

Performance
Evaluation Report

Cambodia: Commune Council Development Project



Performance Evaluation Report

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NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

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Abbreviations

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
C/SF	–	commune/ <i>sangkat</i> fund
D&D	–	decentralization and deconcentration
DOLA	–	Department of Local Administration
IED	–	Independent Evaluation Department
MEF	–	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MOI	–	Ministry of Interior
MOLMUPC	–	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction
NCDD	–	National Committee for Democratic Development
NCSC	–	National Committee for Support to Communes
PCR	–	project completion report
PPER	–	project performance evaluation report
PTC	–	project technical cell
SNA	–	subnational administration
TA	–	technical assistance

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Basic Data

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TA No.	TA Project Name	Type	Person-Months	Amount (\$)	Approval Date
4007	Commune Council Development Project	ADTA	278.6	3,570,000	3 Dec 2002
4008	Commune Council Development Project	ADTA	18.0	2,400,000	3 Dec 2002

KEY PROJECT DATA (\$ million)	As per ADB Loan Documents	Actual
Total Project Cost	17.97	15.79
Foreign Exchange Cost	6.38	6.72
Local Currency Cost	11.02	9.07
ADB loan amount/utilization	10.00	9.98
ADB loan amount/cancellation	0.00	0.00

KEY DATES	Expected	Actual
Fact-Finding		
Appraisal	19 August 2002	24 August 2002
Loan Negotiations	15 October 2002	16 October 2002
Board Approval		3 December 2002
Loan Agreement		7 February 2003
Loan Effectiveness	13 March 2003	13 March 2003
Loan Closing	31 August 2006	29 November 2007

Borrower	Kingdom of Cambodia
Executing Agency	Ministry of Interior

Type of Mission	No. of Missions	No. of Person-Days
Appraisal	1	16
Inception	1	7
Project Administration Review	11	111
Project Completion Review	2	75
Independent Evaluation	1	21

PROJECT PERFORMANCE REPORT RATINGS

Implementation Period	Development Objective	Implementation Progress
7 Feb 2003 to 31 Dec 2003	S	S
1 Jan 2004 to 31 Dec 2004	S	S
1 Jan 2005 to 31 Dec 2005	S	S
1 Jan 2006 to 31 Dec 2006	S	S

S = satisfactory.

Executive Summary

This project performance evaluation report presents the findings of an evaluation of the Commune Council Development Project of the Government of Cambodia. Fieldwork was done in April 2013.

The Project

Decentralization as a development strategy in Cambodia was initiated in 2001 with the adoption of the decentralization and deconcentration (D&D) strategy that focused on improving the role of the commune, the lowest tier of government. The government passed the first Decentralization Law in 2001 that called for the election of commune councils. The first local commune council elections were held in February 2002, the second elections were held in April 2007, and the third in June 2012.

The Commune Council Development Project for \$10 million was approved on 3 December 2002 to support the D&D reforms and was completed in November 2007. Its scope was to provide most commune councils, newly elected in February 2002, with operating facilities and equipment, systems, training, popular understanding, and support required to function effectively. The project's four components were as follows: (i) construct and improve physical facilities of communes and provincial departments, (ii) build capacities of commune officials and hold a media campaign on decentralization, (iii) produce and disseminate photomaps to communes as planning tools, and (iv) support the establishment of a national civil registration system.

Overall Assessment

Overall, the evaluation rated the project's performance *successful*, being assessed on its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

The project was assessed *highly relevant*. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) had a strong basis to support Cambodia's decentralization efforts through the Commune Council Development Project. Cambodia has historically been a highly centralized state, with its politico-administrative processes and institutions dominated by the central government. The open and competitive elections in 2002 and the frequent power shifts in the Cambodian political landscape laid the groundwork for a special effort to democratize the country further. Within this context, the government identified decentralization as a strategy to enable its local governments to better meet the challenges of development, which are daunting, especially in post-conflict societies such as Cambodia. By supporting D&D reforms, the Commune Council Development Project was a pioneer project aimed at contributing to democratization and stronger local governance.

The project was assessed *effective*. It achieved all of its intended outputs and even surpassed many of these in the 1,621 commune councils targeted. The improved commune buildings also provided a good enabling environment for the achievement of the democratization outcomes. The facilities served as symbols of the presence of government at the commune level. The office equipment provided was useful, for a

time, in helping to manage the affairs of the government at the commune level. Training initiatives improved the capacity of concerned officers on D&D and local governance. The project also improved the capacity of the newly elected councilors, who are serving as front liners in the implementation of D&D.

The aerial photography and the digital production of photomaps had more moderate benefits. Because of limited resources and reach, not all communes were able to avail themselves of such photomaps, but the communes of the lowland central parts of Cambodia mostly did. A more positive development was the start of the registration of all citizens of Cambodia. This became an important task considering that vital records and documents were lost during the civil war. The communes played a key role in the government's registration campaign and were very successful.

The project was assessed *efficient* largely in view of the efficient use of resources, notwithstanding the executing agency's lack of experience in managing donor-funded projects at the time. Despite challenges, the project was implemented in a timely manner. When the transfer of funds to the communes was delayed during the early stages of implementation, the Commune Council Development Project appropriately switched to a more efficient private bank.

The project's outcomes are *likely sustainable*. Commune offices built under the project have been maintained by the respective communes. Improvements were also made. Maintenance funds were augmented by other sources. Basic capacities of central and commune officials and staff have been built.

Lessons

This report identified four lessons drawn from the Commune Council Development Project experience:

- (i) Country context is important in project design and implementation. The project took good account of the socio-political, administrative, and historical context of the country during design and implementation.
- (ii) Consultation and dialogue with stakeholders is important where partnerships are expected to deepen the process of decentralization and democratization. A range of partnerships have been initiated under the project: between and among national government offices; between the national government and the communes; emerging between the government and nongovernment organizations and civil society organizations; and, finally, between the government and development partners.
- (iii) Decentralization is a continuing process that can provide the enabling framework for the development of democracy. The Commune Council Development Project experience has shown that decentralization can usefully begin with developing basic physical (infrastructure) and human (capability building) capacities.
- (iv) Tapping the experience of other organizations and the private sector maximizes the process of citizen engagement, as has been done when the Commune Council Development Project supported the civil registration process in post-conflict Cambodia. Academe, community-

based volunteers, and even hospitals were tapped to influence more people to register. Also, the use of a private bank for disbursement for the construction of council offices proved efficient.

Follow-up Actions

ADB, through its ongoing program supporting decentralization, may suggest that the government considers the following in its D&D efforts:

- (i) **ADB could propose to the government to strengthen and institutionalize the capacity building office of the Department of Local Administration in the Ministry of Interior.** The evaluation suggests that ADB promotes the upgrade of the capacity building office of the Ministry of Interior into a full unit with the responsibility of designing a comprehensive capacity building program for subnational governments of Cambodia within the context of decentralization.
- (ii) **ADB could support that the respective roles of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy and Finance are institutionalized in the implementation of decentralization.**
- (iii) **ADB could help the government in preparing a sustainability and maintenance plan for the gains of the Commune Council Development Project and a follow-up grant,** the second Commune Council Development Project (approved in December 2006 and completed in September 2010). Such a sustainability plan and strategy was foreseen when the second project was designed.
- (iv) **ADB could help the government to bring the process of decentralization and deconcentration to its next logical phase.** New public sector activities, more meaningfully managed at the local level, could be certain services in agriculture, education, health, land, and public works.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. The project performance evaluation report (PPER) on Cambodia's Commune Council Development Project is part of the 2013 work program of the Independent Evaluation Department (IED). The project was assessed in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability based on IED's Guidelines for Evaluating Public Sector Projects.¹ Given that a long time has passed since the project was completed, the PPER focused more on the long-term results of the project and its sustainability.

The PPER focused on the long-term results of the project and its sustainability

A. Evaluation Purpose and Process

2. IED conducted a desk review and fielded an independent evaluation mission in April 2013 to gather primary and secondary data. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions were also conducted. IED carried out a survey in 263 communes² in 20 provinces to assess the contribution of communes and *sangkats*³ to public service delivery in Cambodia. The survey findings substantiated the overall performance evaluation of the project in the context of the four evaluation pillars and provided information to improve future activities of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the context of public sector management, particularly on decentralization (Appendix 1 details the survey findings).

3. The project completion report (PCR) was completed in 2008 and rated the project *highly relevant, effective, efficient, and likely sustainable*. The overall rating of the project is *highly successful*.⁴ However, the PCR validation report that was approved in November 2012 corrected the PCR's overall rating to *successful*. The weighted score for overall project performance had been miscalculated in the PCR.⁵

4. The project was followed by the grant-based second Commune Council Development Project, approved for \$7.8 million in December 2006 and completed in September 2010. This involved (i) constructing additional commune offices, (ii) deepening capacity building initiatives, and (iii) preserving civil registration records in a searchable computer database system at the Ministry of Interior (MOI).⁶ Follow-up

¹ ADB. 2006. *Guidelines for Preparing Performance Evaluation Reports for Public Sector Operations*. Manila.

² This represents 51.6% of the total population of the project's component 1 (construction of commune buildings) beneficiaries. The 268 commune councils covered by the survey were randomly selected from the list of project beneficiaries.

³ A commune is the lowest administrative unit in a province, while a *sangkat* is its urban counterpart. In the remainder of this report "commune" is used to refer to both communes and *sangkats*.

⁴ ADB 2008. *Completion Report: Commune Council Development Project*. Manila.

⁵ If the weights of the ratings under the 2006 Guidelines for Preparing Project Evaluation Reports for Public Sector Operations were followed, the final score translated into a rating of *successful* and not *highly successful*. The weighted average score is 2.2 and this falls into the range for successful overall weighted score (greater than or equal to 1.6 and less than 2.7).

⁶ ADB. 2006. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors on a Proposed Grant to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project 2*. Manila.

technical assistance (TA) supported the institutional framework for decentralization, focusing on (i) formulating an integrated and coherent functional assignments strategy for policy makers; (ii) developing recommendations on fiscal arrangements and related regulations; (iii) preparing a study, planning measures, and road map on intergovernmental financing arrangements; and (iv) strengthening network arrangements and capacity of oversight agencies.⁷

ADB has continued to support decentralization and deconcentration (D&D) in the country

5. ADB has since continued to support decentralization and deconcentration (D&D) in the country through a policy-based loan and a project loan approved in September 2012, which became effective in March 2013. This aimed to improve public service delivery by supporting the development of efficient and accountable subnational administrations (SNAs).⁸

B. Expected Results

6. The Commune Council Development Project aimed to contribute to the reduction of poverty in the country by supporting institutional reforms for more participatory, transparent, and accountable governance at the commune level throughout Cambodia. Among the key reforms identified by ADB was the strengthening of subnational institutions through D&D.⁹ D&D was to provide voice to and enable citizens to participate in governance within the context of democratization. D&D would not only hasten the delivery of services as they are immediately acted upon by the communes, but would also enable central government offices to focus on the broader development strategy and not get mired in the details that frontline institutions are in the best position to respond to. Decentralization is the broad concept referring to the process of transferring functions, powers, authorities, and responsibilities from national to subnational institutions. Deconcentration involves the transfer of functions to lower level institutions to deconcentrate and decongest the national government. Decentralization provides the enabling framework for citizens to participate in governance, hence it has been associated with the process of democratization.

7. The project¹⁰ had the following components: (i) improving and strengthening operating facilities, with 519 commune buildings constructed,¹¹ and providing

⁷ ADB. 2009. *Technical Assistance to the Kingdom of Cambodia for Developing an Institutional Framework for Decentralization Reforms*. Manila.

⁸ Expected policy outputs of this package are (i) development and regular update of a gender-sensitive policy and regulatory framework for decentralization, (ii) establishment of institutions for efficient coordination of subnational democratic development policies, (iii) definition of clear service delivery responsibilities of SNAs, (iv) assignment of efficient tax and nontax revenue sources to SNAs, (v) implementation of fiscal transfers that ensure comparable levels of service delivery across SNAs, (vi) development of capacities for efficient decentralized public financial management, and (vii) design and implementation of accountability mechanisms for SNAs to their constituencies. Meanwhile, the expected project loan outputs are (i) construction of district offices in rural areas; (ii) development of an efficient system of intergovernment fiscal relations, and design and implementation of expenditure and revenue assignments and fiscal transfers; (iii) development of the Subnational Investment Facility; and (iv) development of capacities for efficient decentralized public financial management. ADB. 2012. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors on Proposed Programmatic Approach, Policy-Based and Project Loan for Subprogram 1, and Technical Assistance Grant to the Kingdom of Cambodia for Decentralized Public Service and Financial Management Sector Development Program*. Manila (Loans 2886 and 2887).

⁹ At present, Cambodia is at the subnational democratic development phase, involving district and provincial levels. At the time of project implementation, only the communes were involved. The reforms at present involve the promotion of local democratic governance and development, including improved service delivery.

