



OVERVIEW OF CIVIL SOCIETY

CAMBODIA

Country context

Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia, bordering the Gulf of Thailand, between Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Cambodia covers a total area of about 181,035 square kilometers. The country's capital, Phnom Penh, is situated at the junction of the Mekong, Tonle Sap, and Bassac rivers.

Cambodia is a constitutional monarchy with a democratic bicameral legislative system. No party gained the required majority of votes to form a government in the July 2003 elections. After protracted negotiations, a coalition Government was formed in July 2004. Prince Norodom Sihamoni was crowned king in October 2004 after his father, King Sihanouk, abdicated.

Cambodia's population is about 13.1 million, with 57% of the population aged between 15 and 64 years. About 70% of the population is literate and about 36% lives below the poverty line.¹ The legal system is primarily a civil law mixture of French-influenced codes from the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) period, royal decrees, and acts of the legislature, with influences of customary law. In recent years, the influence of common law has been increasing.¹ Cambodia is a party to six main international human rights instruments.

History of NGO involvement

The Government of Cambodia and international funding agencies recognize the important contribution of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in the rehabilitation, development, and reform of Cambodia over the past 2 decades. NGOs play a major role in providing and supporting basic social services, often in remote areas

and communities, and are present in every province and major sector in Cambodia. NGOs also bring alternative models and approaches toward development—emphasizing participation, equity, gender sensitivity, and environmental sustainability. NGOs have advocated national reforms to improve health, education, governance, human rights, legal system, social services, environment, and women and children's welfare.

The number of international nongovernment organizations (INGOs) in Cambodia has reached about 300, up from 25 in the early 1980s. The first local NGO was established in 1991. Since then, the number of local NGOs and associations has increased exponentially. An estimated 1,000 organizations are currently registered with the Government of Cambodia, but only about 300 are operational.² In addition, more than 60 NGO working groups organized by sector, issue, or geographic area have been formed by umbrella organizations such as the **Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) and NGO Forum**.

NGO Forum has organized a working group on ADB. Among other activities, this group participates in project assessments and informs local NGOs and community leaders about ADB projects. The working group on ADB is one facet of the Development Issues Project,³ which aims to ensure that loans and technical assistance, especially those provided by the multilateral banks and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), are used more effectively to benefit local communities and the poor. In 2003, the active members of the Development Issues Project participated in the Fourth Meeting on ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation to comment on ADB's country strategy and program in Cambodia.

Alongside the formal NGO networks, informal networks also exist in almost every province.

INGO activities in Cambodia can be broadly classified into five main categories:

- large-scale service delivery dependent on bilateral and multilateral funding and implemented by large NGOs with experience in reconstruction and infrastructure development;
- service delivery in conjunction with government institutions working through local structures and providing institutional capacity building, especially at the provincial, district, and commune levels;
- community development activities carried out by well-established NGOs with experience in working at the village level to tackle the basic causes of poverty;
- development of local NGOs and community-based organizations, encouraged and directly supported by INGOs, and including direct funding and capacity building through training and mentoring; and
- research and other analytical work and related advocacy activities covering a range of development topics/issues.

Local NGO activities in Cambodia similarly can be broadly classified into five main categories:

- democracy and human rights organizations committed to promoting democratic principles and respect for human rights through policy, training, and other advocacy work as well as good governance and anticorruption measures;
- development organizations involved in education, health, credit, income-generating, and other rural and urban development activities to improve the lives of the poor;
- support organizations focusing on human resource and organizational development training activities, as well as facilitating networking and related advocacy activities;
- community-based organizations and associations that take an active role in participating and directly managing their own development processes; and
- research and other analytical work and related advocacy activities covering various development issues.

NGOs recognize the importance of strengthening their own governance structures and management systems that will in turn increase their accountability and transparency, particularly to the communities and people with whom they work. An NGO-driven Code of Ethics has been developed to promote quality and professional standards within the NGO community, contributing to discussions on models for NGO self-regulation.

Legislation concerning NGO activities

Although the 1993 Constitution recognizes NGOs, they have proposed a stronger legal framework for civil society

members to enhance their ability to develop a market economy and increase citizen participation in Cambodia's development. In 1996, the Government prepared a draft law regulating NGO activities, which was not passed due to criticism from civil society. It has been under review since.

The Government has attempted to increase participation of citizens and civil society in the development process through decentralization. Over 1,600 commune councils were elected in February 2002, although they currently control limited resources.

As decentralization takes place in Cambodia, the relationship between the Government and civil society is likely to witness some dramatic changes. The Government is developing and implementing reform initiatives, but is constrained by limited financial resources, human resources, and institutional capacity. It also has to adjust to new demands of external and local stakeholders for greater transparency, accountability, and public participation.

Local NGOs register with the Ministry of Interior. INGOs must register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and may also have cooperation agreements with particular line ministries, such as the Ministry of Health. INGOs are required to submit quarterly activity and financial reports to the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC). CDC grants permission for duty-free purchase/importation of vehicles and equipment or materials used for NGO-supported projects.

