, service providers, NGO partners and CRTs to identify issues to be assessed. In addition, involve the partners and CRTs in the process and discussion so that they are familiar with it and can easily elaborate during the field survey. A good questionnaire should consist of questions which are easy to understand and to

ask, relevant to the issues it probes. A set of guiding points to consider during design of the questionnaire is below:

**Guiding points to consider during design of the questionnaire**

1. Prepare in a simple way and format
2. Start with a good introduction and clear purpose to build trust
3. Use local language which respondents can easily understand
4. Questions should be simple and easy to understand, ask and explain
5. Technical and strong words should be simplified
6. Using open questions where possible
7. All questions should be relevant and useful for the issues probed
8. Confidentiality should be highly considered in order to get true answers

Questions should probe reasons for people's pleasure or displeasure, highlight deficiencies, weaknesses and interruptions in service delivery and seek recommendations on how these could be improved. Questionnaire design for particular services must be in accordance with targets. It is always a good idea to pre-test or pilot test the questionnaire to assess if it captures what it is intended to.

The table below looks at targets for the assessment according to each basic social service.

<b>Basic service</b>	<b>Consideration targets</b>
Primary education	Quality and adequacy of classrooms, adequacy of books and other learning materials, attendance, conduct and punctuality of primary school teacher
Potable water system	Hand pumps and wells: installation, distances from homes, efficiency, preferences of people, maintenance and management
Basic health service	Immunization, maternal and childcare consultation services, family planning services, fee for health care, provision of free medicines by health center
Small-scale irrigation	Culvert, canal, pumping stations: management, distribution, mechanisms for sharing, design, construction, usage, maintenance and fee collection
Rural roads	Farm-to-market roads or roads from communes leading to major roads: construction, local contribution, roads passable, maintenance

## **STEP 2** Organize and train commune research team (CRT)

### **2.1 Selection of local implementing organization**

The local implementing organization simply refers to provincial local NGOs which work in the area of decentralization, local governance or public sector reforms and are familiar with the issues of CCs and local affairs, especially in social service delivery. Local implementing organization also refers to CSOs, CBOs and citizen groups in districts or communes or villages. Some criteria must be set to select local implementing organizations or implementing partners:

#### **Some criteria to select local implementing organizations:**

1. They must be small local NGOs, CSOs, CBOs or citizen groups
2. Based in province, district or commune where the CRR will be anchored
3. Working on decentralization, local governance, public sector reform
4. Familiar with issues of CCs and local affairs, especially on social service delivery
5. Experience of working with CCs
6. Willing to implement the CRR
7. Have enough resources to carry out the CRR activity

### **2.2 Organizing the commune research team (CRT)**

CRT members are the surveyors during the actual field rating survey. The selection and formation of the CRT is important. Questionnaires are just tools to seek answers but do not in themselves guarantee that answers will emerge. The quality of information depends on the capacity of CRT member to quiz, explore and probe. The selection of CRTs should be flexible, based on the real situation of the respective commune. Implementing organizations could set up selection criteria and processes in accordance to their preferences.

Ordinary permanent residents in each commune are the most suitable CRT members because they know the situation in the commune. In particular, they know each other and it is easy for them to make contact during implementation. Respondents will feel familiar with the interviewers and will be quick to answer. Women should be considered a priority in selection and formation of CRTs. The involvement of CC members and members of other committees should be avoided, as this could restrict the self-expression of respondents during field interviews; respondents may answer positively but the reality may be different.

CCs can help in identifying potential people for selection and interview. There are different ways to identify and select CRT members. Implementing organizations could announce general application, or base this on the recommendation of CCs, relevant service providers or look for people in implementing organization and

communities. After selection, implementing organizations could sign a contract with members for official recognition. Some points to consider during the selection of CRT members are indicated in the table below:

CRT members should be selected based on at least some of the criteria below	Some people are suitable for consideration as CRT	There are different methods for selecting CRT, one of these can be used
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer based</li> <li>• Competency based</li> <li>• Knowledge of commune and village</li> <li>• Can read and write</li> <li>• Women as priority</li> <li>• Actively involved in development work</li> <li>• Age 20-40 years old</li> <li>• Good interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Willingness/ commitment</li> <li>• Ordinary citizen</li> <li>• Permanent resident in commune</li> <li>• Not in public position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active ordinary citizens</li> <li>• Women, youth</li> <li>• Community activists</li> </ul> <p><u>If necessary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group leaders within each village of the commune</li> <li>• Members of committees</li> <li>• Teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce for general application, interview, select and sign contract</li> <li>• Commune chief joint interview and selection of CRT members</li> <li>• CC help identify and recommend the list, partner selects CRT members</li> <li>• Candidate comes to test or exam to write essay</li> <li>• Identify and invite candidate to interview</li> <li>• Select large number of people from commune and interview</li> </ul>

CRTs should comprise 5-10 people per commune. Among these 5-10, there must be a vote or selection of a team leader. Women should be encouraged to be a member or team leader. Forming CRTs aims to institutionalize local people as groups of force in each commune to work on local issues which affect them and to carry out grassroots advocacy to demand solutions and improvements. CRTs can make up a strong local network of local citizens within each commune.