¹⁰ The Commune Council Development Project was followed by the second Commune Council Development Project (Grant 0066).

communication and transport equipment in selected rural communes and provincial departments; (ii) financing capacity development including (a) councilor and officer training;¹² (b) a mass media and awareness campaign; and policy, legal, and decentralization TA; (iii) providing communes with photomaps as part of the jointly funded national orthophotomapping initiative; and (iv) supporting the establishment of the new national civil registration system for births, deaths, and marriages. The project supported the operations of 1,621 commune councils, newly elected in February 2002.¹³ The project was supported by two TA grants—from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and from the Government of the Netherlands.¹⁴ Appendix 2 presents the summary of the project’s design and monitoring framework.

¹¹ Appendix 3 lists the commune beneficiaries of commune buildings constructed under the project.

¹² Appendix 4 presents the project-supported training activities conducted from 2003 to 2007.

¹³ Only components 2 and 4 fully covered the 1,621 communes and *sangkats*.

¹⁴ ADB. 2002. *Technical Assistance to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project*. Manila (TA 4007-CAM); ADB. 2002. *Technical Assistance to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project*. Manila (TA 4008-CAM).

CHAPTER 2

Design and Implementation

The project supported a bold experiment on the part of the government and ADB

8. The context of the design and implementation of the Commune Council Development Project was special. The socio-political and historical environment was very different in the 1990s from what it is in 2013.¹⁵ Cambodia was just entering its post-conflict recovery phase and society was beginning to recover from the trauma of the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese liberation. Because of the ravages of the civil war, governance systems and procedures at the central level were tenuous, and this was also true at the commune level. It was, therefore, felt that capacities must be developed. There was a high degree of distrust between political parties inside and outside the government. The project supported a bold experiment on the part of the government and ADB to focus on the commune level rather than the central level and lay the groundwork and foundations for democratic development.

A. Rationale

9. ADB's country operational strategy of 2000 supported state reforms including D&D to provincial authorities and commune councils.¹⁶ ADB's country strategy and program update of August 2002 continued the focus on public sector management and support to decentralization.

10. The Government of Cambodia started its decentralization program from the lowest tier of government, the commune. In 2001, it adopted the Law on the Administration and Management of Commune/*Sangkat* (First Organic or Decentralization Law), followed by the Law on the Election of Commune/*Sangkat* Councils. These called for the election of commune councils to serve the general interests of the people in their respective jurisdictions. The first local commune council elections were held in February 2002 for a 5-year term, followed by the second elections in April 2007, and, most recently, in June 2012. ADB supported the D&D reforms by approving the project in 2002 and implementing it from 2003. The project was also the first externally funded reform project aiding the MOI. At that time, the MOI had little experience with decentralization and with running and executing any externally supported project.

A central feature of D&D is the decentralization of government

11. A central feature of D&D is the decentralization of government to the communes. The first project in this area initiated by the government was the Seila Program, approved in 1996. It introduced decentralized systems and strategies for poverty reduction and good governance at the provincial and commune levels. It

¹⁵ At the time of project appraisal up to 2013.

¹⁶ ADB. 2002. *Technical Assistance to Cambodia for Preparing the Decentralization Support Program*. Manila.

started with five provinces in 1996 and expanded to cover all 23 provinces in 2003. The Seila Program also developed mechanisms for coordination among various sectors and donors, hence providing a platform for convergence for development initiatives.¹⁷ It was within this framework that the design of the Commune Council Development Project focused on the commune level to develop their capacities by building physical infrastructure and offices for the communes, accompanied by comprehensive capacity building and training interventions. The project complemented the Seila Program, which was then the largest donor support initiative for decentralization but which was focused on software such as training and new systems and not on physical infrastructure.

B. Formulation

12. The Commune Council Development Project was designed and implemented in response to the specific request of the Government of Cambodia for support as part of its broad-ranging reforms in public administration and finance, legal and judicial areas, the military, and subnational areas, particularly commitments to decentralization (the creation of elected [rather than state-appointed] commune councils) and deconcentration (the delegation of central ministry functions to provincial authorities).¹⁸ The project design incorporated extensive consultations with stakeholders, not only ensuring responsiveness to the realistic demands of nation building but also, administratively, enabling the process of D&D to be able to deliver services efficiently.

The project design incorporated extensive consultations

13. ADB conducted a needs appraisal (footnote 16) where institutional stakeholders—including newly elected councilors; provincial, district, and central government officials; international donors; and nongovernment organizations—were interviewed. The following needs were identified:

- (i) facilities for council meetings and communication and transport equipment, especially for poorer communities;
- (ii) capacity building and training, coaching, and support for councilors, clerks, and local and central government officers to enable them to understand democratic functioning, roles, and responsibilities and to familiarize them with legal systems and procedures in government;
- (iii) deepened popular awareness and appreciation of local democracy and the role of citizens and elected local government;
- (iv) strengthening of legislative and council procedures, given the new Law on Commune Administration; and
- (v) capacity building of newly elected officials as front liners in the whole system of civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages.¹⁹

14. With those needs, three components were identified, with the MOI playing a key role as the implementing agency: (i) commune and provincial facilities, (ii) capacity

¹⁷ Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board, Council for the Development of Cambodia, http://www.cdc-crdp.gov.kh/cdc/practices_chapter8.htm. Accessed on 16 November 2013.

¹⁸ ADB. 2002, *Technical Assistance to Cambodia for Preparing the Decentralization Support Program*. Manila. Also, as stated in the report and recommendation of the President on Commune Council Development Project, the project will help develop a new tier of democratic local government throughout Cambodia. The commune governs local affairs of its territory based on the Constitution, law, royal decree, subdecree, proclamations, and relevant norms and standards. The full list of functions is being developed over time through the promulgated legal framework. Among the functions assigned are planning and implementation of small-scale rural infrastructure (Seila Program), civil registration, and voter registration. Administrative services and local conflict resolution are also part of the commune councils' functions.

¹⁹ As cited in the report and recommendation of the President on Commune Council Development Project.

building, and (iii) civil registration. A fourth photomapping component was eventually added upon special request of the government.²⁰

C. Cost, Financing, and Executing Arrangements

15. **Costs and financing.** The report and recommendation of the President estimates total project cost, including taxes and duties and interest during project life, at about \$17.97 million. ADB provided a loan of SDR7.577 million (\$10.0 million equivalent) from its special fund resources, accounting for 56% of the total cost. The project was supported by grant financing from Sida, which provided a total of \$3.57 million (an increase from initial funding of \$3.00 million following the project midterm review in November 2004), and the Government of the Netherlands (\$2.4 million) through the respective TA projects.²¹ The loan had a repayment period of 32 years, including a grace period of 8 years, with an interest rate of 1.0% per annum during the grace period and 1.5% per annum thereafter. The actual project cost of \$15.79 million was lower than the appraisal estimate by \$2.18 million. The component 1 (facilities) budget was increased by reallocating savings from component 3 (digital photomaps) because of the favorable exchange rate gain of the special drawing right to the dollar.²²

16. **Project scheduling and implementation.** The loan agreement was signed on 7 February 2003, and it became effective on 13 March 2003. The PCR noted that, despite an initial delay in project implementation, the loan closing date was extended by only 4 months to allow for (i) delivery of training activities under component 2 (capacity building), which progressed slower than expected; (ii) production of additional digital photomaps and commune boundary demarcations; and (iii) completion of the additional batch of commune offices.

17. The loan's executing agency was the MOI. A project technical cell (PTC) was established to help implement the project. It was staffed by Department of Local Administration (DOLA) officials and consultants. The director general of MOI's Department of General Administration was the project director, and the director of DOLA was the project manager. Five members of the PTC were assigned from the existing staff at DOLA. The PTC reported to the MOI and to ADB and liaised with the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). After the project's midterm review, a deputy project coordinator was appointed from the PTC.

18. The first component (commune and provincial facilities) was implemented by commune councils with support from the DOLA and the PTC in the DOLA. The second component (capacity building) was implemented by the DOLA Capacity Building Office, with support from the PTC, through specialist providers of local training, and mass media agencies, with international TA support.²³ The third component (photomapping)

²⁰ As explained in the report and recommendation of the President, all the proposed activities were fully consistent with the decentralization support needs presented by government at the sixth consultative group meeting for Cambodia held in Phnom Penh in June 2002. All activities were thoroughly discussed with the government and were also consistent with the approach and resourcing plans of other donors.

²¹ ADB. 2002. *Technical Assistance to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project*. Manila (TA 4007-CAM); and ADB. 2002. *Technical Assistance to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project*. Manila (TA 4008-CAM) are only financial arrangements supporting the following loan: ADB. 2002. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors on a Proposed Loan and Technical Assistance Grants to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project*. Manila (Loan 1953-CAM).

²² The exchange rate variation between the special drawing right and the dollar meant higher dollar proceeds, thus allowing cancellation of SDR692,416 from the ADB loan.

²³ Support through Technical Assistance to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Commune Council Development Project (TA 4007 and TA 4008). Also, the MOI as the executing agency effectively

was implemented by the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction (MOLMUPC), part of the joint donor-financed national aerial orthophotomapping initiative,²⁴ and in liaison with the PTC. The fourth component (civil registration) was implemented by MOI's Office of Civil Registration, with support from the PTC.

D. Design Changes

19. No fundamental design changes were made in the implementation of the project. The four components were implemented according to the original design. As earlier mentioned, the TA supported by a Sida grant was increased from initial funding of \$3.00 million to \$3.57 million, given the anticipated outputs and associated costs. This prompted the midterm review in November 2004 to recommend that the grant be increased by \$0.57 million, which was subsequently approved by Sida.

No fundamental design changes were made in the implementation of the project

E. Outputs

20. The project was able to meet its expected outputs: 519 commune offices were constructed, exceeding the target of 440. The target of 11,200 councilors and clerks receiving training was also exceeded. An awareness campaign on decentralization, local democratic development, and civil registration was completed with 684 drama performances, 320 film shows, 240 loudspeaker announcements, 38,000 shirts provided, and television and radio spots held. Digital photomaps were made available to 550 communes and the entire country. In addition, 89% of the population was properly registered in the civil registry system, surpassing the target by 9 percentage points (Appendix 2).

F. Consultants

21. The consultants were engaged in accordance with ADB's Guidelines on the Use of Consultants. The TA funded by Sida supported components 1–3. All the consultants under component 1 were directly recruited by ADB. The TA funded by the Government of Netherlands supported component 4. Consultant inputs totaled 297 person-months.²⁵ Further, the consultants' performance in terms of achieving the project's purpose and outputs was generally satisfactory. Smooth working relationships were observed between the PTC and the consultants who were deployed to work with the DOLA, Office of Civil Registration, and the MOLMUPC. A PTC rather than a central project management office worked well with the consultants.

coordinated with other development partners such as the United Nations Development Programme (Partnership for Local Governance and Decentralization Support Project), United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Population Fund, and German International Cooperation, and a few nongovernment organizations such as the Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia supporting D&D reform.

²⁴ The Japan International Cooperation Agency also supported the photomapping initiative for other parts of the country not covered by ADB.

²⁵ The decision to increase the number of commune offices from 440 to 519 resulted in extension of the consultants' contracts to ensure completion of construction work. The pool of consultants comprised an international facilities advisor, three national architects, a national engineer, an international geographic information system and digital mapping advisor, an international civil registration advisor, a national accountant, and a national curriculum specialist (directly recruited by ADB). A position for the national gender specialist was created but there was no suitable candidate.

G. Loan Covenants

22. There was full compliance with the project's 18 covenants. However, there was a delay on the submission of annual audited accounts because of the auditor's loaded capacity, while the rest of the covenants were complied with on a timely basis.²⁶ Appendix 5 lists the loan covenants.

H. Policy Framework

23. There were no significant changes in macroeconomic and other policies during the implementation period that could have affected the performance of the project. During project implementation (2003-2007), many small construction businesses grew rapidly because of increased demand for commune projects funded by the then newly established commune/*sangkat* fund (C/SF).²⁷ With many contractors (service providers) competing, local public bids were highly competitive, leading to a lower cost of commune office construction. Together with the savings from favorable exchange rate variation between the special drawing right and the dollar, this allowed for construction of 79 more offices than originally targeted.²⁸

²⁶ This was validated during the independent evaluation mission.

²⁷ The C/SF is a fund transferred from the government to commune councils. The fund includes a general administration component for salaries and allowances and operations, and a local development component for local development expenditures.

²⁸ The original target was to construct 440 commune offices but 519 offices were constructed.

Performance Assessment

24. The overall assessment is based on equally weighted individual assessment criteria: (i) the relevance of the project to the government and ADB development strategies and the relevance of the design to achieve project objectives, (ii) the effectiveness of the project outputs and outcomes, (iii) the efficiency of project implementation, and (iv) the sustainability of the project outputs and outcomes (Table 1).²⁹

A. Overall Assessment

25. Overall, the evaluation rated the project *successful*. It met its general objective of supporting commune councils in Cambodia to effectively manage the democratic development of their communes. It addressed the basic and immediate administrative needs of post-conflict Cambodia that was then embarking on national reconstruction. These needs included basic infrastructure to conduct the business of government at the commune level, a civil registry system of the citizens of the country, geographic maps to enable rational planning, and capacity building imperatives of the front line local officials.

