

DFGG LEARNING PROGRAM CONCEPT NOTE

Workshops on Transparency and Access to Information Version 2.0

Implementing agency: DFGG Project Coordination Office and NCDD/OWSO.
Date: January 2011

Introduction

Transparency and access to information are two key contributors to Demand for Good Governance (DFGG) and Social Accountability (SA). The RGC has the following objectives with its commitment to transparency and access to information¹:

1. Reduce corruption, cronyism and inefficiencies in the public administration.
2. Reduce mistrust, rumor, and ignorance regarding public issues, particularly in the rural areas, where access to public information is often limited to 'word of mouth'.
3. Avoid tension and potential conflict caused by inadequate or inaccurate information.
4. Build a stable, functioning democracy and a vibrant, informed, and tolerant citizenry.

It is the ambition of the RCG to mainstream the achievements of various departments throughout all level of the RGC in achieving a high level of transparency and open government in Cambodia. Transitioning from hierarchical control to an administration aiming for maximum disclosure will need a continuous and concerted effort over a long period of time with efforts on both the demand and supply sides² to remove constraints and establish a new open way of working. In government, the first phase of change is often informational -- recognizing that the current isolation of departments can be a threat to long term effectiveness and efficiency of government. On the other hand citizens and representatives of Civil Society need to feel confident that they have the right to ask for information.

It is proposed that the Transparency and Access to Information theme of the DFGG Learning Program be addressed at both the national and sub-national levels and be organized/led by PCO and NCDDDS respectively. This has already been agreed with the World Bank. This Concept Note sets out each of these learning events in turn.

Part A: National level workshop on Transparency and Access to Information

Expected outcomes and outputs

The DFGG Learning Program will support workshops and the national and provincial levels to create awareness that transparency and access to information are crucial for long term development effectiveness, support efficiency in service delivery and underpin stability and peace in Cambodia. The expected *outcome* of the proposed workshops is to lay the seeds for a shift in prevailing norms, for senior officials to better understand the benefits of and mechanisms for transparency and access to information in public service providing ministries/in the Ministry of Interior. The process will also open a dialogue with civil society about the best next steps to take to enhance transparency and access to information about local service delivery that will contribute to the process of enhancing social accountability at the local level. The theme has synergies with the Component 2 grants and the work of the NCDDDS to improve the capacity of local councilors.

¹ MoNASRI, Policy Proposal on Access to Information, 2007

² The stages of behavioral change are defined as resistance, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance.

The primary *Outputs* of the workshop(s) will be participants (high level officials) that understand the concept³ of transparency and access to information and have some familiarity with the mechanisms and tools that can be adopted to improve transparency and access to information in their administrative mandate.

After the workshop, the participants will be willing to publicly⁴ support transparency and access to information. They will have to ability to explain in their own words why transparency and access to information is important and what the priorities are to achieve this goal.

Scope

The contents of the workshop will be very similar to the content developed for the district level workshops by NCDOS/OWSO. The national workshop will however focus more on the strategic importance of both Transparency and Access to Information to improve the awareness of senior officials and civil society that these are priorities that need continuous attention. The following range of topics are envisaged and the exact division/integration between transparency and access to information will be worked in more detail in the detailed proposal.

DAY 1: Transparency

1. Definition of Transparency
 - Relationship between Transparency and Accountability
 - Strategic importance of Transparency for economic growth, poverty reduction, stability, peace and democratization;
2. International best practice in transparency
3. Transparency in the context of SNDD in Cambodia (the NP-SNDD, the Organic Law, Rectangular Strategy, etc.)
4. Mechanisms for Transparency and Integrity in Cambodia. Transparency and Integrity in the implementation of assigned/delegated functions, at different levels of Sub-National Administration and in different fields (financial management; human resources, natural resources etc.)
5. Monitoring transparency, further improving transparency

DAY 2: Access to Information:

1. Definition of Access to Information
 - Strategic importance of Access to Information for effectiveness and efficiency for organizations in general.
 - The difference between information and access to information
 - How access to information supports Social Accountability
2. The role of Access to Information in SNDD. The importance of access to information in decentralization reform and for good governance.
3. Information Management. Cost and benefits of maintaining flows of information, transaction costs. Legal aspects of information collection and dissemination.
4. Supply of and demand for Information and the concept of 'citizen's right to information'.
5. Mechanisms of Information dissemination, disclosure and accessibility. Flow of information from (local) government to citizens and from citizens to (local) governments. Tools for Information dissemination, disclosure and accessibility.