An advisor to the Council of Ministers has served as the Government's chief focal point on NGO matters, liaising with the CCC on matters of interest to NGOs operating in Cambodia. The CDC/Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board (CDC/CRDB) is the only national-level government organization coordinating NGO activity across sectors.

Government-NGO relations

INGOs played a major role in providing relief and other humanitarian services during the Kampuchean Emergency following the 1979 ouster of the Khmer Rouge. They conducted an advocacy campaign during this period on behalf of the Kampuchean people, earning INGOs the respect of the authorities. After bilateral and multilateral donors entered in 1993, INGOs shifted their activities to more traditional community development work, leaving the donors to large-scale assistance programs.

Domestic NGOs were first established during the UNTAC period from 1992–1993. They were involved in human rights and voter education activities. Some NGOs have since disbanded while others, like INGOs, have switched

their focus to development-based activities, partly in response to the availability of external funding. A core group of local NGOs continues as vocal human rights advocates, such as the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association, Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights, and Legal Aid of Cambodia. While often critical of the Government, these organizations are generally respected because of their autonomy.

NGOs, both domestic and international, continue to influence government policies and programs, particularly in the agriculture, education, and health sectors. NGOs have attended consultative group (CG) meetings between donor agencies and the Cambodian Government since 1992. CCC and the NGO Forum on Cambodia coordinate in drafting the NGO statement that is delivered at every CG meeting.

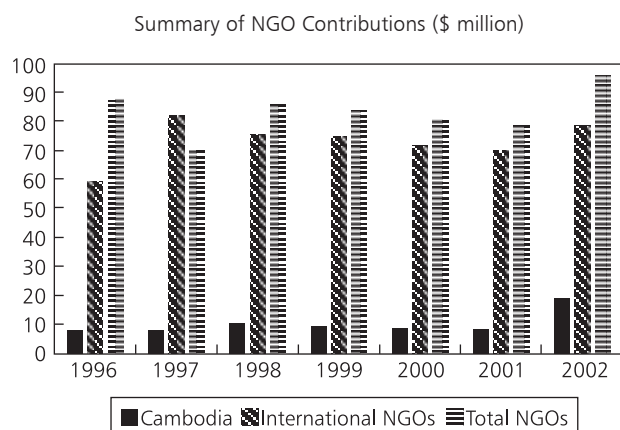
Although the political environment has become more stable, NGOs are concerned about

- institutional reforms occurring too slowly;
- corruption and poor governance; and
- lack of rule of law.

NGOs and development

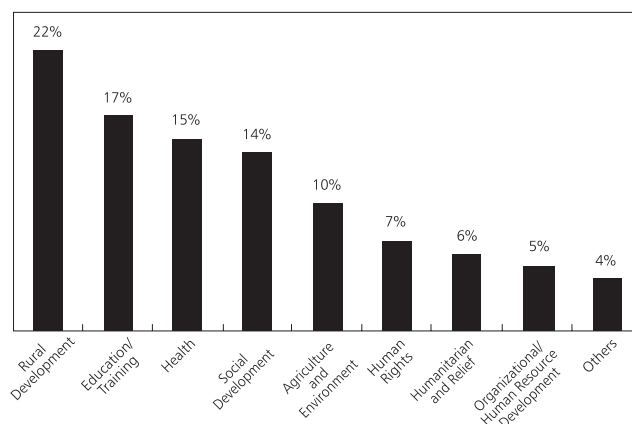
Financial contributions of NGOs to Cambodia's development have been substantial, totaling about \$96 million in 2002. INGOs contributed some \$78.9 million and local NGOs, \$17.3 million (NGO Statement to the 2002 CG Meeting on Cambodia).

The activities of NGOs are diverse. According to CCC, the major contribution of NGOs by sector is toward rural development (22%), followed by activities in education and training, health, and social development.



Source: Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, *Annual Report 2002*.

NGO Activity by Sector, 2002



Sources: CCC, *Directory of International Development Assistance in Cambodia* and *Directory of Cambodian NGOs, 1999–2001, 2001–2002*.

NGOs are also involved in

- capacity building and institutional development;
- sharing information with NGOs, government, and donors;
- sectoral analysis;
- policy advocacy; and
- monitoring and evaluation of large-scale development activities.

NGO capacity

INGOs operating in Cambodia have a long history of advocacy. They initially worked for international recognition of the Phnom Penh Government and increased international assistance to the country and, subsequently, for government policies and programs. Many INGOs have helped build the capacity of domestic NGOs, partly as a specific strategy to mentor local NGOs in improving indigenous capacity, while others use domestic NGO partners in implementing development projects and programs. In addition, some NGOs in Cambodia specifically focus on training and capacity building or on facilitating development processes.

Few domestic NGOs are capable of engaging the Government in policy dialogue since most are concerned with human rights or democracy issues. Capacity building of local NGOs requires long-term attention to ensure that they remain viable and less dependent on external assistance. A challenge facing NGOs is helping empower people to voice their own concerns and effectively engage in dialogue with their respective local governments.