26. Regarding the core evaluation criteria, the evaluation rated the project *highly relevant, effective, efficient, and likely sustainable* (Table 1).³⁰

The project addressed the basic and immediate administrative needs of post-conflict Cambodia

²⁹ The assessment is in accordance with IED's Guidelines for Preparing Performance Evaluation Reports for Public Sector Operations.

³⁰ The Government of Cambodia, through the MOI, agreed with the findings of this evaluation, as per a letter sent to IED on 13 December 2013.

Table 1: Assessment of Project Performance

Criterion	Weight (%)	Assessment	Rating Value	Weighted Rating
Relevance	25	Highly relevant	3	0.75
Effectiveness	25	Effective	2	0.50
Efficiency	25	Efficient	2	0.50
Sustainability	25	Likely sustainable	2	0.50
Impact		Significant		
ADB and Borrower Performance		Satisfactory		
Technical Assistance		Successful		
Overall Rating^a	100	Successful		2.25

ADB = Asian Development Bank.

^a Highly successful = >2.7, Successful = <2.7 to >1.6, Less than successful = <1.6 to >0.8, Unsuccessful = < 0.8.

Note: From 27 March 2013, the Independent Evaluation Department works with equal weight for all four subcriteria.

Source: Independent Evaluation Department.

B. Relevance

27. The project was assessed *highly relevant*, and was consistent with ADB partnership strategies in Cambodia (2000 and 2005–2009). Also, the project was aligned with ADB’s thrust of promoting good, sound, and responsive governance in developing member countries.

28. At the time of project approval in December 2002, ADB’s strategy was based on the country strategy and program update for 2003–2005 approved in August 2002.³¹ The update was anchored on the priority areas of rural economic development, human resources development, and private sector development, and had a focus on the implications of the state reform program, particularly public sector management and support to decentralization. In late November 2009, the government launched the National Strategic Development Plan Update with the primary objective of reducing poverty from 25.0% of the population in 2010 to 19.5% by 2015. The major strategic thrusts included (i) good governance, (ii) agriculture, (iii) physical infrastructure, (iv) private sector development, (v) capacity building and human resources development, and (vi) creation of a conducive environment for the Rectangular Strategy.³²

29. The Commune Council Development Project supported subnational democratic development and local governance in a way that was innovative in Cambodia at the time. Apart from providing physical support to reconstruct facilities for governance, the project also provided symbolic support: the commune offices became symbols of the restoration of government—and sound democratic governance—in the country. The offices symbolized the presence of civil government, where people could obtain basic services including basic civil registry documents such as certificates of residency needed for employment purposes, and registration of births, deaths, and marriages. An unquantifiable benefit of the relevance of the project was the restoration of pride and sense of belonging to a community and to the nation, not only among citizens but also among commune officials.

Commune offices became symbols of the restoration of government—and sound democratic governance

³¹ ADB. 2002. *Country Strategy and Program Update: Cambodia, 2003–2005*. Manila.

³² The Rectangular Strategy has been the government’s supporting tool to implement its political platform. It was developed in 2004 (third government legislature) and was updated at the start of the subsequent fourth and fifth legislatures. It laid out the government’s strategies for growth, employment, equity, and efficiency. Government of Cambodia. 2009. *National Strategic Development Plan Update (2010–2015)*. Phnom Penh.

30. For a country that is developing strategies for physical planning and delineating boundaries between and among the communes and subnational governments, it was critical to have accurate data and information on the physical layout of the land including inland, mountain, and coastal areas. The project addressed this need by producing digital photomaps to cover 550 communes.

31. The civil war in Cambodia during the 1970s–1980s—especially during the ruthless rule of the Khmer Rouge—led to the destruction of basic civil registry documents. The Commune Council Development Project aimed to contribute to restoring and rebuilding such documents in the country by reconstructing the civil registry. The commune councils played a key role as they serve as first points of contact in the registration process; people went to commune offices to register, and there were also cases where commune officials actually mobilized mobile teams to go to the people and register them. The civil registration activities are still done by commune councils.³³ Box 1 summarizes the findings of the survey relating to the project’s alignment with the needs and priorities of the government and the commune citizens.³⁴

32. The imperatives for reforms in governance were part of the thrusts and priorities of various international development partners that extended help and committed resources to post-conflict Cambodia.

Commune councils played a key role as they serve as first points of contact in the registration process

³³ Civil registration is manually done at the commune level. The district and provincial levels keep the records at year end.

³⁴ Appendix 1 provides details of the survey findings.

Box 1: Commune Council Development Project Responding to the Imperatives of Reconstruction and Nation Building

The survey conducted for this project performance evaluation report revealed positive feedback from the present set of commune officials regarding the Commune Council Development Project in terms of its relevance.

- **Component 1: Operating facilities and transportation and communication equipment.** All 260 communes (with three invalid responses) confirmed that the commune building has been facilitating their work, especially for commune council committee meetings, training, and workshops including events organized by the commune's constituent villages and by different sectors and nongovernment organizations or international organizations. With the buildings, commune councils have a structure that is open to receive the public every working day, and occasionally during weekends. Many surveyed communes stated that other equipment such as typewriters, very high frequency (VHF) radios, and, in some cases, motorbikes are no longer in use, yet they emphasized that these were useful many years ago. Modern technology (mobile phones and computers) and the nonavailability of spare parts limit the functionality of this equipment.
- **Component 2: Development of capacities of the commune officials.** All respondents shared that the project-supported training programs such as basic office management skills and basic financial management enabled them to perform their functions effectively and respond to the citizens' needs. All of the total valid responses (246 communes) stated that training helped improve the commune officials' performance and 209 communes (around 90% of the total valid responses) elaborated that, without the training, the work performance of commune officials would have been much lower. On this note, one could make a link that commune councils have not only had an impact at the local level but have also given confidence that deeper decentralization and deconcentration (higher subnational government tier) reform in Cambodia will be successful.
- **Component 3: Photomaps for communes.** The project-printed maps have been beneficial for administrative management, security provision, and, more importantly, for commune development (planning) and resolution of local land conflicts. Therefore, these maps have been useful to the commune council's work and that of other agencies (aerial photomaps are useful for agencies to identify boundaries, natural resources, types of land, and development needs for long-term planning). However, there have been no updated maps produced since the completion of the project, which means they become less useful as time goes by.
- **Component 4: Civil registration.** From a country devastated by a 30-year civil war that destroyed all national and individual archives, the civil registration efforts of the commune councils through the project enabled about 90% of about 14.5 million people to obtain their birth certificates. Further, the civil registration work as claimed by the surveyed communes provided benefits to citizens to gain their legal rights as Cambodians and get access to education and jobs, inherit family assets, marry, and access other services.

All three components (office buildings, capacity development, and civil registration) were and are still of high priority in the decentralization and deconcentration reform process and contribute to the progress of the country.

Source: Project Performance Evaluation Report Survey, Independent Evaluation Department, July 2013.

C. Effectiveness

33. The project was assessed *effective* for having achieved its purpose: commune councils effectively managing the democratic development of their communes. The 2009 country assistance program evaluation for Cambodia noted the special

contribution of the project to D&D.³⁵ It was the only public sector loan project completed in the area of governance. It contributed to the smooth ongoing performance of the communes in terms of the commune/*sangkat* fund (C/SF) project implementation and civil registration. Commune councils have become the leading local governance front in Cambodia in providing first-hand contact and intermediary resolution to their citizens, and as representatives of the people to elect the senate and higher tier subnational councils.

34. The commune offices served as the basic infrastructure where the business of government was conducted and as venues for commune meetings, and facilitated reconciliation meetings between conflicting factions.³⁶ In other words, the commune offices served their purpose for governance.

35. On contribution to policy reforms, the project supported-training programs helped in building the capacities of D&D champions in different ministries at the national level who have been involved in the formulation of D&D-related policies, legal instruments, and guidelines. Also, many people were provided with the opportunity to take up language and master's degree courses as scholars of the project.³⁷ The training provided commune officials with knowledge and skills on local development and governance.

36. In terms of project management, the PTC was considered effective as an approach, specifically in developing ownership of the initiatives of the project within the MOI. After project completion, the DOLA staff who were deployed to the PTC served as the core and champions of the D&D and project initiatives. This core group supported the other downstream decentralization initiatives in the MOI.

37. Only 5% of Cambodia's total population had registered births before the project started, as civil registration records were lost during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975–1979). The project targeted for 80% of the population to be registered. At project completion, about 89% of the population had been given birth certificates.

38. Civil registration is an important service sought at the commune office. Over the years, the number of registered and certified births, marriages, and deaths is increasing; average growth during 2010–2012 was 30%–40% (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of Registered Births, Deaths, and Marriages in Cambodia, 2010–2012

Year	Birth ^a	Marriage ^a	Death ^b
2010	225,574	25,367	10,997
2011	244,716	34,679	13,412
2012	370,345	49,687	19,000

^a Total of registered and certified.

^b Refers to registered only.

The figures do not include civil registration for foreigners.

Source: Office of Civil Registration.

39. There were some areas of slippage as well. For instance, the project aimed to provide some radios and handheld communication equipment. Typewriters were also

Commune offices served as the basic infrastructure where the business of government was conducted

³⁵ ADB. 2009. Country Assistance Program Evaluation: Cambodia—*Growth and Sector Reform*. Manila.

³⁶ This was confirmed by the secretary of state, MOI, in a letter to IED in response to the independent evaluation mission's aide memoire dated 8 May 2013.

³⁷ The project enabled 22 staff members to obtain their master's degree in business administration at local educational institutions.

to be provided to the commune offices. The survey, validated by field visits, showed that various equipment—including radio handsets and typewriters—was not working or had become obsolete because of the advent of cell phones and computers. Box 2 summarizes the findings of the survey.

40. A major concern regarding the photomaps distributed to communes pertains to the need to update them periodically. Because of rapid demographic and geographic changes brought about by urbanization, maps tend to be outdated within 5 years and periodic updating is therefore necessary. The maps have been very useful for basic planning and settling of boundary disputes and conflicts. There have also been cases where maps provided the basis for cooperation between communes. Gaps in terms of maximized usage of maps were also identified. As revealed by officials of the MOLMUPC, maps were given to communes without proper training on map reading. This was also confirmed during the interviews with councilors. Therefore, maps have mostly been used to determine locations rather than long-term land and natural resources planning and/or zoning and management, and/or master plan production.

41. Such slippages can be considered minimal and did not take away from or reduce the overall effectiveness of the project.

Box 2: Commune Council Development Project Contributing to Public Service Delivery

More than 90% of the 263 commune councils under the survey claimed that they have been present at the project-constructed office for 5–10 hours per working day. In addition to having an appropriate work space, all claimed that the office was a safe place to store office documents such as development plans, investment programs, civil registration records, copies of laws and regulations, and other important files.

The project-supported cascade training has been essential in building the capacity of commune councils and their staff in performing their functions in accordance with national guidelines and principles of good governance. This is clear with 258 communes (99.6% of the total valid responses) confirming they have gained knowledge and skills from the training, evidenced by the formulation of local by-laws and regulations on a regular basis (on an annual average commune councils formulate 2–10 *deika* [local policies or decisions]). Commune councils, as the lowest tier of subnational governments, have been utilizing and managing the increasing amount of resources (commune/*sangkat* fund, local contributions, and other project or nongovernment organization support funds at the local level) since their establishment without notable lapses, thanks to the training and support mechanisms put in place since 2002 (largely contributed by the project as there was only a few other projects available at the time).

Two hundred and sixty communes, or 99% of valid responses, stated that they still need assistance from other agencies in performing civil registration work, though none of them mentioned capacity building. This means that all training and mobile teams under the project for civil registration have been useful, and all communes can now undertake the registration work by themselves. However, they still need civil registration books and incentives for staff that have to be reinforced by a sustained public awareness campaign. This is understandable because civil registration is the Ministry of Interior's function, however it was passed on to the commune councils for implementation. Therefore, the ministry, as the function owner, needs to provide constant logistical and capacity support to commune councils.

Similarly for the digital photomaps, the full value was questionable because there has been no related training and updates of the maps since the project's completion. All maps have been used more for administrative management and security purposes and are less appropriate for development and natural resource management.

Source: Project Performance Evaluation Report Survey, Independent Evaluation Department, July 2013.

D. Efficiency

42. The project was assessed *efficient* in the use of resources, notwithstanding the executing agency's lack of experience in managing donor-funded projects. Generally, the project was implemented in a timely manner, despite several implementation problems such as insufficient imprest account ceiling, delays in transferring funds through provincial treasuries during the first phase of the project, and delivery problems due to remoteness of some locations and load of contractors who were awarded with multiple construction sites. Box 3 summarizes the findings of the survey.

43. The field visits revealed that several communes had been able to cut down on costs and save on construction. One commune in Siem Reap constructed a commune building for \$14,400, saving \$770 on the estimated cost of \$15,170. The savings were used for improvements to the buildings such as construction of fences, installation of tiles and blinds, and addition of toilets.

