

Introduction

Dear Readers,

We constantly talk about a “good society,” democratically realize; but we need to understand and concrete it, is a matter of difficulties and challenges. A good society also requires good governance of the state by both the people and the governance.

Most people when talking about good governance and democracy limit themselves to politics and state rule only; this is not our point of view. In fact, a good society is inseparable from democracy, which provides means for the conduct of life, in other words for a society to be good, democracy must be there to provide the means for us to conduct our daily life. Democracy means all powers belong to citizens who can use their sovereignty in accordance with the constitution. Democracy is based on personal responsibility and accountability, fairness, mutual understanding, absence of self-centeredness, and most importantly people participation in the business of the community. We believe that we can build a good society at all levels if all of us put democracy into practice by using our good communication skills in decision making, cooperation, participation and peaceful conflict resolutions.

This booklet “Together We Can Make a Good Society” will present pictures, essential knowledge and understanding, and possible means for bringing about a good society, to facilitate clearer understanding and to make available practical ways to turn them into tools for the conduct of daily life.

The booklet will present to the readers what is a good society. A society is good only when there is provision of public services which is good in quantity, quality, and high in effectiveness and efficiency – this is a function for the obligation party (State) to perform. In addition a good society also includes justice and rights, the spirit of sharing and helping each other as well.

Good implementation of public services needs good governance. Good governance needs social accountability which provides tools for tracking and measuring the delivery of services. While ordinary citizens – the demand side should come together and form strong groups for advocacy to demand, argue, negotiate to successfully get the obligation party (the State) to accept and implement any advocated propositions. This is the practice of democracy in a good society.

We believe that this booklet can serve as a brief guideline for readers to consider the selected ideas and tools for further reflection as well as for possible practical applications in their respective local units, in daily life of the families, as the Cambodian society is now treading on the path to good society grounded on good governance introduced and perfected in democratic practices.

Prepared by
SILAKA team



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What is a good society?




Chapter I

Good Society



What is a
good society?

Meaning of a good society



I go to learn at school regularly, have regular meals and be raised by my own parents.

I can harvest good produce and there are markets for it.

I can live with dignity in my own territory.

There are compassion, loving kindness and the spirit of mutual assistance.

I can work with the feeling of responsibility and live in dignity.

We can join together to defend common interests.

Meaning of a good society

Education services of good quality with choices of professions and regular employment.



There are medics to provide treatment conscientiously.



In conclusion, good society consists of 3 components:
1-Citizen gets basic services (health care, justice and education...)
2-There is justice and respect for human rights in society
3- Prevailing spirit of helping each other out.



Duties of citizen and the state in a good society



What duties should citizen and the state fulfill in a good society ?



Citizen should be active and participate in activities of the society:

- 1- Attend Commune |Sangkat council meeting, vote in elections, take part in non-violent protests.
- 2- Citizens cooperate with each other, lead others, and join together in groups to negotiate with the government.

Government shall:

- 1- Facilitate the provision of social services and facilitate citizen participation e.g. by allowing their representatives to come in for discussion.
- 2- Push for participation through information sharing.
- 3- Be provider of good quality, effective and timely services with reasonable and acceptable charges.

Duties of citizen and the state in a good society



Duties of citizen and the state in a good society

Citizen's participation in social activities and the response of the State





Chapter II

Good Governance

What is good governance?



Good governance is a method that states or institutions use to manage common resources, the economy and social actions to serve citizen's common interests.

To have good governance...



What should be done to have good governance?



- 1-We need people's participation.
- 2-Law enforcement should be impartial.
- 3- There is highest possible effectiveness and efficiency in the management and use of resources.
- 4-Take responsibility for the fulfillment of roles and duties and respond to citizen's needs equally, non-discriminately and timely.

Our own faults pass unnoticed, but other's, however small seem like a mountain



Impartial law enforcement

Public officials or not,
children of high ranking officials or not,
all must receive sentencing
equally before the law.

I am a
public official,
sir.

That's the right way!
This sets a good example.



National budget allocation
30% for education sector
30% for health sector
20% for rural development

Citizen pays taxes.



Decentralization and De-concentration

What is decentralization?

Decentralization is a transfer of power, resource, function, role and decision making in the government from the national to the sub-national level (e.g. commune council has right to prepare, approve and implement their own commune|sangkat development plan).

What is de-concentration?

De-concentration is a transfer of power and some of decision making from the government at the national level to the sub-national level (e.g. the Ministry of Interior transfers civil vital registration to commune council).

Decentralization has four components:

1- Political decentralization: the transfer of right of decision making on drafting and implementation of policies to sub-national level government

2- Financial decentralization: the transfer of right to seek revenue and allocate expense to sub-national level government.

3- Administrative decentralization: the transfer of management, responsibilities and resources for the provision of public services to sub-national level government.

4- Economic decentralization: the transfer of responsibilities for supply which is used to be managed by the state to the government at sub-national level.

