

NON-STATE ACTORS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN DEVELOPMENT -
ACTIONS IN PARTNER COUNTRIES (MULTI COUNTRY) FOR NON-STATE ACTORS

Best Practice Toul Sangke Sangkat: People-Private-Public Partnership (PPPP) to Improve Local Infrastructure

- short version -

Thematic Area: Peoples' Participation in Planning and Decision Making
Country of Origin: Cambodia

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This project is
co-funded by
the European
Union.



A Project implemented by the consortium: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), Local Government Development Foundation Inc. (LOGODEF), United Cities and Local Governments for Asia and Pacific (UCLG-ASPAC), Association of Indonesian Regency Governments (APKASI), Association of Cities of Vietnam (ACVN), and National League of Communes/Sangkats of the Kingdom of Cambodia (NLC/S).



ABOUT DELGOSEA

The Partnership for Democratic Local Governance in Southeast-Asia (DELGOSEA) was launched in March 2010 and is co-funded by the European Commission and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) of Germany through the German Ministry of Development Cooperation.

DELGOSEA aims to create a network of cities and municipalities to implement transnational local governance best practices replication across partner countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. It supports the role of Local Government Associations (LGAs) in providing and assisting the transfer and sustainability of local governance best practices replication by local governments. Most importantly, through the exchange of best practices in the region, DELGOSEA intends to contribute to the improvement of living conditions of disadvantaged groups in Southeast-Asia by helping increase their participation in local planning and decision-making.

In the first phase of project implementation, an intensive research was done to determine Best Practices (BP) in local governance in each of the five participating countries. A consortium of international local governance experts and representatives from the LGAs reviewed and selected 16 BPs out of the submitted 27 BPs.

The project concentrated on the following four thematic areas while selecting best practice examples from the five countries:

1. Peoples' participation in planning and decision-making;
2. Institutional governance;
3. Inclusive urban public services;
4. Fiscal management and investment planning.

The following short descriptions BP is one of the selected 16 BPs in the area of people's participation in planning and decision making, provided by Toul Sangke Sangkat in Cambodia.

Starting in January 2011 through August 2012, DELGOSEA will continue to collaborate with LGAs and local governments to transfer best practices replication. The pilot cities/municipalities could modify or improve the original best practice to their local context. The LGAs in the five participating countries will closely consult and guide the selected pilot local governments on the transfer and implementation of BP replication.




Country	Cambodia
Local Government:	Toul Sangke Sangkat
Type:	Sangkat/Commune
Best Practice:	People-Private-Public Partnership (PPPP) to improve local infrastructure
Aspect of Governance:	People's participation in planning and decision-making
Reported By:	Min Muny

Summary

The PPPP model from Toul Sangke Sangkat commune, Cambodia, is a good example for successful involvement of residents and private business in local planning and decision making processes to improve local living conditions. About ten years ago, the Sangkat was an open and very little developed area, which was often affected by flooding during rainy season. Today, the area is characterized by a well-development infrastructure, including big and small buildings, residential apartments and houses as well as roads, sewage, electricity and pipe water networks. With only a small annual budget, Toul Sangke Sangkat could not improve much of its physical infrastructure comparing to the great needs of its rapidly increasing population and urbanization. Considering this unmet needs, Toul Sangke Council has taken the initiative and developed a five-year development plan and annual investment program with five key pillars: rehabilitation of infrastructure, education and health, national resource management, administration and security and gender.

In the planning process, majority of the villages' residents helped identifying needs and agree on possible solutions. The Sangkat Council has established its Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) to work with residents in all three villages throughout the year (from the planning stage through project completion/evaluation stage) and set up various committees to deal with the collection of people's contributions, procurement/bidding of the work, project management and regular monitoring, and technical supervision.

The Council has added to this participatory process some key steps to improve transparency and integrity in managing the people and public funds. For instance, after the people reach an agreement on a specific project, technical feasibility study and cost estimates are conducted. Then contributions from private firms located in the Sangkat, rich individuals, and ordinary residents are collected to add to the fund that the Sangkat's Council has secured from the government sources. Each contribution is recorded and announced on the



Sangkat's information board, other public places, and in front of the contributor's residence.

The results are impressive:


- By 2010, at least 70% of earth roads were upgraded to bituminous and well-maintained roads with no flooding during rainy season. At least 80% of financial contributions have been provided by the private sector and local people.
- The people in the community obtained more benefits, such as better education and welfare. Special emphasis has been given to the education of women and children.
- A sewer network and rubbish collection in the community has been set up.
- People participation and support from stakeholders in social development is strengthened.
- Men and women have equal rights and better understanding on gender sensitive issues.
- The council is represented by members of all political parties. This was the first time in Cambodian history.
- Toul Sangke Sangkat commune became a good practice for 90 other Sangkats in Cambodia.

Background and Objectives

Toul Sangke is one of Phnom Penh's 76 Sangkat, the fourth and lowest tier of government in Cambodia, and is located in a newly developed area. About 10 years ago, the Sangkat still had much open, but flooded area. Now, there are big and small buildings, residential apartments, and houses, as well as road, sewage, electricity, and pipe water networks.

The Sangkat is in the northern part of Phnom Penh and has a total registered population of 49,636 (or about 100,000 day population due to numerous garment factories¹). The total size of the area is 635.31 hectares, divided into three villages. It is governed by 11 directly elected councillors, who are supported by one appointed Ministry of Interior clerk (and 20 police) and 11 voluntary personnel (two of whom are women). The 11-member council consists of six from the Cambodian People's Party (CPP-two women) and five from the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), the country's main opposition party. Rapid population growth and urbanization have made it necessary for Toul Sangke Sangkat to improve its physical infrastructure. However, it had been unable to keep up with these requirements due to the small amount of annual Commune/Sangkat Fund (C/SF).

¹ Interview with the Sangkat Council Chief in May 2010



The Sangkat Council gathered ideas from the people from its three villages to include in the planning process. They also asked villagers to make financial contributions to match the annual C/SF allocations and/or Phnom Penh Capital's Development Fund.

A. Innovative Elements


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Toul Sangka's Council and its staff have maintained clear records of each project and consolidated annual achievement reports since 2002 (its first mandate). Main physical infrastructure developed from 2005 to 2009 under this initiative includes various DBST, concrete and earth roads; sewages, culverts and canals; and regular maintenance of road networks, sewages and canals. By this year, the locality has reached its target to upgrade its entire earth road network to about 75% of DBST, asphalt and/or concrete types, and has resolved its chronic seasonal flooding. The total costs of the above improvement and upgrading in the last five years exceeds USD1.5 million, 80% of which came from private and people's contribution.

B. Activities and Involvement

By May 2010, the commune decentralization reform program in Cambodia has reached its eighth year of implementation. Overall, the establishment of elected Commune/Sangkat councils has shown a number of positive results:

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- The Commune/Sangkat council has gained legitimacy as the people's representative body, leading to a changed line of accountability and the re-channeling of development assistance to the Commune/Sangkat council to address local needs.
 - The planning and budgeting procedure has allowed people to participate and express their preferences in terms of community needs.
 - The decentralization program has contributed to security and peace building, and to the improvement of physical infrastructure, leading to economic growth.
 - Reform at Commune/Sangkat level has strengthened and legitimized the central government. The Commune/Sangkat councilors who come from different political parties/ideologies and were formerly enemies are now working together to develop their localities.²

On the physical infrastructure improvement, all 1,621 Communes/Sangkat have received an annual inter-governmental transfer called "the Commune/Sangkat Fund-C/SF" since 2003. The C/SF has been incremental and is divided into two spending categories: 1/3 for salary and operations; and 2/3 are for commune/Sangkat development/investment. The latter has been used mainly to improve the commune/Sangkat's physical infrastructure. In 2010, the average amount of this C/SF development component for each commune or Sangkat was around USD14.000.

For the communes/Sangkat to be able to utilize this fund, the government has provided guidelines on local planning and budgeting process and published a Project Implementation Manual. The Commune/Sangkat Councils strictly follow these guidelines and have primarily been able to respond to a small portion of their people's needs. This means that there has been a huge gap/difference between people's needs and commune/Sangkat council's responses.