The project was implemented in a timely manner

*Notable
implementation
change occurred
when the
supervision of
the project was
transferred
midterm*

44. Local branches of a private bank, the Association of Cambodia Local Economic Development Agencies Bank,³⁸ were used to transfer the funds for construction of commune buildings. This was because the offices of provincial treasuries were found to delay such transfers when the initial 424 offices were constructed.³⁹ This switch shortened the construction time for the additional 95 offices. This also allowed commune councils to take better control over project implementation.

45. A notable implementation change occurred when the supervision of the project was transferred midterm from ADB headquarters to the Cambodia Resident Mission. This improved implementation, supervision, and monitoring of the project.⁴⁰

46. The overall implementation of component 1 was efficient. The report and recommendation of the President on the second Commune Council Development Project (footnote 6) estimated that the project would spend \$1 for overhead costs for every \$12 of infrastructure financed. This compared well with the Seila Program which had a ratio of \$1.00:\$4.70. The quality of the works was also high because of clear guidelines and relative autonomy of the councils in the procurement process to enable flexibility, coupled with accountability mechanisms being in place through rigorous inspection processes.

47. However, the Commune Council Development Project had the following minor drawbacks:

- (i) Implementation of component 2 was slower because of some administrative difficulties including the long process for approving curricula and materials, a 6-month delay in mobilizing the consultant because of funding shortage and contract extension process, and some changes in policies and the environment within the DOLA and PTC.⁴¹
- (ii) With component 4, administrative difficulties in terms of nonpayment of monthly salaries and daily subsistence allowances negatively affected the motivation of councilors and clerks. Slow disbursement of training allowances and limited accounting skills were obstacles to the efficient implementation of this component.
- (iii) There was lack of a coherent framework to unify the four components and a lack of clear management responsibilities for each component within the PTC. Given the context of a country recovering from civil war, this is understandable and can be attributed to the relative newness of the project.

48. There was difficulty in assessing the project's concrete economic benefits partly because of lack of a clear project benefits monitoring system.

49. Notwithstanding the delays in some components described above, most of the intended outputs were delivered.

³⁸ Formerly a microcredit nongovernment organization, now a commercial bank.

³⁹ During the project's first phase, 424 offices were constructed. The second phase used the Association of Cambodia Local Economic Development Agencies Bank.

⁴⁰ This was articulated during the field visits conducted by the PPER when the team met with Cambodia Resident Mission officials and, equally important, with officials of the MOI, the PTC, and communes.

⁴¹ As cited in the PCR validation report for the Commune Council Development Project, savings from the low bidding prices in component 3 allowed the expansion of outputs (including training on commune boundary demarcation) versus targets, and all were delivered by the end of 2006.

Box 3. Commune Council Development Project's Efficiency in Project Implementation

The survey was not designed to calculate the costs of the Commune Council Development Project compared to market values at that time, but allowed a qualitative assessment of the choice and opinion of commune councils on the support provided. Components 1, 3, and 4 of the project achieved more than the planned outputs, while component 2 achieved its expected outputs. Given that the decentralization and deconcentration reforms were already in the next phase of subnational democratic development, it is likely that the results of the Commune Council Development Project have contributed to these reforms, although it is difficult to quantify by how much.

Of the communes, 175 (or 68.6% of the total valid responses) confirmed that they would have used the funds for office construction if the funds were given to them freely for any commune council use. Another ground for a conclusion that resources were efficiently used was that savings were made from the bidding under almost all Commune Council Development Project components (e.g., constructing 79 more offices, producing additional digital photomaps from aerial photographs covering the coastal hinterland and provinces north of the Tonle Sap basin, and purchasing an additional 135 motorcycles for districts to facilitate the civil registration process).

Source: Project Performance Evaluation Report Survey, Independent Evaluation Department, July 2013.

E. Sustainability

50. The project's outputs and outcomes were assessed *likely sustainable*.

51. The survey, as validated by field visits, showed that 6 years after the project, the results of the Commune Council Development Project are visibly sustained. Commune offices are used by commune officials and visited by the citizens to obtain basic services. Improvements in the commune offices were made using the commune funds and, in some cases, citizens' contributions.

Six years after the project, the results are visibly sustained

52. Many other studies⁴² concluded that commune councils have an important role in the development of infrastructure and the provision of administrative services and local security. Moreover, the citizens had high regard for the councils in their facilitation of solving problems and addressing domestic violence. Less positive, however, was the assessment of the councils in their management of natural resources. This had mainly been handled at the central level. This was despite project-supported capability building initiatives in this area.

53. The MOI continues to build capacity and conduct training programs for commune officials. The capacity building section of the MOI may be upgraded to a full office considering the demands of the time, especially with decentralization occupying a prominent place in the development strategy of Cambodia.

54. The digital photomaps that were initiated during the project, though outdated, were actually built upon and used by the communes not only to demarcate boundaries

⁴² Studies include the 2005 Asia Foundation's national survey on commune council's functions and performance, the 2008 and 2010 Pact Cambodia surveys of citizen and councilor perception on commune councils and its follow-up, and the 2011's National Committee for Democratic Development's 3-year Implementation Plan local governance survey.

with other communes but also to plan across political boundaries.⁴³ The project nurtured the seeds of intercommune (and interlocal) cooperation.

55. The project institutionalized organizational processes in the MOI. The project deployed champions in various offices, thus ensuring the institutional sustainability of the gains of the project. Box 4 summarizes the findings of the survey.

56. In terms of operations and maintenance, it was disclosed during the field interviews that some communes obtained supplementary funds donated by local citizens to augment funds for operations. Although a mark of the appreciation of the local councils by the population, this evaluation notes that such funding is a sign of the lack of availability of regular budget. There is a need for commune councils to include sufficient provision for operations and maintenance of buildings and facilities in their respective budgets. The 3-year Implementation Plan of the 10-year National Program for Democratic Development, which is aimed at putting in place mechanisms and procedures for additional funding sources for the SNAs including commune councils, will allow communes to officially budget their office maintenance cost from the revenues collected from administrative fees, donations, and other own sources.

57. The creation of the National Committee for Democratic Development (NCDD) in 2008 provided the impetus for government and development partners to harmonize D&D reform initiatives. This included ADB-supported projects such as the second Commune Council Development Project, the TA project on developing an institutional framework for decentralization reforms, and the ongoing program on decentralized public service and financial management sector development (paras. 4–5). The NCDD is an interministry mechanism for promoting democratic development through D&D reforms throughout Cambodia. It was established to review functions of ministries and to determine which of these could be assigned to subnational levels. The NCDD has four subcommittees, focusing on (i) functions and resources (led by the MOI); (ii) financial and fiscal affairs (led by the MEF); (iii) subnational administrative personnel (led by the State Secretariat for Civil Service); and (iv) subnational policy, legislation, and guidelines of development plans and investment programs (led by the Ministry of Planning). With the NCDD coordinating and ensuring D&D reforms, this evaluation judges it likely that the gains made by the Commune Council Development Project, its follow-up grant, and other ADB-supported initiatives will continue.

The project had an important demonstrative effect on other ADB D&D initiatives

58. The Commune Council Development Project had an important demonstrative effect on other ADB D&D initiatives. From the lessons during implementation, the project empowered local communities, allowing them to be part of the implementation process, and this is being replicated in recent projects supporting D&D. The design of the project under the Decentralized Public Service and Financial Management Sector Development Program (footnote 8) drew on best practices from the Commune Council Development Project, particularly on its implementation arrangements such as the disbursement of block grants to SNAs through financial institutions (para. 44), project delegation to ADB's resident mission (para. 45), and community participation in project implementation and monitoring. Also, the Commune Council Development Project demonstrated the viability of delegating procurement and contract implementation responsibilities to commune councils, in the process building their project management skills and local ownership of the project.

⁴³ The secretary of state, MOI, stated in his letter to IED dated 8 May 2013: "Today, the subnational administration, including the communes, are still using the maps for many purposes, especially for development planning process while recognizing that the maps have to be updated."

Box 4. Commune Council Development Project's Sustainability Helped in Strengthening Governance Reforms

Among the four evaluation criteria, the assessment of sustainability of the Commune Council Development Project and its contribution to Cambodia's decentralization and deconcentration (D&D) reform is the most important, given that a long time has elapsed since the project was completed. In this respect, the survey looked closely at all four components:

- **Component 1: Cooperating facilities and transport and communication equipment.** When 171 surveyed communes (or 66.3%) stated that they had repaired the buildings, they were referring to improving the building and facilities such as repainting, construction of toilets, landfills, fencing, and floor upgrading. This means that the offices have been maintained. Further, all valid responses from 263 communes (3 were invalid, leaving 260 valid responses) agreed that the buildings have been facilitating their work, and proved that the offices are open on a daily basis, with 90.1% of the valid responses stating that they perform their work in the office for 5–10 hours per day. This indicates sustainability of utilization of the project-constructed commune offices 6–7 years after completion.

All communes with valid responses confirmed that the buildings have been beneficial, with ample space for work. With the commune office as venue for public service delivery, commune councils are able to relate with their citizens, government agencies, nongovernment organizations, and international organizations. This clearly proves that other agencies are using the facilities, and is also seen to assist in the maintenance. Maintenance funds as related by the surveyed communes are augmented by individual contributions from councilors, generous gifts from rich residents and political figures, as well as from the commune/*sangkat* fund.

However, typewriters and very high frequency (VHF) radios are now outdated and almost completely useless. Despite motorbikes being useful in the early years of the project, the cost of use and repairs was often shouldered by the commune chief.

- **Components 2 and 4: Capacity development of commune councils, and civil registration.** Since the two components involved a lot of training and support activities (also mobile team support), the sustainability findings of the survey are presented jointly. Clearly, commune councils are functioning quite well in terms of being the closest government to the people as well as undertaking an agency's (Ministry of Interior) function, in this case civil registration.
- The project-supported capacity development interventions have contributed directly to the sustainability of commune systems in planning, finance, and development project implementation, as well as ongoing civil registration work. All communes in the survey agreed that the training provided helped them perform better, and 90% echoed that, without the training, they would have produced much less. Sustainability of civil registration could, however, only be assessed at the commune council level. There was no sustainability of the computerized systems introduced (under the second Commune Council Development Project) and the related work of the Central Office of Civil Registration. The independent evaluation mission visit to the office proved that the computerized system and the work of the office have been halted because of lack of funding.
- **Component 3: Digital maps.** There was a one-time production and dissemination of digital maps to communes. It is clear that the communes need updated maps and related capacity to maximize the use of these maps.

Source: Project Performance Evaluation Report Survey, Independent Evaluation Department, July 2013.

CHAPTER 4

Other Assessments

59. The goal of the Commune Council Development Project was to contribute to poverty reduction in Cambodia. The expanding role of commune councils in service delivery may well contribute to poverty eradication, but this is difficult to quantify.

A. Impact

60. Over the years, the CS/F allocation has been increasing. The general administration allocation decreased from 35% in 2008 to 26% in 2013, while the local development allocation increased from 65% to 74% during the same period (Table 3). Though a small portion of the fund comes from communes' own sources, which include the shared property tax when ownership transfer is required,⁴⁴ a small fee is collected from civil registration and local contribution. All this makes up less than 3% (especially during 2002–2007).⁴⁵ The development component was 1.5% of domestic revenues and this increased to 2.7% in 2008 and to 2.9% in 2010–2012. With the increasing resources available to the communes for development, commune councils can respond to the priorities of their local constituencies, such as the construction of primary school classrooms and small-scale irrigation systems, and the start of agriculture- and health-related schemes.

The national registration system that the project set up may indeed be one of its outstanding accomplishments

61. The national registration system that the project set up may indeed be one of its outstanding accomplishments, developing a sense of identity and nationhood among Cambodians.

62. There was general consensus among the commune officials that the project had helped develop a sense of pride and belonging—a fundamental feature of nationhood—among commune officials. The presence of a commune office, with Khmer design and architecture, helped nurture the work ethic of commune officials. When citizens go to the commune office to obtain basic services and to register (whether a birth, death, or marriage⁴⁶), their sense of identity and belonging to a broader community is also nurtured.

⁴⁴ There is almost no property ownership, especially in rural areas.

⁴⁵ The CS/F at present is funded by the government. In the past (during 2002–2007, the project implementation period), the United Nations Development Programme, Sida, the Department of International Development of the United Kingdom, and the World Bank contributed almost 20% of the total allocation. From 2010 onwards, the government has been fully in charge. A small number of communes are receiving some extra support from other donors' programs and nongovernment organizations locally. This is, however, difficult to capture at the national level.

⁴⁶ IED had the opportunity to talk to and interview some local people. One couple beamed with pride as they excitedly shared how happy they were to be able to formally register their union in the commune. The sense of belonging of this couple to the commune cannot be quantified.