Organization of NGOs

Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)

CCC is a membership organization of NGOs committed to facilitating information exchange among members of the development community in Cambodia. CCC produces a wide range of information on, about, and for NGOs in Cambodia. Distributed to member organizations, government departments, and other organizations in Cambodia, these publications include a directory of Cambodian NGOs, an agency personnel listing, and security briefing reports.

CCC maintains a resource center with an extensive collection of documents. The center is one of the few libraries available to NGOs, students, researchers, government staff, and the general public. The resource center also has a growing collection of government laws and policies, and maintains a comprehensive set of the proceedings of the annual government-donor consultative group meetings on Cambodia.

CCC provides advice on government accreditation, registration, and protocol, NGO personnel policies, salary and benefits, and NGO operations in Cambodia. For several years, CCC has played a coordinating role on NGO input to the Cambodia CG meetings and other forums of funding agencies. CCC has taken a lead in compiling information and recommendations on various development issues of interest to NGOs, preparing NGO statements, and selecting NGO representatives to meet with development partners. CCC holds monthly meetings.

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Education Committee (EDUCAM)

EDUCAM, established in 1991, is made up of NGOs and bilateral and multilateral groups with an interest in education in Cambodia. Government education officials and individuals, who are interested in networking on educational issues, are part of EDUCAM.

EDUCAM's objectives include sharing information on new projects/plans and resource persons working in the sector; sharing project and program evaluation results; and discussing topics, such as the national budget for education, testing programs, textbook development, library formation, and evaluation of education sector initiatives. Occasionally, EDUCAM also sponsors education-related workshops in coordination with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport.

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Medical Cambodia (MEDiCAM)

MEDiCAM is an organization of NGOs active in Cambodia's health sector. It is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, and nonsectarian organization that serves as a focal point for health-related information sharing. More than 100 international and local NGOs are members of MEDiCAM.

MEDiCAM's main objectives are to

- facilitate communication and share health-related information among NGOs, the Government, and all other health players in Cambodia;
- act as an interface between its member NGOs and the Government, particularly the Ministry of Health;
- represent its membership at official forums, including Ministry of Health Coordination Committee meetings, CG, and other meetings of funding agencies, and health-related workshops;
- facilitate discussion on key health issues to help develop and strengthen national health policies and services in Cambodia; and
- act as an advocacy think tank for health-related issues in Cambodia.

MEDiCAM also facilitates working groups on specific health issues; and maintains a Cambodia health-related resource center, database, and e-mail network.

MEDiCAM

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NGO Forum on Cambodia

The NGO Forum on Cambodia consists of more than 60 organizations, including local and international NGOs with experience in humanitarian and development assistance to Cambodia. The NGO Forum evolved from an international campaign that began in 1986 to end the embargo on aid to Cambodia. An office was established in Phnom Penh in 1994, and the Forum is now managed and located solely within the country. The agenda for advocacy has subsequently shifted from international to national issues.

The Forum exists to advocate issues of concern to Cambodians; and to enhance economic and social justice, respect for human rights and democracy, peace and nonviolence, sustainable use of resources, respect for cultural diversity, and development with equity.

The Forum has an important role in highlighting the impact of development processes and economic, social, and political changes on Cambodians. The NGO Forum coordinates and supports advocacy activities, with its advocacy agenda set in Cambodia and driven by national events. The NGO Forum also mobilizes international support for Cambodia's development. It supports partner organizations' capacity building in advocacy and brings NGOs together in working groups to organize seminars, discussions, and campaigns on issues of concern. The NGO Forum's current working groups and project areas are on

- *civil society*—encourage discussions on strengthening civil society in Cambodia and promoting respect for human rights;
- *development issues*—building capacity to link micro- and macro-level issues, discussing development values, participating in consultations with bilateral and multilateral aid programs, and undertaking research and advocacy on the impact of aid;
- *environment*—focusing on the Mekong River Basin development, dams, forests, fisheries, pesticides, toxic waste, and the role of public participation in environmental impact assessment;
- *information*—keeping international partners informed of current events and issues of concern to the development community in Cambodia;
- *land mines*—encouraging assistance for demining, helping victims, and monitoring progress toward ratifying and implementing the Mine Ban Treaty, as part of the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines;
- *women*—strengthening efforts of local women's organizations and other NGOs toward advocating gender issues through advocacy training programs; disseminating information on women issues to the Government, civic associations, and NGOs in Cambodia; and promoting exchange of information and experience; and
- *advocacy skills training*—strengthening the ability of NGO networks to raise concerns.

The NGO Forum has close ties with NGOs in Australia, Europe, Japan, and North America, which assist and support its advocacy agenda.

NGO Forum on Cambodia

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NGO Directories

Most INGOs and many local NGOs are CCC members. Their contact numbers can be obtained directly from CCC (see page 4 for CCC contact details). Selected CCC documents are also available at ADB's NGO and Civil Society Center.

Cambodia and Funding Agencies

On a per capita basis, Cambodia has received significantly more official development assistance (ODA) than other low-income countries during the past decade. Aid inflows were mainly used to improve health and education, rebuild physical infrastructure, and build institutional capacity. At the 7th CG meeting in December 2004, donors pledged \$504 million in aid. Major bilateral donors were Australia, Japan, and United States. The major multilateral donors are ADB, World Bank, and United Nations agencies. Historically, grants have accounted for about 80% of ODA. In 2003, ODA was equivalent to 8% of gross domestic product. ADB contributes about 9% of Cambodia's total ODA.

In an August 2001 report, the NGO Forum on Cambodia, on behalf of the Asian NGO Coalition, recommended that ADB, World Bank, and the IMF undertake the following:

- develop clear and concise definitions of "participation" and "consultation" and their measurements;
- be more active in sharing information about international financial institution (IFI)-supported activities; and
- facilitate NGO participation in steering committees (or its equivalent) to oversee IFI-supported activities.

ADB-NGO/CSO cooperation

ADB opened the Cambodia Resident Mission (CARM) in 1996. CARM coordinates high-level policy dialogue and aid; and assists with country programming, technical assistance administration, project processing, portfolio management, and project administration. In addition, CARM maintains regular dialogue with NGOs/CSOs on ADB assistance in the country.

NGOs/CSOs are involved in several ADB loan and technical assistance projects in Cambodia. In addition, ADB has consulted extensively with NGOs/CSOs in elaborating the current country strategy and program (CSP) for 2005–2009 and in reviewing general ADB policies and

strategies. For example, NGOs/CSOs in Cambodia participated in national consultation workshops on preparing the accountability mechanism (August 2002), developing the ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation Framework 2003–2005 (August 2002) and ADB assistance to the education sector (January 2005), and implementing ADB’s water policy (June 2005). Also, in November 2004, ADB organized a tripartite national workshop on NGO/CSO input into the Greater Mekong Subregion regional cooperation strategy and program update 2006–2008.

ADB Country Strategy and Program (CSP) 2005–2009
 ADB’s overarching goal in Cambodia is sustainable poverty reduction. The constraints to poverty reduction are inadequate and narrowly based economic growth; limited access to and poor quality of social services; landlessness; lack of access to natural resources; social exclusion; poor governance; and endemic corruption.

ADB’s strategy will focus on the following.

Broad-based economic growth. Growth is essential to sustain poverty reduction and increase government revenues to provide public services. In the past, growth has been strong but narrowly focused and has had a limited impact on the poor. Structural constraints to pro-poor growth include few sources of growth, infrastructure bottlenecks, weak and shallow financial system, low skills base, and weakness in governance.

ADB will enable pro-poor, private-sector led growth through investments in physical infrastructure, financial sector development, support for regional integration, sustainable development of small and medium enterprises, and investments in agriculture and irrigation.

Inclusive social development. Indicators of Cambodia’s progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals are among the worst in the region. ADB programs will help increase the poor’s access to physical and natural assets and strengthen human capital. ADB will focus on improving education, empowering women and minority groups, controlling diseases, providing rural water supply and sanitation facilities, and promoting conservation in the Tonle Sap Basin.

Good governance. Poor governance is an obstacle to increased growth and reduced poverty. ADB will improve accountability and service delivery; support legal, regulatory, and policy reforms; strengthen institutional capacity; and improve efficiency of project implementation.

Cumulative ADB Assistance to Cambodia (as of 31 December 2004)

Sector	No. of Loans	\$ Million ^a	%
Multisector	5	191.0	22.7
Transport and Communications	4	173.0	20.6
Education	6	123.0	14.6
Energy	4	92.8	11.0
Agriculture and Natural Resources	5	88.6	10.5
Water Supply, Sanitation, and Waste Management	3	46.3	5.5
Finance	3	40.0	4.8
Health, Nutrition, and Social Protection	2	40.0	4.8
Industry and Trade	2	35.6	4.2
Law, Economic Management, and Public Policy	1	10.0	1.2
TOTAL^b	35	840.2	100.0

^a Total may not add due to rounding.

^b Includes loan components of regional projects in Cambodia.

ADB-supported activities involving NGOs

ADB recognizes CSOs, including NGOs, as significant players in the development process and cooperates with them to improve the impact, sustainability, and quality of its services. NGOs provide value-added in promoting sustainable development through

- *innovation*—identifying new approaches and models for specific development activities and drawing upon their close knowledge of local communities;
- *accountability*—helping ensure that project components are implemented as envisaged and planned;
- *responsiveness*—encouraging the implementation of projects to respond to local needs;
- *participation*—serving as bridges between project authorities and affected communities, and providing structures for citizen participation; and
- *sustainability*—nurturing continuity in project work, especially when implementing agencies lack capacity or when staffing changes.

Loan and Technical Assistance Projects

Project	Objective and NGO Involvement
Agriculture and Natural Resources	
<p>Tonle Sap Environmental Management (\$10.9 million) Approval: 21 Nov 2002 Estimated completion: Dec 2007</p>	<p>Sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity in the Tonle Sap Basin is a long-term goal. The immediate objective of the project is to promote systems and capacity for natural resource management coordination and planning, community-based natural resource management, and biodiversity conservation in the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve (TSBR). Three closely interrelated components will (i) strengthen natural resource management coordination and planning for TSBR, (ii) organize communities for natural resource management in TSBR, and (iii) build management capacity for biodiversity conservation in TSBR. Project beneficiaries include field staff from national, provincial, and district offices; and NGOs who will receive interdisciplinary and on-the-job training that cuts across professional and social boundaries, including gender. The project will contract out services to pre-qualified international and local NGOs and other institutions.</p>
<p>Northwestern Rural Development (\$27.2 million) Approval: 27 Nov 2001 Estimated completion: Dec 2006</p>	<p>The project aims to support the Government's effort to reduce poverty through accelerated rural development by establishing physical infrastructure, improving socioeconomic conditions, and enhancing rural livelihood in northwestern Cambodia. The project will (i) plan, rehabilitate, or establish, and maintain public rural infrastructure that will contribute to improved living conditions of the rural population; (ii) strengthen the capacity of communities and institutions to identify, prioritize, plan, implement, coordinate, monitor, and maintain infrastructure investments and development initiatives; and (iii) support and facilitate access to appropriate savings and credit mechanisms for enhancing livelihood and income-generating activities at village and commune levels. Experienced NGOs will assist in implementing community development and microfinance activities in the target areas.</p>
<p>Rural Credit and Savings (\$20 million) Approval: 27 Apr 2000 Estimated completion: Dec 2005</p>	<p>The project has supported NGO efforts in delivering reliable and effective rural financial services through a long-term credit line for onlending to agricultural and other income-generating activities of the rural poor. NGOs have been licensed as microfinance institutions (under the new regulatory framework of the financial sector) and have provided full financial services, including savings facilities, in rural areas. Beneficiaries and NGOs have been closely consulted in formulating and implementing the project.</p>
<p>Tonle Sap Sustainable Livelihoods (\$1.3 million) Approval: 16 Oct 2003 Estimated completion: 30 May 2004</p>	<p>The goal of the technical assistance (TA) was sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity in the Tonle Sap Basin. The TA prepared a project to sustain and improve livelihoods in the flooded areas of the Tonle Sap. Implementation involved 48 person-months of international expertise and 30 person-months of domestic expertise in sustainable livelihoods; participatory rural appraisal; policies, institutions, and processes; rural infrastructure; and project economics. Other expertise were related to community fisheries development, agrarian development, natural resource management, gender, rural roads, small business development, NGO coordination, and community mobilization.</p>
Transport and Communications	
<p>Greater Mekong Subregion: Cambodia Road Improvement (\$50 million) Approval: 26 Nov 2002 Estimated completion: 31 Dec 2006</p>	<p>The project is expected to (i) reduce poverty by providing all-year access to employment opportunities, markets, and growth centers; (ii) improve social conditions by providing all-year, all-weather access to education and health; (iii) promote economic growth by reducing the cost and increasing the reliability of transport to promote tourism; (iv) increase private sector participation by strengthening the domestic road contracting industry and providing opportunities in road construction; (v) work with an experienced NGO under the national HIV/AIDS framework to control and create awareness of the disease; (vi) initiate a process of reform for the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, particularly for the road sector with asset management as the guiding theme; and (vii) establish an effective road maintenance management system and financing mechanisms to support its implementation.</p>

Social Infrastructure

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
(\$18 million)
Approval: n/a
Estimated completion: 31 Dec 2009

The project will assist the Government in achieving its Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Investment Plan (2003–2012) targets of increasing the percentage of the rural population with access to safe water supply to 45% and sanitation facilities to 30%. The project areas include Kampong Thom, Kampot, and Pursat provinces. The goal is to improve the rural people's quality of life in the project areas. The project will have the following components: (i) community mobilization program, (ii) water supply improvement, (iii) sanitation improvement, and (iv) project implementation assistance.

The project management unit will engage individual international, regional, and domestic consultants to support project management and implementation. A total of 355 person-months of consulting services (63 international and 292 domestic) will be required, with expertise in project management, rural water supply and sanitation design and construction, social and community development, environment management, community water supply system management, training, and capacity building. In addition, about 600 person-months of services from local NGOs or local consultants will be needed for the community mobilization program.

Second Education Sector Development Program
(ESDP II) (\$45 million)
Approved: 9 Dec 2004
Estimated completion: 31 Dec 2009

The objective of ESDP II is to contribute to poverty reduction in Cambodia by improving access to and the quality of secondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for out-of-school youth. For the project component, NGOs will help review implementation and assess the impact of all reforms in the education sector as part of joint education sector performance reviews. The program component will take the process of Government, development agency, NGO, and ADB coordination to a full sector-wide approach that can serve as a comprehensive model for the region.

Health Sector Support
(\$20 million)
Approval: 21 Nov 2002

As part of the sector-wide management of the health sector, the project has supported the implementation of the Health Sector Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Health (MOH). The Department for International Development of the United Kingdom and the International Development Association are cofinancing the project, that has focused on providing basic health services to the poor and disadvantaged, including ethnic minorities, women, and children, in 21 provinces. ADB financing, covering nine provinces, will improve access to quality health services by upgrading commune health centers and district referral hospitals and enhancing the skills of health care service providers. The project has supported contracting NGOs to provide health services in 11 poor operational districts. The project has also supported public health priorities, including national programs for tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, and safe motherhood. The project emphasizes building the capacity of MOH for planning, financing, and managing health services. Health services in 10 operational districts will be contracted to NGOs using ADB-approved procedures.

Provincial Towns Improvement Project
(\$26.3 million)
Approval: 17 Dec 1999
Estimated completion: Jun 2005

The project improved the urban environment, public health, and basic urban services in the following towns: Battambang Kampot, Kompong Cham, Kompong Thom, Pursat, Sihanoukville, and Svay Rieng to support the Government's development objective of reducing urban poverty through sustained economic growth. The scope included five components: community sanitation and health awareness, water supply, wastewater management, local governance and resource mobilization, and implementation assistance. Community and beneficiary participation was encouraged during project preparation, including extensive discussion with key stakeholders and also central government departments, provincial and municipal governments, NGOs, and communities. As the project was designed based on communities' needs and willingness to pay, project sustainability and positive social impacts were expected.

Second Basic Health Services
(\$700,000)
Approval: 3 May 2001
Estimated completion: 31 July 2002

ADB's initial Basic Health Services Project was aimed at strengthening community-based health services in five provinces. The project pilot tested an innovative approach of providing basic health services through contracts with NGOs and private sector groups. Service delivery in two districts was "contracted out" to two NGOs; other NGOs were "contracted in" to manage the operations of three other districts. The impact of the pilot project and lessons learned were assessed so the Government could use the approaches on a wider scale. The TA was implemented in a participatory way by closely involving all stakeholders, including rural communities, interested NGOs, international agencies, and health care providers. It was expected to lead to a second phase of a loan project.

Greater Mekong Subregion: Mekong Tourism Development (\$15.6 million)
Approval: 12 Dec 2002
Estimated completion: Dec 2007

The community, NGOs, civil society, private sector operators, government tourism agencies, and regional tourism agencies have been consulted on tourism development. The community-based participatory consultations have helped identify the social and economic needs, their views related to project interventions, expected benefits, modalities for community participation, and participation of women and youth in tourism-related skills building and employment opportunities. As a result, the project design reflects the strategies for building partnerships with poor rural communities (particularly ethnic minorities), NGOs, and civil society; and government agencies involved in tourism development, agriculture, and forestry.

Small and Medium Enterprise Development Program (\$20 million)
Approval: 4 Dec 2004
Estimated completion: 31 Dec 2007

The program's objective is to support the Government's efforts in creating an environment that is conducive to business development. The program aims to (i) establish an SME development framework; (ii) improve governance and regulatory reform related to SMEs; and (iii) enhance SMEs' access to finance. Recognizing the role of NGOs in providing rural credit facilities to the poor, the project involves about 90 NGOs in operating rural credit facilities.

Governance

Commune Council Development (\$10 million)
Approval: 3 Dec 2002
Estimated completion: Feb 2006

The project helps the newly elected commune councils function by providing commune facilities, capacity building, photo mapping, and civil registration. NGOs present drama education and film performances as part of a nationwide campaign to increase awareness on the roles and responsibilities of the commune councils and the public in the decentralization process.

Khmer Women's Voice Centre (KWVC)/
Mobile Dissemination on Gender Mainstreaming

The project promotes gender mainstreaming through mobile concerts in eight communes in Kampot and Kompong Cham provinces, focusing on women's rights; equality and equity of gender; and women's role in decision making, education, health, and domestic violence issues. KWVC also monitors, assesses, and evaluates activities and interviews people attending the concerts as a follow-up.

Mith Samlanh and Friends/Ministry-Operated
Care Centers for Street Children and Children with HIV/AIDS

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training, and Youth Rehabilitation requested the design of the project. It is aimed at developing and reinforcing collaboration between Mith Samlanh and the Government to strengthen the Government's capacity to run projects for street children and to reduce poverty by addressing social issues.

Mlup Baitong/Community-Based Ecotourism

The project builds the capacity of villagers to manage the Chambok Community-Based Ecotourism Project. It expands and improves attractions and services at the site (e.g., a multipurpose meeting hall/visitor center, expanded nature trails) to increase benefits that can be shared more widely throughout the commune.

Buddhism for Development/Home-Based
Small-Scale Businesses for People Living with HIV/AIDS

The project provides small business capital as well as training and follow-up support to 100 people living with HIV/AIDS and/or their immediate families. The capital helps them establish and operate small businesses (e.g., poultry/livestock raising, mushroom production, and vending kiosks).

Cambodian Health Education Development/
Sewing a Healthy Future

The project helps reduce morbidity and mortality among adolescents of reproductive age in the project operational areas. The objectives are to increase the use of reproductive health services and to improve sexual health practices of the youth by increasing the awareness of factory workers and building on their work skills.

Women and Children Rights Development/
Health Promotion for Ethnic Minorities in Kratie Province

The projects reduce poverty among ethnic minorities in Kratie Province by building community health awareness and relationships between communities and providing access to government health services in target communities to improve health care.