### 2.3 Preparing official Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) and contracts

After agreement, if needed, a MOU should be prepared and signed between the CC or commune chief and the implementing organization for each commune. If the implementing organization is a national NGO, it could work directly with CRTs in the field by itself, or sub-contract local provincial NGOs to do this. In this regard, they need to prepare a MOU and contract such local NGOs as implementing organizations. In case the starter is a local NGO, these also need to have a MOU with target communes and contracts with individual CRT members. After selection, implementing organizations can sign contracts with CRT members for official recognition. As mentioned previously, implementing organizations need to prepare an official MOU and contracts accordingly. The contract must be clear and MOUs

should be simple, clear and not too complicated, so that they can be agreed upon by both parties. The documents could include information on purpose, responsibility, financial support, timeframe, scope of work, etc.



**A MOU with CCs and a contract with CRTs are optional. Whether or not you want to have this depends on the nature of your implementing organization. Sometimes, too much formality can restrict natural ability and productivity.**

#### **2.4 Training, coaching and orientation on CRR concepts and methodology**

A key condition for the success of the CRR is thorough training and orientation to implementing organizations, CSOs, CRTs, CCs and service providers. This requires all actors in the process to participate in training on CRR concepts and methodology. This could entail one long training session or in a series.

**When conducting training the following points should be considered:**

- Training must be conducted in an appropriate time span and in a participatory way in order to increase levels of cognition and absorbance.
- Time and topics must be appropriate for ordinary people who have never been involved in such activities.
- CCs and commune chiefs must be invited to attend trainings and preside over the opening to benefit from their enthusiasm and acknowledgement.
- Training should take place close to the field survey schedule to keep information clear in trainees' minds.
- The orientation training schedule should be flexible, as people in different places may busy at different times.
- The training should be broad in content or should represent continuing capacity-building activities. Content should include: knowledge of local affairs, research and survey techniques, orientation for ordinary people, media mobilization, and coordination of advocacy work
- After training, the implementing organization should organize a meeting to introduce CRTs to commune chiefs and councils.

**CRTs need to be confident to explore people's idea on basic services. Orientation training for CRTs is essential. It should take two to three days and cover the following contents:**

Orientation content should cover	Who should attend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Basic knowledge on decentralization and public services, and roles and responsibilities of CCs</li> <li>▪ How to use questionnaires</li> <li>▪ Data gathering skills</li> <li>▪ Interviewing skill</li> <li>▪ Note taking, organization</li> <li>▪ Data analysis</li> <li>▪ Organizing and facilitating general assembly meetings</li> <li>▪ Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CRTs</li> <li>▪ Ordinary citizens</li> <li>▪ CCs</li> <li>▪ District officials</li> <li>▪ Provincial officials</li> <li>▪ Service providers</li> <li>▪ Media actors</li> <li>▪ NGOs and CBOs</li> <li>▪ Elders and monks</li> </ul>

**Orientation to ordinary citizens**

Orientation to ordinary citizens, especially those in villages where basic services will be rated, is very important for the field rating survey. If people do not have a full understanding of the CRR purpose and objectives, they cannot provide meaningful answers to the survey. Implementing organizations have to make sure that ordinary people, who will be the respondents, clearly understand:

- Purpose, objectives and what the CRR is about
- Local basic services and targets to be rated
- How information will be collected
- How information will be used
- Right to express themselves
- Importance and benefits
- Integrity and nonpartisanship of the organization or groups
- Authentication and legitimacy
- Other positive aspects

Orientation to ordinary citizens could be done through:

- Public meetings
- Focus group meetings or mixed group meetings
- Village meetings, commune meetings or provincial meetings
- Media and information dissemination
- Use of commune administration: CC meetings, councilor visits, village chief dissemination
- Campaign activities
- Mobile spokespersons

Organizers could invite ordinary citizens separately or mix them with others. This depends on the actual situation or own preference.



## There are three different stages for orientation for ordinary citizens:

1. Obtaining information about the CRR through different kinds of media. Some may not have time or lack of access to media.
2. Some may learn from public meetings or other promotion activities.
3. During the field survey, surveyors should give a good introduction to orient the respondents to understand the purpose clearly.

### **Mobilizing and using media, here!**

The media always plays an important role in raising public awareness. So keep them informed about activities. Write articles or invite them to orientation. This can add value to transparency and openness. With media coverage or involvement, people can see that the issue is an open one. As well as being educational, then, the media can help make the project more attractive. It is important that the media knows the schedule.



## 2.5 Promotion of CRR in the commune and in public

Promotion of the CRR regards ongoing activities, taking place across the process.

This is about explaining the positive purpose, advantages and usefulness of the CRR to all stakeholders. Promotion increases people's levels of acceptance and internalization, and gains the recognition of the people, of CCs and of service providers. This allows people to value the CRR as a mechanism to promote public participation and to enable citizen feedback on service delivery. It also allows people to become acquainted with the CRR's methodologies.

**There are different tools and activities to promote the CRR, such as:**

1. Seminars
2. Workshops
3. Informal talking
4. Public meetings
5. Focus group meetings
6. Mixed group meetings
7. Village, commune or provincial meetings
8. Information dissemination
9. Use of commune administration: CC meetings, councilor visits, village chief dissemination
10. Campaign activities
11. Performance/ review/ appraisal
12. Mobile spokesman and
13. Media

### **Mobilizing and using media, here!**

Although there are different ways to promote the CRR, the most effective one requires the implementing organization to work closely with media. Using the media can help reach a larger population and attract more attention than using other means can. Working with the media allows for different forms of information, which could include bulletins, newspaper articles, radio broadcasts, TV spots, etc.