Table 3. Commune/Sangkat Fund Allocation, 2002-2013
(KR million)

Item	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total Allocation	30,688	51,420	58,000	66,100	77,814	89,550
Government	25,015	43,620	50,000	58,000	69,614	87,500
External Support	5,673	7,800	8,000	8,100	8,200	2,050
Reserved Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administration Allocation	13,847	19,388	19,333	20,712	24,645	32,514
% of total	45	38	33	31	32	36
Salaries	9,366	14,050	14,050	14,050	14,050	25,347
Nonsalaries	4,481	5,338	5,283	6,662	10,595	7,167
Development Allocation	16,841	32,032	38,667	45,388	53,169	57,036
% of total	55	62	67	69	68	64

Item	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Allocation	93,025	113,340	148,649	159,400	181,990	204,268
Government	91,000	106,890	142,424	159,400	181,990	204,268
External Support	2,025	6,150	6,225	0	0	0
Reserved Fund	0	300	0	0	0	0
Administrative Allocation	32,836	34,324	38,649	52,602	52,737	54,107
% of total	35	30	26	33	29	26
Salaries	27,026	27,127	27,127	40,301	40,436	40,436
Nonsalaries	5,810	7,197	11,522	12,301	12,301	13,671
Development Allocation	60,189	79,016	110,000	106,798	129,253	150,161
% of total	65	70	74	67	71	74

External support may refer to projects such as Partnership for Local Governance by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency Sida, the Department of International Development of the United Kingdom, and Project to Support Democratic Development through Decentralization and Deconcentration by UNDP.

Source: Ministry of Interior.

63. **Institutional development.** The Commune Council Development Project has contributed towards institutions becoming more responsive, effective, and efficient. The project's impact can be considered *significant*, although more from a governance and administration point of view than an economic one.

64. Fundamental institutions have been fostered, and champions have been created in the MOI for decentralization. This has indeed laid the groundwork for further development of decentralization strategies in the bureaucracy.

65. **Environmental and gender impact.** There were no adverse environmental impacts from any project activities. Capacity building on gender-related issues

Fundamental institutions have been fostered, and champions have been created for decentralization

(education and health issues, domestic violence, and child rights and protection) was delivered, usually with joint funding from bilateral partners.⁴⁷

66. All communes in the survey confirmed that the gender situation had improved, while 98% stated that women's participation in economic activities had improved. Survey responses confirmed that women now have more rights in family relations, are more engaged in business, have joined the workforce, or are simply better able to undertake social and work activities. Similarly, 98% of respondents confirmed that more local women participate in politics and more women had become candidates for political parties.

67. The surveyed communes expressed that the project had contributed to curtailing pupil dropouts and domestic violence, and improving motherly support at health centers and civil registration efforts. They also claimed that, through the project, women's awareness of gender issues and their needs situation had increased, which led to their increased participation in society and local leadership.

B. Related Technical Assistance

68. The technical assistance activities were rated *successful*.

69. The Sida grant (footnote 14) provided a total of \$3.57 million. It provided TA inputs for (i) constructing commune offices; (ii) training commune councilors and clerks, capacity development for DOLA's staff including master's degree in business administration for staff from a local university; (iii) legal support concerning D&D (review of legal documents and training materials with legal implications); (iv) media campaigns with 684 drama performances, film shows, and loudspeaker announcements with different messages on D&D which were delivered by a local nongovernment organization (Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia) to about 2 million people in rural areas; (v) producing digital photomaps for 550 communes in the targeted areas; and (vi) producing additional digital photomaps to cover most of Cambodia, and piloting demarcations of commune boundaries.⁴⁸

70. The grant from the Government of the Netherlands (footnote 14) provided \$2.4 million to support component 4 (civil registration). It supported (i) revision of existing procedures to simplify the civil registration process; (ii) training of personnel involved in civil registration, including commune councilors, to operate the new national system; (iii) pilot testing of civil registration prior to the launch of nationwide activities; (iv) provision of mobile civil registration teams to access remote locations; and (v) development of a public awareness and mobilization campaign. The procedures for civil registration were well understood and operational across the vast majority of communes. The coordination of the Office of Civil Registration with the provinces and districts has been strengthened. The information from the provinces has been received by the Office of Civil Registration on a monthly basis, starting in the first quarter 2005.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ This was reported in the PCR and confirmed by the project officer during the independent evaluation mission and is revealed by the survey.

⁴⁸ These are additional to the original scope of the project as TA support to components 1 (operating facilities and office buildings), 3 (production and dissemination of photomaps), and the whole of component 2 (capacity building and awareness campaign on decentralization).

⁴⁹ As cited in the technical assistance completion reports, Appendixes 10 and 11 of the PCR of Commune Council Development Project.

71. Both TA projects were essential for the Commune Council Development Project to deliver all planned outputs and achieve the expected outcome. All project components, supported by the TA projects, were identified priorities of the National Committee for Support to the Communes/Sangkat (NCSC) for D&D reform, and the level of MOI ownership of the project is high.

72. However, there were minor issues related to delayed payments which contributed to some delays in implementation, hiring consultants, and purchases of VHF radios and typewriters (that became obsolete).

Both TA projects were essential for the Commune Council Development

C. Performance of the Borrower and Executing Agency

73. The performance of the borrower and executing agency was rated *satisfactory*. There were initial problems on PTC's understanding of ADB rules and procedures as the Commune Council Development Project is the first ADB-financed project executed by the DOLA. But the staff were able to learn and apply these procedures during the project implementation. Overall, the executing agency developed the capacity to manage future donor-funded projects.

74. Although there was no actual government financing of the project, the government contributed staff time, office space, and land for the commune offices.

D. Performance of the Asian Development Bank

75. ADB officers responded rapidly to executing agency requests and inquiries. A project administration delegation to the Cambodia Resident Mission in January 2005 also facilitated timely and face-to-face contacts between ADB and the executing agency, thus leading to more effective project management. One shortcoming was the lack of emphasis on benefits monitoring and evaluation, both in the report and recommendation of the President and during implementation. ADB performance was rated *satisfactory*, mainly because of the effective supervision by the two project officers over the 5-year project duration.

CHAPTER 5

Issues, Lessons, and Follow-Up Actions

76. A number of issues and lessons were drawn from the Commune Council Development Project experience. Follow-up actions are suggested to further improve the governance reforms in the country, to which the project has earlier contributed.

A. Issues and Lessons

A successful development approach to improving governance

77. The design and implementation of the Commune Council Development Project should be seen as an example of a successful development approach to improving governance. The project's approach has highlighted aspects of the following reform framework (see figure):



- (i) **Institutions, processes, and procedures.** The Commune Council Development Project focused on building institutions (literally and figuratively) and processes. This was manifested in the construction of commune office buildings and accompanied by developing basic processes and procedures in these offices. More than building infrastructure, institution building means strengthening organizational structures and processes, crafting new laws, and updating old laws to

be more relevant to the needs of the time. Among the core areas of support was institution building—support to the development of a clear policy framework for D&D; capacity building interventions to strengthen the organization and processes of the communes; institution building for massive population registration and the reconstruction of civil registration of the population; and clarifying boundary demarcation among communes to enable focused planning, including planning across political boundaries. All these were part of the nature of institution building that was central to the project.⁵⁰

- (ii) **Reforming mindsets.** The project’s capacity development strategies through the training programs implemented by the MOI clearly targeted reforming the mindsets and behavior of the commune officials. This was validated by the PPER survey where commune officials proudly stated that many of them are in the commune offices for 8 hours a day to be able to render service to people, which is in marked contrast to pre-project days.
- (iii) **Leadership and political will.** The project recognized the key role of the commune chiefs and officials. Their role as change agents in the commune was not only accepted but tapped as well. For instance, attention was given to the key role of commune leaders in the conduct of civil registration. The leadership provided by the MOI was also important, through the secretary of state who was with the project from the beginning as a senior staff member of the MOI, rising through the ranks to eventually be its head. He was considered the champion of the project. Because of the training programs and interventions carried out under the Commune Council Development Project, project champions and leaders have been developed throughout the bureaucracy at the national and commune levels.
- (iv) **Citizens’ engagement.** People participation and civic engagement is a fundamental ingredient of good governance. The project emphasized the key role of people’s involvement in the entire local development project. People should own the project and, more importantly, its accomplishments and innovations. This is the ultimate test of sustainability and success.

The project recognized the key role of the commune chiefs and officials

78. The following are lessons from the Commune Council Development Project experience in Cambodia:

- (i) **Country context is important in project design and implementation.** The Commune Council Development Project has

⁵⁰ Tariq Niazi (ADB. 2011. *Deconcentration and Decentralization Reforms in Cambodia: Recommendations for International Framework*. Manila) identifies 10 areas to be addressed in the broader D&D reforms that are critical for its success: (i) development of a clear framework for policy reforms; (ii) improved effectiveness of the public administration and civil service management system; (iii) better coordination of government and development partner efforts, especially through the NCDD; (iv) addressing of gaps and inconsistencies in the legal and regulatory framework; (v) clarification of assignment of functions between tiers of government; (vi) formulation of assignment of tax and nontax revenues; (vii) design of a system of intergovernmental financing, particularly conditional and nonconditional grants; (viii) design of public financial management systems at subnational levels; (ix) development of stronger governance and audit and supervision systems; and (x) development of both central government and subnational administration capacities to implement reforms.

shown that a successful program has to recognize the social, political, administrative, and historical context of the country. In this case, Cambodia was just beginning its post-conflict stage, challenged by various problems such as lack of basic physical resources at the commune level and absence of administrative capacities of elected council officials. The design and implementation of the project took into consideration these local contexts.⁵¹

- (ii) **Consultation and dialogue with stakeholders is important where partnerships are expected to deepen the process of decentralization and democratization.** The project was among the first ADB-funded projects that supported the construction of commune offices. ADB did not normally fund such activities but in this case supported it based on consultation with the concerned officials. A similar observation can be made for ADB's support for civil registration. A variety of partnerships have been initiated under the project: (a) between and among the national government offices (MOI-DOLA and MOLMUPC) with the PTC playing a key role; (b) between the national government (specifically the MOI) and the subnational levels, such as the provinces, districts, and communes, with the national government providing the D&D framework and the communes operationalizing and localizing these, taking into consideration the specific context of the commune; (c) emerging partnerships between the government and nongovernment organizations and civil society organizations, specifically in information and public awareness, including the civil registration with the use of mobile teams by the MOI; and (d) between the government and development partners.
- (iii) **Decentralization is a continuing process that can provide the enabling framework of the democracy.** The project experience has shown that decentralization can usefully begin with developing basic capacities (human and physical). Capacity development is, however, a continuous process.
- (iv) **Tapping the experience of other organizations and the private sector maximizes the process of citizen engagement.** Teachers, community-based volunteers, monks, and even hospitals were tapped to influence more people to register. Also, the use of a private bank for disbursement for the construction of council offices proved efficient.

B. Follow-Up Actions

79. ADB, through its ongoing program supporting decentralization, may suggest that the government considers the following in its D&D efforts, building upon the hard-earned gains of the Commune Council Development Project:

⁵¹ Chan and Chheang emphasized the need to recognize context in the implementation of decentralization. They argued that decentralization and local governance are difficult to achieve in societies characterized by high power distance, a strong patron–client relationship, a male-dominated environment, and low public trust in the political system. R. Chan and V. Chheang. 2008. Cultural Challenges to Decentralization Processes in Cambodia. *The Ritsumeikan Journal of Asia Pacific Studies*, Volume 24, pp. 1–16.

- (i) **ADB could propose to strengthen and institutionalize the capacity building office of the Department of Local Administration in the Ministry of Interior.** The project contributed to the development of capacities of major stakeholders of the D&D process at the local and national levels. Capacity building initiatives at the commune level have doubled under the coordination of the NCDD at the subnational level. The TA on decentralization reforms and the ongoing program on decentralized public service and financial management sector development program involved capacity building efforts in support of decentralization reforms. In proceeding to subnational democratic development reforms, the MOI's capacity building office could be upgraded to a full capacity building institution (e.g., a local government academy or institute) with the responsibility of designing a comprehensive capacity building program for governments of Cambodia within the context of decentralization. The service delivery strategy could usefully link service providers (e.g., local academic institutions and schools) with the DOLA, providing strategic directions for the implementation of such programs.
- (ii) **ADB could further support the institutionalization of the respective roles of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy and Finance in implementing decentralization.** Some progress must be noted already: (a) the roles of the MOI and MEF have been initially defined within the context of the NCDD, with the MOI as chair and the MEF as deputy chair; (b) the MEF is the chair of the NCDD Committee on Resource; and (c) the MEF is a lead implementing agency for the subprogram on resources for subnational administrations of the Ten-Year National Program for Democratic Development (2009-2019) and its First Three Year Implementation Plan (2011-2013) that has been extended to 2014. The ongoing program (footnote 8) and the government's First Three Year Implementation Plan clarified the roles and responsibilities of both ministries in D&D reform. It is expected that the program will help to further improve the relationship between the MOI and MEF and push for the MEF to become more supportive of D&D reform. As the MEF's primary responsibility is to ensure macroeconomic stability, it may inadvertently lead to further centralization of state resources. The project earlier piloted the roles of the MOI and MEF within the context of decentralization, and internal capacities in both ministries have grown. Hence, it is important to institutionalize the roles of both ministries in public sector reform through decentralization.
- (iii) **ADB could help the government in preparing a sustainability and maintenance plan for the gains of the Commune Council Development Project and a follow-up grant.** Initial gains under the project were solidified by the second project and the TA earlier discussed (footnote 7). The decentralized delivery program (footnote 8) is supporting policy development in decentralization of fiscal and functional assignments and capacity development, and in constructing selected district offices drawing from the lessons of the project. With this ongoing program supporting decentralization, ADB can recommend

to the government that it (the government) builds upon the gains by devising and implementing a sustainability plan and strategy, as was foreseen when the second Commune Council Development Project was designed. A sustainability plan should be aligned with the government's National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development and First Three-Year Implementation Plan. A key component could be to identify concrete areas for partnerships between the MOI and nongovernment organizations and community service organizations. These could include conducting public awareness forums and organizing and participating in radio and TV spots and programs. Another component would be the capacity building institute (based at the MOI) already mentioned.