Cambodia Business Initiative in Rural Development

The TA promotes a participatory and sustainable approach to poverty reduction. It aims to achieve socioeconomic development by getting business organizations to partner with government institutions, NGOs, and poor villages in rural development efforts.

Capacity building for the Tonle Sap Poverty Reduction Initiative (\$500,000)
Approval: 16 Aug 2004

The goal of the TA is sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity in the Tonle Sap Basin. Its purpose is to build capacity at the national, provincial, and local levels to manage, engage in, and support the Tonle Sap initiative. The TA helps build skills and awareness, develops a knowledge network, and strengthens partnerships.

Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction

The Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) is an untied grant facility established by the Government of Japan and ADB in May 2000. The \$90 million fund assists ADB clients to reduce poverty and address the social effects of the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Specifically, JFPR

- initiates and supports innovative programs with high potential for improving the affected countries' situations;

- provides relatively rapid, demonstrable benefits through initiatives that can be developed and sustained in the long term; and
- helps local populations and civil society design and implement programs.

JFPR provides an opportunity for local communities and civil society organizations, including NGOs, to actively participate in the development. The partnerships may involve NGOs in designing and conceptualizing the proposed grant, or in executing the grant.⁴

Project	Objective and NGO Involvement
Improving the Livelihood of Poor Farmers in Southern Cambodia (\$1.8 million) Approval: 11 Nov 2002	The project provides access to agricultural services and resources and income-generating opportunities for the rural poor. The JFPR also assists in institutional capacity building of NGOs and other community-based organizations Centre d'Etude et de Developpement Agricole Cambodigien was one of the NGOs involved in this project.
Community-Based Livelihood Enhancement of the Rural Poor in Northwestern Cambodia (\$1.8 million) Approval: 12 Jul 2002	The project enables the most vulnerable groups to participate in village development and access services. An international NGO serves as the coordinating agency, working through local NGOs.
Income for the Poor through Community-Based Environmental Improvements in Phnom Penh (\$1.0 million) Approval: 25 Sep 2002	The project establishes sustainable community-based mechanisms to improve living and working conditions and environmental hygiene in low-income neighborhoods. NGOs implement various project components and subcomponents.
Targeted Assistance for Education of Poor Girls and Indigenous Children (\$3.0 million) Approval: 25 Nov 2002	The project provides access to agricultural services and resources and income-generating opportunities in poverty-stricken rural areas. The project involves parent-school committees and NGOs, such as IDP Education Australia Limited, World Education, CARE, and Kampuchean Action for Primary Education.
Health Care Financing for the Poor (\$1.9 million) Approval: 15 Nov 2004	The poor and vulnerable population have improved access to the health system through targeted, demand-side subsidies. A sustainable health care equity fund has been established with support from Government, development partners, and NGOs.
Mainstreaming Labor-Based Maintenance to the National Roads Network (\$2.2 million) Approval: 17 Jun 2004	The project shows the potential for increasing the direct poverty reduction impact of the national roads network and mobilizes road maintenance funds for provincial governments.
Improving the Access of Poor Floating Communities on the Tonle Sap Lake to Social Infrastructure and Livelihoods (\$1.2 million) Approval: 25 Feb 2005	Alternative income-generating activities that are viable for the poor are being undertaken. The project also supports community-based microfinance for the poor; develops and tests low-cost solutions for the most urgent health, nutrition, water and sanitation needs of the poor; and promotes functional literacy and vocational skills.
Improving Primary School Access in Disadvantaged Communes (\$1.8 million) Approval: 4 Jan 2005	The project is a pilot scheme that mobilizes the community to support increased enrolment among the poorest 40% of communes, pupil retention especially among children of the poor, and the operation and maintenance of the schools. It provides community mobilization and capacity building, and improves facilities in schools that do not offer a full range of primary education. Community groups, village committees, parents' associations, NGOs, government agencies, and donors participate in implementation.

An ongoing ADB regional technical assistance (RETA) project, NGO Partnerships for Poverty Reduction, serves as a pilot for the possible establishment of a larger NGO grant-funding mechanism.

Seed funds for two upcoming JFPR projects with significant NGO involvement have been disbursed. The projects are the Integrated Women's Empowerment Centers Project and the Livelihood Improvement for the Rural Poor in Cambodia Project.

Policy dialogue

Cambodian NGOs have been involved in reviewing several ADB policies, including the Environment Policy and the Inspection/Accountability Mechanism. They also participated in developing of the ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation, A Framework for Action, 2003–2005 (the NGO Center’s medium-term action plan).

Other cooperation

ADB and the Center for Social Development (CSD), a local NGO, collaborated in organizing (with Transparency International) a 2001 workshop on Building a Coalition for Transparency. ADB and CSD also jointly organized broad-based public meetings to disseminate the Second Socio-Economic Development Plan 2001–2005 (SEDP II) and the National Poverty Reduction Strategy 2003–2005 (NPRS).