## STEP 3 Conducting the rating survey

### 3.1 Prepare action plan for field rating survey

Preparing the action plan for actual field survey is about arrangement of the time frame for surveying, task assignment among CRT members, validation, and consolidation of data, etc. Time allocations for each activity during actual field implementation for each commune might follow the table below:

Activity	Average timeframe	Remarks
<b>Selection of CRT members</b>	1 week	Include announcement, identification, interview and selection
<b>Orientation training</b>	2-3 days	In-class training and field exercise
<b>Field rating survey</b>	2-3 days	Could be more flexible depending on implementing organization
<b>Consolidation of data and information</b>	3 -5 days	Include tabulation, analysis and report writing
<b>Conduct assembly meeting or dialogue with CC</b>	1 day	Present and negotiate for changes

The preparation and execution of each activity during field work should be based on the actual situation. The schedule for field activities should be regulated to coincide with times when people are free from their work in the fields. The gap between one activity and the next should not be too long, otherwise those involved in surveying might lose attention.

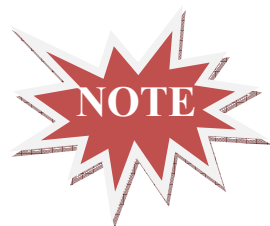
### 3.2 Conducting the field survey

The size of the CRT is on average 5-10 persons, although this can vary depending on the size of the commune. In the actual survey, the CRT can divide itself into small teams of three to four people, responsible for different villages. Each member of the group is responsible for interviewing 15-20 respondents. This, too, can vary from commune to commune and village.

In one commune, as a guide, around three kinds of social services could be selected for rating. As such, each CRT member should bring all relevant questionnaires. CRTs should ask about each service in turn to avoid confusion. They can speak to older people or children, men or women in the family, depending on the kind of

service and purpose of the questions. The most important thing is that they ask those who are the primary users of the particular service. Try to match the service to the user or the user to the service to enable quality and meaningful results. To encourage respondents, CRTs should start with a proper introduction. They must be good at asking questions in a happy environment. Make sure that respondents understand the purpose of the questions, which should be elaborated clearly.

CRTs could make appointments in advance or go to meet respondent by chance. They need to prepare enough copies of the questionnaires and have sufficient access to other necessary materials.



**Women should be encouraged to provide answers. Remember, however, that women tend to be good at providing feedback on health and education services whereas men may have more experience of being the primary user of small-scale irrigation or rural roads. Not all respondents are primary users of all services.**

### **3.3 Validation, analysis and production of report**

#### **Consolidation of results:**

Implementing organizations are responsible for producing survey results with the involvement and assistance of the CRTs. After the field survey, the best way to consolidate results is to allow the CRTs (surveyors) to tabulate the completed questionnaires. The team leader sends information to the implementing organization for consolidation. The implementing organization, CRT members, and CC members organize a meeting. They could all be involved in counting, checking, validating and correcting data. This can ensure that there is less suspicion and increase levels of recognition.

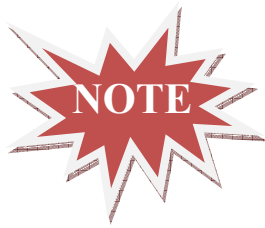
CRC data analysis can be done using SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Sciences) or some other statistical software. It is important to ensure that the transfer of raw data from the questionnaires into the computer program is accurate. Results of tabulation are to be calculated into percentages and the requests and suggested solutions are to be summarized. In general, the survey results could be divided into three parts: satisfaction, dissatisfaction and requests, according to each individual social service and subject.

CRTs should be involved in the whole process of tabulation, summarizing, analysis and interpretation of data into the rating report, so that they can be familiar with the way data and information are organized and converted into rating reports.

#### **Writing the report:**

A report format must be developed for report writing. After results are consolidated, the implementing organization has to produce a report on the findings and translate results into recommendations. During report writing, the implementing organization

may seek advice from others on how to interpret findings. The rating report should be publicly disseminated after validation with CCs and service providers.



**It is good to involve CCs and service providers in consolidation of result, so that they can see results for themselves. This encourages for trust among CCs and service providers and can assure them that results are not fabricated.**

### **3.4 Monitoring and continuing technical assistance**

Monitoring helps to keep implementation on track, so this activity should be properly planned and implemented at all stages in the process. Monitoring is an ongoing activity. Field monitoring and visits should be set periodically in order to coach and advise local implementing organizations regarding questionnaire orientation, field survey application, data analysis and report writing, preparing for presentation, advocacy etc.

# STEP 4

## Present, negotiate and advocate for changes

### 4.1 Commune assembly meeting

**Before the assembly meeting, the implementing organization should answer the following questions:**

1. Is the report ready?
2. Appointment with CCs?
3. All relevant people invited?  
Councilors, service providers, media, etc.
4. Are all invited people coming?
5. Who is presiding over the meeting?
6. Who will take the minutes?
7. Do we have good tactics for presentation?
8. Do we know clearly what people want?
9. Do we have arguments prepared?
10. Do we have instruction and rule for the meeting?
11. Are the time, place, number of people, logistic arrangements and documents in place?