³ This might draw on the principles established by the UN special rapporteur ... UN reference.

1. Drafting national legislation for maximum disclosure of information and establishing procedures through which the public can access information rapidly, fairly and affordably.
2. Making public institutions responsible for publishing and disseminating all documents of significant public interest and people's right to access to information.
3. Making all meeting of government institutions public in principle and defining clearly under which (SENTENCE NOT COMPLETE)

⁴ Not only will participants have to express their views in front of a mixed audience of civil servants and civil society representatives, in addition to this, the participants will be interviewed on video about their views and their statements will be made available on the internet.

6. Monitoring Access to Information and further improvements of Access to Information.

Target Audience

The participants in the Transparency and Access to Information Workshop (s) will be:

1. Senior level officials from the most important public service providing ministries including: information, education, health, women's affairs, economy-finance, public works, agriculture-forestry-fisheries, environment, labor-vocational training, interior, and rural development (total of 45 participants)
2. Senior representative of civil society organizations working on access to information or in the sectors from which the senior civil servants are drawn. (15 participants)

The total number of participants will be limited to 30 per workshop to allow discussions involving every member of the group. The workshop will be repeated with clusters of 2 or 3 ministries. The first event will be organized for the service delivery Ministries (health, education and water), the second event for the Ministry of Rural Development and Interior. A total of 60 officials/managers will undertake this learning program.

The invited officials will be of director level or higher and they will be in charge of operations that are dealing with public information that is currently not being shared. This selection process will need careful and intense engagement with the departments concerned. This engagement will be part of the outputs of the learning event.

Resources

The same resource person and supporting three facilitators will be used for the PCO part and the NCDD/OWSO part of this theme. (see Part B below). The experience of delivering the course in 4 municipalities will be used to increase the effect of the national workshop.

Duration and Location

The two training events will be organized at the end of the series of 4 workshops by NCDD/OWSO. The exact date will be determined in consultation with NCDD/OWSO but will be conducted no later than end March 2012.

The workshop will take 2 times 2 days in Phnom-Penh at a venue to be decided.

Part B: Sub-national level workshops on Transparency and Access to Information (NCDD/OWSO)

Part B of this concept note concerns the piloting of training workshops in Transparency and Access to Information at the sub-national level, specifically in 4 municipalities in Cambodia (that currently participate in the OWSO initiative).

Objectives and outcomes

The objective of the workshops on Transparency and Access to Information will be to provide participants with an understanding and know-how about the concepts and the mechanisms and tools relevant to enhance transparency and access to information in sub-national administrations (municipality/districts and commune/sangkats). After the workshops, the participants will be able to engage in transparent practices in their respective roles and improve the overall performance of their administrations.

Moreover, at the last day of the workshop, the participants will (i) prepare an action/implementation plan specifying how the officials intend to increase transparency in their own work and (ii) design leaflets and brochures to raise citizens' awareness about the importance of transparency. The use of these materials in the context of the plans is seen as an extension of the workshop, and it is therefore proposed that the cost of the actual printing of these materials is also covered under the workshop

budget. As a result, the workshop is also expected to contribute to the enhancement of good governance with active participation from citizens, civil society and other stakeholders in order to increase transparency in local development and service delivery.

The knowledge of each participant will be evaluated before and after the workshop course through a pre-test and post-test. In order to avoid that the participants “learn and forget”, NCDDDS will encourage the participants and monitor to implement their action plans, through self-evaluation, direct interviews with trained participants by outsider and citizen rating cards (that is part of the improved M&E system of the OWSO/DO project). Special attention will be paid to the question whether or not citizen notice an improvement in transparency (as part of OWSO/DO’s Lessons Learnt exercise).

1. Scope and content of learning

The content of these workshops include the following:

DAY 1: Transparency

- a. Definition of Transparency
- b. Relationship between Transparency and Accountability and their importance for different stakeholders in the context of democratization and poverty reduction;
- c. Transparency in the context of SNDD in Cambodia (the Organic Law, Rectangular Strategy, etc.)
- d. Mechanisms of Transparency and Integrity in Cambodia. Transparency and Integrity in the implementation of assigned/delegated functions, at different levels of Sub-National Administration and in different fields (financial management; human resources, natural resources etc.)
- e. Monitoring transparency

DAY 2: Information

- a. Definition of Information, and its importance for effectiveness and efficiency for organizations in general.
- b. The role of information in SNDD. The importance of information in producing the advantages of decentralized compared to centralized governments and for good governance.
- c. Information Management. Cost and benefits of maintaining flows of information, transaction costs. Legal aspects of information collection and dissemination.
- d. Supply of and demand for Information and the concept of ‘citizen’s right to information’.
- e. Mechanisms of Information dissemination, disclosure and accessibility. Flow of information from (local) government to citizens and from citizens to (local) governments. Tools for Information dissemination, disclosure and accessibility.
- f. Information centers at the OWSOs.
- g. Monitoring Access to Information: Citizen rating cards on the Transparency and Access to Information.

DAY 3: Action plan and materials

1. Reflection on Day 1 and Day 2.
2. Production of action plans for officials with assistance from NGO or business representative.
3. Design of information materials on Transparency and Information Dissemination.

2. Target group

The workshops will be conducted in four municipalities. In total 112 participants will be invited to the learning event. In each municipality 28 participants will be selected in line with the following criteria:

| Organization | Number of participants per municipality/district |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Municipal/District Councilors, | 3 |
| Board of Governors | 3 |
| M/D Administrative Officers | 3 |
| OWSO/staff and officers | 3 |
| DO staff and officer | 2 |
| Women and Children Committee representatives; | 1 |
| NGO representatives in Municipalities/Districts (the members of the committee that select and supervise the DO); | 5 |
| Business persons in Municipalities/Districts (including the members of the committee that select and supervise the DO); | 5* |
| Relevant government officers at provincial level | 3 |
| Total (from sub-national level) | 28 |

Note: * in case not enough business men or women are able to attend this three days training session, the number of Civil Society representatives will be increased.

3. Method/Approach to delivery

The participants will receive classroom workshops in the above-mentioned themes, through a combination of brainstorming, group discussions, role-plays and lectures. At the end, each participant will prepare his/her personal implementation plan and together they will design brochures and leaflets to raise citizens' awareness about transparency.

NCDDS will appoint a resource person to prepare the detailed proposal, including a specification of the curriculum, the workshop contents, and pre-test the materials. The training will then be implemented by three facilitators. The resources persons will get involved with the expert at the time of the pre-testing. After the workshop in 4 municipalities, the materials and curriculum may be revised for further implementation with different funding.

As a follow-up to the workshop NCDDS/DST will encourage the participants to implement the personal action plans and its monitoring will be done in cooperation between NCDDS and PCO to ensure that the knowledge acquired will be used in practice.

4. Duration and location of training

The workshop for each of the target M/Ds will be organized for 3-days. Day 1 and 2 will be aimed at active acquisition of knowledge while Day 3 aims at the production of personal action/implementation plans and design of IEC materials that the trainees can use in their work. The first workshop will take place in Kampot, with participants from Kratie, Pursat, Preah Sihanouk and Prey Veng provinces.

If evaluated as successful, and should more funds become available, the workshops will be rolled out to additional municipalities and districts.