Cambodia Enhancing Governance, a 2002 study prepared by the Cambodia Development Resources Institute (CDRI) under the overall supervision of ADB, includes a section on civil society in Cambodia (see www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Cambodia_Enhancing_Governance).

The NGO **Friends/Mith Samlanh** served as ADB’s Cambodia partner NGO for the 2002 ADB Children’s Art Competition and also took part in a follow-up roundtable conference on street children in the Asia and Pacific region.

NGO concerns about ADB initiatives

Recognizing NGOs as development partners, ADB documents and responds to the concerns of NGOs that materialize during the design and implementation of ADB-assisted projects and other initiatives. ADB’s operations departments and the NGO Center collaborate to keep senior ADB staff, members of the Board of Directors, and representatives of Management informed of challenges faced by the institution’s operations and to obtain feedback about how NGO concerns are being addressed.

For example, the **Fishery Action Coalition Team (FACT)**, a Cambodian NGO, alleged problems regarding the now-cancelled Chong Kneas Environmental Improvement Project. FACT alleged that ADB consultants did not follow guidelines when preparing the draft environmental impact assessment and that communication with local people was lacking in some respects. FACT was also concerned that the project would involve resettlement of people living on houseboats who may not want to give up their traditional way of life, and that resettlement would cause inequity among villagers in the Tonle Sap.

A Japanese environment group, **Mekong Watch**, cited NGO and local community concerns regarding the Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project including possible degradation of environment, increased boat traffic and pollution, loss of fish habitats, and land grabbing.

Depository library

ADB has established a network of depository libraries throughout the Asia and Pacific region. Each library receives some 300 documents a year from ADB, free of charge. The documents range from TA reports to country economic reports, to basic information about ADB, posters, bookmarks, videos, and CD-ROMs. The library is open to the public and assists clients through on-site research and interlibrary loans. In Cambodia, ADB has several depository libraries.

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References

Additional information about NGOs and civil society in Cambodia can be obtained from the following sources:
www.bigpond.com.kh
www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Cambodia_Enhancing_Governance
www.asiasource.org/asip/cambodia.cfm
www.usief.org/cambodia_ashwill.html

End Notes

- ¹ 1990–2001 estimate in HDR 2004
- ² Cooperation Committee for Cambodia Strategy Paper 2004–2009.
- ³ www.ngoforum.org.kh/Core/core.htm
- ⁴ www.adb.org/jfpr

About the Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s work is aimed at improving the welfare of the people of the Asia and Pacific region, particularly for the 1.2 billion who live on less than \$2 a day. Despite the success stories, Asia and the Pacific remains home to two thirds of the world's poor.

ADB is a multilateral development finance institution owned by 63 members, 45 from the region and 18 from other parts of the globe. ADB's vision is a region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve their quality of life.

ADB's main instruments in providing help to its developing member countries are policy dialogues, loans, technical assistance, grants, guarantees, and equity investments. ADB's annual lending volume is typically about \$6 billion, with technical assistance provided usually totaling about \$180 million a year.

ADB's headquarters is in Manila. It has 26 offices around the world. The organization has more than 2,000 employees from over 50 countries.

About the NGO and Civil Society Center

ADB's NGO and Civil Society Center (NGOC) serves as the focal point for ADB's interaction with civil society organizations (CSOs), including the broad range of nongovernment organizations, foundations, social movements, and trade unions. The NGOC is a part of the Gender, Social Development and Civil Society Division in ADB's Regional and Sustainable Development Department. Its key functions include empowering operations departments to work with NGOs/CSOs, serving as ADB's knowledge center and advisor on consultation and participation with NGOs/CSOs, managing implementation of ADB's Policy on Cooperation with NGOs, contributing to the capacity of ADB staff and NGOs/CSOs to work together, communicating on ADB's work with NGOs/CSOs, and supporting the exchange of knowledge and expertise between ADB and civil society. The NGOC also coordinates ADB's NGO and Civil Society Cooperation Network, which comprises designated staff from departments and offices across the institution.

This profile provides an overview of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) and of ADB-NGO/CSO cooperation in Nepal. It was originally prepared by staff at CARE International (Nepal) and was updated in July 2005 by Aziz Sunderji, ADB intern. Although primarily intended for use by ADB staff, the information contained in the profile will be of use to other development partners. For comments on this profile, e-mail ngocoordinator@adb.org.

ADB's use of the term "nongovernment organization" refers generically to organizations (i) not based in government and (ii) not created to earn profit. ADB is concerned primarily with developmental NGOs, which can be regarded as private organizations entirely or largely independent of government, not created for financial or material gain, and which address concerns, such as social and humanitarian issues of development; individual and community welfare and well-being, disadvantage, and poverty; as well as environmental and natural resource protection, management, and improvement. While ADB's interest is directed primarily toward organizations that do not exist to serve their members' self-interests, ADB also works with organizations, such as self-help, and people's and community-based organizations formed by or around disadvantaged persons, groups, and communities. Terms parallel to developmental NGO include voluntary organization, private voluntary organization, or private voluntary development organization; people's organization; community organization or community-based organization, community group or community association; grassroots organization; intermediary organization; and public interest group.