Conduct formal assembly meetings at commune offices to present the rating reports and people's requests to CCs and service providers. Service providers, citizens, CSOs, CBOs, CCs, village chiefs and key decision makers should be present, along with those working at commune level. The composition of and number of participants in the meeting must be clearly identified. Details of the assembly meeting must be properly recorded and disseminated to those attending and to other relevant actors.

Findings in the rating report and comments of commune residents should be presented gently. In the meeting, try to argue for consideration of points to be improved by CCs or service providers. Keep records of all promises.

CCs can use information for commune development planning. This reflects on the individual roles and responsibilities of commune chiefs, first deputy chiefs, second deputy chiefs and others in the commune administrative structure, as their functions, roles and responsibilities are separately assigned. In this exercise, councilors can constructively work with each other and strengthen mutual performance. **After the meeting, the implementing organization should have a clear follow-up plan and keep good communication with CCs, service providers, people and media.**

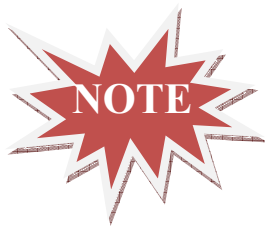
**After assembly meeting, a simple but cleared improvement plan must be made to list the proposed actions to improve quality of services. Please use the sample table of improvement plan below to develop your plan together with service providers, CC members and other involved in commune assembly meeting.**

What can we do to make things better?	Who will do this?	When will they do this? (short/long run)	Actions proposed
1			
2			
3			
4			

**Mobilizing and using media, here!**



The media can be very important in terms of witnessing the assembly meeting. The media can capture and document such events and helps record all that occurs, such as discussion, elaboration, agreement and promises, as well as acting as a witness to future actions. The presence of the media can ensure that CCs and service providers present formal responses to issues arising rather than avoiding replying.



Make sure that participants in the assembly behave properly. Avoid personal attacks, shouting, irritation or scolding. Do not connect specific issues to government leadership. Such interpretations and attitudes could lead to tension or nullify the results of the assembly, leading to undesirable outcomes. Meetings should start with a good introduction and instruction, and then get to the point.

**4.2 Advocacy**

**Conduct grassroots advocacy training**

Immediately after the survey is finished and the rating report has been produced, grassroots advocacy training should be conducted to equip the local network with the knowledge and tactics to lobby local government and service providers. This should be conducted at a level whereby ordinary people can learn.

The targets of the grassroots advocacy training are CRT members, local NGOs and CBOs. Training on grassroots advocacy can be conducted by implementing organizations or be jointly organized by a variety of implementing organizations. They should focus on practical activities which people can actually use; people could help carry out the training rather than the training being purely theory based. Training might be organized by province or by region, depending on the number of participants in each province. Active CRT members or potential community leaders should be a priority for attendance.

**Initiate grassroots advocacy campaign:**





CRTs or citizen groups must be encouraged to initiate grassroots advocacy campaigns or activities using the results of the CRR. The results of the CRR can be used as a source for many advocacy activities. Activities initiated by local people, however, must be well coordinated and backstopped.

### **CRR results can be used for advocacy in the following ways:**

- Involve CCs and service providers in consolidating results, so that they can read the rating results by themselves. In essence, this provides CCs and service providers with trust and confidence that rating results and reports are not fabricated.
- Conduct assembly meetings with CCs and service providers to present demands and negotiate for change.
- Organize forums to inform people and discuss issues affecting them, forming a force to demand effective service delivery.
- Send report to relevant people, CCs, service providers, district and provincial authorities, and Media, who may have influence on the improvement of services.

The results of the CRR will serve as a basis for critical dialogue with local government officials and other decision makers. Results are also shared with citizen bodies, other NGOs and the media. NGOs or citizen groups using the rating reports are expected to educate and mobilize the media, other public interest groups and the citizenry at large to facilitate mechanisms to enable citizens to develop a voice and be able to express themselves. Initial rating reports can then serve as benchmarks to measure improvements and performance over time. The results of the CRR will be used as a take-off point to advocate for reforms and changes.

- In other circumstances, make appointments with CCs and/or service providers for critical dialogue towards improvements.
  - Results could be used for making presentations to decision makers, at commune level or to competent authorities.
  - Propose issues from the report on the agenda of CC meetings, district meetings or technical sector meetings.
  - Keep the report as a tool for comparative checking and gauging and monitoring the level of improvement.
  - Use issues in the report as entry points for form partnerships among CCs, service providers and citizens for dealing with common issues.
- Use results as proof to demand people's participation in monitoring or taking part in decision making in local basic service delivery.
  - Use the report as evidence to support policy advocacy or as a source of evidence for sector advocacy.
  - Rather than just blaming and demanding, the report could be a basic source for developing lessons or learning materials for capacity building for CCs and service providers.
  - The report is evidence to make a statement or petition letter to mobilize support to advocate for change.
  - Moreover, results can be used:
    - To write formal letters to CCs and/or service providers

- As baseline information for the evaluation of services
- To form benchmarks for service providers
- As a source for producing articles for the media
- As information to organize press conferences to present issues to the public
- As strong evidence for campaigning, demonstration or protest to demand change and improvement
- To form recommendations for improvement of performance of CCs and service providers, of policies for better performance, or of quality of services

**Work with media and other local NGOs on policy advocacy to improve the policy framework.**

At national level, the implementing organization should work with the media and other NGOs by translating findings into evidence for policy advocacy.