- (iv) **ADB could help the government to bring the decentralization and deconcentration process to the next logical phase.** The process of decentralization towards democratization must be sustained and driven by the Government of Cambodia with support from development partners.⁵² New public sector activities, currently administered by the central government but more meaningfully managed at the local level, need to be identified, with expenditure and revenue reassignments. Among those activities that could be involved are certain services in agriculture, education, health, land, and public works. These should address issues encountered in decentralization, including national–local relations, intergovernment financial transfers and grants to communes, and capacity building interventions including support for the creation of an office or academy attached to the MOI.⁵³ The project's design and implementation could best be appreciated when placed within the broader context of it being not only a strategy to enhance participation at the lowest levels of government as possible through decentralization, but also as a major component of the country's overall post-conflict recovery, reconstruction, and development strategy.

⁵² This was articulated by government officials (at the commune, local, and national levels) interviewed and participating in focus group discussions.

⁵³ These have been broadly outlined in the government's National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development.

Appendixes

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNE COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SURVEY REPORT

A. Summary

1. During late April to the end of May 2013, a survey was conducted in selected provinces in Cambodia with the objective of assessing the contribution of commune councils to public service delivery through the Commune Council Development Project. The survey findings will substantiate the overall performance evaluation of the project and will provide information to improve future activities of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the context of public sector management, particularly decentralization.
2. The Commune Council Development Project had four components: (i) operating facilities and commune office buildings, (ii) capacity building, (iii) digital photomapping, and (iv) civil registration. It was approved in 2002 and was implemented from 2003 to 2007 under the overall management of the National Committee for Support to the Communes/*Sangkat* (NCSC), with the Ministry of Interior (MOI) as the project's executing agency. The NCSC was an interministerial committee formed to coordinate the formulation of a decentralization and deconcentration (D&D) regulatory framework and support for the reforms at the commune level during its first mandate (2002-2007). This support enabled the newly elected commune councils to perform their duties under a new management system and structure. The NCSC was chaired by the deputy prime minister and minister of interior, and ended its mandate 9 months before the second elections of commune councils in April 2007.
3. There were many positive D&D reform achievements in Cambodia through a few D&D support projects, which included the Commune Council Development Project. The MOI became the lead ministry in coordinating and overseeing the government's 10-year National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development hence it increasingly undertook the management of projects supported by development partners and took the lead role in defining policies and strategies related to D&D reform.
4. At the local level, and as revealed by the survey, the Commune Council Development Project is assessed *highly relevant* to progress of Cambodia's D&D reform, especially project-supported commune buildings, capacity development, and civil registration. It is clear that these three components are among the priorities for D&D reform.
5. The commune buildings provided the commune officials with a working space in which to work 5–10 hours a day and a safe place to store documents. However, the survey found limited use of other operational facilities and equipment, specifically the very high frequency (VHF) radios under component 1 and typewriters under component 4. Similarly, the digital photomaps were never updated and no related training was provided.
6. Through capacity development supported by the project, commune councils are now able to perform their duties and responsibilities, such as the administration of the commune/*sangkat* fund (C/SF) for the implementation of local projects. They are performing well in terms of civil registration and voter registration (another function of the MOI). Commune councils become the representatives of the central government to provide first-hand contact and play an intermediary role with citizens, and are the representatives of the people in interacting with other tiers of government.
7. The Commune Council Development Project produced more outputs than expected for almost all four components. This was possible because of lower cost of construction materials and a better exchange rate, and from savings as a result of publicly competitive bidding.
8. From this survey, it is clear that capacity development provided under components 2 and 4 contributed directly to the sustainability of commune systems in terms of planning, finance, and development project implementation, as well as the ongoing civil registration efforts still being delegated by the MOI to the commune councils. On civil registration, however, sustainability could only be assessed on the efforts at commune council level.
9. On the contrary, VHF radios and typewriters were no longer being used, while the computerized civil registration system is far from being materialized. Sustainability of the use of digital maps was also found not promising since it is clear that all communes need updated maps and related capacity to maximize the use of these

maps for planning and managing their localities.

B. Introduction

10. The ADB Independent Evaluation Department (IED) conducted a project performance evaluation report (PPER) for the Commune Council Development Project, which was approved in 2002 and was implemented during 2003–2007. A survey was undertaken between the fourth week of April and the end of May 2013 to assess whether communes, through the project, have contributed to public service delivery in Cambodia. The survey findings will substantiate the overall performance evaluation of the project in the context of the four evaluation pillars (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability) and will provide information to improve ADB's future activities in the context of public sector management, particularly decentralization.

11. More specifically, the survey assesses
- (i) the relevance of the project and its contribution to D&D reforms in Cambodia;
 - (ii) the contribution of the project to the development of stronger local governance;
 - (iii) the institutional development and capacity building of commune councils during the first mandate (improved governance practices though improved capacity to articulate and advocate community interest, and skills transfer);
 - (iv) the quality of the physical infrastructure built and equipment provided, and their usefulness; and
 - (v) sustainability in terms of operations and maintenance of project-achieved outputs.

C. Methodology

12. Among the four components, only components 2 (capacity building) and 4 (civil registration) were implemented across the country (without specific geographical targets), whereas components 1 (facilities and commune office buildings) and 3 (digital photomapping) were designed and provided to meet certain criteria of the communes.¹

13. The survey was conducted as follows:
- (i) **Develop survey questionnaires.** The national governance specialist prepared survey questionnaires and sought input from the international consultant and team leader before finalizing and translating them into Khmer language.
 - (ii) **Recruit enumerators.** The project was implemented in 20 provinces, with one enumerator for each province and so 20 enumerators were engaged for the survey.
 - (iii) **Select communes covered by the survey.** Since component 1 was the project's biggest component in terms of financial contribution (about 50% of the total budget) and was implemented in 20 (rural) provinces in which 519 new commune offices were constructed, a total of 263 communes (or 50.67%) were covered by the survey (see table on number of communes by province). These 263 communes were randomly selected from the list of component 1 beneficiary communes in each of the target provinces. The final number of surveyed communes by province was also decided based on commitment of enumerators to fully undertake the survey. The commune council chief and/or commune chief and clerk were the key informants for this survey.
 - (iv) **Orientation and testing.** After the questionnaires were approved by the IED project officer and translated by the national governance specialist into Khmer, an enumerators' orientation was conducted, followed by a simulation exercise or pre-test.
 - (v) **Roll out the survey.** The survey was managed by the national governance specialist and was carried out by 20 enumerators from 22 April to the end of May 2013.
 - (vi) **Data encoding and report writing.** The national governance specialist, with the assistance of the 20 enumerators, retrieved all completed survey questionnaires. An information technology specialist was engaged to tabulate the survey results during June 2013. The report writing was done in July.

¹ Key criteria for the beneficiaries of the commune buildings were communes (i) in rural areas, (ii) with clear land ownership and available land, (iii) that were poor, and (iv) with high commitment shown by commune councils.

Number of Communes Covered by the Survey, by Province

No.	Name of Province	Offices Constructed under Project	No. of Communes Covered by the Survey	Name of Enumerator
1	Banteay Meanchey	22	14	Rath Vanna (F)
2	Battambang	35	17	Bouy Sokly (M)
3	Kampong Cham	60	24	Hy Seangly (M)
4	Kampong Chhnang	24	12	Va Vong (M)
5	Kampong Speu	31	14	Chen Sameth (M)
6	Kampong Thom	29	9	Ly Veth (M)
7	Kampot	34	15	Sun Kak San (M)
8	Kandal	51	22	Try Bungheng (M)
9	Koh Kong	9	5	Heng Chanthan (M)
10	Kratie	17	14	Lang Mang (M)
11	Monduliri	6	3	In Kam (M)
12	Odor Meanchey	7	4	Nhea Chanthavy (F)
13	Preah Vihear	14	7	Sum Set (M)
14	Prey Veng	41	18	Hin Sreylak (F)
15	Pursat	17	12	Set Heap (M)
16	Ratanakiri	13	5	Phea Sopheak (M)
17	Siem Reap	35	18	Hin Hach (F)
18	Stoeung Treng	10	10	Phan Vuth (M)
19	Svay Rieng	27	23	Prum Sorphorn (M)
20	Takeo	37	17	Meas Uy (M)
Total	20	519	263	20

F = female; M = male, No. = number.

Source: Project performance evaluation report national governance specialist.

D. Limitations

14. As with many other surveys, time and budget were limitations. The survey sought ideas and perceptions of the communes and/or local governments on the project, being the direct and core project beneficiaries. It covered about 50% of the total communes (519) with project buildings. Because of enumerator capacity constraints, the number of surveyed communes per province was not proportionately equal. Because several of the questions were open ended, the findings of the survey were supplemented by qualitative assessment. As the survey was carried out 7 years after the completion of the project, key individuals in some communes were no longer available; hence, some data were unavailable.

E. Survey Findings

15. The survey questionnaires were structured according to five key areas: the four components of the project, and the commune councils' understanding of the principles of local governance and gender. Key findings about project contribution and attributions are given in the following section.

F. Commune Council Development Project Contribution

1. Facilities: Improving and Strengthening Operating Facilities and Communication and Transport Equipment in Selected Rural Communes and Provincial Departments

a. Commune Office Buildings

16. Under the project 519 commune offices were constructed (79 more than the project's original expected output of 440) in 20 provinces.² Out of the 263 communes surveyed, 244 (or 95.3% of valid responses) expressed that the size of the building is appropriate or suitable while only 12 communes (4.7%) mentioned that the building is too small. Further, 171 communes (66.3%) stated that they did some repairs and renovation of the buildings through repainting, constructing toilets, landfilling, fencing, and floor upgrading.

17. Though only 12 communes expressed that the buildings are too small, 37 of the 260 valid answers informed about the need for expansion of working space in the commune offices. This represents only 14% of the total valid responses. Favorably, 252 communes (97.3% of valid responses) liked the design of the commune buildings and expressed that the same design helped the public to easily recognize the local government's work place, provided a good working environment as well as area for storage of documents, and was of good quality. All 260 communes agreed that the building (i) afforded them a working space for commune council and committee meetings; (ii) gave them enough space to hold around 70 people in meetings, training, and events organized by different sectors, nongovernment and international organizations, and constituent villages; and (iii) was a good venue for public relations activities. The place also provided convenience to people seeking support and resolution from their commune council.

18. While 26 communes did not give an answer, 237 communes (90.1% of the total 263 surveyed) stated that they work at the building 5–10 hours per day; of these, 178 stated that they work 8 hours per day on average. The majority of the commune councils are open from 7 a.m. to 11.00 or 11:30 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on working days (Monday-Friday), with some exceptions such as when needed to come on call during nonworking hours and on weekends.

19. All 261 communes (100% of valid responses) believed that their commune people also liked the commune office, while 258 communes (also 100% of valid responses) confirmed that people come more regularly to meet them at the commune office to seek resolution of domestic and family conflicts and for civil registration. They also mentioned that people liked to come to the office because it has adequate facilities, provides a good environment, and is clean and close to their residence. In addition, people, as quoted by the surveyed commune councils, have come to see the council for land certification and legal advice as well as to discuss matters pertaining to local development, and for other public services.

20. In conclusion, 260 communes (100% of valid responses) confirmed that the building has been very beneficial and provides ample space for work and for commune councils' dealings with their citizens, government agencies, as well as nongovernment and international organizations. Nevertheless, 151 communes (58.3% of the total valid responses) stated that the building needed some repair, whereas 108 (41.7%) mentioned that their buildings are still in good condition. Again, all expressed that the repairs are small renovations such as making a room bigger, repainting, and adding additional parking space for motorbikes and bicycles. Previous expenses for the repairs and expansion of the commune buildings refer to use of remaining budget from the main building construction costs, while for most of the communes, past and present maintenance funds have come from individual contributions from the councilors, from rich residents and political figures, as well as from the C/SF.³

21. When asked what would have been their outputs and/or achievements if there had been no building, 231 (90.2% of the total valid responses) stated that they would have produced much lower results, whereas 16 communes (6.2%) responded that their work could have been better without the building. Nine communes (3.5%) were indifferent.

² ADB. 1998. *Project Completion Report: Commune Council Development Project*. Manila (Loan 1953-CAM).

³ All 519 communes have a clear idea of how to operate and maintain resources, e.g., through donations from individuals and allocation from the commune administrative budget. The C/SF is an intergovernment fund transferred to communes to reduce funding imbalances among them. The fund has two components: the general administration component (not more than one-third of the total), and the development component (not less than two-thirds of the total). The C/SF's share is about 2.85% of the current domestic revenues of the country.

22. Positively, 175 communes (68.6% of the total valid responses) confirmed that, even if the funds were given to them to decide how they should be used, they would still have constructed an office, while 80 communes (31.4%) were not sure whether they would have used it for the same purpose.

b. Very High Frequency Radios

23. According to the project completion report (PCR), 19 radio base stations and 811 VHF radio handsets were procured under the project for provincial offices of local administration and communes.

24. All 263 communes under the survey responded. One hundred and fifty two (57.8%) received a VHF radio. Surprisingly, the number of communes that received a desk-type radio base (118) far exceeded the number provided by the project (only 19). It is possible that there were many other projects and/or agencies that provided the communes with these radios. One disappointing finding is that only three communes claimed that the radios are still in use at the time of this survey.

25. Positively, 135 communes stated that the radios were beneficial as communication means since there had been no better alternative at the time. Nowadays, mobile telephone networks have replaced radios. Besides, many communes under the survey added that an improved road network also helped them connect with their peers and others.

c. Typewriters

26. Under component 4 (civil registration), 1,806 typewriters were provided. Among the 263 communes surveyed, 255 (97%) confirmed that they had received one. As with the VHF radios, only 28 communes (11% of valid responses) told the survey team that their typewriters are still working, and only 13 of the 28 claimed that they are still using them at the time of the survey.

27. When asked for the reasons for not using them, 72% explained that there was no repair possible to the machine when it broke down, while some others claimed that computers are now available and superseded the typewriters. Despite this, 155 communes (62.5% of the total valid responses) recognized the usefulness of the typewriters in the early years of the project.

d. Motorbikes

28. There were 349 motorbikes purchased under component 1 (operating facilities) for the communes, and 135 more under component 4 for the districts.⁴

29. Only 65 communes (25.2% of the total valid responses) confirmed that they had received one. Of these, 47 are still working and 43 are still in daily use during the time of the survey. Despite this, over 70% of the surveyed communes stated that motorbikes have been very useful for them in undertaking field trips to the villages, circulating letters, and attending various meetings at different venues. Many commune staff have used their own motorbikes for work purposes.

2. Capacity Building

30. The project's capacity building component aimed to develop both individual and institutional capacities at commune, district, provincial, and national levels through the cascade mode of training from national and provincial level to provincial and district level and down to elected commune councilors, clerks, and their focal points. This survey only captures results at the commune level.

31. From the 263 communes under the survey, the importance of training received was prioritized as follows:

- (i) D&D orientation or commune decentralized administrative management,
- (ii) commune development planning,
- (iii) commune financial system,
- (iv) civil registration,
- (v) land acquisition for commune's project implementation,
- (vi) administrative affairs,
- (vii) good governance,

⁴ District officials are not covered by the survey.

- (viii) land law,
- (ix) commune project implementation manual, and
- (x) voter registration.

32. From the list of training, those on the financial system, administrative affairs, good governance, and planning process were rated as having high contribution to work performance.

33. When asked whether the provided training improved their work performance, 246 communes (100% of the total valid responses) confirmed that it had (17 communes did not respond to this question). Further, 209 (89.7% of the total valid responses) stated that without the training they would have produced much less, whereas nine thought they would have produced more without the training, and 15 were indifferent.

34. Two hundred and fifty eight communes (99.6% of the total valid responses) revealed that, through the training, knowledge and skills were gained, as evident by the local by-laws and regulations formulated. Examples of local laws and/or regulations formulated by the commune councils are creation of different committees on project management, project procurement and bidding, planning and budgeting, project maintenance, and women and children's affairs; crackdown on illegal fishing and community forest protection; health support; and disaster management.

3. Digital Photomapping: Providing Communes with Photomaps as Part of the Joint Funded National Orthophotomapping Initiative

35. It should be noted that the Commune Council Development Project was one among the few projects managed by the NCSC. The NCSC (now succeeded by the National Committee for Democratic Development [NCDD]), oversees the demarcation and/or redemarcation of commune boundaries as one of its mandates.

36. For this task, the NCSC created a subcommittee, the NCSC Subcommittee on Urbanization and Commune Boundaries, led by the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MOLMUPC). In this regard, component 3 of the project played a critical role in providing the communes with maps through the NCSC.

37. Among the 263 communes surveyed, one response was not valid while 237 (90.5% of the total valid responses) did receive a commune map, but not necessarily from the NCSC under the project. This was also confirmed by the MOLMUPC, which coordinated and distributed a variety of local maps supported by different development partners.

38. As indicated by the surveyed communes, two types of commune maps were distributed: an administrative boundary map, and a land and natural resource management map. Both the communes and the project's national partners confirmed the usefulness of these maps for administrative management, security provision, and, more importantly, commune development and in resolution of local land conflicts. However, all told the survey team that no updated maps have been produced since the completion of the project.

39. Another concern echoed by the MOLMUPC was that maximum benefit was not gained from these maps as there was no related training for the users and commune councils. In this regard, updated maps and related training on map utilization are highly recommended by the survey informants.

4. Civil Registration

40. Because of 30 years of civil war and internal conflicts, the people of Cambodia lost most, if not all, records including birth and marriage certificates. At the start of the Commune Council Development Project, the government revealed that only 5% of Cambodia's total population registered their births, most likely those born after 1980. Therefore, the project aimed to support about 95% of the communes to make an effective start on the civil registration work.⁵

41. Apart from developing training curricula and conducting echo training on civil registration down to the commune level, the project also supported awareness campaigns through mass media and mobile teams to work with the commune councils during the first few months. In this respect, all 263 communes under the survey responded that they were able to hear and see the awareness and advertisement programs on the importance of

⁵ The project target on civil registration was to support 95% of commune councils to register 80% of the population.

civil registration via TV, radio, banner, or leaflets, with 261 of 262 valid responses saying that they gained benefits from this mass media campaign.

42. Remarkably, all 263 communes under the survey responded that their civil registration work has improved as they became aware of it through mobile team campaign and advertisements. While 260 of the 263 claimed that they have been undertaking this work since, only 38 (15% of all valid responses) are aware of their civil registration data being entered into the computer system at the MOI.

43. Further, 260 communes (99% of valid responses) insisted that they still require support from other agencies to undertake this work. There are several agencies that provided support to the communes, including the districts (117 communes), the province (107 communes), the MOI (105 communes), nongovernment organizations (52 communes), and others (8 communes). The support listed by the communes is mostly not related to capacity of commune personnel and only covered civil registration books, staff incentives, and awareness raising campaigns. The communes suggest that awareness raising programs could be conducted at the village level, in schools and health centers, as well as through the internet.

44. On direct project support, the surveyed communes articulated that the awareness raising campaigns and mobile teams helped them to undertake their task appropriately and in a timely manner. Essentially, they claimed that the exercise was beneficial and crucial for the citizens to gain their legal rights as Cambodians and get access to education and jobs, inherit family assets, and benefit from other civil registration services which are claimed by the communes to having made a great contribution to the overall progress of the country.

G. Commune Council Development Project Attribution to Local Governance and Gender

45. The survey tried to get the commune councils' understanding of local governance and gender and development principles and the application of these to their work. The surveyed communes selected different modes on how they learned about these issues. They ranked training and workshops as the best means to learn about these principles (246), followed by guidelines from higher government tiers (166); nongovernment and international organizations (134); mass media such as TV, radio, and leaflets (125); and other means (39).

46. On the communes' understanding of gender and development, 261 communes (100% of the total valid responses) agreed that it had improved, while 253 (97.7% of the 259 valid responses) articulated that the participation of women in economic activities had improved. When asked to list some examples of women's economic activities, the communes explained that women now have more rights in family relations. Also, more women joined the work force, were engaged in business, worked with the communes and private and government institutions, or were simply able to undertake social and work activities.

47. Similarly, 251 communes (97.7% of the 257 total valid responses) confirmed that more local women participated in politics. When asked about the types of political activities, communes referred to women's participation in the political arena—in leadership at the provincial, district, commune, and village levels, and in different organizations. Further, the communes agreed that more women become candidates for political parties.

48. On the communes' discretionary decision to partly allocate C/SF funds to the commune committee for women and children's affairs, 239 surveyed communes (91.9% of the 260 valid responses) claimed that they have been doing this. When asked what kinds of services required the use of the committees' commune-allocated budget, the surveyed communes prioritized activities supporting vulnerable women and children and in raising the status of women in society.

49. The surveyed communes expressed their opinion that services and work that are primarily related to curtailing school dropouts and domestic violence, providing motherly support in health centers, and conducting civil registration improved through the project's contribution. They also claimed that women's knowledge on gender and development increased, which motivated them to participate in society and local leadership.

H. Conclusion

50. Looking back at its history, Cambodia 30-year civil war only ended in 1999 when the last faction of democratic Kampuchea (known as the Khmer Rouge) joined the government. Under the peaceful situation, Cambodia made substantial progress in terms of economic development during 2000–2010, especially during 2005–2008 when there was double-digit economic growth. Indisputably, a number of reforms have contributed to this progress. One of these is governance, notably the D&D reform, which aims to promote local democracy, local

development, and local service delivery. It started in 2002 at the commune level with the direct elections of commune councils and has progressed to district and provincial levels since 2009.

51. Along with this positive change, the achievements and experiences of the commune councils encouraged the Government of Cambodia to expand the reform program. Thus, shortly after the reforms at the commune level were initiated, the government began to formulate a policy framework for advancing the democratic development reforms in all tiers of the administration. The government recognized that D&D reform positively changed the behavior of the commune councils and their constituents for the development of their own localities. Also, through D&D reform, elected commune councils remain the key pillar of the Cambodian administrative structure, and find themselves close to the people. They are, thus, aware of and able to respond directly to the needs and priorities of their constituents in a timely and effective manner. This positive behavioral change is the core of local development.⁶

52. All the positive achievements, especially under the pillar of D&D reforms, have been made possible with the contribution of a few D&D support projects, including the Commune Council Development Project,⁷ which injected resources through the NCSC and MOI. At the national level, the MOI has become the lead ministry in coordinating and overseeing the government's 10-year democratic development program. Under this mandate, the NCDD and MOI have been managing more projects supported by development partners and taking the lead role in defining policies and strategies related to D&D reform.

53. At the local level and as revealed by the survey, the project is found to be highly relevant to the progress of Cambodia's D&D reform and to the present time, especially with regard to support for communes' office buildings, capacity development, and civil registration. It is clear that these three components were and are still a high priority in the D&D reform process and contribute to the progress of the country.⁸ By having the project executed under the leadership of the NCSC (MOI), the project contributed at the national and local levels.

54. In terms of effectiveness, with commune officials present at the constructed office for 5–10 hours each working day, and having an appropriate work space and a safe place to store documents, the project-supported commune offices facilitated the carrying out of commune functions. The 512 buildings constructed under the project exceeded the target (79 more than planned), are used for many activities (such as public meetings and training organized by nongovernment and international organizations and sector ministries), and remain in good condition 6–7 years after being built. For the other equipment provided under the project, specifically the VHF radios under component 1 and typewriters under component 4, the survey found limited use by the commune councils. Similarly, the digital photomaps were never updated and no related training was provided. In this regard, the effectiveness of this component is not clearly revealed.

55. On capacity development (component 2 and partly 4), the project is also effective since there has been smooth ongoing performance of the communes in terms of the C/SF project implementation and civil registration. Commune councils are the representatives of the central government and provide first-hand contact with and intermediary resolution to their citizens, and have become representatives of the people in interacting with other tiers of government; this is a result of the training and support activities provided under the project.

56. Though the project's economic internal rate of return could not be calculated from this survey, it is evident that the choices in supporting the four components were appropriate, hence meeting the right opportunity cost criterion. In terms of budget, the project produced more outputs than expected for three components.

⁶ It is widely understood that commune councils have an important role to play in addressing poverty and vulnerability. In the past 10 years (2002–2012), commune councils have implemented projects (many for local infrastructure) to promote local economies and have enabled committees for women's and children's affairs with functions and budgets to look after vulnerable groups such as orphans, widows with many children, and the elderly.

⁷ Other projects are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Decentralization Support Project, with its focus on policy and legal framework development; and the Partnership for Local Governance funded by UNDP, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, with its focus on supporting local planning and financing systems at commune and provincial levels through an ad hoc interministerial committee called the Seila Task Force.

⁸ Despite sustained economic growth, it is difficult for the Government of Cambodia to directly deliver local development and the required range of public services across the country at the national level. Therefore, D&D reform has been implemented to change the approaches in delivering local development and public services to the people.

57. All four components of the Commune Council Development Project achieved their purpose. Buildings have been well maintained and are in full use. Capacity building programs were put in place to enable the commune councils to plan for commune development, execute the C/SF projects, provide administrative services and local security, and mediate in local problems such as domestic violence.

58. Most of the project components are likely sustainable, however modern equipment and technology have rendered the VHF radios and typewriters obsolete, while the computerized civil registration system is far from being materialized. From the survey, the civil registration work is operational and will continue at the commune level, but the effort to create a central office and computerized system by the MOI (under the second Commune Council Development Project) is not evidently clear. Sustainability of utilization of digital maps is also not promising since it is clear that all communes need updated maps and there is no related capacity to maximize map use for planning and managing localities.

59. In brief, the survey finds the Commune Council Development Project highly relevant to the progress of D&D reform, considerably effective, efficient, and with evidence of sustainability.

APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Description	Performance Indicators/Targets	Achievements
<p>Goal Enhanced poverty reduction through more participatory, transparent, and accountable governance at commune/<i>sangkat</i>^a level throughout Cambodia</p>	<p>By 2007, the majority of poor people say they have greater voice, information, and influence with commune <i>or sangkat</i> councils than under the old system.</p>	<p>Compared with appointed commune chiefs before the commune council elections in 2002, the commune councilors and their roles are now different. A survey by the Asia Foundation^b revealed that citizens are generally satisfied with the performance of commune councilors after the elections for the first commune councils in 2002 and that they are generally well aware of the function of the commune councils.</p>
<p>Purpose Commune councils effectively manage the democratic development of their communes</p>	<p>By 2006, commune councils effectively promote the interests of their constituencies by effectively lobbying the government for services and resources.</p> <p>Annual local development plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of all commune citizens, and especially the poor, prepared and implemented effectively</p> <p>Civil registration services and updating of voter lists provided effectively by commune councils</p> <p>The majority of the population understands the essentials of democratic local government.</p>	<p>The Commune Council Development Project has contributed to improved capacity for commune councils to articulate and advocate their communities' interests. However, their performance has been limited by resource constraints, insufficient knowledge to ask for accountability from service providers (such as for health and education), and unclear roles and responsibilities in services delivery (which are to be clarified in the organic law to devolve service responsibility).</p> <p>Annual local development plans have been prepared. However, implementation depends upon the availability of resources, which are insufficient.</p> <p>Commune councils are feeding regular information to the district, province, and Ministry of Interior on a monthly basis. Linking civil registration data to voter registration has not yet taken place, however, because of a significant lack of data. About 89% of the total population has been issued birth certificates. Preserving civil registration information (now available only in hard copy) and updating the data through computerization is being supported under the second Commune Council Development Project, which started in early 2007. The updated data would also provide a significant link to updating voter lists and demographic information for development planning.</p> <p>The Asia Foundation survey shows that citizens are generally satisfied with the performance of commune councilors after the elections for the first commune councils in 2002 and that they are generally well aware of the function of the commune councils.</p>
<p>Components/Outputs 1. Commune and Provincial Facilities Commune councils and</p>	<p>At least 440 commune council premises</p>	<p>The project supported the construction of 519 commune offices. In 18 provinces 811 communes and</p>

Description	Performance Indicators/Targets	Achievements
supporting provincial line departments have the working facilities and communications necessary to function effectively.	<p>established by Dec 2005</p> <p>At least 1,000 councils have radio and/or cellular telephone communication with provincial centers by Dec 2003</p> <p>All provincial offices for local administration^c fully established, equipped, and operational by Jan 2004</p>	<p>135 districts each received a radio handset, and 325 communes and 24 PLAUs each received a motorbike.</p> <p>The PLAUs have been established and well integrated into the <i>Salakhets</i> (Governor's Office). Computers and equipment were provided to all PLAUs, whose capacities have been developed to an extent that they are able to plan, execute, and monitor training programs. Some training activities have been delegated to PLAUs.</p>
<p>2. Capacity Building An appropriate legal framework for decentralization is in place.</p> <p>NCSC coordinating efforts to support appropriate decentralization of service delivery in major service ministries</p> <p>Councilors, clerks, and district and provincial officials have been trained in their respective roles, functions, and operating procedures.</p> <p>Nationwide mass media public awareness campaign conducted</p>	<p>Decrees and regulations specified in the NCSC action plan approved and promulgated by Dec 2005</p> <p>Up to four service ministries reviewing or piloting service decentralization options by Dec 2005</p> <p>At least 11,200 commune councilors and clerks have received selective refresher training by Dec 2005. Provinces and their districts have received training on support and supervision to commune councils by Dec 2005.</p> <p>At least 11,200 commune councilors and clerks have received selective refresher training by Dec 2005.</p> <p>Provinces and their districts have received training on support and supervision to commune councils by Dec 2005.</p> <p>Awareness campaign completed by Dec 2005</p>	<p>Legal support provided as needed. Overall support on legal aspects has been overshadowed by the recent development on decentralization and deconcentration. There has been no shortage of donors ready to provide needed support for legal development.</p> <p>Assessment completed by consultant in Feb 2004 concluded that the plan was overly ambitious.</p> <p>More than 11,200 councilors and clerks received training and refresher training supported by the project. Although priority is given to training of commune councilors and clerks, concerned provincial officials (at PLAUs) have also received adequate training, and they have sufficient skills to support communes. Districts have not been given a prominent role so far, although this will change soon. The draft organic law is expected to give more responsibilities to districts.</p> <p>The study by the Asia Foundation revealed that citizens are generally satisfied with the performance of the commune councilors.</p> <p>The project supported the delivery of a total of 684 drama performances, 320 film shows, 240 loudspeaker broadcasts, 38,000 T-shirts, TV and radio spots, and radio call-in shows for delivering messages on decentralization, local democratic development, and civil registration.</p>

Description	Performance Indicators/Targets	Achievements
<p>3. Commune Photomapping Commune councils have up-to-date orthophotomaps to enable their role in implementing the Land Law.</p>	<p>Aerial photography (1:40,000) for 35% of Cambodia completed by Dec 2004.</p> <p>Aerial photographs scanned, rectified, and digital orthophotos produced by Sep 2005</p> <p>Photomaps provided to 550 communes by Dec 2005</p>	<p>Delivered</p> <p>Delivered</p> <p>Digital photomaps are available for 550 communes and for the entire country.</p>
<p>4. Civil Registration The national civil registration system for births, deaths, and marriages is fully operational.</p>	<p>Quarterly statistical reports received by Ministry of Interior from all provinces on a regular basis by July 2005</p> <p>By Dec 2005, 95% of communes implementing civil registration effectively</p> <p>The unregistered backlog is 80% cleared by Dec 2005</p>	<p>Information from the provinces is sent to the Office of Civil Registration of the Ministry of Interior on a regular basis.</p> <p>All communes have implemented mobile civil registration.</p> <p>As of Nov 2006, about 89% of the total population had been given birth certificates.</p>

NCSC = National Committee for Support to Commune/Sangkat Councils, PLAU = provincial local administration unit.

^a *Sangkat* is an urban equivalent of what is the commune in rural areas.

^b Henke, Roger, and Kim Ninh. 2005. *Commune Council in Cambodia: A National Survey on Their Functions and Performance, with a Special Focus on Conflict Resolution*. Phnom Penh: The Asia Foundation.

^c Provincial offices for local administration were renamed PLAUs.

Source: Project Completion Report.

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PROVINCES WITH COMMUNE BUILDINGS

	Province	Number of Communes
1	Kampong Chhnang	24
2	Kam Pot	34
3	Kandal	51
4	Koh Kong	9
5	Odor Meanchey	7
6	Prey Veng	41
7	Rattanakiri	13
8	Svay Rieng	27
9	Takeo	37
10	Siem Reap	35
11	Kampong Speu	31
12	Pursat	17
13	Kampong Cham	60
14	Kratie	17
15	Mondulkiri	6
16	Banteay Meanchey	22
17	Kampong Thom	29
18	Preah Vihear	14
19	Battambang	35
20	Stung Treng	10
	Total	519

Source: Project Completion Report.

APPENDIX 4: LIST OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Year	Training	No. of Participants				Total	Remarks
		National Level ^a	Provincial Level ^a	Commune/ Sangkat Level			
				Councilors and Clerks	Others		
2003	Commune/Sangkat 3-year Rolling Investment Program	117	1,097	10,539	6,971	18,724	Funded by ADB and PLG/Seila
2004	Commune/Sangkat Fund Project Implementation	120	1,102	10,699	583	12,504	Funded by ADB and PLG/Seila
	Facilitation Skills	981	1,059	0	0	2,040	
	Monitoring and Evaluation	100	900	3,100	2,174	6,274	
	Civil Registration	127	1,219	6,438	4,648	12,432	Funded by ADB
2005	Highland People	86	110	14	46	256	Funded by ADB and PLG/Seila
	Commune/Sangkat Fund Project Implementation	112	987	7,887	436	9,422	Funded by ADB and PLG/Seila
	Civil Registration	30	703	4,804	496	6,037	Funded by ADB
	Commune/Sangkat Administration	111	776	6,211	153	7,251	Funded by ADB and PLG/Seila
	Commune/ Sangkat Good Government	112	903	9,827	73	10,915	
	Provincial Local Administration Units structure	120	227	1,508	0	1,855	
2006	Domestic Violence						Funded by ADB, PLG, and GIZ
	Commune/Sangkat Activity in Health Issue	95					Funded by ADB and UNFPA
	Commune/Sangkat Activity in Education Issue	95					Funded by ADB and UNICEF
	New Clerk Training			145		145	Funded by ADB
	Targeted Training in certain areas (e.g., Pusat, Battambang, Kandal, Kampong Speu, Siem Reap)						Funded by ADB
	Commune Councils Congress						

ADB = Asian Development Bank, DOLA = Department of Local Administration, GIZ = German International Cooperation, PLG = Partnership for Local Governance, UNFPA = United National Population Fund, UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund.

^a Training of Trainers.

Note: Training for DOLA staff separate from above includes capacity building overview, public administration management, project management, comparison of decentralization and deconcentration in Southeast Asia, public administration reform in developing countries, and the purpose of government. English and computer training were also provided. About 24 staff members obtained master's degrees in business administration.

Source: Project Completion Report.

APPENDIX 5: COMPLIANCE WITH LOAN COVENANTS

Covenants	Timeframe for Compliance	Progress and Remarks
1. Borrower to make available on time to MOI/DOLA all loan and other resources to implement the project and operate and maintain project facilities.	Throughout	Proper funding access arrangements were in place and operational.
2. Borrower to make arrangements, acceptable to ADB, for insurance of equipment financed by loan.	Immediate-upon acquisition	Complied with.
3. DOLA to maintain proper records and accounts to identify project expenditures financed from loan proceeds.	Throughout	Pro forma record sheets have been produced for these purposes. Record keeping by the PTC was satisfactory.
4. DOLA to furnish ADB with certified copies of annual audited accounts and financial statements and auditors' reports.	Annually, by 30 September	In compliance, often with slight delay.
5. DOLA to supply ADB with quarterly reports on project implementation in a form acceptable to ADB.	Within 10 days of the end of each quarter	Complied with.
6. DOLA to supply ADB with a Final Report on the execution and implementation of the project.	Within 3 months of the physical completion of the project	Done.
7. DOLA to establish a Project Technical Cell.	Before loan becomes effective	Done.
8. Borrower to establish an imprest account at National Bank of Cambodia	Upon loan effectiveness	Loan a/c was established in early May 2003.
9. DOLA to supply ADB with local procedures for competitive bidding for procurement for civil works contracts.	31 May 2003	Complied with mid-May 2003.
10. DOLA will ensure that commune councils register in the land registration office the land on which commune facilities are built.	Before commencing survey and construction activities	Acknowledged and applied.
11. DOLA will prepare a capacity building analysis and training plan that priorities training and public awareness resources.	15 August 2003	Analysis completed on schedule. Training plans approved by DOLA/MOI (slow pace in the implementation of training plan).
12. DOLA will supply ADB with procedures and criteria used in selecting communes, POLAs, and provincial treasuries that will receive facilities support.	31 May 2003	Complied with, mid-May 2003.
13. The borrower will ensure that the project is carried out in accordance with all applicable environmental laws.	Throughout	Complied with.
14. DOLA will ensure that all project activities are consistent with ADB's policy on indigenous peoples.	Throughout	Complied with.
15. The borrower will ensure that no resettlement of people, either with or without legal title to the land, is required as a result of building or rehabilitating commune facilities.	Throughout	Complied with.
16. MOI, MOLMUPC, provinces, districts and commune/ <i>sangkat</i> councils shall undertake to meet recurrent costs, from	Throughout	Complied with.

Covenants	Timeframe for Compliance	Progress and Remarks
their own resources, for all equipment and vehicles supplied under the Project.		
17. The Borrower shall ensure that the civil works contracts include mandatory provisions on health, sanitation and appropriate working	Throughout	Constructions of commune offices caused no health risk.
18. The Borrower shall ensure that the civil works contractors comply with all applicable labor laws, including elimination of gender differentiated wages and food rations, and do not employ child labor in construction activities.	Throughout	Complied with.

ADB = Asian Development Bank; DOLA = Department of Local Administration; MOI = Ministry of Interior; MOLMUPC = Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction; POLA = Provincial Office of Local Administration; PTC = project technical cell.

Source: Project Completion Report.