Considering these unmet needs, Toul Sangke Council has taken this commune/Sangkat planning further and expanded to work with their constituents on improvements of their physical infrastructure. They use mainly the contributions from private firms, rich individuals, and ordinary people to address the issues. It started with the development of the Sangkat five-year development plans and the annual investment programs, where people's priorities are classified into five sectors:

² The Government's National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development/NP-SNDD
(Adopted on May 28, 2010)



1. Economic, which includes the rehabilitation and building of infrastructure, among other activities
2. Social, which includes education, health etc
3. National Resource Management
4. Administrative and Security
5. Gender.

To formulate the five-year Development Plan, the Sangkat Council followed guidelines and steps of Sangkat Development Plan Process:


- Step 1: Draft of Development Framework and Budget
- Step 2: Public Meeting on C/S Development
- Step 3: Draft of C/S Development Plan
- Step 4: The approval of C/S Development Plan
- Step 5: The Evaluation on Implementation of C/S

The Council has also placed efforts in setting up various committees to discuss and involve people and local NGOs at various stages of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress, local conflict resolutions during the project implementation, and maintenance of the project's achievement. Openness and community's outreach were the key strategic approach of the Council. In this respect, the Council has set up mechanisms to reach out to all segments of the residents, regardless their wealth, belief, culture, and political affiliations.

In terms of financing the agreed projects, the Council has approached the richer segment (including firms) prior to discussing with ordinary residents for their contributions. Nevertheless, the original idea of having all parties of PPPP as the owner of the project would still be maintained, regardless of the amount they contribute. Every contributor is highly be appreciated by the Council, and his/her identity and contributed amount are made public. Furthermore, the contributors are encouraged to oversee the project bidding and implementation processes throughout the project life. This, in turn, has created trust among communities and in the council on the management of the project fund.

C. Sustainability and Replication

Until 2002, Cambodia was a highly centralized country. Sub-national tiers of government were very much a subordinate tier and an administrative arm of the central ministries and always waited for the order/command from the top. Commune/Sangkat was highly politicized and mainly charged with security matters. After the directly democratic commune/Sangkat council elections in 2002, the country has slowly



decentralized, with some general mandate/permissive functions given to the commune/Sangkat council to deal with their own local development.

With limited resources (under the C/SF, the only source of revenues of the commune/Sangkat), local development needs could only be dealt with more effectively through extraordinary efforts from the council members. In many parts of the country, local development needs have been addressed by the respective councils (as local politicians) working closely with higher level politicians to invest on infrastructure for popular votes. There is a political agenda in this relationship, however, as concerned politicians mainly focus on certain parts of the commune territory where their supporters reside. Furthermore, this type of local development produces no record of contribution and corresponding expenditures.

The model initiated by Toul Sangke Sangkat Council is somehow different from the above. First, the process involves all councilors, who have come from different political parties. All council members are active and take lead in mobilizing residents and identifying needs, and collecting people's contributions. Second, all identified needs, people's contributions, and corresponding expenditures are well recorded and displayed for people's scrutiny. Funds obtained from the government are also posted on the Sangkat information board and other public places. Project signs showing project outputs and project finance (including its sources) are placed at project sites.

Toul Sangke has been seen as a model Sangkat for many years and is now under the government-CCSP-NLC/S Best Practice Awards Program (BPA) screening process³. The Council has received recognition from the Phnom Penh Administration on an annual basis. The Council Chief, Mr. Soy Kosal has received several medals from the RGC, the National Assembly, and the Senate. More importantly, the Sangkat has become a learning venue for many other Sangkat in Phnom Penh and other urban places in the country. This was probably a clear reason why the Sangkat Council Chief has become so popular and been elected as Phnom Penh PAC/S and NLC/S Chairman for the past two mandates.

Although the initiative has been implemented in a small local unit, municipalities from other countries can still learn from the policy of involving all segments of the population, private firms, and the public sector in the planning and implementation process.

³ This is the first time that the government (the Ministry of Interior), the National League of Commune/Sangkat (NLC/S) and an NGO called Cambodian Civil Society Partnership (CCSP) implement this comprehensive BPA program inviting all commune councils (and NGOs working in partnership with the councils) to submit their proposal for the BPAs. Many NGOs have also supported the councils in their target areas to identify the project which meets the set criteria and submit to the BPA Panel. About 500 applications across the country were received by the deadline, 30 April 2010. Three final winners will be announced by November 2010.

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