The results of the rating survey are envisaged to serve as a basis for critical dialogue with CCs, service providers and other decision makers at commune level. Results are also to be shared with citizen groups, other NGOs and the media, in the assumption that they will use them to educate and mobilize other public interest groups and the citizenry at large to help citizens develop voice and express themselves towards advocating for change.



**Mobilizing and using media, here!**

**Whatever advocacy activities you carry out, you should make sure the media is informed and involved, as a powerful instrument which could help hold CCs and service providers accountable to the people. This can add pressure and make positive outcomes more realistic.**

## **STEP 5** Follow up the progress, replicate the success

### **5.1 Strengthening local networks, maintaining sustainability**

To make advocacy stronger, encourage the people to speak out on their own behalf. There will be a need to institutionalize and strengthen local networks and activate them as a local movement for the demand of good governance and good service delivery. For this reason, meetings, capacity building and coaching should be continuously provided to the local network, and members should be involved in all activities related to local governance in their respective area, in order that they keep motivated and learn to work as a team. Try to equip networks with a sense of constant monitoring of service delivery and performance of CCs.

### **5.2 Follow up and evaluation activities**

CRT is, and local NGOs are, to make their follow up plan to check the progress based on the findings of the report and the agreed improvement plan during the commune assembly meeting. Mid-term and final evaluation must be in place to measure success and impacts, and to identify best practice and lessons learned.

### **5.3 Dissemination and replication**

To popularize this initiative, there is a need to disseminate and replicate the CRR methodology, experience, findings, lessons learnt and best practice to a broader group of stakeholders for replication. There are many ways to disseminate the CRR.

It is important to ensure wide dissemination of the findings through newspapers, public meetings, electronic media including the internet etc. Also, organize a joint meeting between users and service providers to allow constructive dialogue to take place and put pressure on service providers to improve their performance.

- **Seminars, workshops, meeting**
- **Presentations, informal talks**
- **Publications and distribution**
- **Information dissemination**
- **Campaign activities**
- **Mobile spokespersons**
- **Media**



### **Mobilizing and using media, here!**

**The media will help with wide dissemination of the CRR. This can be through printed articles on lessons learned, best practice, experiences, methodology etc, access to radio and TV, etc.**

## **5.4 CRR activities that really need the media**

### **5.4.1 Negotiation and lobbying for endorsement and launch**

During lobbying and launching, it is important to get the media involved. This helps inform the government at both national and local level, about the positive factors involved in the CRR. The media can help to persuade officials and CCs and convey the sincerity, good intentions, importance and usefulness of the CRR. This can help make CCs and other government officials feel more comfortable with the process, which can lead to their quicker endorsement of the project. The media can also capture the launching event and disseminate the message more broadly to the public. This can raise public awareness and allow local people to become aware that the project is to be implemented on their behalf.

### **5.4.2 Promotion of CRR in the commune and in public**

There are different ways of promoting the CRR. This requires that the implementing organization works closely with the media, as the media can help the implementing organization to reach a larger population and attract more attention than it might do so by other means. Working with the media means allowing different forms of information include bulletins, newspaper articles, radio or TV spots, etc. Furthermore, this can help the implementing organization to document and keep records of people's perception and feedback regarding the project.

### **5.4.3 Training, coaching and orientation**

The media always plays an important role in raising public awareness. So keep them informed about activities. Write articles or invite them to orientation; this is good for adding value to transparency and openness. With media coverage or involvement, people can see that the issue is an open one. Aside from helping with education, this can make the project more attractive. Most importantly, the media need to know the schedule involved.

### **5.4.4 Meeting with CCs and service providers**

The media can be a very important witness to assembly meetings. They can capture and document the event. They will help to record all issues, such as discussion, elaboration, agreement and promises, and be a witness for future action. The present of the media can ensure that CCs and service providers give a formal response to issues arising rather than avoiding replying.

### **5.4.5 Advocacy**

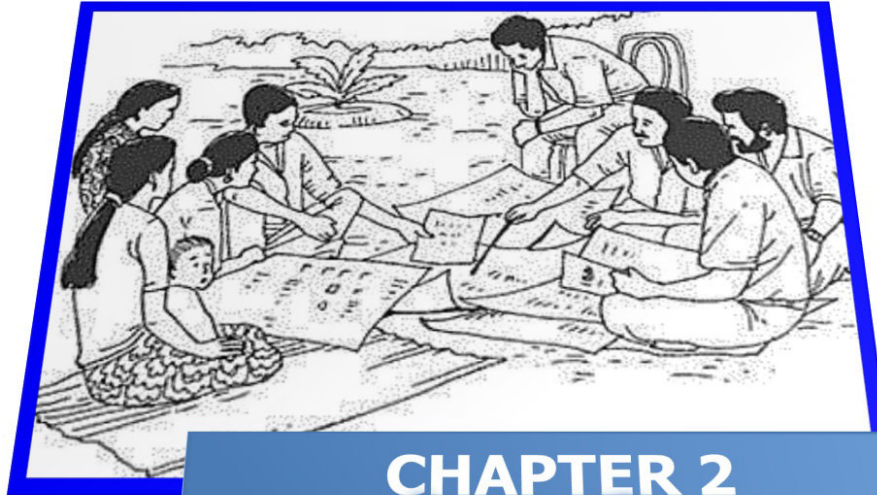
Whatever activities you carry out in advocacy, you should keep the media informed and involved, as this is a powerful instrument which can help hold CCs and service providers accountable. This adds pressure and makes outcomes more realistic.