Sharing of duties



Sharing of duties will benefit every one !
Just like decentralization to sub-national level will make
public services reach the citizen.

Citizen get response

Take responsibility for the performance of roles and duties and respond to the people's needs equally, non-discriminately and timely.



Victory !!!
Government officials execute
works in line with their roles
and respond in accordance
with our needs now.

Significant actors who make good governance

Citizen/civil society, government and private sector

We all do our share to have good governance.





Chapter III

Social Accountability

What is social accountability ?



“Social accountability”

Refers to specific actions which are taken to get public officials, politicians, and service providers responsible to the citizen for their actions and for the performance of their tasks in service provision, the improvement of citizen well-being, and protection of citizen’s rights.

What should be done to get social accountabilities?



What should we do to have social accountability?



There is social accountability only when the following prevail:

- 1- Have an access to and effective use of information
- 2- Civil society and citizen groups have capacity and know how to get organized
- 3- The State supports and facilitates citizen's participation e.g. Policies, law and various mechanisms are in place...
- 4- Have appropriate culture, open to change

Method: Participatory planning



Method: Conducting social audit



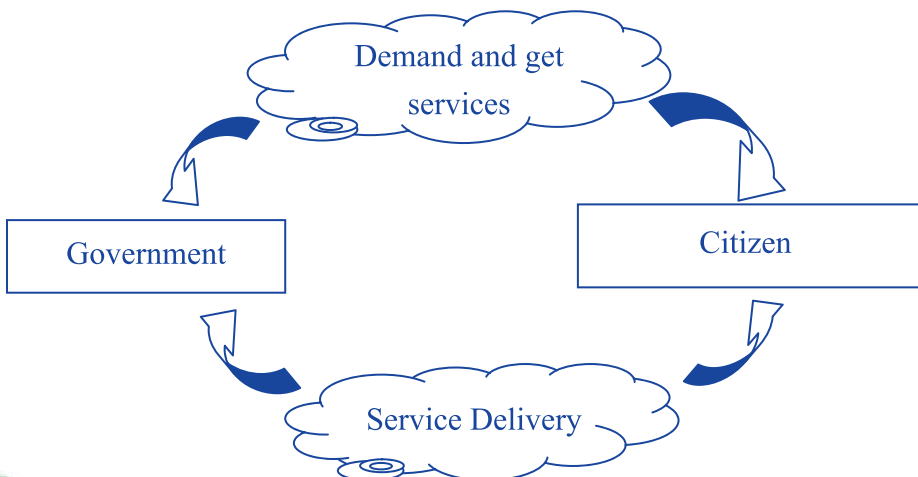
Social Audit Practice

What advantage does social accountability bring? To whom?

1. It enhances state governance;
2. It makes national development effective;
3. It empowers citizen through participation.

In what ways should we do social accountability?

1. Expenditure Tracking
2. Participation in planning
3. Social audit
4. Participatory conflict resolution
5. Citizen report card
6. Citizen's charter (principles to specify citizen's rights and the obligations of public service providers, e.g. It can be civil vital registration service charges and government's promise to citizen)
7. And so on.



Join in demanding public services to citizen

If citizens do not participate and demand services, they will not get good services from the government.



You don't demand, I don't give.



We want to know the district development plan and the budget of this year.

Why do damaged roads remain damaged for so long without anybody doing anything?

Even public schools demand charges.



Who are in civil Society?

- Organizations
- Associations
- Village committees
- Local entities
- Citizen
- Etc.

Government agencies/public institutions:

- Public officials
- Public service providers
- People's representatives
- Councils
- Governing committees
- And so on

Private sector:

- All kinds of businesses
- Various corporations, businessmen and so on.

SILAKA

SILAKA is a local non-political, non-sectarian organization, registered with the ministry of Interior of the Royal Cambodian Government in January 1997. Its mission is to facilitate, educate and enable Cambodians to develop and strengthen organizations and institutions by working with individuals and institutions that are actively concerned with building Cambodia's capacity. SILAKA has been taking part in developing and implementing projects that advance principles of transparency and accountability in efforts to spur organizational and institutional advancement. With a vision of a peaceful Cambodia, SILAKA is dedicated to constructively bring positive social changes that will effectively address the collective needs of Cambodian society; thereby contributing to peace and reconciliation as a fundamental step to create an enabling environment for sustainable development.

Vision

Cambodian living in a pluralistic and economically developed society that places value on open learning, respect of human rights, gender equality, and self reliance.

Mission

SILAKA has the mission to:

- Prepare Cambodians to establish, organize, develop and strengthen organizations and institutions;
- Work with individuals, organizations and institutions actively to promote gender equality and equity in building Cambodian society;
- Contribute to peace building in Cambodia, constructive conflict resolution effective problem solving, and gender equality.



Welcome Good Society in Cambodia



Supported by CIPE



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