#### **5.4.6 Dissemination and replication**

The media can help with wider dissemination of the CRR. There are a variety of strategies to reach out to the media such as press kits, press-releases, press conferences, and the translation of the main report into local languages. They can also produce printed articles on lessons learned; best practice, experiences, methodology etc or information for radio and TV, for example.

##### **How to mobilize the media?**

- Look for local and national media actors and connect with them
- Make friends with media actors
- List and keep all contacts of media actors you have met
- Write articles for the media
- Make appointments for interview
- Keep media informed clearly about the CRR
- Provide media with time schedule of activities
- Keep good communication and relations
- Know about different kinds of media
- Make information and documents available and easy to access
- Invite them to parties as well as work



## CHAPTER 2 CASE STUDY

### CASE STUDY

CCSP undertook a project entitled 'better public health service through social accountability' aimed at improving public health services through enhanced citizen's engagement with Commune/ Sangkat, District/ Khan Councils, and government health officials. CCSP formed a coalition with 10 local NGOs and CRTs to build their capacity in good governance and social accountability.

The project supported local NGO partners and CRTs to implement a CRR on health services in 30 communes in five provinces, and has promoted CRR findings at the commune, provincial and national level to inform planning health services. The project finished at the end of 2012.

The project was designed with the following objectives:

Citizens have increased access to improved public health services through enhanced citizen engagement with Commune/ Sangkat and District councils.

Objective 1: Project staff of the 10 local NGO coalition partners has increased capacity to effectively engage their communities in sub-national governance processes through improved knowledge and understanding, of good governance and the social accountability tool CRR.

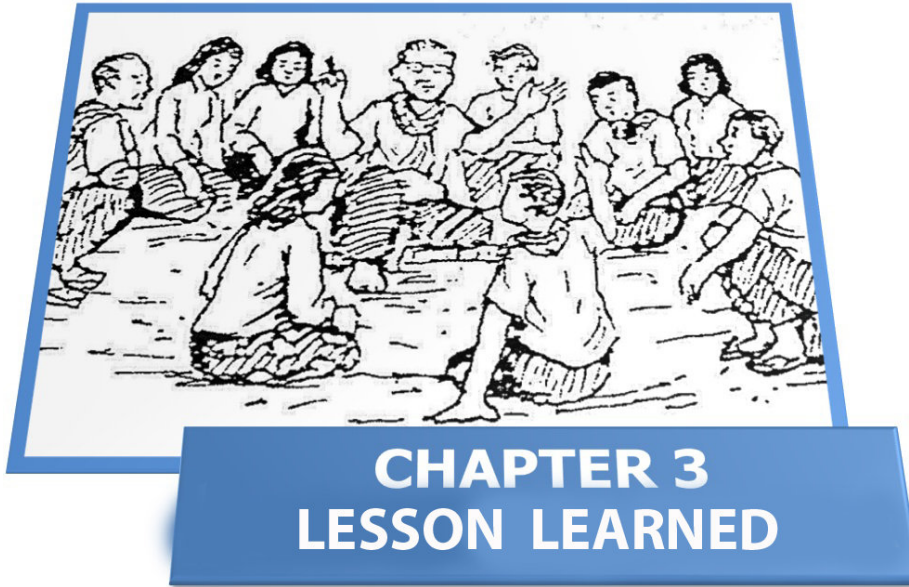
Objective 2: Citizens in the target communities, especially marginalized groups, fulfill their role in sub-national democratic processes providing feedback to government and demanding good public health services.

Objective 3: Target representatives from the network of State Institutions responsible for local public health services, from Commune Councils and Commune Health Centers up to the Ministry of Health, recognize the importance of constructive feedback from citizens and act on this feedback to improve local public health services.



At the end of 2012, CCSP also undertook a final evaluation of the project in order to assess its effectiveness and impact to the health of the beneficiaries/constituencies. The report concluded that both the villagers interviewed and local authorities (CC and Health Centre staff) had improved their knowledge of public health and changed their practices toward using Health Centre's. The final evaluation report including lesson learned, conclusion and recommendations can be found on CCSP's website at: [www.ccspcambodia.org](http://www.ccspcambodia.org)

The next chapter draws on lesson learned from undertaking this case study. Information has been provided by CRT, NGO partners, CCs, participants and observations by CCSP staff.



## LESSON LEARNED FROM CRR



In the following session, the chapter tries to classify and locate lessons learned into each step of the CRR process. In addition, there is also a section for general learning which is useful for the whole process.

In most cases, the lesson learned was tracked around health service but it could be a good example for other service as well.

### 1.1 Selection of target areas and public service

- Involve CCs and service provider in trainings or formal project orientation to make them familiar with activities and willing to participate, and then to fully endorse the project. Provide proper orientation to CCs and citizens. Direct and friendly communication with CCs and service provider is needed.
- NGO staff, CRT and CC should equally be equipped with knowledge of CRR as each would take on a crucial part of the process: NGO staff builds capacity of their co-worker, CRTs or people in community, CRTs use knowledge and experience to advocate for change and CC helps to facilitate or convey the concern to service provider and decision maker.

### 1.2 Organize and train CRT

- Ultimately, the impact of the CRR will depend on the strength, commitment and persistence of the implementing organization and the CRT. The trigger point is to develop skills and confidence of the CRT to meet and negotiate with service delivery agencies at district and provincial levels and with elected leaders in the communes, and to mobilize their respective communities to support the CRR. To train CRTs very well there is a need to provide more training, and for a longer period, so that they are able to use their skill for collecting information as well as

trying to seek for the real answer rather than just filling in the form without understanding the main purpose of the data collection. More training on advocacy was identified as well as a need for more capacity building. It was recommended that a training manual and curriculum be designed. All parties involved in CRR implementation should attend training delivered by an effective trainer.

- Formation of the CRTs should be formally and publicly visualized to enable the creation of a grassroots movement that might increase influence on local councils and keep alive people's participation. It must be clear that political affiliation is not taken into consideration during the selection of CRTs. CRTs must be involved in the design and preparation of the project, especially the design of practical tools for actual field rating surveys, such questionnaires and report formats, etc. In the field, CRTs must have the confidence to carry out the research survey and, as such, must be well trained. Questionnaires and materials must be adequately supported.
- Involve women as CRT member is critical since they play a very central role in taking care of family health.
- Diverse identity of CRT member such as Village Health Support Group (VHSG), Commune Women and Children Committee (CWCC) and Village Health Volunteers (VHV), retired teachers, young students, housewife, local businessman, farmer and ordinary people, draw multiple perception and comments on CRR intervention and public health. In particular involve the duty bearer to play a major role in the exercise and internalize the issue to be addressed. By doing this way, the government staff are aware of what they need to improve in order to be accountable to their job and also the people.
- The capacity of NGO staff to transfer the knowledge to CRTs who are the community people and who work very closely with the villagers needed more improvement. Different level of participant, especially late involvement of staff (due to staff turnover), requires a lot of time and energy to balance their understanding so there is a need for more popular techniques to build the capacity of people at the grass root levels.

### **1.3 Conducting rating survey**

- In the sampling of respondents, if possible, match the rating of a particular service with respondents who are primary users of that service, so as to gain more meaningful information from the rating survey.
- Translating the results of rating survey to report is a big challenge for partner. So there is a need to standardize the report format among partner and skill in producing and interpreting the rating report should be well coached to partner.
- Some people are still reluctant to speak out as they are afraid that their answer might be revealed to the authority or health center. Proper introduction and guarantee of confidentiality would safeguard them to raise their voice.

#### **1.4 Present, negotiate and advocate for change**

- The commune forum (assembly meeting) for presenting rating reports should include the participation of service providers according to the services identified in each commune. NGO working on health should be invited to the forum. Assistance from local authority in inviting participant to commune forum is important while invitation, confirmation and attentive follow up before the day are necessary.
- Report and material should be well prepared and ready before the forum. The report should ideally be presented to the Health Centre first for comment. CRT member with self-confidence and competence should be identified for presenting the rating report. The results should be presented gently and the discussion should be properly documented.
- Commune forum is not just for CRR but an opportunity for commune and service provider to disseminate information related to their work such as commune safeguards policy, service available at health center etc.
- Apart from using results as a basis for critical dialogue at local level and for advocacy purposes, they should serve as a root for developing education materials to improve weakness discovered by the rating survey and to build the capacity of CC. Identification of issues and capacity building should happen simultaneously.
- All participants including citizens, CCs and NGO partners should be invited to attend the forums. At the forums, questions to speaker posed by district deputy governor, commune chief, and director of health center stimulated the discussion very well. It made the ordinary participant open their mouth and share the issue they faced, so getting officials to speak out is key to having an active forum.
- As result of inter-face dialogue at commune forum, health center service fees were reduced in some target communes (for instance blood test for malaria). Some CRT members were able to get a free of charge health service for minor health incident, because the acquaintance and close relationship was built during the exercise of CRR. In some target communes, health service fees would not be charged for students who get injured during school term. More importantly, the service fees and work time table were posted on the wall at health center for patients.

#### **1.5 Follow up the progress, replicate the success**

- Replicating CRR exercise to other places may face challenges in convincing government authority/health officials and in receiving their appreciation since they feel that the tool is going to evaluate their performance which might affect their benefit and reputation. The key is to clearly show that the exercise is not harmful but helpful to them.
- CRR has yielded effect during implementation; it has empowered and equipped CRT with advocacy, public speaking and negotiation skills. Local authority became aware of the local needs and appreciated and tried to respond to the needs of community while health officials have shown friendly service and

hospitality to people, work regularly and eliminated corruption practice.

- The Commune Forum should be held twice a year as this helps to ensure that the issues identified remain at the forefront of people's minds as well as a way of measuring progress.

## **General learning**

- CRTs can help in many ways such as: educating people to express their feelings based on their needs, thinking how to speak for others in terms of helping people for improvement, exercise their rights to demonstrate constructive criticisms to the supply side so that they can be aware of what the needs are and try to address to that needs effectively.
- Some example of CRTs, in Kampong Thom provinces, have mentioned that they are happy to work with this project because it is the real needs of the poor and it can help to report to the health center staff on what has been good and what has not been good. They said that, there has not been any survey to collect information like that in the commune before and they feel like this is the best tool of CRR in terms of improving the public services. Some CRTs mentioned that they feel confident in asking questions when they are clear what they need to do and what kind of information that they need to collect.
- Some female CRTs in Siem Reap provinces said that this tool is very useful because they can ask questions to people and feel confident to talk with them because they are sure that people dare to express their feeling as they know the CRT who lives in the same village. This way can build trust among the villagers who lives in the same village so that they can improve their relationship for the future too.
- The best practice to highlight is to build trust among CRT and the interviewees who are people in the village and to exercise their rights for freedom of expression.
- Before most communities in the CCSP working areas don't know where they can tell about their need/concern, they are now aware about the role of CCs.
- Community feels confident about CRT, especially women and they often tell and request them to solve domestic violence issues.
- Being citizenship in commune planning, feedback via Social Accountability box, they did not apply this before.
- Many people in the community said that before they had no confidence in sharing negative points about the commune; sometimes they think that it is not necessary and useful because they never take action in completing or dealing with their needs and concerns, now they speak out. And don't feel scared about what they say.
- CRR made the community recognize the important role and responsibility of CRT as they mobilizing community to speak out what they want/need/concern. People acknowledged that what they demand through CRT will be discussed in commune meeting thus including commune investment plan. It makes them feel confident that it is not useless by giving the opportunity to express their opinion. It mainstreamed citizenship among community people and was also a good chance

to train people to have ownership on the public services as they can demand for their needs and freely express their opinion in order to seek for more improvement as well as being responsible to the public services.

- The CRR should not be taken as a standalone initiative. The tool is effective in monitoring the performance of government policy in terms of service delivery.
- There is an overwhelming participation of people in CRR since the tool is a means to ensure freedom of expression for people at the demand side to have their comments and suggestions to improve the health services that meet their real needs at the commune level. It can also build as a foundation for people to exercise their rights in order to provide constructive feedback to the supply side so that it can help to improve the performance.
- Implementing CRR through local partner is a good option as it has a joint hand in preparing survey, dialogue and creates influential network as a major force for change but there is a need for flexibility in coordination as partners have different leadership and communication characteristic and altered way of working (soft ways and procedure based) so there must be a clear guideline on implementation plan and budgeting. Regular field monitoring, follow up and communication is the best way to keep good cooperation. Since the project was short and did not have as much monetary incentive (no salary, funded only activities), a clear explanation on the value added to partner activities is essential otherwise they will not care for it. Low capacity and the turnover of staff and bad history of relationship or cooperation between partner and health center or local authority has a negative effect on CRR implementation.
- The Law on Administration and Management of Commune/ Sangkat stipulates the CC and the planning and budgeting committee must submit an annual report to CC which include a description of problems in basic service delivery and options for improvements. In practice, there is no clear methodology for gathering such information. The CRR offers the potential to generate the information required, particularly regarding options for improvements in service delivery. Furthermore, citizens should make organized efforts to ensure that people's priorities as reflected in the plan can be implemented through budget allocations. In many cases, plans remain plans because they are not translated into budgetary priorities.
- When planning a CRR implementation, it is important to take into account of influential hindering factor such as appreciation of local authority, availability of people, geography, climate, other event that cause conflict schedule etc. For example, CRR Implementation schedule conflicted with harvesting season and election turnout updating and registration. So, mobilizing the involvement from people and local authority become hard.
- CRT to work with other health volunteers at the commune level i.e. Village Feedback Committee who has been recruited by Health Centers to undertake a similar role to share information but also to avoid duplication.

## ANNEX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEWING CITIZENS

### Cambodian Civil Society Partnership (CCSP) “Better Public Health Services through Social Accountability” CRR-Health questionnaire

#### Respondent information

Age: Sex: Education: Occupation:  
Commune: District: Province:

I.

#### II. Question

##### 1. Question related to general health services

1.1. How often have you used the health center services?

Never  Once a month  Once every three months   
Once every six months  Other:

1.2. What kind of health services have you used in the last two years?

- .....
- .....
- .....

##### 2. Question related to specific health services

2.1. How did you feel about the health service fee?

Not acceptable  Very expensive  Expensive  Acceptable  Other

2.2. How did you feel about the following health services below?

2.2.1. Children receiving 10 different vaccines

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know

2.2.2. Checking pregnant women's health

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know

2.2.3. Providing medicine before and after child birth to mother:

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know

2.2.4. Child birth delivery service

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know

2.2.5. Birth spacing service

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know

2.2.6. General sickness treatment service

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know

2.2.7. Process of receiving medicine to patients

Very good  good  fair  bad   
very bad  don't know



2.3. Question related to health center staff's performance

2.3.1. How do you feel about the service quality provided by health center staff?  
very satisfied  satisfied  fair  not satisfied  not very satisfied

2.3.1. Were you satisfied with the health center staff's attitude during the service performance?  
very satisfied  satisfied  fair  not satisfied  not very satisfied

2.3.2. Do you have any concern related to the health center services?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of medicines and equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender discrimination                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High service fee                | <input type="checkbox"/> Pushing patients to use private clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of midwife                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....                             |

3. Do you have any recommendations for the health center?

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

The Citizens' Rating Report project is administrated by the Cambodian Civil Society Partnership under the support of Demand for Good Governance Project, financed by The World Bank through The Asia Foundation.

Additional copies of or further information on this handbook can be obtained from the Cambodian Civil Society Partnership:

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NGO Forum, SEDOC, World Vision Cambodia and  
PACT Cambodia.

April 2013  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia