Voluntary Subnational Review Cambodia

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THE CAMBODIAN VOLUNTARY SUB-NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT 2023

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PREFACE

United Nations member countries, including Cambodia, adopted the transforming our world "the 2030 agenda" for Sustainable Development, on the 25th of September, 2015. They agreed to a plan of actions towards a more sustainable society. It is about ending poverty and hunger and about protecting the planet by managing natural resources sustainably and taking acute measures to address climate change. It is also about fostering fair, peaceful and inclusive communities – free from fear and violence. Cambodia implemented the 18th SDG, which addresses the ending of the negative impact of Mine/ERW.

Localization and realization of the SDGs require synergized efforts at various levels, with the recognition that the central government is not alone. All countries have regional and/or local authorities and subnational administration that are key actors in the transition to a more sustainable society.

This voluntary subnational review of the implementation of the SDGs highlights the contributions of subnational, provincial, capital, municipalities, district, Khan, commune/Sangkat levels—and how they can broaden perspectives, and make the solutions more widely available.

The Royal Government of Cambodia has challenged and made strong efforts in the localization and realization of the SDGs, under the national framework of holistic reforms. The endeavor transformed from a centralized, traditional governance to a de-centralized form of governance, and promoted democratic developments. The reform established good relations between the state and subnational administrations, as well as a well-developed structure of government agencies. It also created good conditions for working collaboratively toward sustainable development.

The reforms have allowed subnational administrations to play active roles in the CSDGs localization and implementation. The VSR has confirmed that the Subnational administration has actually and legitimately played a crucial role in the localization and implementation of CSDGs, in their respective territories. They utilized nationally allocated resources, development partners and agencies (DP/DA) assistance, local revenues and locally mobilized resources. Furthermore, most of the projects implemented by District/Municipality/Khan (DMK) and Commune/Sangkat (C/S) have benefited the grass-root communities.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all parties involved in this Voluntary Subnational Review for their valuable participation and inputs; and special thanks to the support of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG World Secretariat), the regional organization UCLG Asia Pacific and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

H.E. Say Kosal
President of the National League of Local Councils, Cambodia

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
API	Advocacy and Policy Institute
CAOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CARD/CM	Council for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Council of Ministers
CBET	Community-based Eco-tourism
CCC	Cambodia Coordination Committee (civil society coordination body)
CMDG	Cambodia's Millennium Development Goals
CP	Capital, Province
CS	Commune/Sangkat
CSDG	Cambodia's Sustainable Development Goals
DA	Development Agencies
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DMK	District, Municipality, Khan
DMO	Destination Management Organization
DP	Development Partners
EIB	European Investment Bank
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning System
GEF	Global Environmental Fund
GIZ/MUSEFO	German Technical Cooperation/ Multi-sectoral Food Security and Nutrition
HKI	Helen Keller International
IEC Material	Information, Education and Communication Material
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IP3	Three-Year Implementation Program
JICA	Japan International Development Agency
LED	Local Economic Development
MEF	Ministry of Economic and Finance
MOE	Ministry of Environment
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOP	Ministry of Planning
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NACPC	National Association of Capital and Provincial Council
NCDD	National Committee for Democratic Development
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NC-SNDD	National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development

NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NLC	National League of Local Council
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSDP	National Strategy Development Program
OWSO	One Window Service Office
PDAFF	Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery
PDEF	Provincial Department of Economic and Finance
PDEYS	Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sport
PDH	Provincial Department of Health
PDOP	Provincial Department of Planning
PDRD	Provincial Department of Rural Development
PDWA	Provincial Department of Women's Affairs
PDWRM	Provincial Department of Water Resource Management
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
PIP	Public Investment Program/ Provincial Investment Plan
PPA	Project, Programme and/or Activity
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RS	Rectangular Strategy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SNA	Sub-national Administration
SNIF	Sub-national Investment Fund
UCLG/ASPAC	United Cities and Local Government/ Asia Pacific
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VSR	Voluntary Sub-national Review
WA	Wildlife Alliance
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WFP	World Food Programme

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Terms	Definition
Goal 1: No Poverty	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: Zero Hunger	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4: Quality Education	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Gender Equality	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13: Climate Action	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14: Life Below Water	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15: Life on Land	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
Goal 18: End the negative impact of Mine/ERW	End the negative impact of Mine/ERW and promote victim assistance (only for Cambodia)

Country Map and Profile

Map of Cambodia
(Population by Capital/Province)

Population per province

- 41,798 - 204,027
- 204,028 - 411,759
- 411,760 - 775,296
- 775,297 - 1,195,547
- 1,195,548 - 2,129,371
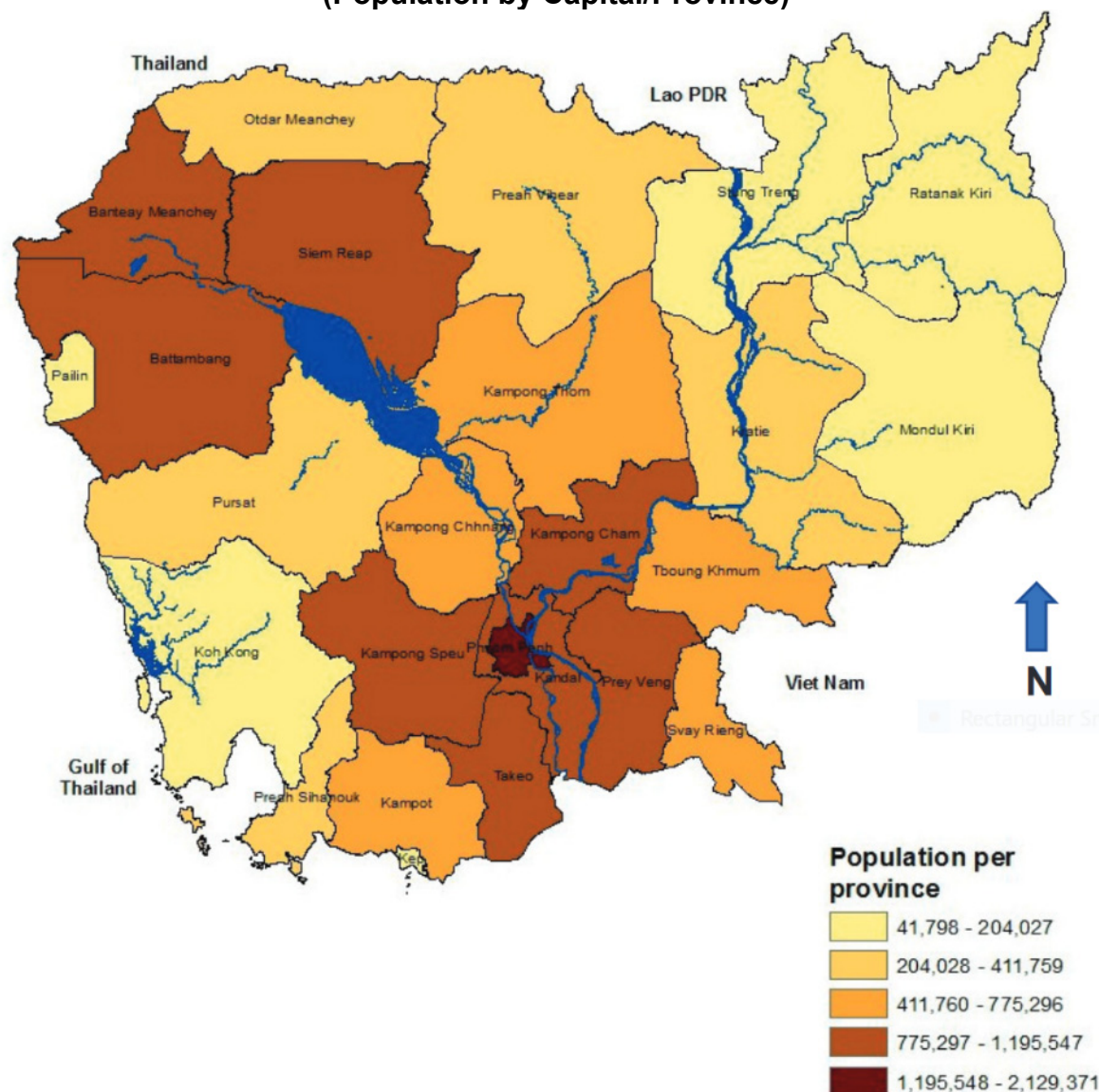
Cambodia Profile

Indicators	Figures
A. Socio-Demographic Information	
Total area	181,035km²
Population (2021)	16.95 million
Poverty rate (2019)	18%
Labor force participation rate (aged 15-59 years)	81.7%
Total population by region (female %)	15,552,211 (51.3%)
• *Central Plain*	7,644,295 (49.7%)
• *Tonle Sap*	4,852,964 (31.0%)
• *Coastal and Sea*	1,072,468 (6.8%)
• *Plateau and Mountains*	1,982,484 (12.5%)

Distribution of population	
• *Rural*	75.1%
• *Urban*	24.9%
Percentage annual growth rate (national population)	1.4%
Life expectancy at birth (year) (female)	75.5 years (76.8)
Population density (inhabitants per square km)	87 persons/km^2
Percentage of population by age group	
• *Age 0-14 years*	29.4%
• *Age 15-59 years*	61.7%
• *Age ≥ 60 years*	8.9%
Population of migrants working abroad (2018)	1,235,993
Educational attainment of literate population aged ≥ 15 years	
• *No educational level*	0.06%
• *Primary not completed*	35.1%
• *Primary completed*	31.1%
• *Lower secondary completed*	26.6%
• *Lower secondary/Baccalaureate*	2.9%
• *Lower secondary/Baccalaureate (technical/vocational)*	0.7%
• *Graduate Degree*	2.9%
• *Master's Degree/Ph.D Degree*	0.6%
• *Other vocational training certificate*	0.03%
B. Economic Indicators	
GDP USD (2021)	26.96 billions
GDP per capita (2021)	1,404 USD
Unemployment rate (2021)	0.6%
GDP growth (2022)	4.8%
ADB's projected GDP growth in 2023	5.5%
Economic Pillars (Textile; Tourist; Agriculture; and Construction)	
Exports in 2017 (USA: 21%; Singapore: 8%; Thailand: 8%; Germany: 7%; Japan: 6%; China: 5%; Canada: 5%; UK: 5%)	$11.42 billions
Imports in 2017 (China: 27%; Thailand: 25%; Vietnam: 15%; Singapore: 10%)	$14.37 billions
Public Debt (2017)	30.4% of GDP
Inflation (year average)	2.8%
FDI: Investments (2021)	5,119 million USD
Income Group	Lower middle income

Sources: General Population Census of Cambodia 2019 and Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey for 2019
OECD-WOFI (sng-wofi.org)
https://data.worldbank.org/country/cambodia?view=chart
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Cambodia

The Royal Government of Cambodia has made strong efforts in SDGs localizations and realizations. A package of rich strategy, policy, regulation and norms were elaborated and circulated. In compliances, Cambodia has challengingly revolutionized itself from a long-distance traditional centralized governance to decentralized governance, which is promoting democratic development. Hence, the Royal Government of Cambodia adopted and addedCSDG#18. The eighteenth CSDG is about ending the negative impact of Mine/ERW.

Under the above meaningful reform, the notified resources (humans, material, financial) have been allocated to subnational levels, namely capital and provincial level; district, municipality and khan level; and commune/sangkat level. More than KHR14,643 billion was allocated between 2010 – 2020; with the commune/sangkat fund and MDK fund increasing year by year.

Based on the World Bank database, 63 indicators out of 71 indicators measured over the 17 SDGs have been confirmed as progressing positively; while 8 indicators had no verifiable data.

According to Table 6 and Figure 14 below, Sub National Administration (SNA) prioritizes eight CSDGs out of nine. In subsequence priorities, SNA implements SDG#1: No Poverty; SDG#4: Quality Education; SDG#3: Good Health and Well-Being; SDG#6: Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG#8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG#9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; SDG#5: Gender Equality; and SDG#7: Affordable and Clean Energy. Respondents also acknowledged a progress on SDG#11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, particularly in CP/MDK that benefited from financial and/or technical support from the national government and from development partners and NGOs (Group A: Initiatives made by CP/MDK under the financial and/or technical support from the national government; and Group B: Initiatives made by CP/MDK under the financial and/or technical support from DP/DA or NGOs; see Table 6, section 4.3). In comparison between SNA prioritization and the actual situation on the ground of local communities in Cambodia, the subnational administration is trying to fulfill the basic needs of the local public, especially on SDG#1, SDG#4, SDG#3, SDG#6 and SDG#8.

This Voluntary Sub-National Review (VSR) of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was developed in collaboration with various stakeholders, including SNA representatives, community leaders, NGOs and development partners. The subnational administration has played a crucial role in the localization of CSDGs, with public awareness and infrastructure development being the most common approaches. However, the lack of budget at the subnational level remains a major challenge to advance the development agenda. Despite this, the allocated budgets for subnational administration, including local taxes, have been increasing. The conclusion is that the

SNA plays a critical role in the localization and implementation of CSDGs, complementing the efforts of the national government.

The VSR helped raise awareness of the subnational administration's responsibilities in CSDGs localization. Several actors expressed a need for training, technical assistance, backstopping, and monitoring on CSDGs interpretation and localization, enabling them to adhere to local development plans in alignment with CSDGs. Furthermore, they expressed a need for fundamental data and information to improve their local development planning in alignment with CSDGs. Subnational administration should be encouraged to mainstream the use of CSDGs as a reference for preparing development plans, including the relevant Provincial Departments. Social and environmental safeguards in every project at the subnational level should be strengthened to avoid adverse impacts of the projects and contribute to the SDG's overall objective of ensuring an inclusive, equitable, prosperous, and sustainable future.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Cambodia has a three-tiered subnational government system. The structure of subnational administrations is officially recognized in the 1993 Constitution (revised in 2008), in Chapter XIII. At the highest level are (i) the provinces and the capital-city, (ii) the intermediate and lower levels are the districts, municipalities, urban districts, and (iii) communes and quarters (see **Figure 1**). The 2008 Organic Law on Administrative Management of Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans establishes the functions and sets out the financial provisions of all subnational administrations.

In each province, there is one Provincial Governor, 10 Deputy Governors, one Major, and 6 Vice-Majors for each Municipality/District/Khan. The Governor and Major are regarded as the executive body, while Capital/Provincial Councils, Municipal, District and Khans (MDK) councils and Communes and Sangkats (C/S) councils are the legislative bodies. Lately, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has defined the term of Provincial Governors, Deputy Governors and District/Municipal/Khan Majors and Vice-Major to hold the position not more than 2 consecutive terms (8 years) in the same territory. To date, Cambodia has one Capital, 24 Provinces, 14 Khans, 31 Municipalities, and 163 Districts, 267 Sangkats and 1,385 Communes.
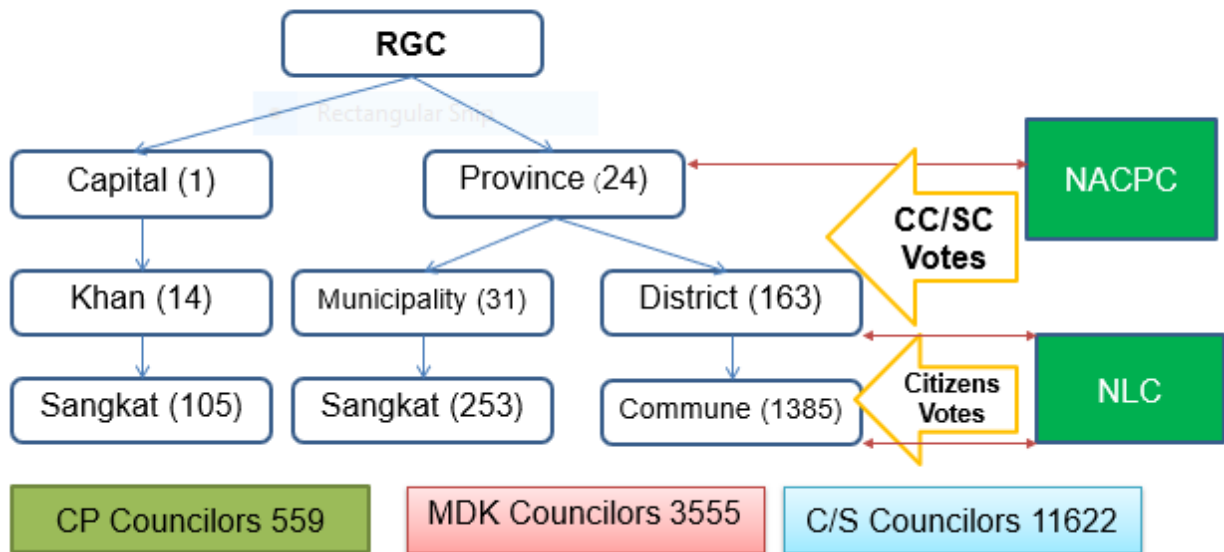
SNA Structures

Figure 1: Administrative Structure at Sub-national Level

In line with NCDD, the local administrations and agencies are accountable upwards to the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) for the implementation of delegated functions. The Department of Local Administration (DoLA) oversees districts, municipalities and khans, while provinces and the capital city are under the supervision of the General Department of Local Administration (GDoLA) and the Secretariat for Subnational Democratic Development.

The National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD) serves as an umbrella for several efforts to strengthen subnational administrations and making national level agencies work more efficiently in each administrative level. In 2020, Cambodia completed the first phase of its National Program on Subnational Democratic Development 2010-2019, led by the NCDD.

In Cambodia, there are two elections in every five years, with the Commune/Sangkat Election (held in 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017 and 2022) and General Election (held in 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, 2018 and will be in July 2023). This means that the Royal Government is elected every 5 years through General Election, while the Governors of Capital/Province, and Majors of Khan/District/Municipality are appointed by the Government-led ruling party. The Councils of Capital/Province and Khan/District/Municipality are elected by Commune/Sangkat (C/S) Councilors; while the Chief of Commune/Sangkat Council is elected in Commune Election every 5 years.

Since 1996, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has introduced many important reforms to deepen and strengthen decentralization and deconcentration (D&D) in Cambodia to delegate (transferring tasks and resources) to the subnational administrations. For instance, Cambodia adopted several important laws, including the Commune and Sangkat Law (2001), the Organic Law on Administrative Management of

Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans (2008), and the Subnational Finance Law (2011).

As a result of many years of government reforms, the subnational administrations have been playing more significant roles in making important decisions for the development and investment in their territories.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are both directly and indirectly related to the responsibilities of the sub-national administration. Because sub-national administrations are responsible for a wide range of services that matter to a person's daily lives, particularly with respect to services related to water, sanitation, primary education, community health services, local transportation, food security and nutrition, etc. All of them are having a great impact on promoting equitable access to public services, especially for women and girls. In fact, the national governments will not be able to deliver all the commitments to achieve SDGs by 2030 without the involvement of the subnational administration (SNAs), and the outcomes from the implementations of SDGs from the national governments are just half of the picture. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize the enormous efforts and innovation practices of subnational governments in achieving and localizing the SDGs with their limited resources.

As stated above, the subnational governments could be at the heart of the 2030 Agenda (Global Task Force, 2016).

The Voluntary Subnational Reviews on SDG localization and report preparation led by local and regional governments and their respective associations have proven essential. It brings about catalytic changes and promotes stronger multi-stakeholder and multi-level governance cooperation, transformative policies, transparency and accountability (UCLG, 2021).

The preparation of the Voluntary Subnational Review (VSR) in Cambodia is done by the National League of Local Councils, in collaboration with the ASAC-General Secretariat, which is a very active association of subnational governments in Cambodia.

It is also necessary to mention that the National League of Local Councils (NLC) was established in 2003 as a representative body for subnational administrations. The NLC has missions to advocate for local councils' interests at the national level, provides services and training, and fosters cooperation between communes and Sangkats. In 2014, the NLC expanded and included MDK (Municipality, District and Khan) councils. Meanwhile, the National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils (NACPC) was established and registered at the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in 2013. It is composed of the councils of 24 Provinces and Phnom Penh Capital City. It aims to: 1) Improve the status and build capacity of capital and provincial councils; 2) Protect the interests and legitimacy of members; 3) Build partnership with relevant ministries/institutions in order to develop localities, strengthen the rule of law and promote democracy in Cambodia. Both NLC and NACPC have a common secretariat so-called ASAC-General Secretariat, which is based in the campus of the Senate of Cambodia.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This report followed the UN VNR Handbook and UCLG's Guidelines for Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) with its own roadmap. Several data collection techniques were employed to collect the significant and relevant information regarding the localization of SDGs experiences, challenges and progressions in the Cambodia context. Those include desk reviews, survey, in-depth interviews and field visits (see **Figure 2**).
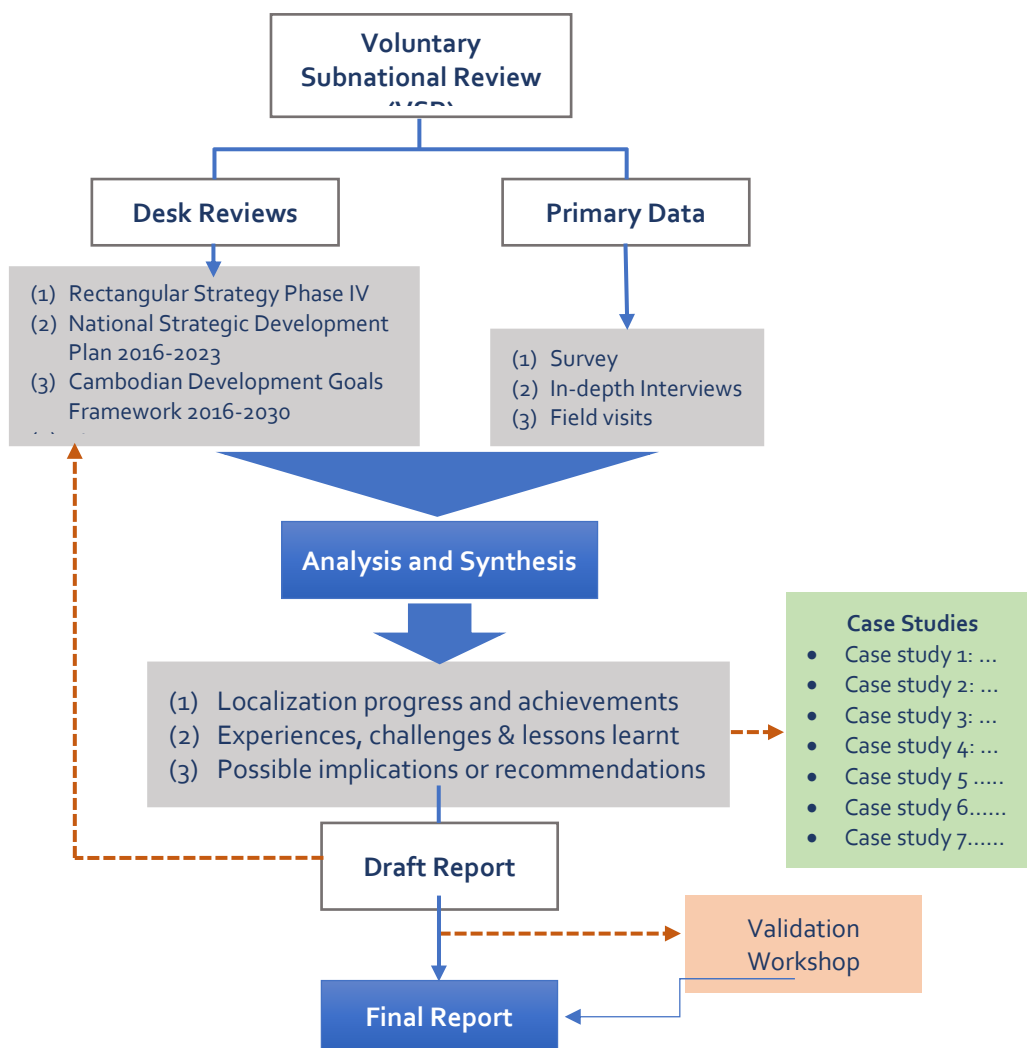
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Preparing VSR

Tracking Date

Start data	Data collection			VSR			Finalization		
	Desk work	Survey	Case studies	Structure	Preliminary draft	Advanced draft	Validation process	Final Report	Publicize
Dec-22	Jan-Feb	Dec-Jan	Jan-Mar	Feb	March	April	25 April	Mid of May	Late of May

Desk Reviews: Included, but not limited to, national development plan frameworks (such as policies, strategic plans and development plans) by reflecting the localization and the integration of SDGs at both national and subnational levels. Rectangular Strategy Phase IV, National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023 and Cambodian Sustainable Development Goals Framework 2016-2030 are some key documents for desk reviews. At the same time, certain research studies and reports related localization experiences of SDGs in Cambodia by academia, government agencies, and NGOs were also reviewed. These helped with the understanding and conceptualizing of the institutional context of national and subnational governments in Cambodia regarding their roles and necessary supports for localization of the SDGs as well as the decentralization trends, devolved and shared powers, and responsibilities between local and national governments. In conjunction with the above, the Desk Review has thoroughly gone through the CSDG tracking database, and found that 63 indicators out of 71 indicators measured over the 17 SDGs have been confirmed as progressing positively; while 8 indicators had no verifiable data (see Appendix D).

Survey: The survey targeted two levels of subnational government structure across the country, namely the Capital-Province (CP) and Municipality/District/Khan (MDK) (see **Figure 1 in the introduction**). In total, 172 samples out of 204 entities were randomly selected for this study (see **Table 1**). Forty-one percent (41%) completed and returned the questionnaires. The questionnaire was translated in Khmer language. The printed questionnaires[1] were distributed to the representatives of the provincial/capital and municipality/khan/district administrations with the official letters signed by the President of NLC. The distribution was facilitated and supported by the NLC team.

After a thorough consideration with key and relevant stakeholders, the questionnaire survey of VSR mainly prioritized eight of the goals (No. 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 13). This allowed this report to explore in a comprehensive manner the experiences of localization process and progresses of SDGs at the subnational level in terms of case studies, challenges and necessary supports needed to achieve the specific SDGs in Cambodia context.

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[1] Attached with QR code which allows them to access the soft copy

Table 1: Detailed Sample Size Selection by Region and Province/Capital

Regions[2]	Capital/Provinces	Total CP+MDK	Sample Size	Respondents	Response Rate
Central Plain (7)	(1) Kampong Cham	1+11	9	4	44%
	(2) Tbong Khmum	1+7	6	1	17%
	(3) Kandal	1+11	9	1	11%
	(4) Phnom Penh	1+14	11	3	27%
	(5) Prey Veng	1+13	10	0	0%
	(6) Svay Rieng	1+8	7	1	14%
	(7) Takeo	1+10	8	1	13%
Tonle Sap (8)	(8) Banteay Meanchey	1+10	8	1	13%
	(9) Battambang	1+14	11	9	82%
	(10) Kampong Chhnang	1+8	7	1	14%
	(11) Kampong Thom	1+9	7	7	100%
	(12) Pursat	1+7	6	2	33%
	(13) Siem Reap	1+12	9	2	22%
	(14) Otdar Meanchey	1+5	5	0	0%
	(15) Pailin	1+2	3	2	67%
Coastal and Sea (4)	(16) Kampot	1+8	7	7	100%
	(17) Koh Kong	1+7	6	4	67%
	(18) Preah Sihanouk	1+4	4	3	75%
	(19) Kep	1+2	3	0	0%
Plateau and Mountains (6)	(20) Kampong Speu	1+8	7	0	0%
	(21) Kratie	1+6	5	4	80%
	(22) Mondul Kiri	1+5	5	3	60%
	(23) Preah Vihear	1+8	7	0	0%
	(24) Ratanak Kiri	1+9	7	1	14%
	(25) Stung Treng	1+6	5	0	0%
Total	**25**	**204**	**147**	**60**	**41%**

In-depth Interviews: Conducted with the representatives from both national and subnational government agencies (i.e., MOP/NIS, MOI, NCSD, MOWA, CARD/CM) and some potential development partners and/or donor agencies in Cambodia (i.e., UNDP, UN-Habitat, GIZ-MUSEFO). The discussions were focused on the local and national supports, policies, strategies, monitoring instruments or databases available, including good practices and case studies in order to measure the processes and progresses in the implementations of the SDGs at the SNA level. Online interviews were used for the interviews. A list of key informants for in-depth interviews is found in **Appendix A.**

Report Preparation and Dissemination: From the beginning until the end of the writing process, both national and subnational governments, development partners/donor agencies, and civil society organizations were involved, and contributed

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[2] The classification of the region is based on the General Population Census 2019.

directly and indirectly through various means (such as survey, in-depth interviews and/or validation workshops). This ensured an inclusive and meaningful participation from relevant stakeholders in the VSR. It also found that some individual provinces and MDKs were encouraged to have a group meeting with relevant stakeholders, including NGOs in their areas to contribute and answer the questionnaires.

Validation Workshop: The Validation Workshop was held on 25th April 2023 in the morning, in Bayon Restaurant's venue, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It was chaired by four persons representing MOI, MOP, MOWA and PALC, and was presided over by H.E **Say Kosal**, president of NLC. The event was fully participated by 47 key persons from NLC, PALC, MOI, MOP, MOWA, API, UNDP and Cabinet of Council Ministers.

The event went through four sessions, namely (1) introductory and opening remark by H.E Say Kosal; (2) presentations of VSR methodology applied, key analytical findings and recommendations; (3) open discussion and gathering participants' inputs to validate the VSR report; and (4) wrap-up and closing remarks by H.E Say Kosal.

In a closing remark, H.E Say Kosal emphasized that the workshop had attained its objective; as participants were informed about the SVR works, participants' inputs are generated, and SVR results were validated. See appendix E: a note from the workshop.

In conjunction, with above mentioned methodology applied, the NLC and consultant kept communicating with UCLG secretariat via email and video conference, to gather comments, obtain advice and secure confirmation that this VSR report is meeting the standardized form.

Chapter 3: Policy and Enabling Environment for the Localization of the SDGs

3.1. National Strategies for Implementation and Localization of the SDGs

In 2015, the Royal Government of Cambodia endorsed the ambitious agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 at the annual session of the UN General Assembly. Back to Cambodia, the government has extensively adopted the SDGs to best fit in the Cambodian context by considering national needs, challenges, and aspirations (VNR, 2019). In this regard, Cambodia added one more necessary goal

called the "End the negative impact of Mine/ERW and promote victim assistance". In total, Cambodian Sustainable Development Goals (CSDGs) have 18 goals, 88 nationally relevant targets, and 148 globally and locally defined indicators. This shows the level of nationalization of the SDGs and a strong commitment of the RGC in Cambodia (VNR 2019).

Table 2: Review National and Sectoral Policies, Strategies and Strategic Plans

Level	Key Policies, Strategies, Strategic Plans	SDGs Responsiveness																		TOTAL
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
National	1. Rectangular Strategy, Phase IV	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	18
	2. National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y		14
	3. Cambodian Sustainable Development Goals 2016-2030	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	18
	4. National Social Protection Policy 2016-2025	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y		Y							Y		8
Sectoral	5. Cambodia Industrial Development Policy 2015-2025	Y							Y	Y								Y		4
	6. National Strategic Plan on Green Growth 2013-2030	Y	Y		Y			Y	Y					Y				Y		7
	7. Long-term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality 2021	Y				Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		11
	8. Cambodian Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		12
	9. National Biodiversity and Action Plan 2016 -	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		13
	10. Agricultural Development Strategic Plan 2019-2023	Y	Y		Y					Y			Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		9
	11. Neary Rattanak V (5-year Strategic Plan for strengthening Gender Mainstreaming, and Women's Empowerment 2019-2023	Y		Y	Y	Y			Y		Y			Y				Y		8
	12. Health Strategic Plan 2016-2020	Y		Y		Y					Y							Y		5
	13. Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023	Y			Y	Y					Y							Y		5
	14. Policy on Labor Migration for Cambodia 2019-2023	Y							Y									Y		3
	15. National Employment Policy 2015-2025	Y	Y						Y									Y		4
	TOTAL	15	9	7	8	10	6	6	10	6	9	4	6	9	6	7	4	15	2	

Note: The selections for all of these policies, strategies, and/or strategic plans are based on the year of compliance (at least in 2015) as the year of establishing Global SDGs.

Basically, the localization process of the SDGs in Cambodia was based-on the assessment of achievements and unfinished goals, targets and indicators of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs). The Cambodian SDGs have been widely integrated and also a primary input for the Rectangular Strategy (RS) Phase IV, as well as the NSDP 2019-2023, which are the key national development frameworks and references for all sectoral development planning processes in

Cambodia. In the literature review, almost all sectoral development plans and strategies (if not all) have widely referenced the NSDP and RS in their conceptualization and prioritization. Also, it was found that the line ministries have actively integrated themselves to play their roles in achieving nationalization and localization of SDGs in Cambodia, particularly the SDG 1, 17, 5, 8, 2, and 13 (see **Table 2**).

The MOP (Ministry of Planning) has been responsible for coordinating and consolidating the Annual Three-Year Rolling Public Investment Program (PIP) since 1996. The PIP is prepared to provide the priorities of the national and subnational governments for seeking capital and technical assistances from donor agencies, development partners and/or private sectors to implement the NSDP; sectoral development strategies, policies and frameworks as well as PDP (Provincial Development Plan). Both national and subnational governments (25 capital-provinces) are responsible to prepare their own PIPs annually based on their own needs, development and investment priorities/agenda. They will then provide it to the Provincial Councils for review and approval before submitting to the MOP. However, the preparation of five-year development plan and three-year Rolling Public Investment Plan (PIP) was started only in 2009 and continues to the present.

Additionally, there is an important regulation framework in place so-called the Inter-Ministerial Prakas (Proclamation) between the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Ministry of Planning (MOP) on the Preparation of Development Plan (Five-Year Provincial Development Plan—PDP) and Three-Year Rolling Public Investment Program (PIP) for Capital, Provinces, and Municipalities/Districts/Khans in Cambodia, dated 06 December 2010. The PDP is a strategic roadmap for subnational development frameworks to address urgent and strategic priorities, including the development vision, goals, agendas and strategies. It should be mentioned that PDP was also used as a basic reference for preparation of PIP. Both, PDP and PIP are indirectly addressing the CSDGs in different ways based on their own means of resources and priorities.

Following the PIP in 2010, the National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development (NC-SNDD) [3] prepared the first Three-Year Implementation Program 2011-2013 (IP3), which was extended to 2014, the Second Phase IP3 (2015-2017) and the Third Phase IP3 (2018-2020). The IP3 served as a significant roadmap and process for the identification of the service delivery functions that can be deconcentrated, delegated, or assigned to SNA at provincial and local levels. The IP3 focuses on the establishment, governance, functioning and oversight of Sub-national Administrations (SNA), starting with Districts and Municipalities in order to ensure an effective and efficient supports and cooperation between Districts/Municipalities (DM) and Commune/Sangkats (CS). It also aims to further strengthen the capacity and ownership of Commune/Sangkats and the capacity development of the Capital and Provinces, including the overall policy and regulatory frameworks.

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[3] The National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD) under the Ministry of Interior (MOI) is responsible for leading the policy and planning work on decentralization reforms.

3.2. National Coordination Mechanisms

There are two essential coordinating and supporting agencies for the implementation and localization of SDGs in Cambodia, namely the Ministry of Planning (MOP) and the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD). They have different roles and responsibilities, yet complement each other.

First, the Ministry of Planning (MOP) is assigned as the coordinating and reporting agency of Cambodia, and is also authorized to lead and coordinate the nationalization of the SDGs in Cambodia. In 1993, National Institute of Statistics (NIS) was established to serve as a focal point on the statistical tasks in Cambodia (see **Figure 3**). The NIS compiles and consolidates statistics provided by decentralized offices and also collects primary data through household surveys and population, agricultural and economic censuses. Cambodia has a decentralized statistical structure. It means there are Statistical Bureaus or Units within the Planning and Statistics Departments of the various ministries and in the Planning and Statistical Units in the Provinces and Districts/Municipalities/Khans. This is the reason why NIS has a significant role in the achievement and localization of SDGs, especially in preparation and development of goals, targets and indicators for Cambodia.
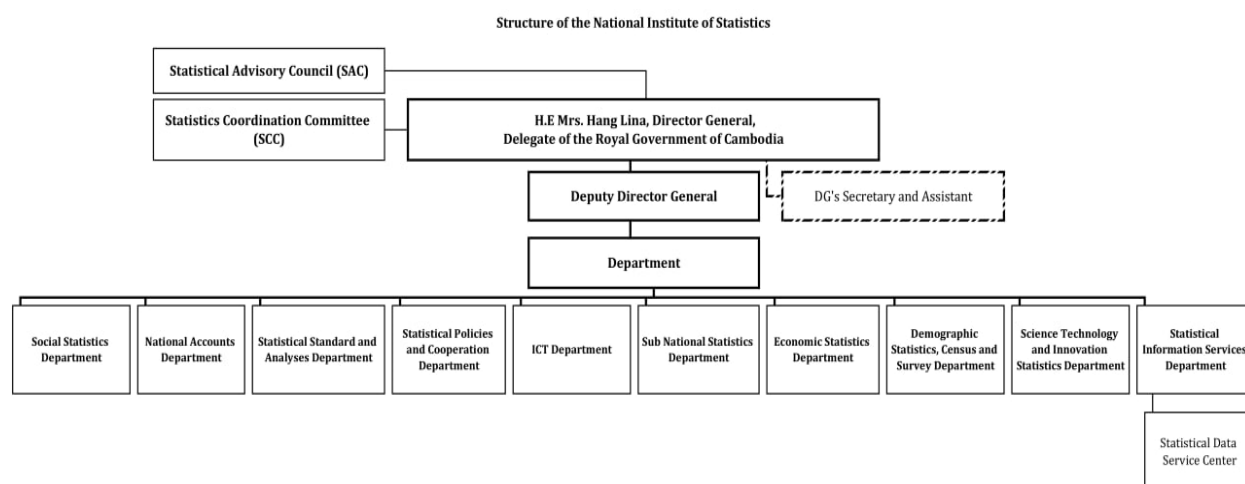
Structure of the National Institute of Statistics

Statistical Advisory Council (SAC)

Statistics Coordination Committee (SCC)

H.E Mrs. Hang Lina, Director General, Delegate of the Royal Government of Cambodia

Deputy Director General — DG's Secretary and Assistant

Department

Social Statistics Department · National Accounts Department · Statistical Standard and Analyses Department · Statistical Policies and Cooperation Department · ICT Department · Sub National Statistics Department · Economic Statistics Department · Demographic Statistics, Census and Survey Department · Science Technology and Innovation Statistics Department · Statistical Information Services Department

Statistical Data Service Center

Figure 3: Structure of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS)

Secondly, the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) was established in May 2015, chaired by the Minister of the Ministry of Environment (MOE). The NCSD was consolidated from four bodies, namely (1) the National Council of Green Growth and its Secretariat, (2) the National Climate Change Committee and its Secretariat, (3) the National Biosafety Secretariat and (4) the National Biodiversity Steering Committee (see **Figure 4**). It has a role to oversee the country's efforts to promote sustainable development and to ensure the economic, environmental, social and cultural balance of the nation. It is also mandated to prepare, coordinate and monitor the implementation of relevant policies, strategies, legal instruments, plans and programs in all areas of sustainable development as well as to monitor and report on Cambodia's implementation of its international commitments to the respective

international bodies. The NCSD comprises 36 ministries and agencies and 25 capital/provincial governors. There will be at least one annual meeting and additional meetings as requested by members.
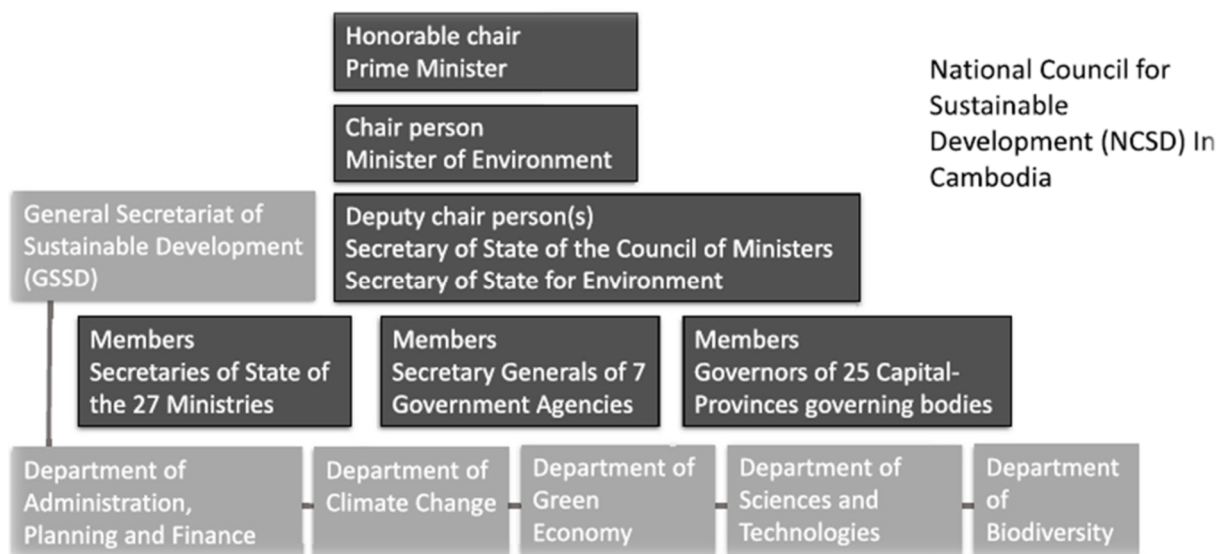

Figure 4: Structure of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD)[4]

Strategically, the NCSD supports for effective policy development and implementation, which focuses on 6 main pillars:

      (1) National Policy and Legal Framework;
      (2) Climate Change;
      (3) Biodiversity Conservations;
      (4) Green Economy;
      (5) Science and Technology; and
      (6) Operations.

So far, the NCSD has developed legislations and policies related to the sustainable development in Cambodia, including:

      (a) The National Environment Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2023,
      (b) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2020,
      (c) National Green Growth Strategic Plan 2013-2030,
      (d) National Policy on Green Growth,
      (e) Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023,
      (f) Sectoral Climate Changes Action Plans 2014/5-2018,
      (g) National REDD+ Strategy 2017-2026,
      (h) Environment and National Resource Code and
      (i) National Research and Development Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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[4] Retrieved from https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/16/6664

The subnational governments have also contributed to the development of legislation and policies at the national level by reflecting their own situation, and raised concerns or requests through the consultations and meetings in the name of NCSD's members.

Through NCSD, many line ministries have implemented a number of funded projects with the support of international programs (such as GEF, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, IFAD, WB, FAO) which are widely matching the **SDG 11**: Sustainable Cities and Communities; **SDG 12:** Responsible Consumption and Production; **SDG 13**: Climate Change; **SDG 14:** Life Below Water; and **SDG 15**: Life on Land.

3.3. Enabling Institutional Environment for Subnational Governments

Cambodia has implemented several reforms to deepen and strengthen Decentralization and Deconcentration (D&D) since 1996. The process started with the Seila programme during the second half of the 1990s. Then, in 2001, Cambodia adopted two laws that led to the first democratic election in communes in 2002. These were followed by significant reforms for the budget implications and administration transfers in Cambodia to allow SNAs have more decision-making power and authority (see **Table 3**). Beside regulations, there were also national mechanisms and frameworks to reinforce the law compliance, such as the Strategic Framework for Decentralisation and Deconcentration and the National Programme on Sub-National Democratic Development 2010-2019, which are led by the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD) and the Ministry of Interior. Recently, the government also introduced the National Program on Sub-National Democratic Development 2021-2030 and the Sub-National Budget System Reform Strategy 2019-2025.

Among 39 line ministries at the national level, 28 have subordinate departments at the Capital/Provincial level and 13 have line offices at the District/Municipality/Khan (DMK) level (The World Bank, 2021). Several key policies and regulations potentially minimize the gap between the policies (including CSDGs) into actions and ensure an effective framework for transferring resources from national to subnational levels. The multi-level government mechanism is key to determining the success of Cambodia's development journey to Cambodia Vision 2050 as well as CSDGs 2030.

Table 3: Key Policies and Regulations for D&D Reforms at SNA in Cambodia

No.	Tittles	Year
Governance and Reform		
1	Public Financial Management Reform Program	2004
2	National Public Administration Reform Program	2004
3	Law on the Management of Capital, Provincial, Municipals, Districts and Khan	2008
4	Law on the Public Financial System	2008
5	National Program on Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-SNDD)	2010
Fiscal Decentralization		

6	Law on Financial Regime and the Management of Property of SNA	2011
7	Sub-Degree No. 32 on the Establishment of the Sub-National Investment Fund (SNIF)	2016
8	Sub-Degree No. 6 on the Transfer of Conditional Grants to SNA	2017
9	Prakas No. 1458 (MEF) on the sharing of tax revenue of capital and provincial administration to DM and CS administrations	2017
Public Financial Management		
10	Sub-Degree No. 219 on the Development Plan and 3-Year Rolling Public Investment Plan for CP and DKM	2009
11	Law on the Public Procurement (including at SNA)	2012
Personnel Management and Capacity Development		
12	Policy on the Management and Development of Human Resources at SNA	2013
13	Law on the Separate Statute for Personnel at SNA	2016
14	Sub-Degree No. 240 on the delegation of authority to capital, provincial, and municipalities in managing personnel working at sub-national level	2017

Cambodia has been putting forward many efforts to deepen D&D reforms. Consequently, there is an increase of transferring resources and responsibilities to the SNAs regarding human and financial resource management, as well as revenue collection, which enables the SNAs to play even more important and effective role in the implementation and localization of SDGs in Cambodia. For example, the provincial and district governments receive the revenues from tax and nontax income, including revenues from subnational property, land, mine, construction, and One-Window Service Offices (OWSOs). The OWSO was firstly piloted in 2003 and is being scaled up national wide[5]. Currently, there are two different levels of OWSOs, namely at the Capital-Provincial (CP) level and District, Municipality, and Khan (DMK) levels.

Despite the sub-national share of public expenditures in Cambodia, which remains among the lowest in the world, it has kept increasing respectively as the National GDP has increased. The SNA budgets increased 42% on average per year in the last 8 years, which were about US$190 million in 2013 to US$821 million in 2020 (see **Figure 5**) (The World Bank, 2021). In 2020, subnational revenues corresponded to 3.6% of GDP and 15.7% of total public revenue at the national level.[6] The distribution of total revenue to the SNAs is varies. The Capital/Province level receives the most tax revenue, while DMK (District, Municipality, Khan) and CS (Commune/Sangkat) levels receive the most revenue from the national fund transfers (see **Figure 6**).

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[5] Get more information: https://www.owso.gov.kh/en/
[6] OECD-UCLG (2022), World Observatory of Subnational Governments Finance and Investments, Cambodia Country Profile, https://www.sng-wofi.org/country-profiles/
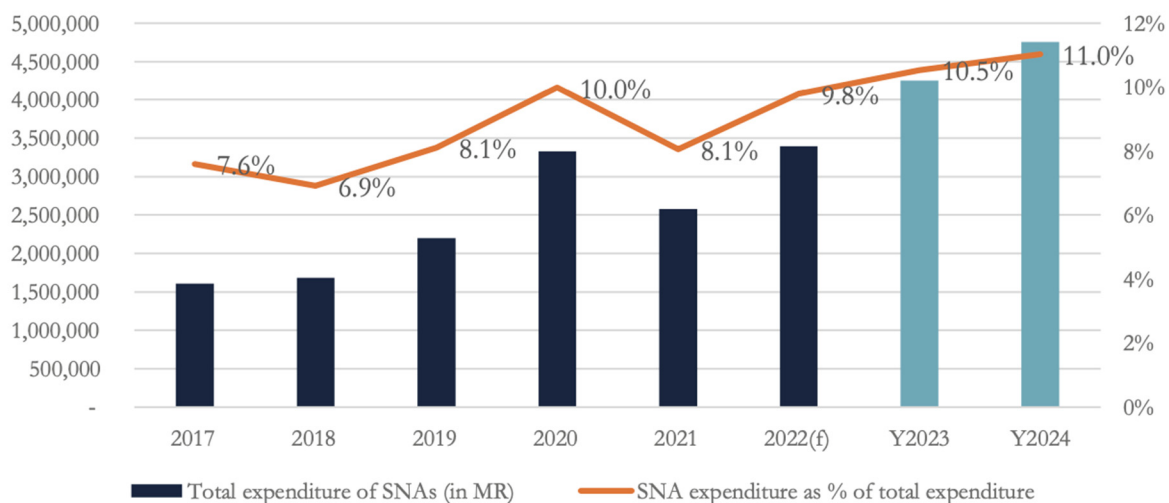
Figure 5: SNA and Total Expenditures (Million Riels)[7]
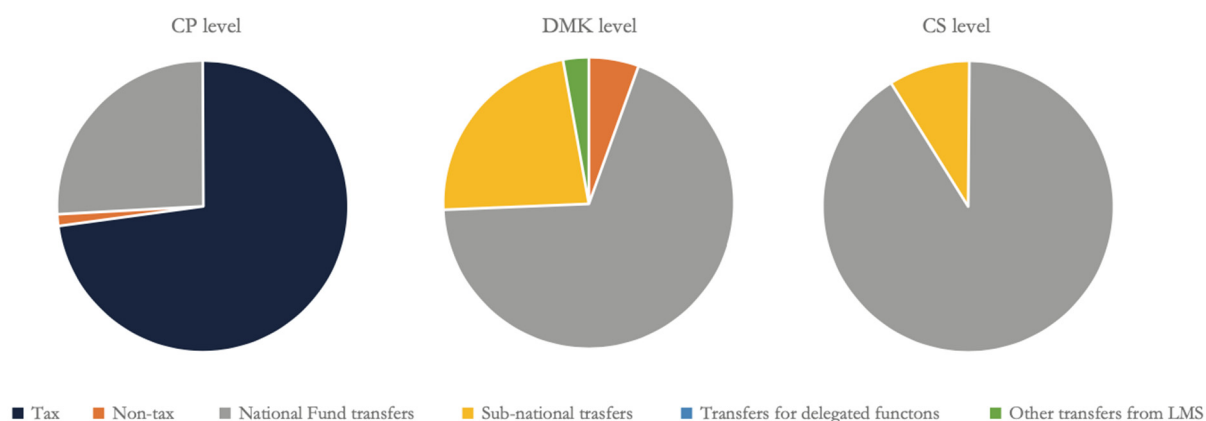

Figure 6: Distribution of Total Revenue to the SNA Level in 2019

In 2012, the RGC released a Sub-Decree on "General Processes of Transfer of Functions and Resources to the Sub-National Administrations," which was another important fiscal and administrative decentralization achievement in Cambodia. It delegated some necessary tasks to the subnational administrations to ensure the process of transfer of functions and resources from ministries, institutions, departments, units and authorities at all levels to sub-national administrations in a systematic way, rational, coordination, consultation, transparency and equity. In the first phase of 2012-2013, key sectors and ministries that agreed on the transfer of 28 functions include education; public works and transport; environment; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; rural development; social affairs; tourism; and irrigation[8]. This decentralization allows SNAs to improve the quality of public services (more convenience, transparency, and accountability) and have potentially contributed to the achievement of the localization of SDGs in Cambodia (see **Table 4**).

**Table 4: First Phase of transfer of function to SNAs by reflecting to the SDGs**

No.	Target Sectors (2012-2013)	Matching SDGs (direct)
1	Agriculture	1, 2
2	Education	1, 4
3	Forestry, Natural Resources and Environment	1, 2, 12, 13, 14, 15
4	Industry and Support to Economic Development	8, 9
5	Land Use, Cadastral and Construction	6, 11
6	Electricity Production and Distribution	7
7	Water Management	6
8	Social Affairs	1, 2, 3, 10
9	Rural Development	1, 10
10	Health, Nutrition and Services for people including other needs of women, men, youth, children, vulnerable groups and indigenous people	3, 5
11	Particular or special needs, including tourism, historical sites and cultural heritage	1, 2, 10

More recently, in December 2019, the entire administration of health services was transferred to subnational administrations through the Sub-decree No. 193. This document came into force in January 2020 and re-assigned the administration of Provincial Department of Health, Health Operational Districts and health service delivery, among others, to the capital and provincial administrations (grouped under the acronym CPA). In addition, discussions are on-going to increase the responsibilities of subnational administrations in service delivery, and in tackling climate change challenges through better management of infrastructure.

In ten years (2010 – 2020), resources (humans, materials, finances) have been allocated to subnational levels, namely capital and provincial level; district, municipality and khan level; and commune/sangkat level. More than KHR14,643 billion was allocated during 2010 – 2020; with the commune/sangkat fund increasingly year by year.
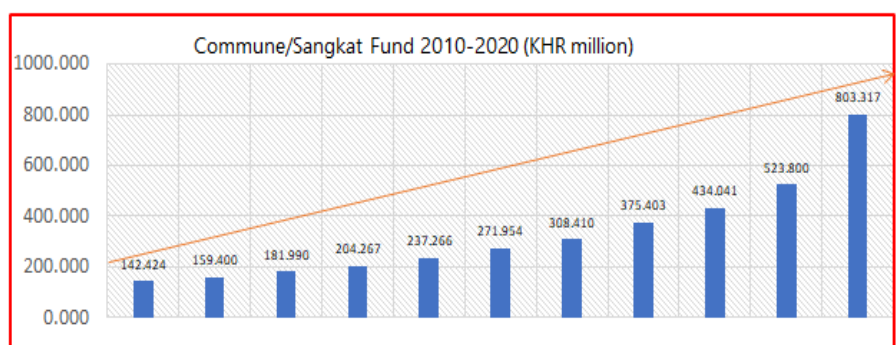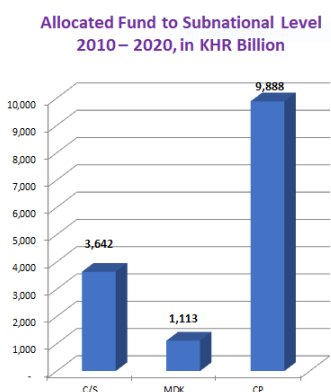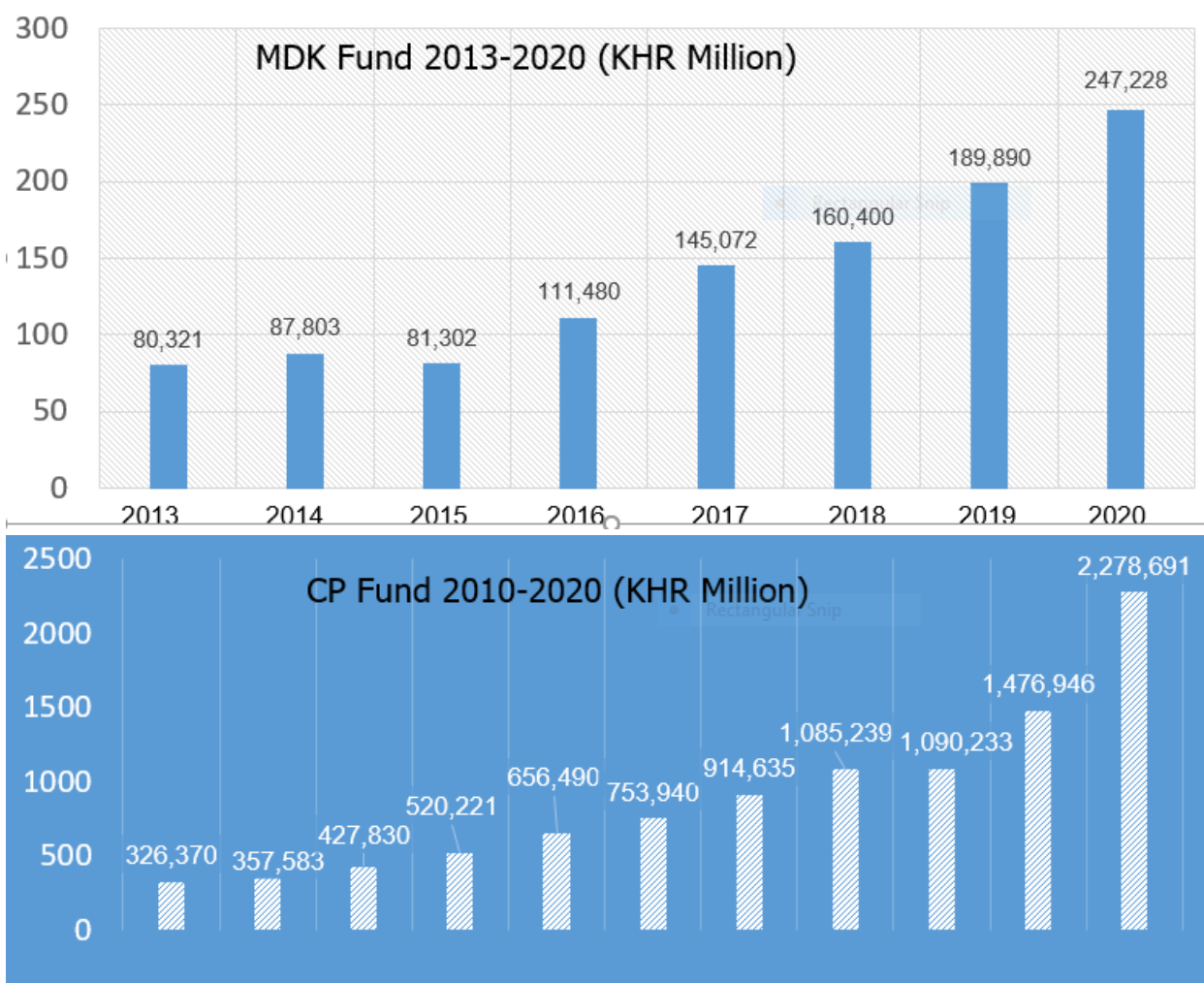
Figure 7: Fund Allocation to SNA (Source: MOI/NCDD's report & presentation)

In 2016, the SNIF was established to provide funding from the national government and other sources for public investment projects prepared and implemented by the SNAs. The fund is set at 0.02% of the recurrent national budget and it is expected to increase at 0.07% in 2020. The SNIF Board is chaired by the Minister of MEF (Ministry of Economic and Finance), two deputies (one from MEF and one from MOI) and 18 members from key line ministries. Funds are made available through a competitive project selection process and thus allocated to only selected districts. In 2019, the RGC contributed US$1.5 million into SNIF, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) contributed US$5 million. 15 district administrations were selected to receive funding from the contributions of the RGC, another 30 districts, 8 municipalities and 4 Khans were chosen to receive funding from the ADB. The budget for SNIF in 2020 was estimated to be around US$2 million, which about US $0.5 million was allocated for SNIF Secretariat, and other US$1.5 million was for local development projects in 12 districts in 9 provinces (NCDD, 2019). This is a potential financial source to promote localization and implementation of SDGs at the SNAs in Cambodia.

In 2018, the RGC introduced the "**Budget System Reform Strategy 2019-2025**", which is a core pillar of the Public Financial Management (PFM) reform program in Cambodia. The strategy aims to gradually transform the Cambodian budget system into an effective, accountable, and transparent system in line with international best practices. Consequently, the strategy focused on four key aspects for SNA: (1) Preparation of

Capital/Provincial Budget Strategic Plan (BSP); (2) Budget Preparation, Negotiations and Approval at SNA level; (3) Execution and Monitoring of Budget at SNA level; and (4) Reporting System, Monitoring and Evaluation of Budget at SNA level. Basically, it synergized the national and subnational administration (SNA) budgets through alignment of program activities and administrative arrangements (see **Figure 8**). Right now, this strategy is at the third stage of the "Budget-Policy Linkages."
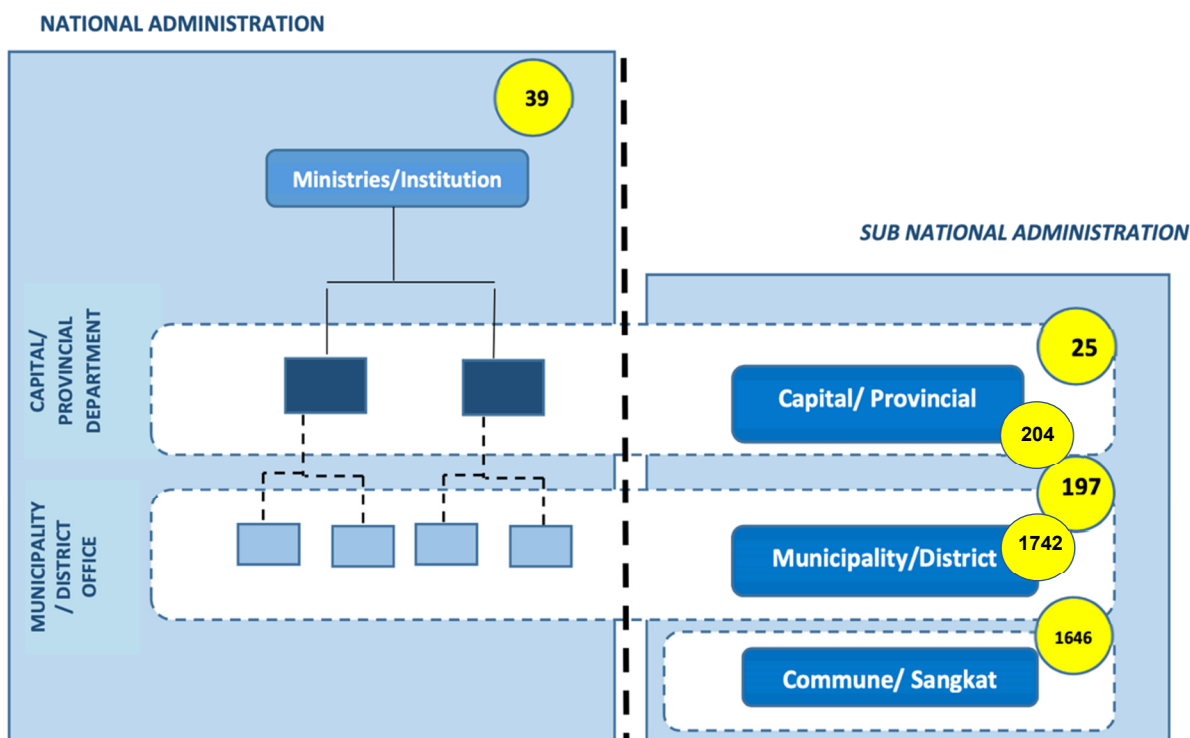

Figure 8: Linkages between National and SNA for the Implementation of National Policy Priorities[9]

Later in May 2019, the RGC introduced "Budget System Reform Strategy for Sub-National Administration 2019-2025." This strategy is a long-term and comprehensive budget system reform in Cambodia. It aims to ensure budget policy linkages. Specifically, policy objectives of SNAs must be aligned with the national policy objectives/priorities. Also, national and sub-national plans/programs must be linked, inter-related and complementary to each other through the integration of the budget strategic plan. Learning from the previous experiences and studying the "Public Investment Management Framework: Global Practices and Cambodian Context", the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) introduced the "Public Investment Management System Reform Strategy 2019-2025" in October 2019, which is led by the Ministry of Economic and Finance (MEF). This strategy aims to establish an integrated national public investment management system which is responsive, efficient, effective, transparent, accountable and sustainable use and allocation of public resources. It has a vision to achieve the high economic growth in a sustainable and inclusive manner towards successfully reaching the Cambodian 2030 milestone and 2050 vision[10].

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[9] Source: Budget System Reform Strategy 2018-2025 (with statistical adjustment for 2022)
[10] Transform Cambodia to be a high-income country by 2050

In December 2021, Cambodia approved the second phase of National Program on Sub-National Democratic Development, to be implemented between 2021 and 2030. The objective of this new plan is "to promote democratic, inclusive, equitable and just development through the modernisation of sub-national governance and improved access, quality, and utilisation of public service delivery". The Program is organised around five key components: reform leadership and coordination; subnational administrations' structures and systems; human resources management and development; fiscal decentralisation and subnational administrations' planning and budgeting; service delivery and local development. It also focuses on specific cross-cutting issues: gender equality, social equity and inclusiveness mainstreaming; climate change vulnerability, disaster risk reduction and serious infectious diseases. The implementation of this new Program will require the drafting of two five-year plans detailing activities, timeframe and budget. The first five-year plan (IP-5 I) has been endorsed by the central government in September 2022.

Chapter 4: Local Actions to Localize the SDGs

4.1. Actions to Create Local Awareness and Ownership on the SDGs

The Rectangular Strategy (RS) Phase IV has identified a clear and solid strategic direction for "**Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency**" to achieve the Cambodia Vision 2050, which applies for not only the national administrations, but also sub-national administrations. In other words, it creates and enables an environment to build local ownership and leave no one behind in Cambodia.

In fact, significant actions have been made to create local awareness and ownership on CSDGs. The evidence-based reviews have confirmed that NLC/NACPC is the most active one in capacity building and awareness raising on CSDGs localization. At least, 38 key activities were carried out between March and April 2019. There was a training workshop event held in April 2019, in Seam Reap province to provide a hundred participants with the awareness, ownership and capacity in the localization and implementation of CSDGs in their localities; and most recently NLC organized a training workshop to 24 key persons on the above mentioned subject, in Kampong Cham province, February 2023. In addition, NLC/NACPC mainstreamed and reminded participants in every meeting and workshop they organized. Consequently, the Provincial Association of Commune/Sangkat leaders and participants are able to provide the above messages down to MDK and C/S (see **figure 13**).

In conjunction with this effort, MOI, MOP, MOWA, CARD/CM and DP/DA have publicly disseminated information on CSDGs localization and ownership to SNA, with supports of their produced IEC (Information, Education and Communication) materials. Furthermore, so many IEC materials relating to CSDG awareness raising can be found on the websites of RGC's ministries and on WB, ADB and other DP/DA. However, the knowledge and capacity of SNA, especially at MDK and C/S, in access to/and utilize those online IEC materials in their local planning are somehow below expectation.

In this line of consideration, the VSR captured that approximately 61% of SNAs in Cambodia who answered the survey (60) stated that it's "necessary". Approximately 32% stated "very necessary" to localize CSDGs in their organizations as well as in their provinces/municipalities (see **Figure 9**). They believe that achieving CSDGs lead to significant benefits as it solves the actual problems in their municipal or provincial context and especially, inter-linkages with various stakeholders (public, private and people) (see **Figure 10**).
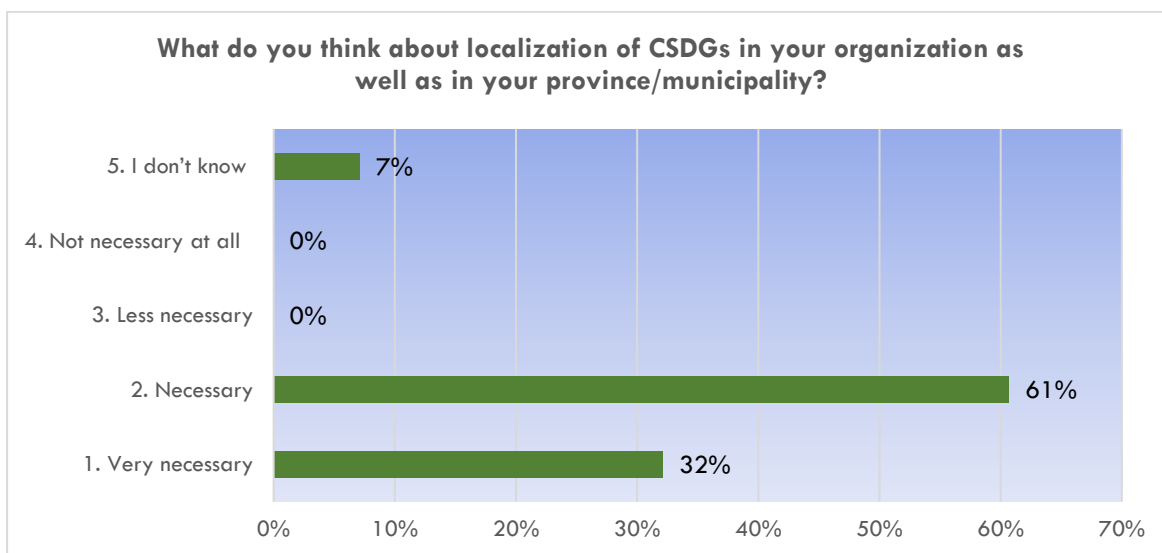

Figure 9: Perspectives of Localization of CSDGs for SNAs
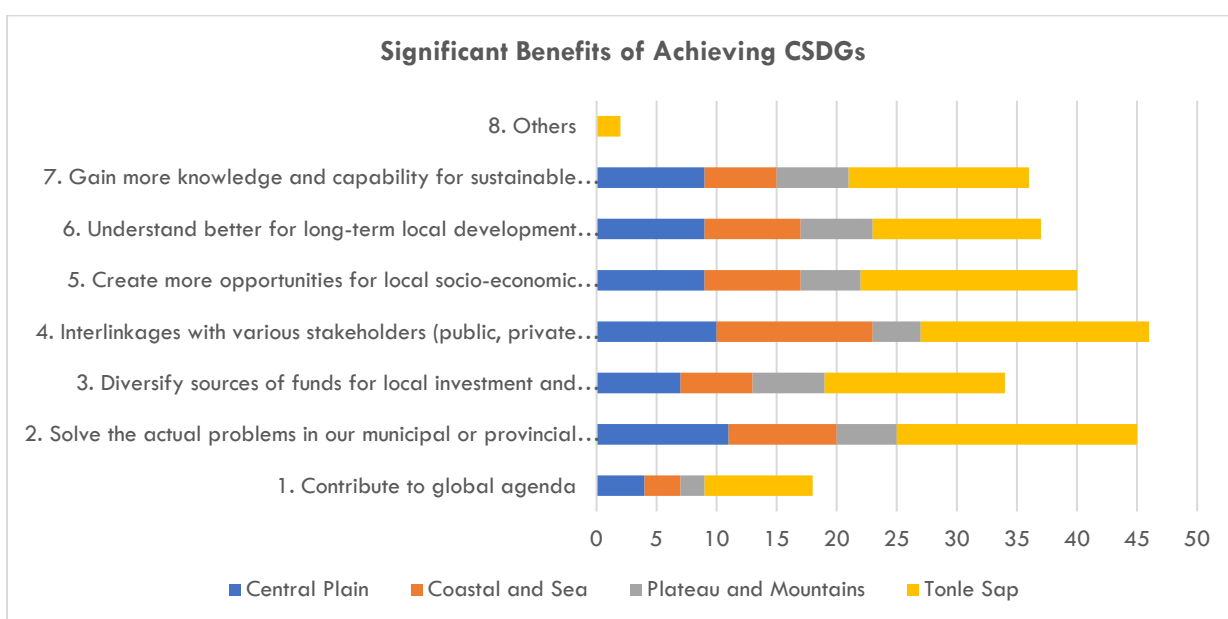

Figure 10: Significant Benefits of Achieving CSDGs

The current status of localization of CSDGs at SNA is generally in the phase of awareness and conceptualization (see **Figure 11**).
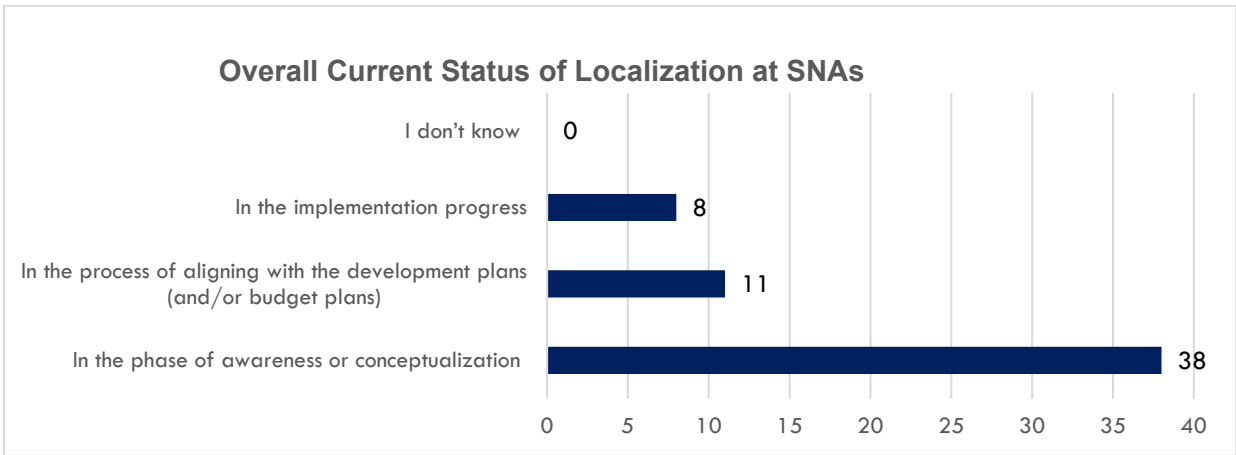
Figure 11: Overall Current Status of Localization of CSDGs at SNA

With regard to the awareness of the CSDGs in SNA by regions, as shown in **Figure 12**, 67% of SNAs (40) have limited awareness and only 25% (15 SNAs) consider that the majority of the staff is aware and use the SDGs as a reference or in the local plans and strategies. The regions with more SNAs in category with limited awareness are the Mountainous (19) and the Coastal and Sea (12); the regions with more awareness are the Central Plain (8), seconded by the Tonle Sap (4).

The survey also shows the national governments play a vital role in raising awareness of CSDGs at SNAs in Cambodia (34%) followed by the National/Local Governments Associations (NLC, NACPC) or international/ local governments networks (UCLG ASPAC, Citynet, etc.) (24%) and the development partners and/or donor agencies (19%) (See **Figure 13**).
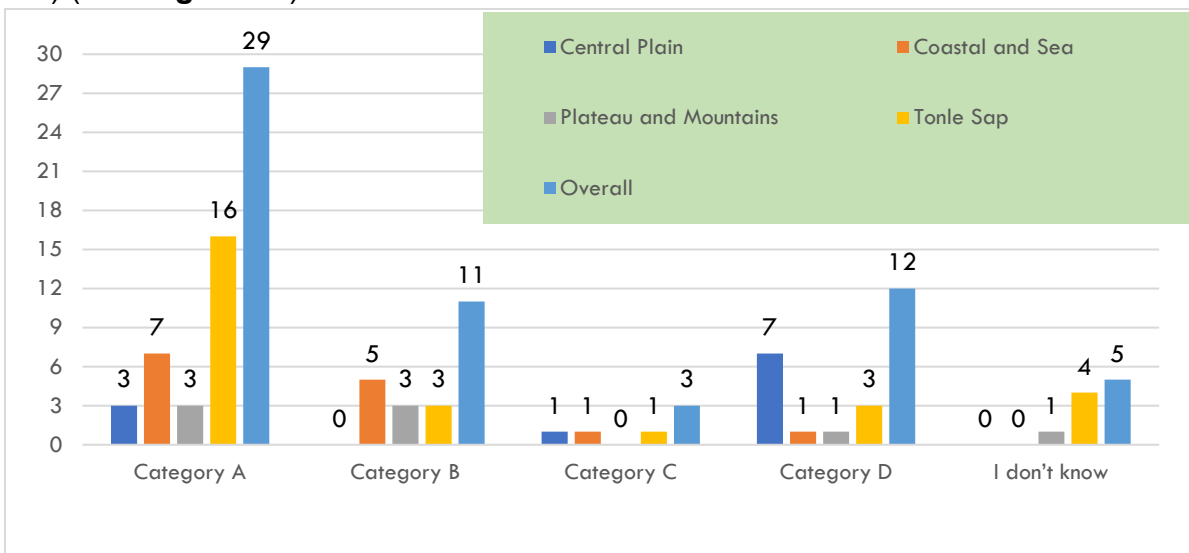
Figure 12: Level of Understanding CSDGs at SNAs[11]

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[11] Following their answers to the survey, the SNAs have been classified in 4 categories: **A:** Very few individuals in the organization are familiar with the SDGs; Category **B:** Many have heard about the SDGs but are not aware about their relevance; Category **C:** The majority of our staff is aware and makes reference to the SDGs, but it is not high in our work priorities; Category **D:** The SDGs are well known in our organization and used as an important reference in our development plan, investment plan and/or strategies**.**

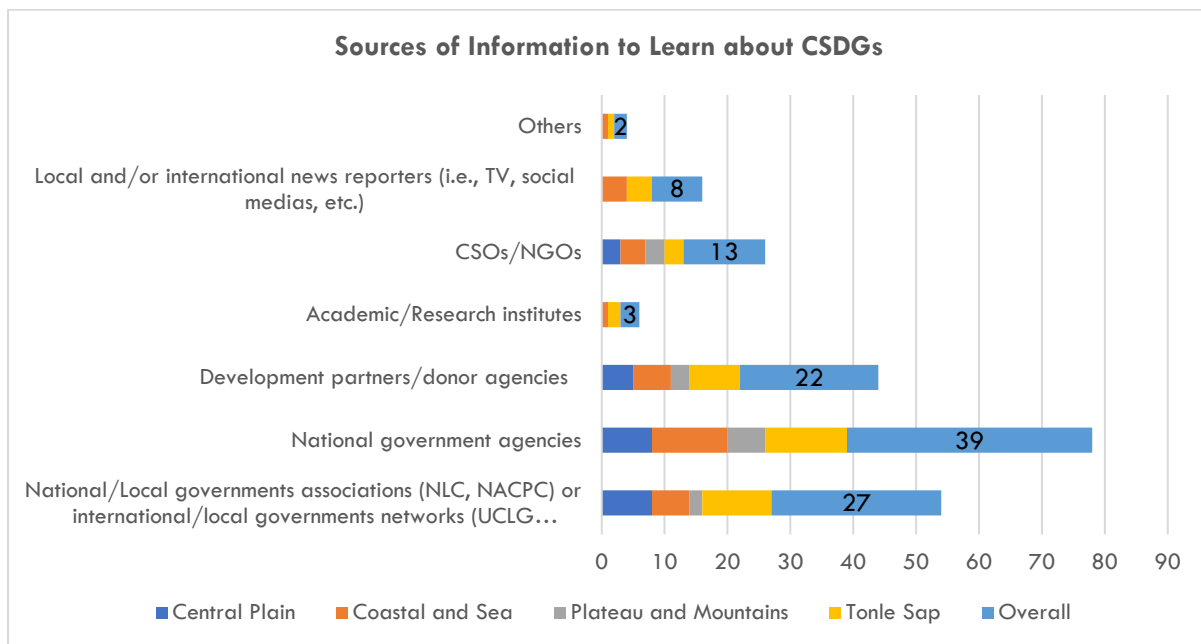**Figure 13: Sources of Information to Learn about CSDGs**

Despite the fact that awareness is still in an early phase, the review of the Five-Year Provincial Development Plan (PDP) and Public Investment Program (PIP), show that there are city-owned initiative programs and innovative practices by municipalities that contribute to localize the SDGs in Cambodia, even if they do not associate these initiatives to the CSDGs. This is particularly the case for public health and sanitation, environmental sustainability, and local governance (see below chapter 4.3 and Box 1 – 7 in section 4.3.).

Moreover, sub-national administrations play many significant roles in engaging with DA/DP (Development Agencies/Development Partners) and/or NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) in implementing and localizing CSDGs in their territories, which include, but are not limited to: (i) suggest the locations/sites for implementing; (ii) suggest or select the target groups of vulnerable people or communities that benefit the most from the projects/programs/activities; (iii) for construction related projects, local authorities do daily monitoring and supervising to ensure that the construction works comply with local regulations and handle the resettlement works/safeguard works, if any; and (iv) establish a long-lasting mechanism to strengthen and solidify the project implementation as well as local ownership after the project phased-out.

In terms of **priority ranking** of CSDGs, the survey indicated that Goal No.1: No Poverty is still remaining the most important priority at all levels (see Figure 14). Meanwhile, Goal No. 6: Clean Water and Sanitation is the second most important for MDK and Goal No.2: Zero Hunger is a second important priority at CP level; followed by the Goal No.3: Good Health and Well-Being and Goal No.4: Quality Education. However, the overall ranking indicating that SDG 1: No Poverty is the top priority, while SDG 4: Quality Education is a second top priority, and SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being is the third one.
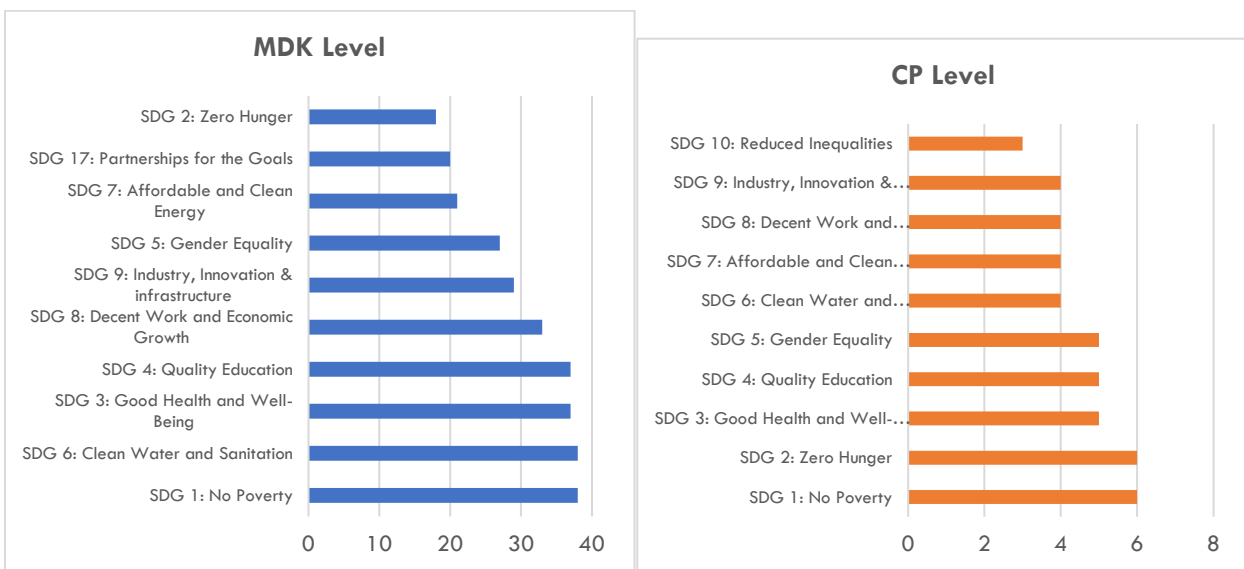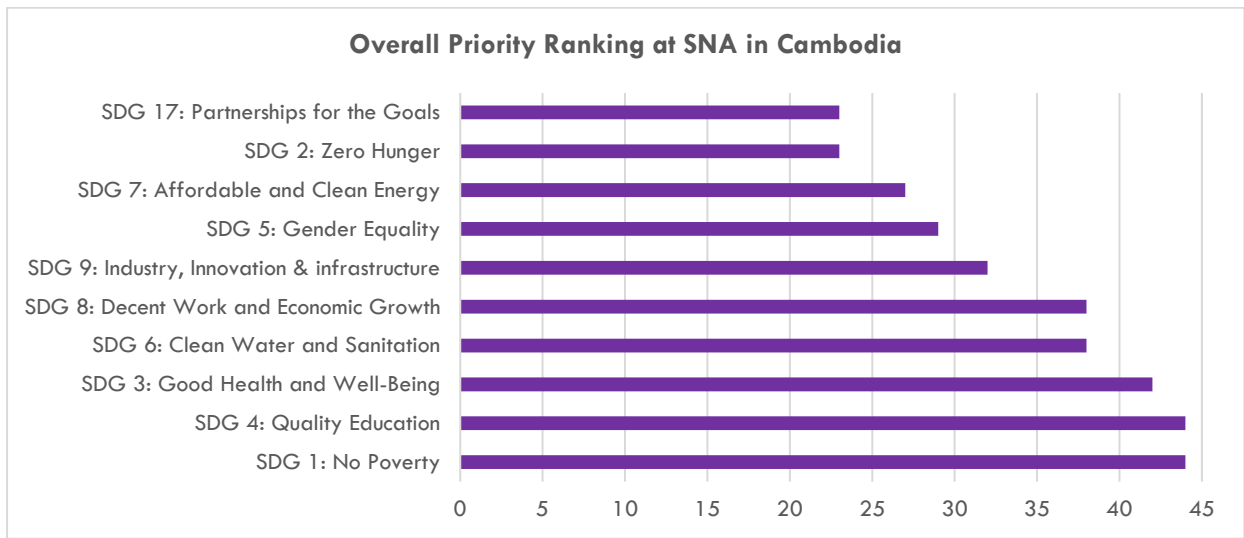
Overall Priority Ranking at SNA in Cambodia

MDK Level

CP Level

Figure 14: Priority Ranking of CSDGs at SNAs

There are several important sources of information that are currently available in place to encourage "**Evident-based Project/ Program Intervention**" for implementing CSDGs at the SNAs in Cambodia for the DP/DA and NGOs, such as (1) Commune Database System (CDS), (2) Sub-National Statistics (SNS), (3) General Population Census (GPC) 2019, and (3) Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2021. To some extent, this data can be disaggregated. To make this more effective or more impactful, it is necessary to have av more comprehensive data management system with regular updates. By having this information, it would help identify which group of people are in the most need and which provinces/municipalities they live in.

The NLC and NACPC have also been playing an important role in the implementation and localization of SDGs at the subnational administration level (see **Figure 15**). According to the Third Strategic Plan of NLC (2018-2022), three out of seven strategies were aimed at advancing the localization and implementation of CSDGs at the SNAs. They are (1) Provide additional necessary services for local councils to achieve the SDGs; (2) Improve the local economic development (LED) by focusing on the climate change; and (3) Mainstream women in local politics and promote inclusive society. So

far, both NLC and NACPC have implemented a number of funded projects from local and international development partners, donor agencies and NGOs by partnering with the Capital-Provincial and MDK Administrations. Those projects were generally designed to improve SNAs and their capabilities in order to ensure an "Inclusive Public Service" and "Leave No One Behind" in the areas of urban planning, local economic development (LED), and women leadership (see **Appendix B**).
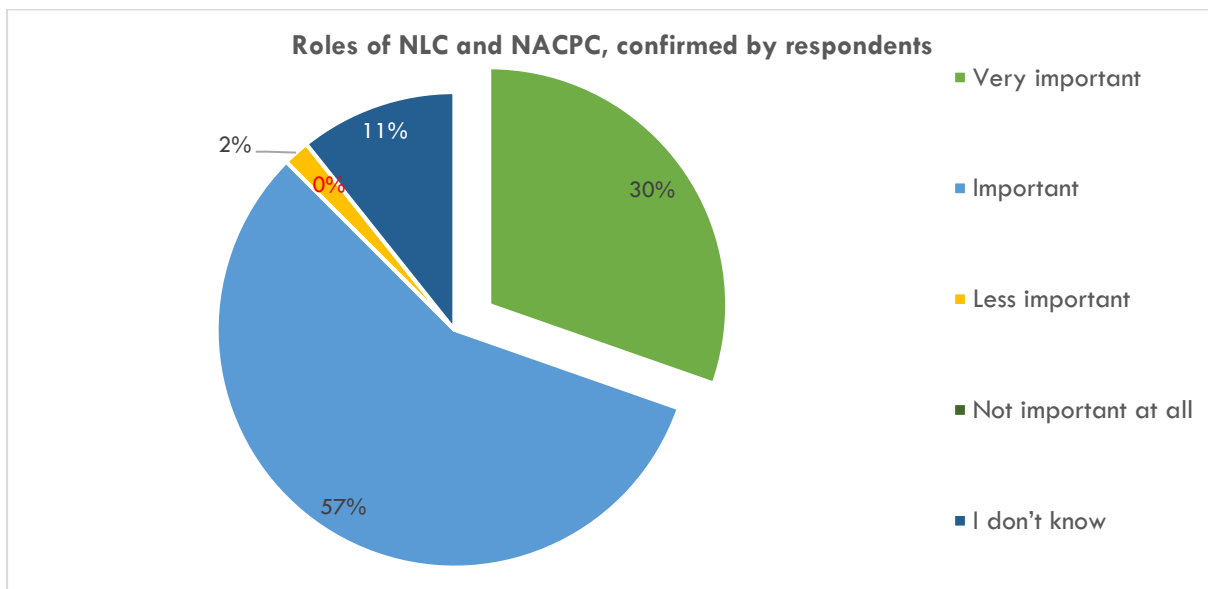
Figure 15: Roles of NLC and NACPC in localization of CSDGs at SNA

4.2. Efforts and Approaches of SNAs to Implement CSDGs

Following the answers to the survey, 58% of the SNAs stated that their organizations/entities (governments) have some kind of commitment to localize CSDGs. As shown in **figure 16**, the Tonle Sap Region has the highest commitment among all in Cambodia (27% of SNAs), followed by SNAs from Central Plain (14%) and Coastal and Sea regions (11%).
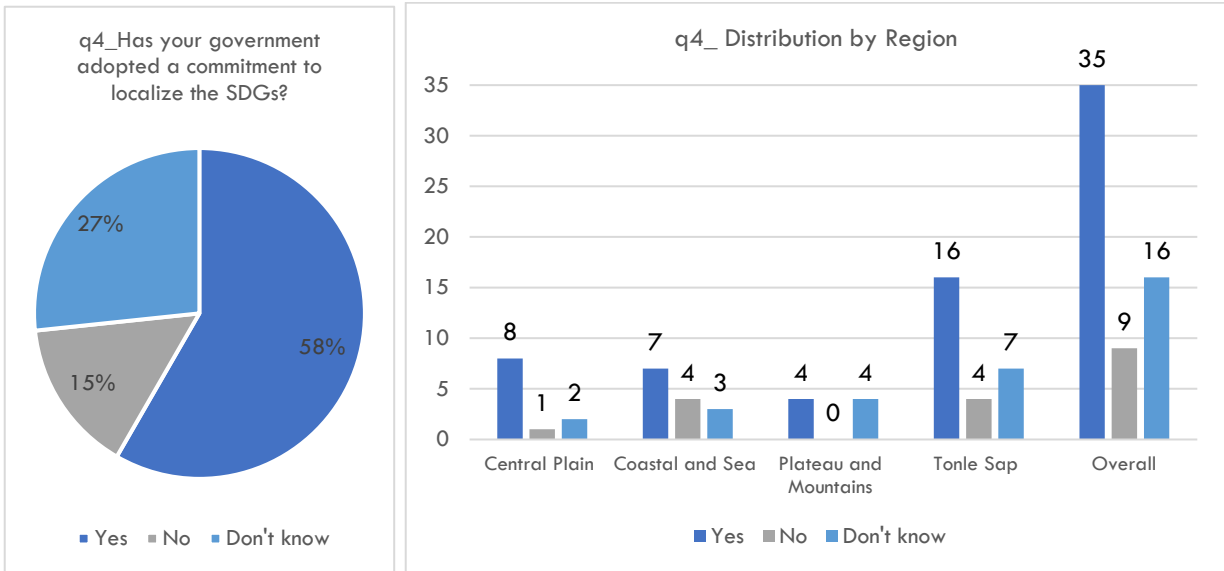
Figure 16: SNAs' Commitment to Localize CSDGs

To get a better sense of understanding the efforts and approaches of SNAs in implementation of CSDGs, eight specific goals of CSDGs are thoroughly discussed in this section. It mainly focuses on the thematic approaches that SNAs have been employed and/or delivered to achieve certain goals within the last few years together with funding. Yet, this analysis does not cover the effectiveness of those approaches due to limitations of data. However, appendix D shows some indicators with the progress made at a national level for the majority of the CSDGs.

For the localization of **CSDG 1**, social assistance involving financial and/or cash aids were the most frequent or popular approaches to achieve: No Poverty by SNAs, followed by the Infrastructure Development (such as road projects), ID Poor Program, and support poor and farmers (public awareness, food assistance, nutrition, scholarship, etc.) (see **Figure 17,** and **Box 5 and 7** in section 4.3). Only 5% of those programs/projects/activities were a joint collaboration between the government and DAs/DP/NGOs.

Figure 17: Localization Approaches for CSDG No. 1: No Poverty

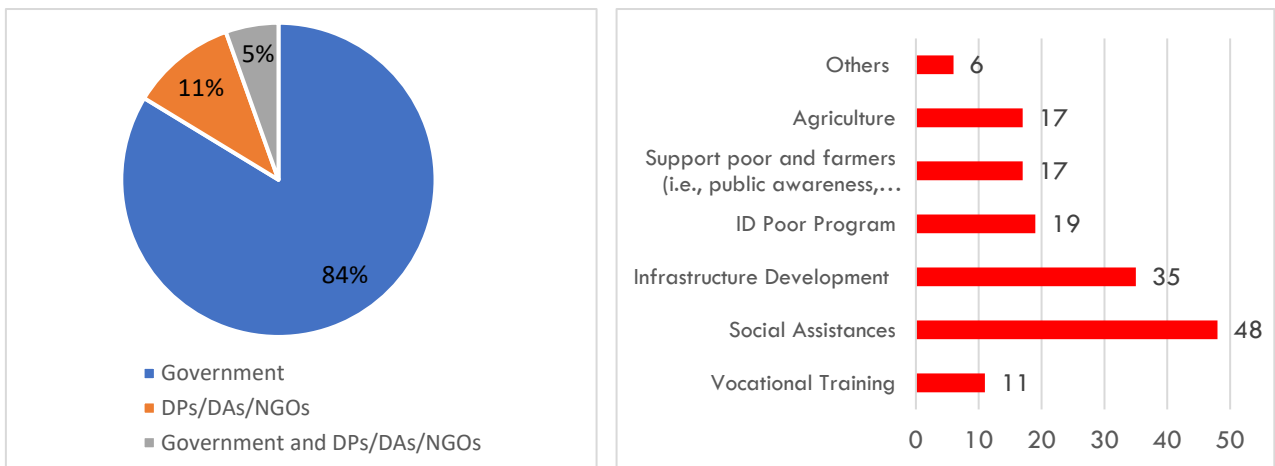For localization of **CSDG No. 3**, a vast majority of SNAs focused on the improvement quality of public health services, including infrastructure development, public toilets, financial aids, child care program, nutrition, HIV, emergency response, and law enforcement, etc. While the public awareness, and pregnancy and child care program, placed second and third place, respectively (see **Figure 18** and **Box 6** in section 4.3). The FCM, WaterAid and Bread for the World (BFDW) were mentioned as the donor agencies and/or active NGOs working on this issue, which share 14% of all given PPAs.
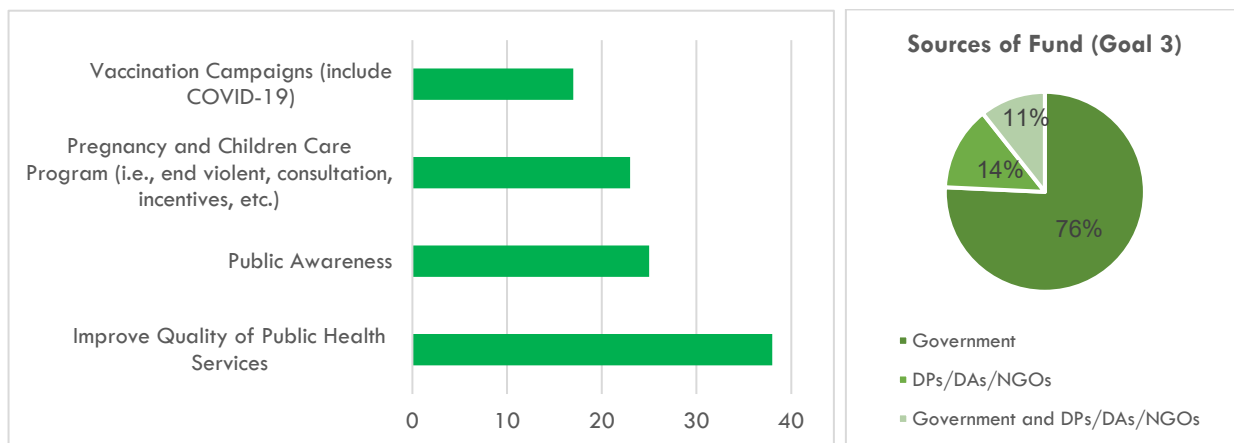
Figure 18: Localization Approaches for CSDG No. 3: Good Health and Well-Being

In **CSDG 5**: Gender Equity, the respondents confirmed that public awareness (via IEC material, social media, direct education) was the most implemented approach, and gender mainstreaming and women empowerment was the second most implemented approach (**Figure 19**). Both public awareness on gender equity, and the gender mainstreaming and women empowerment, were taking into account and were included in most of the activities that were implemented. Meantime, vocational training and capacity building for women and girls was also an effective approach to empower them to become economic leaders. All these activities have been considered as implementing CSDG 5 (see **table 5**).

Figure 19: Localization Approach for CSDG No. 5: Gender Equity

Urban Clean Water Supply infrastructure is seen the most important approach that SNAs in Cambodia have focused on in the localization and achieving the **CSDG No. 6**,

followed by the Rural Water Supplies (such as community ponds, wells, dams, rain water containers, climate resiliency sources of water, etc.) (see **Figure 20**). However, SNAs also promoted hygiene, sanitation and use of toilets as their agendas to address this goal. There was also a contribution from the private sector even though it was quite small (1%), but it was only seen in this goal. On the other hand, many local and international DAs/DPs/NGOs have actively been involved in this goal, including EU, UNIDO, ADB, WB, JICA, WA, SNV, IFAD, EIB, WaterAid, WaterSHED, Plan International, and CAOD, etc. See **Box 1, 6 and 7** in section 4.3.
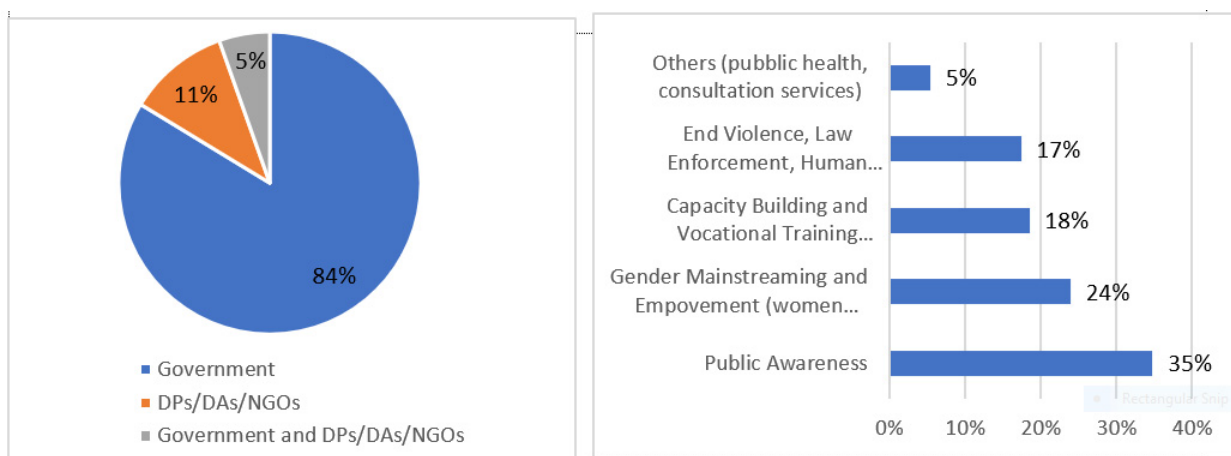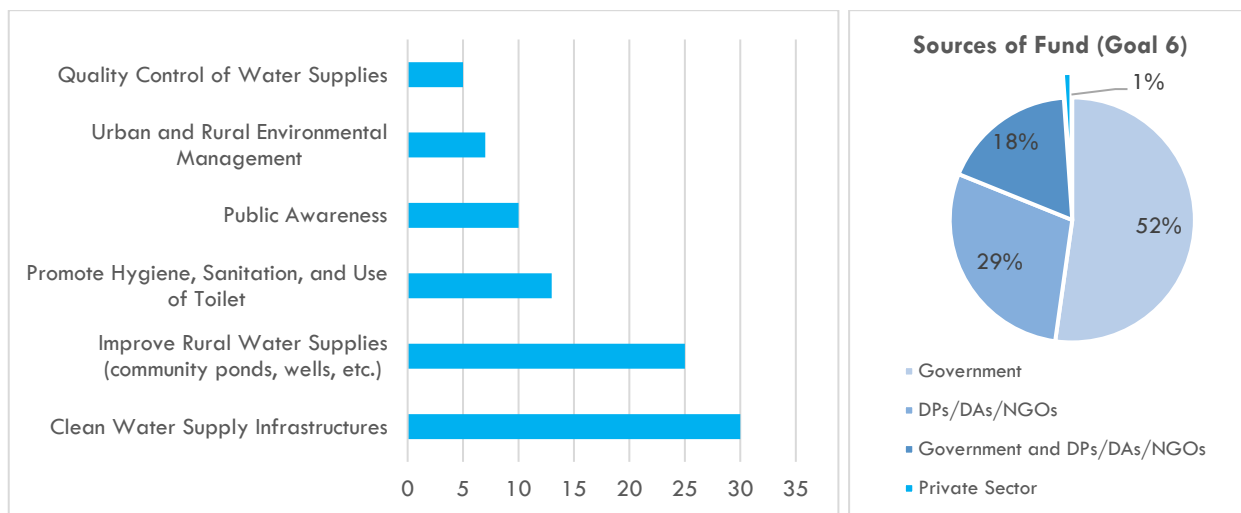

Figure 20: Localization Approaches for CSDG No. 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Solar energy became a leading way for addressing the affordable and clean energy at the SNAs in Cambodia (**CSDG 7**). More specifically, it's about installation of solar-powered street light for the public uses (see **Figure 21**). While grid infrastructure development was also put in the agenda through private sector investment projects. To address this goal, public awareness, law enforcement and capacity building were carried out by the SNAs in Cambodia as well. See **Box 2 and 7** in section 4.3
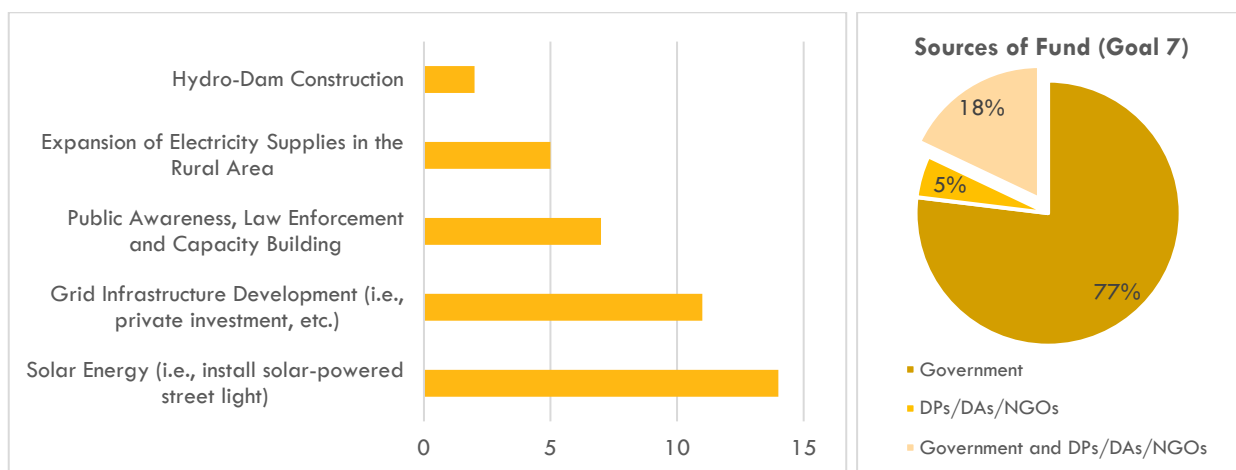
Figure 21: Localization Approaches for CSDG no. 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Public awareness and capacity building programs, including law enforcement, were the leading approach that have been carried out by the SNAs in Cambodia to address the **CSDG No. 10**: Reduced Inequalities. While at the same time, helping poor and

disadvantaged communities through promoting accessible infrastructure for all was also another important agenda (see **Figure 22**). Yet, it is interesting to see that gender mainstreaming and women/girl empowerment was also used as a tool to reduce inequalities by the SNAs. WaterAid, GIZ and GAD-C are some of the active NGOs who have been working with the SNAs to address this goal. See **Box 2, 3, 4 and 7** in section 4.3.
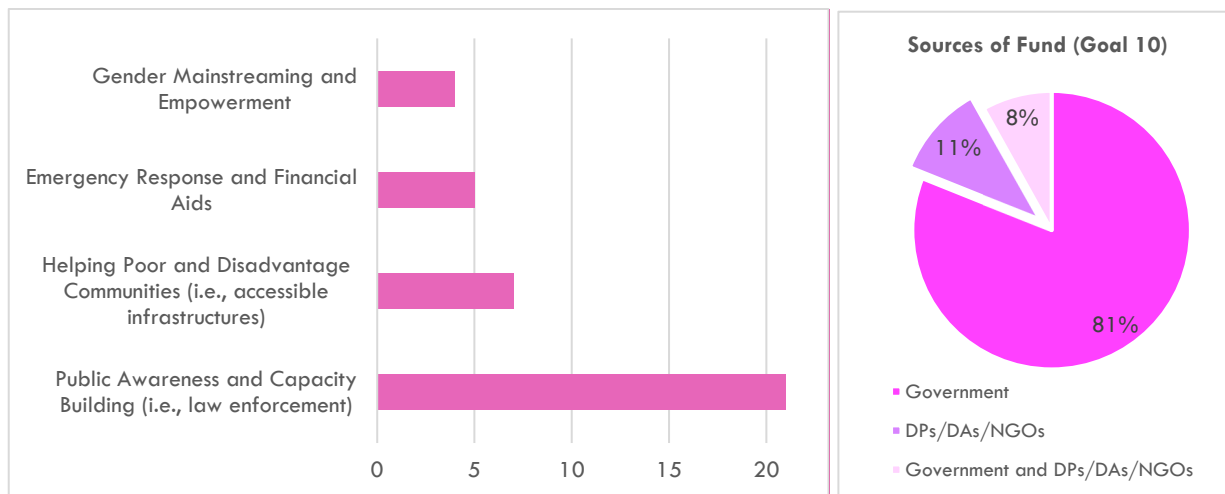
Figure 22: Localization Approaches for CSDG No. 10: Reduced Inequalities

Several different thematic approaches were used to address the **CSDG No. 11** (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by the SNAs. The most popular one is the urban environmental management and improvement which includes law enforcement, waste management, and landfill management, etc. (see **Figure 23**). In addition to that, there is also the "**Green Initiative Program**" that was designed for all municipalities in Cambodia to compete for national and international awards like the Cambodian and ASEAN Clean Tourist City Awards. Yet, the community engagement and development were also found the least in the forms of DMO, CBET, and NRM. Lastly, it is quite interesting to see many key players who have been contributing in this area, namely ADB, USAID, GIZ, WCS, WA, DANIDA, and API. See **Box 1, 2 and 4** in section 4.3.
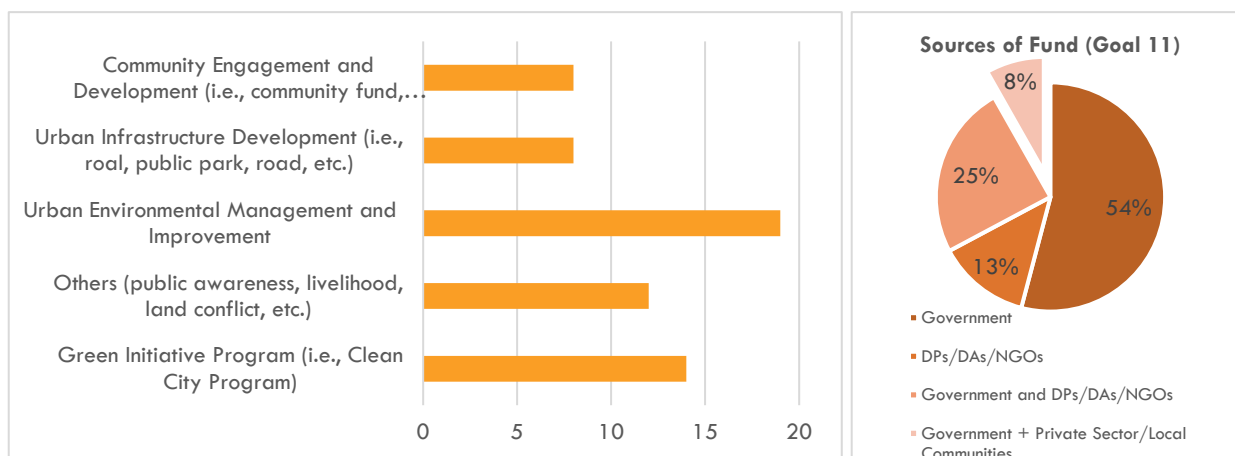
Figure 23: Localization Approaches for CSDG No. 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities

Both (1) Sustainable Green Initiative and (2) Climate Resilient and Smart Agriculture were the most popular approaches that were introduced by the SNAs to address the **CSDG No. 13** (see **Figure 24**). Actually, there are several forms of Sustainable Green Initiatives like NRM, REDD+ Projects, tree plantings, promotion of renewable energies and so on. It is followed by the disaster prevention and emergency response (i.e., EWS) and public awareness and law enforcement. The WB, ADB, WCS, USAID, World Vision and API are considered key players in this area. See **Box 7** in section 4.3
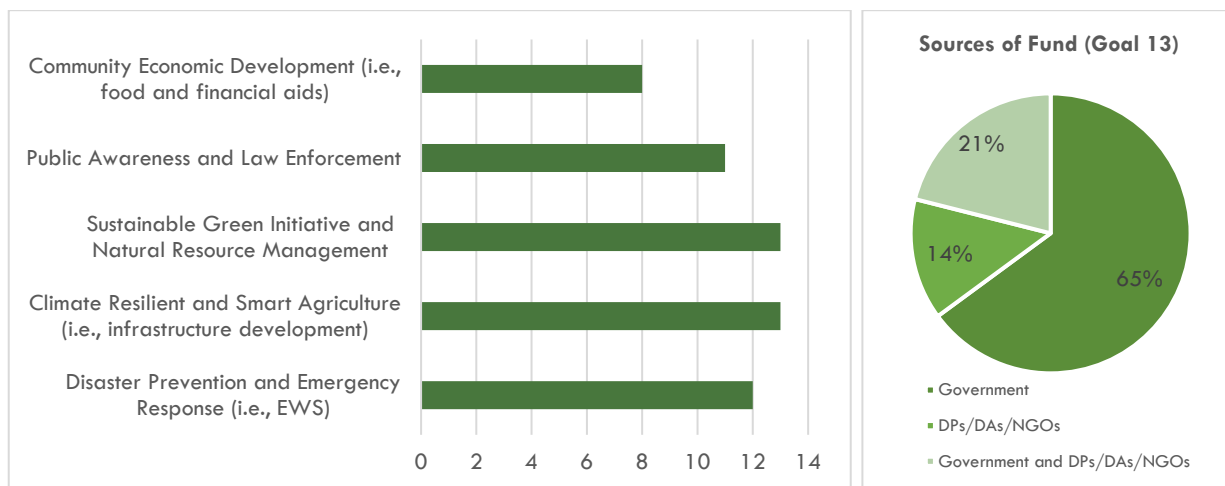
Figure 24: Localization Approaches for CSDG No. 13: Climate Action

In short, it can be said that there are some common approaches taken by the SNAs in Cambodia that are applicable to all goals, namely the Public Awareness and Capacity Building Program. While the Infrastructure developments have also been applied to many of goals. In many cases, however, there is a limitation of private sector engagement and contribution in addressing those individual goals. Yet, so far, private section engagement is only seen in Goal 6 and 11.

Table 5: Summarized thematic approach of localization CSDGs by SNAs

CSDGs	No.	Localization Approaches	Percentage
Goal 1: Poverty reduction	1	Vocational Training	7%
	2	Social Assistances	31%
	3	Infrastructure Development	23%
	4	ID Poor Program	12%
	5	Support poor and farmers (i.e., public awareness, food assistance, nutrition, etc.)	11%
	6	Agriculture	11%
	7	Others	4%
Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being	1	Improve Quality of Public Health Services	37%
	2	Public Awareness	24%
	3	Pregnancy and Children Care Program (i.e., end violent, consultation, incentives, etc.)	22%
	4	Vaccination Campaigns (include COVID-19)	17%
Goal 5: Gender Equity	1	Public Awareness on Gender Equity	35%
	2	Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment (women participation, institutional mechanism)	24%
	3	Capacity Building and Vocational Training (i.e., livelihood improvement)	18%
	4	End Violence, Law Enforcement, Human Trafficking and Emergency Response	17%
	5	Others (public health, consultation services)	5%
Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	1	Clean Water Supply Infrastructures	33%
	2	Improve Rural Water Supplies (community ponds, wells, etc.)	28%
	3	Promote Hygiene, Sanitation, and Use of Toilet	14%
	4	Public Awareness	11%
	5	Urban and Rural Environmental Management	8%
	6	Quality Control of Water Supplies	6%
Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	1	Solar Energy (i.e., install solar-powered street light)	36%
	2	Grid Infrastructure Development (i.e., private investment, etc.)	28%
	3	Public Awareness, Law Enforcement and Capacity Building	18%
	4	Expansion of Electricity Supplies in the Rural Area	13%
	5	Hydro-Dam Construction	5%
Goal 10: Reduced Inequities	1	Public Awareness and Capacity Building (i.e., law enforcement)	57%
	2	Helping Poor and Disadvantage Communities (i.e., accessible infrastructures)	19%
	3	Emergency Response and Financial Aids	14%
	4	Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment	11%
Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	1	Green Initiative Program (i.e., Clean City Program)	23%
	2	Others (public awareness, livelihood, land conflict, etc.)	20%

	3	Urban Environmental Management and Improvement	31%
	4	Urban Infrastructure Development (i.e., public park, road, etc.)	13%
	5	Community Engagement and Development (i.e., community fund, DMO, CBET, NRM, etc.)	13%
Goal 13: Climate Action	1	Disaster Prevention and Emergency Response (i.e., EWS)	21%
	2	Climate Resilient and Smart Agriculture (i.e., infrastructure development)	23%
	3	Sustainable Green Initiative and Natural Resource Management	23%
	4	Public Awareness and Law Enforcement	19%
	5	Community Economic Development (i.e., food and financial aids)	14%

4.3 Examples of the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Goals and Targets

As shown in the previous section, different SNAs are making efforts to align their plans and projects with the CSDGs. Various approaches and innovative practices are made by SNAs in localization of CSDGs from one province or municipality to another; therefore, progress is also seen at different levels. The respondents considered four goals to be highly progressed in Group A; while Group B considered the same three goals to be highly progressed; and Group C considered four goals moderately progressed and four goals with low progression (see **table 6).**

Table 6: Progress of localization among the 8 CSDGs at SNAs

No.	CSDGs	Initiatives		
		Group A	Group B	Group C
1	Goal 1: No Poverty	High	Moderate	Low
2	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being	Moderate	Moderate	Low
3	Goal 5: Gender Equity	High	High	Low
4	Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
5	Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
6	Goal 10: Reduced Inequities	Moderate	Moderate	Low
7	Goal 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities	High	High	Moderate
8	Goal 13: Climate Action	High	High	Moderate
9	Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals	NA	NA	NA

Notes:
- The progress is calculated based on the number of PPAs: (1) High= At least 100 PPAs; (2) Moderate= Between 50-100 PPAs; and (3) Low= Less than 50 PPAs
- **Group A**= initiatives made by CP/MDK under the financial and/or technical support from the national government;
- **Group B**= initiatives made by CP/MDK under the financial and/or technical support from DP/DA or NGOs;

- **Group C** = initiatives made by Private Sector under partnership with CP/MDK

To be more specific about some of the major progress and achievements that SNAs have made in localization of CSDGs, seven different case studies were chosen. The selection process was based on their potential impacts to address CSDGs, potential to scale-up, and innovative practices, and private sector involvement.

4.4. Top Ten Priorities Post-Covid-19

Based-on respondents' perspectives, six SDGs out of ten have been prioritized for localization and implementation post Covid-19. SDG#1: Poverty Reduction, SDG#3: Good Health and Well-being, SDG#4: Quality Education, SDG#8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG#6: Clean Water and Sanitation and SDG#9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, remained high priorities among ten (see figure 25).

Relatively, table 7 below is presenting the prioritized SDGs by region; Tonle Sap region ranked high priorities in almost every SDG. This data is confirming that a lot of effort has to be made in the said region. However, SDG#1 has remained a primary focus of all regions for post Covid-19, following by SDG#3, SDGs#4 and SDG#8.
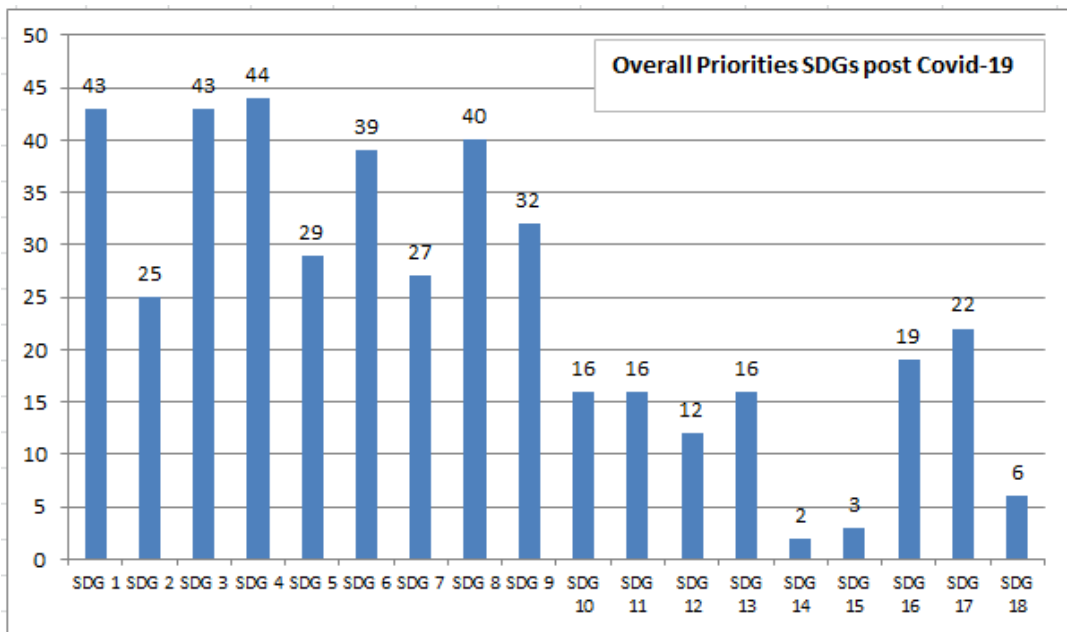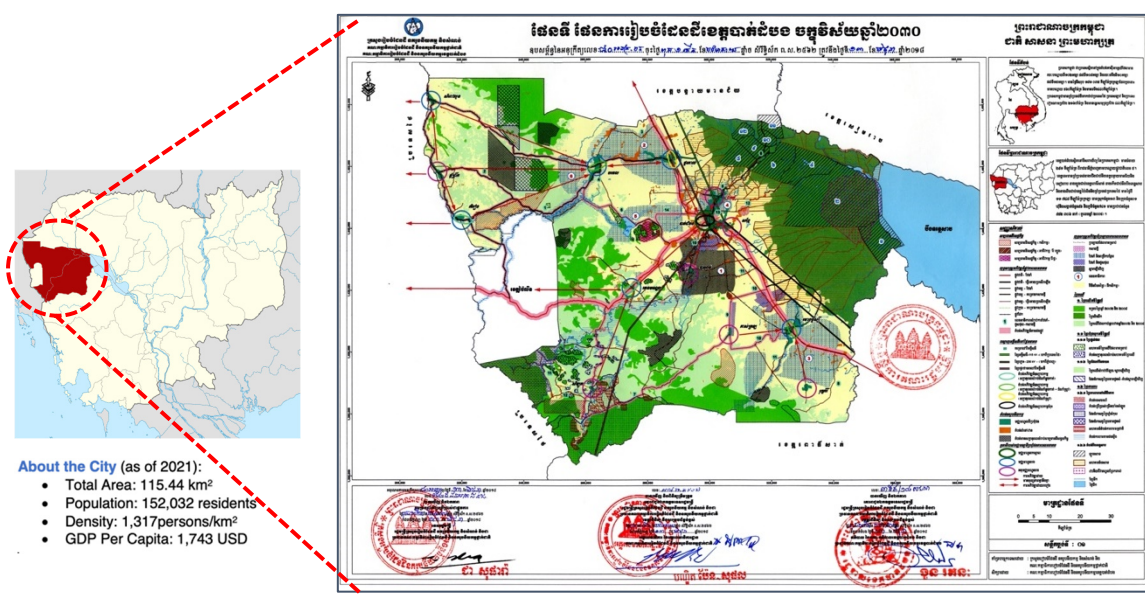

Figure 25: Prioritized Top-ten SDGs

Table 7: Priority Ranking by Regional Voices vs SDG#1-#18

Priority	Region	SDG1	SDG2	SDG3	SDG4	SDG5	SDG6	SDG7	SDG8	SDG9	SDG10	SDG11	SDG12	SDG13	SDG14	SDG15	SDG16	SDG17	SDG18
Priority 1	Central Plain	6																	
	Coastal and Sea	7		2	1		1			1							1		
	Plateau and Mountains	5	1				1												
	Tonle Sap	12		3	3		1										3		
Priority 2	Central Plain		4	5					1										
	Coastal and Sea	1	4	3				3					1					1	
	Plateau and Mountains			5	2														
	Tonle Sap	2	6	6					1	1								1	
Priority 3	Central Plain				1				4	1									
	Coastal and Sea			1	3		3	1	2									1	
	Plateau and Mountains			2	2		1											1	
	Tonle Sap	1	3	4	5	3			1	1					1				
Priority 4	Central Plain				1	3	1			1									
	Coastal and Sea			2	4	2			3					1					
	Plateau and Mountains				2	1			2				1						
	Tonle Sap		1		7	3	2	1	3			1			1				
Priority 5	Central Plain				1	3	2												
	Coastal and Sea		1	2			2			6	2			1					
	Plateau and Mountains						3		1			1			1				
	Tonle Sap		1	1	5	2	5	2	2										
Priority 6	Central Plain					4			1					1					
	Coastal and Sea			3	1		2	4					1	1				1	
	Plateau and Mountains				2		2			1	1								
	Tonle Sap		1	2	1	1	5	3	2	1	1			1		1			
Priority 7	Central Plain				1	1				1			3						
	Coastal and Sea	1				3		3	1	1			2		1		1		
	Plateau and Mountains	2			1				1								1	1	
	Tonle Sap			1	1		3	1	3	2	2	1		1			1	1	
Priority 8	Central Plain							1		3			1			1			
	Coastal and Sea	2	1				1	1	1	1	1	1	3			1			
	Plateau and Mountains									2				1				3	
	Tonle Sap		1				1	4	4			1		2			2	2	1
Priority 9	Central Plain						3						1		1		1		
	Coastal and Sea	1				1	2			3	1	1		2			1		
	Plateau and Mountains						1	1	2					1					1
	Tonle Sap	1				2			1	4	1	2	1				3	2	
Priority 10	Central Plain												3		1	1			1
	Coastal and Sea				2	1			1	3			1				1	1	1
	Plateau and Mountains	1							2								2	1	
	Tonle Sap	1	1			2			1	1	1	1					2	5	2
		43	25	43	44	29	39	27	40	32	16	16	12	16	2	3	19	22	6

Box 1: Smart City Initiative Development in Battambang City, Battambang Province

About the City (as of 2021):
- Total Area: 115.44 km²
- Population: 152,032 residents
- Density: 1,317persons/km²
- GDP Per Capita: 1,743 USD

Background: The Battambang Province is the second largest province in Cambodia, located in the northwest of Cambodia about 300 kilometers away from the Phnom Penh Capital City. The province has one city called Battambang City, which has a total population of approximately 152,032 and a total land area of 115.44 km² (1,317persons/km²). The city is well-known as a rice production hub and French architecture city with a positive living environment.

The Battambang City has seen incredible growth over recent decades, with the built-up area in the city expanding from approximately 1,500 hectares in 1990 to over 4,500 hectares in 2016. The rapid urbanization brings the city both opportunities and challenges, especially in urban land use planning. In 2015, as a result, the Battambang province developed the Land Use Master Plan 2030 to guide the development framework and vision. The Master Plan has several strategic targets as below:

- By 2025: At least 2800 youth will receive specific job skills
- By 2025: 50% of street vendors will transition to formal retail stores, market
- By 2025: At least three informal settlements will be rehabilitated to formal housing
- By 2025: Develop city-wide drainage systems
- By 2025: Build two wastewater treatment plants
- By 2025: 85% of the city's settlements will be covered with sewage systems
- Total asphalted road in the city will be increased from 17% in 2016 to 40% in 2025

Also, it focused on two pillars:

- **Pillar 1: Urban Street and Public Space Management:** In order to improve the livable environment, Battambang provincial administration plans to

upgrade public street and space design (i.e. upgrade a new public garden along the river and tree planting), organize street vendors, and improve the infrastructure for informal settlers. This will be done through development of market, low-cost housing and upgrading of skills.
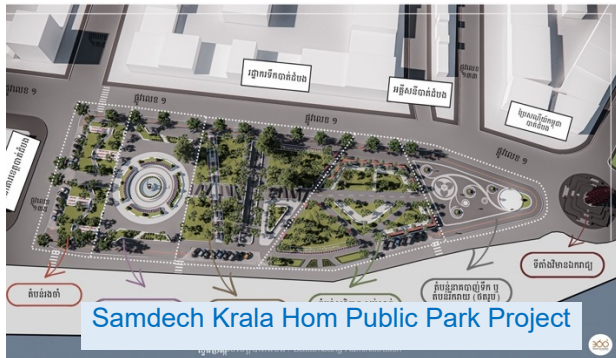

Samdech Krala Hom Public Park Project

Night Market and Food Street

Urban Street at Day and Night Time

- **Pillar 2: Solid and Liquid Waste Management:** Battambang desires to become a green and healthy city. It will move up from river-based natural waste management to sewage and wastewater management systems. Works on drainage systems are being carried out by the Battambang provincial administration supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
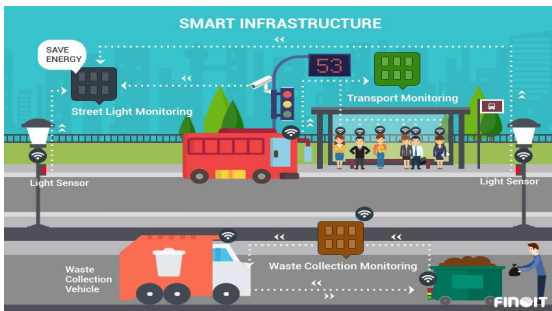
Only 2 provinces and one capital city have smart city initiatives in Cambodia so far. In the recent update of the master plan after five years, the province has a clearer vision to develop Battambang City to become one of the smart cities in Cambodia by integrating modern technologies and sustainable land use planning to achieve a balanced territorial development that will ensure economic efficiency, environmental sustainability and cultural identity. In 2022, Battambang City is one among three cities in Cambodia and among other 18 cities in the region that have been awarded the ASEAN Clean Tourist City 2022-2024.

Source: By Author

Box 2: Sustainable Green and Clean Community Initiatives at Banteay Srey District, Siem Reap Province

Background: Banteay Srei District is located in Siem Reap province (Angkor Wat Temple—World Heritage Site) and just about 40km from the city center. It has a total area of 600km^2 with approximately 43,738 in population (10,130 households),[12] 6 communes and 36 villages. Banteay Srei district has a unique culture and it is hugely advantaged by having many popular tourist attractions, including Banteay Srei Temple, Banteay Samre Temple, Pradak village, and Phnom Kulen National Park. A vast majority of people rely on the tourism sector rather than the agriculture sector.

The District Administration has been seeing both challenges and opportunities at the same time for a long-term development in this district by integrating tourism and agriculture in order to reduce poverty and improve the living standard of the residents. The administration has begun with several significant initiatives, which focused on a people-centered approach or community ownership-oriented initiatives. Some of the successful initiatives are given below:

(i) Installation of solar-powered street lights for each house in the Pradak village under the project so-called "One House, One Light Bulb" (CSDG no. 3, 7, 10, 11, & 13). This initiative addressed two important problems of road traffic safety and safety for individual villagers and tourists at night. Approximately 518 households and thousands of tourists benefited.

(ii) Public awareness and community clean-up practices (CSDG no. 3, 6, 11, & 13): This first began with the district administration and local authorities who collect or pick-up rubbish at least one day a month; this also serves as a role model for the villagers. Also, this initiative encourages and explains to each household how to install rubbish bins (local made

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[12] General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019

products) in the villages. This initiative helps create a cleaner community that is greener and eventually made the community more attractive for tourists. Through such effort, as a result, Preah Dak Village is one of the cleanest villages and also became a "model tourist village" in Siem Reap province as well as in Cambodia.

(iii) Improvement of local people livelihood strategies through agritourism development:[13] It focuses on creating new job and business opportunities for local villagers (i.e., homestay services, selling local hand-made souvenirs, local foods and others) and creating new attractions by using the available resources in the community (i.e., Banteay Srei Roundabout and Preah Dak Model Village), including destination branding and marketing campaigns.

Like other Sub-National Administrations in Cambodia, Banteay Srei district administration is also faced with the financial constraints. However, this administration has come up with an idea to mobilize the local resources from private sector and individual people in its own area (CSDG no. 17). One of them was through a "social fundraising program". It had successful and strong support from all kind of stakeholders due to the strong leadership and achievement that this administration has demonstrated to the public through social-media (Facebook).

Picture: Some of potential tourism activities and products in Banteay Srei district

Source: By Author

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[13] For more information about agro-tourism development and income distribution to local people, please visit: https://www.facebook.com/ទៅលេងបន្ទាយស្រី-111027626986493/photos/?ref=page_internal

Box 3: How Do One Window Service Offices (OWSOs) Contribute to Localization of SDGs in Cambodia?

Background: The traditional structures of public services have been dramatically transforming into new and modern arrangements that best serve the needs of citizens and businesses through the One-Window Service Office (OWSO) mechanism. Technically, OWSO–one-stop shopping for administrative tasks—is designed to promote a friendly public service by bringing services closer to the people in a simple, more inclusive, transparent, accountable, and more efficient, all-in-one location or a single office.

To date, OWSOs are available in all 25 Capital-Provinces (CP) and all 204 Municipalities/Districts/Khans (MDK), and at least 80% of all Communes/Sangkats (CS) have an OWSO. At the CP level, there are 14 sectors available from 12 ministries, whilst 17 sectors available from 13 ministries at the MDK level and approximately 1,300 OWSOs at CS level across the nation.

Since the beginning to July 2022, the OWSOs at the CP level have provided 2.1 million in services and earned a total revenue of approximately $74million[14] (and approximately $20 million per year on average). The OWSOs at the DMK have provided $7.6 million in services and earned a total revenue about $19 million (and approximately $5 million or $7 million per year on average). By the end of 2023, all CS' in Cambodia are expected to have OWSOs (100%).

With this in consideration, it is observed that OWSOs play a significant role for localization of SDGs at the subnational level. For example, it promotes local economic development and business growth through local investment, local entrepreneurs, and fair business competition. Basically, it means to leave no one behind through promoting friendly public services in Cambodia at the subnational level.

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[14] Received from https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/one-window-service-offices-net-75-million (26 Dec 2022)

Some of the important contributions are given below:

Ensure a friendly and citizen-centered public service in Cambodia at the grassroots level. In real practice, OWSO officers have a special rule or focus in providing the services for vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, poor people and pregnancy women. These groups receive a special hospitality, free of charge, and fast services among others.

Improve the local investment environment and increase local job opportunities for local economic development. OWSOs reduce time spent (time is money for businessman) and cost (travel cost, procedure, and unnecessary fee/service charge) for the public with accountability and transparency manners. That means unnecessary fees or "under the table" money is eliminated. All of these aspects are key in supporting factors for local small businesses (many of which are women-owned businesses) to legalize their business to the next level. That eventually increases local job opportunities and reduces risky out-migration to other countries.

Also, it supports local entrepreneurs and SMEs because OWSOs create a good environment (so-called Small Business-Friendly System) for growing local entrepreneurs, particularly youth and women to improve their livelihood and living conditions. It reduces the complexities of the process for small business registration and legalization for those entrepreneurs (such as young startup—SMEs), which help them to access the loans, credits, and/or grants from Micro-Financial Institutes, Banks, and/or governments.

There is an existing information system to record the information of OWSO performance and services, such as service numbers, service incomes, and monitoring service requests. Through this database system, local staff could understand the trend of local business growth as well as challenges. As a result, the staff of OWSO could advise business owners and create better environments for their businesses' growth and others.

SNAs are able to collect revenue (local tax) for local development agenda. Local government agencies are now able to collect revenues (local tax) from providing the public services through the OWSO. Eventually, they can allocate some budgets to their local development agenda or program (such as poverty reduction, school improvement program, waste collection, and other public interest programs).

Digitalization has been improved at SNAs. A new information system (such as Management Information System-MIS) was introduced in the OWSOs. Through this system, local government administrations are now becoming more familiar (hand-on experience) with the roles and implications of digital technologies for improving public services. To date, they admit that they are now more reliant on technology than manual systems. Embracing technology is leading to an increase in efficiency and improvement of public services at SNAs. At the same time, it is observed that more and more local government officials use social media platforms (i.e., Facebook) and digital platforms (i.e., Telegram) for working, sharing information, and communicating.

Besides the MIS, there is also the OWSM Cambodia Application that allows the public to learn and search for available services, fees and requirements by each sector at CP, MDK and CS levels through their smartphones. This application has raised not only the public awareness about OWSOs in their areas, but also helps them to understand how to access the OWSO services in more effective ways.

Sources: Personal Communication with a representative of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Adopted from the Report on Progress from the One-Window Service Office Assessment Report by the FCM and NLC Through the Partnership for Municipal Innovation: Local Economic Development (PMI-LED) (August 2021)

Box 4: Improvement of Living Environment and Disaster Prevention Capacity in Cambodia Project

Period: 2019-2020
Budget: USD 912,409
Funded by: Government of Japan
Implementing Partners: MPLUPC and UN-Habitat
Target: Tboung Khmom Province

Background: The project aimed to enhance resilience capacity through rebuilding houses damaged and destroyed due to recent floods, and also supported the affected communities to improve their livelihood strategies and living conditions. This project significantly contributed to the Royal Government of Cambodia for achieving the "Affordable Housing Policy", particularly the SDG 11 "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." More specifically, the project targeted the most vulnerable and poor families affected by natural disasters(such as floods).

The project was implemented in close coordination with national and subnational administrations, including local authorities. It also demonstrated the "community-driven re-building approach" which helped train and empower local people (whose houses had been completely destroyed) in resilient construction methods and rehabilitated resilient housing. While at the national level, it delivered a capacity building program to ensure disaster risk reduction elements are integrated in the local urban planning agenda.

District Administration, including district council

- Selected the location for implementing the project
- Suggested the target groups of vulnerable people or communities that could benefit the most from the project
- Defined term of conditions for people who are eligible to receive housing.
- Co-designed the typical house structure and materials for building the houses, and set the price.

Commune Administration, including commune council

- Managed the budget from the UN-Habitat for housing construction works
- Established the Community Development Committee (CDC) (50 representatives/28 women) to strengthen and solidify the project implementation & ownership
- Co-defined the typical house structure and materials for building the houses, and set the price
- Trained local villagers on building techniques and hired them for construction

Local Authorities
- Provided technical suggestions, daily monitoring, and supervision to ensure that the construction complies with local regulations
- Contributed to the resettlement of works/safeguard works

Beneficiaries
- Participated in construction for free (in-kind contribution)
- Provided house construction materials available in their communities (like bamboo)

After project competition in May 2020, 202 houses, (104 newly-constructed and 98 rehabilitated) including 202 latrines, have been completely constructed with in-kind contributions from the beneficiaries (local villagers) and handed over to key households affected by the floods. During the COVID-19 pandemic, an additional 14 latrines were installed for 14 households in five communities and benefited at least 86 people. To be eligible to receive the houses and latrines, applicants need to meet at least one of the following criteria: (1) People with ID Poor; (2) Affected by the natural disasters; and (3) Families/Households with more than 5 members, many children/ageing persons, and/or woman-headed household.

This might be seen as a small-scale of impact from an infrastructure perspective, but it has made a positive example of partnership and collaboration work between SNAs and development partners or donor agencies in localization of SDGs at the SNA level. Also, it demonstrated significant long-term awareness for the SNAs in terms of integrated urban planning with disaster risk reduction in Cambodia[15]. One of which is through its advocacy agenda to encourage SNAs to include disaster prevention and preparation in the PIP. And this project defined a solid target group to achieve the goal "Leave No One Behind."

Source: Personal communication via Microsoft Team with a representative of UN-Habitat Office in Cambodia (January 03rd, 2023) and End of Project Evaluation Report (2020) by UN-Habitat Cambodia.

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[15] Cambodia is highly considered one of the most vulnerable countries in the Southeast Asia region because of climate change. In particular, it's affected by affected by floods and droughts on a seasonal basis (the World Bank and UN Cambodia).

Box 5: Provincial Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition (PWG-FSN)

Background: Kampot is a province in Southwestern Cambodia, divided in 7 districts, 2 municipalities, 85 communes, 8 Sangkat and 488 villages. It shares border with Koh Kong and Kampong Speu to the north, Takéo to the east, Kep and the country of Vietnam to the south, and Sihanoukville to the west. It has a coastline of around 45km on the Gulf of Thailand. It is rich in low arable lands and has abundant natural resources. Its capital is the City of Kampot. The total population is 592,845 (53% are women and 47% are men). The main income is from the agriculture sectors, tourism and remittance from family living abroad. The poverty rate is 17.8% (refer to recent study in 2021 by National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning).

Senator, CARD, PWG-FSN monitoring fish farm

Efforts Made: The PWG-FSN was established in October 2020, by the provincial council with technical assistance from CARD/CM and GIZ-MUSEFO. It is formed of 9 departments (PDH, PDWA, PDRD, PDP, PDEYS, PDWRM, PDAFF, and PDEF) and international and local NGOs (HKI, Word Vision, RACHA, GIZ-MUSEFO, and Local NGO), and chaired by provincial deputy governor. A total of 27 members joined the PWG-FSN in Kampot province. Each provincial department nominated 2 staff, one deputy director of department and one technical staff, and 1 representative from development partners. The PWG-FSN led by the deputy provincial governor and co-chair with GIZ-MUSEFO. PWG-FSN is a mechanism to synergize different resources and technical-know-how toward improving food security and nutrition.

The PDH and PDAFF are more advanced than other members as the FSN is one of the main priority within their sectors. Hence, these two provincial departments have the most resource persons to share knowledge and experiences with others during the quarterly meeting. In addition, the secretary of the PWG-FSN has a proper office equipped with the ICT facilities such as the video conference system, computers desktop and laptop, LCD Projector and printer. This setup has made it easy to connect with the PWG-FSN in regard of the topic of FSN at the provincial level.

Functions of PWG-FSN: With the basis of National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition, the PWG-FSN has developed and implemented a clear annual work-plan; it hosts regular meetings every quarter to provide mutual updates, to share practical experiences, to identify and short-out issues related, and to define priorities for the

upcoming quarter. Every member of the PWG-FSN has provided technical supports to commune/sangkat and village levels, as per their individual mandatory tasks.

This is an example of a participatory assessment carried-out by a national consultant, and viewed by PWG-FSN itself (Score 1: lowest, 5: highest)
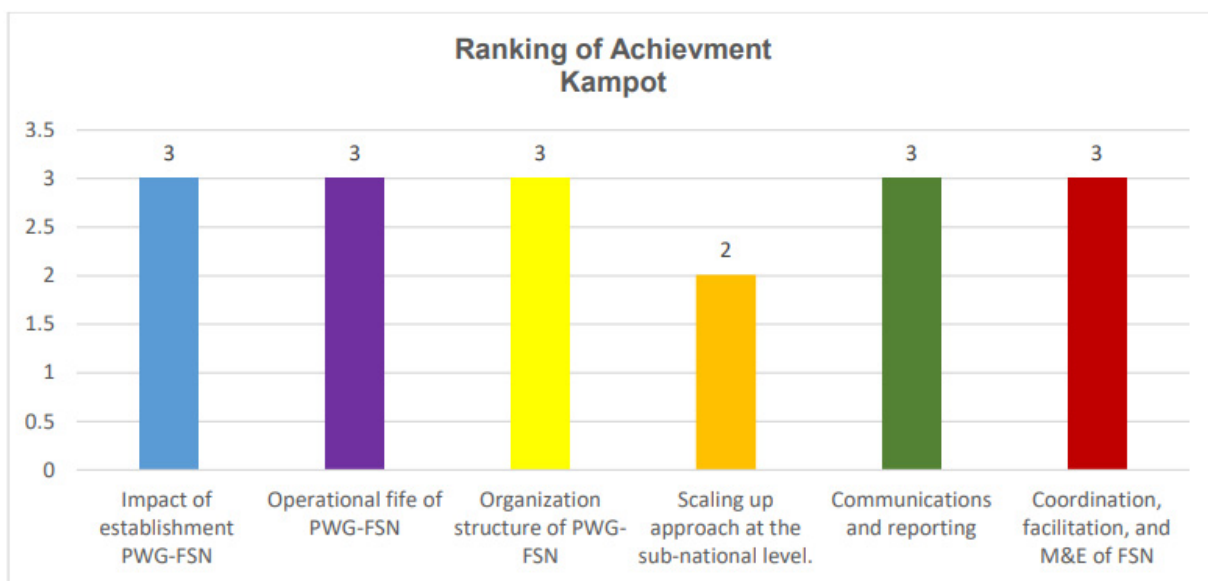
The intervention made by PWG-FSN is confirming how the government's sector departments at subnational level, NGO/OI/UNO and commune/sangkat councils are working together in the implementation of National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition. Since the strategy imposed a cross-cutting theme, PWG-FSN has actually contributed to the localization and realization of SDG #1, #2, #3, #5, #6 and SDG #13.

At the VSR, PWG-FSN has been established and functioned in 24 provinces and 1 capital city of Cambodia.

Source: by author, GIZ-MUSEFO case study report, OWNH documentary

Box 6: Provincial Working Group for ODF (Open Defecation Free)/ WASH

Background: Svay Rieng is one of the 24 provinces of Cambodia; it is located in the East of the country, and is bordered by Vietnam at the East and South. This province has been categorized as a poor one. It consists of 6 districts, 2 municipalities, 68 communes, 12 Sangkats and 690 villages. It has 143,341 households with 152,173 families, and a total population of 642,713 people of whom 330,915 are female. The main income sources are agriculture and textiles. Access to WASH services was limited in this province; many people got sick with contaminated diseases, and women and children were the ones who suffered most.

Efforts made: The provincial council had established a PWG/RWSSH (Provincial Working Group for Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene) and further established district-based DWG/RWSSH, in 2018. Its target is to provide 100% access to WASH services by 2023.

Basic Data

Indicators	2018	2021	2023
% of access to basic sanitation	86.0	95.0	100
% of access to hand washing facilities	75.0	100	
% of access to clean water supply	99.3	99.4	100
% of access to safe water supply	86.6	88.6	100

PWG/RWSSH created a strategy to meet its goal by early 2023. Under that strategic approach, and with the provincial council's support—the PWG/RWSSH and DWG/RWSSH have colloboratively implemented key activities, namely (i) encouraged commune/sangkat council to invest more resources for the WASH sector; (ii) asked the provincial council to allocate funds for WASH to the grass-root community; (iii) mobilized private sector involvement in WASH sector; and (iv) launched a series of public information dissemination and awareness campaigns on WASH best practices; with gender focus theme.

Consequence: In January 2023, a national evaluation team, together with PWG/RWSSH and DWG/RWSSH, conducted a technical review and concluded that Svay Rieng province is a first ODF and a model of WASH improvement.

The successful approach and modality were then replicated in other provinces.

At this VSR, at least 6 provinces have been documented as success stories.

This case study presents the vital roles and effective interventions of subnational administration in SDGs localization and realization, specially SDG #1, #3, #5 and SDG #6.

Source: by author, communication with WASH/ODF team and PWG/RWSSH

Box 7: Village integrated projects to build villagers' capacity in climate change resilience

Background: Dong commune is located in Bati district, Takeo province. It is an underdeveloped commune, particularly a village named Tanorn. This village is one of the eight villages of Dong Commune. It is located in an isolated geographic area and is next to the Krang Yao commune in Kandal Province. The village lies on land that floods in every wet season. It had a poor access road which was 924 meters in length (from entrain to end), and has total land size of 71 hectares. Tanorn village has 107 households, consisting of 124 families with 563 members.

Based on national poverty data, the village had been categorized as poor; the villagers made a living on rice farming, which harvests once a year, with average yield of 2.5 tons per hectare. They fish for local consumption in the wet season. Some families earned additional income from working in the textile sector, far away from the village.

In 2019, the Bati district council formed a working group, which comprised of all specialized sectoral offices and the district government, to assist the Dong commune council in socioeconomic development. Commune council of Dong selected Tanorn village to localize and implement CSDGs.

Commune council's efforts in CSDGs localization and realizations at a village level: Commune council implemented 6 complementary projects in Tanorn village, namely (i) safe managed water supply, (ii) access road, (iii) street light, (iv) canal construction, (v) waste recycling into organic fertilizer, and (vi) agriculture optimization.

(i)   Safe managed water supply: employing a new technology called "decentralized water supply", the commune council renovated a water pond of 54m x 54m with 8m depth, installed a water treatment and supply system, installed a clean energy (solar) power supply, and installed 2,628 meters of water pipe networks and provided 117 household connections. The poor, vulnerable and female-headed households received free-of-charge household connections, while the rest of the households contributed US$10 per household.

At the end of December 2022, 88% of local household had access, and used, this safely managed water supply service, and 98% of water users have expressed their satisfaction with the availability and convenience access to the safe, piped water system. With an access to safe water, a number of small businesses, such as café, food shops, homestead, animal raising were created.

The project has significantly achieved beyond sector vision and the national target in term of access to and use safely managed water supply service. The national goal of all access by 2025 and the national target of 90% of rural households access to and use basic water supply service by 2023. The effort contributed to sustainable and equal access to safe water of CSDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) by 2030. In addition, the achieved outcomes also contributed to a number of Cambodia's SDGs, particularly Cambodia SDG 1 (No poverty); 2 (Zero hunger); 3 (Good health and well-being for all people); 5 (Gender equality), and 13 (Climate action).

(ii)   Access Road: A total length of 1,450 meters, with a thickness of 0.3 meter of paved road, was constructed in Tanorn village. This project helps improve the village's life through access, and also by allowing outside vendors and visitors into the village.

(iii)   Street-light: 68 piles of solar panels/lamps were installed along the village's paved road. They light the roads from 6pm afternoon to 6am in the morning. The project helps prevent traffic accidents at night, helps saves the grid electricity and helps improves personal security.

(iv)   Canal construction: 1,453 meters of concrete canal was constructed in Tanorn; it drains flooding water from the village to the rice field. The canal has been beautified with flower and plants. The project helps with flooding and also beautifies the village.

(v)   Waste recycling: Dong commune council contracted an NGO to provide training and to facilitate a practice of waste recycling into organic fertilizer. In practical actions, solid wastes were recycled through composting, and the grey and black wastewaters were recycled through a primary treatment. Both, compost and treated wastewater, are used to enrich soil conditions and used on farm productions.

(vi)   Agriculture optimization: A series of technical trainings on agriculture diversification and optimization was launched in the village. As result, the villagers applied their new knowledge to planting vegetables, rice farming, fish raising in rice farms, and in poultry raising.
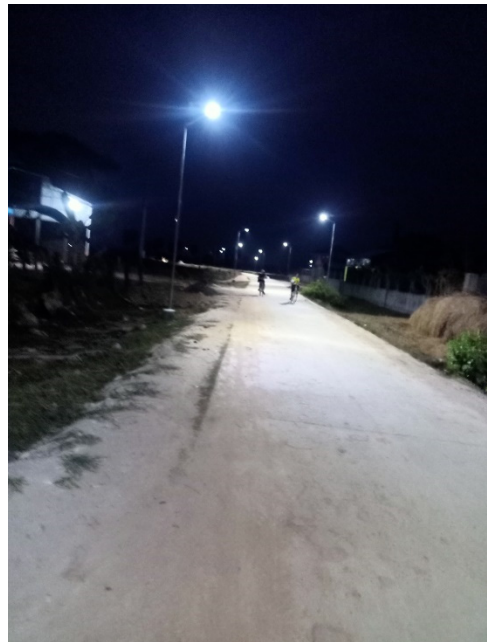
The implemented complementary activities by commune council has resulted in improving villagers' living conditions; and contributed to realizations of CSDG #1, #3, #6, #7, #10, and CSDG #13.

Source: by author

Chapter 5: Means and Challenges of SDGs Implementations

Three different means of implementation of the CSDGs at SNA were observed in this report, namely (1) initiatives (PPAs) made by CP/MDK under the financial and/or technical supports from the national government; (2) initiatives made by CP/MDK under the financial and/or technical support from DP/DA or NGOs; and (3) initiatives made by Private Sector under partnership with CP/MDK. It's also observed that the total allocation of the shared budget at subnational level has been increasing from year to year (see **Table 7** and above section 3.3. and particular figure 7). Moreover, the allocation of Commune-Sangkat Budget (CSB) is even larger than the District-Municipal Budget (DMB). Yet it is hard to calculate budget proportion by each goal of CSDGs at the SNA because of limited data.

Table 8: Total allocations of share budget at subnational and national levels

Items	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Line Ministry Budget	80.8%	80.5%	78.6%	77.6%	75.1%	74.7%	75.0%
Capital-Provincial Line Department Budget	13.8%	13.5%	14.8%	15.6%	17.8%	17.9%	18.2%
Subnational Budget	5.4%	6.0%	6.6%	6.9%	7.1%	7.4%	6.7%
• Capital-Provincial Budget	3.8%	3.9%	4.5%	4.7%	4.9%	5.0%	4.3%
• District-Municipal Budget	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%
• Commune-Sangkat Budget	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%

Source: National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (2018): Budget Report

There are some significant challenges in integrating CSDGs into the PDP and PIP at the subnational level. Lack of funds and technical support or assistance from relevant stakeholders (private sector, NGOs, communities, etc.) are considered the major challenges for SNAs to implement or localize CSDGs in their organizations (see **Figure 25**). While during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a diversion from other priorities in order to address public health crisis, but lack of funds is still the major challenge (see **Figure 26**).
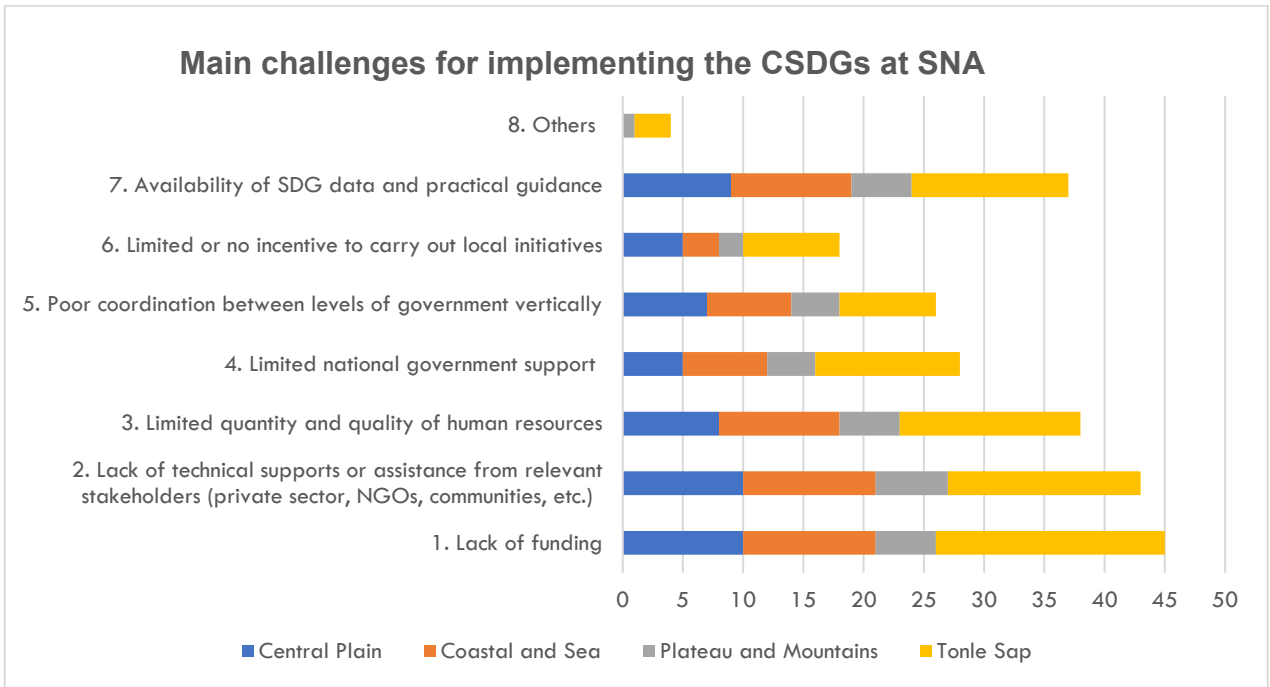
Figure 26: Main Challenges for Implementing the CSDGs at SNA

Other important challenges are:

i. No certain guidelines and CSDGs' indicators to implement and monitor the progress and achievement. Because of this, the subnational administrations find it hard to integrate the CSDGs into their public investment program and development plans.

ii. No office or Technical Committee which is responsible for localizing and implementing the CSDGs at the subnational level. This makes them difficult to find the ways to implement and seek financial and technical support.

Figure 27: Main Challenges for Implementing the CSDGs during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

The Voluntary Sub-National Review (VSR) of SDGs was developed by the NLC, with the support of UCLG ASPAC, UCLG and FCM. The preparation process of the VSR was inclusive with the participation from many relevant stakeholders, including local and in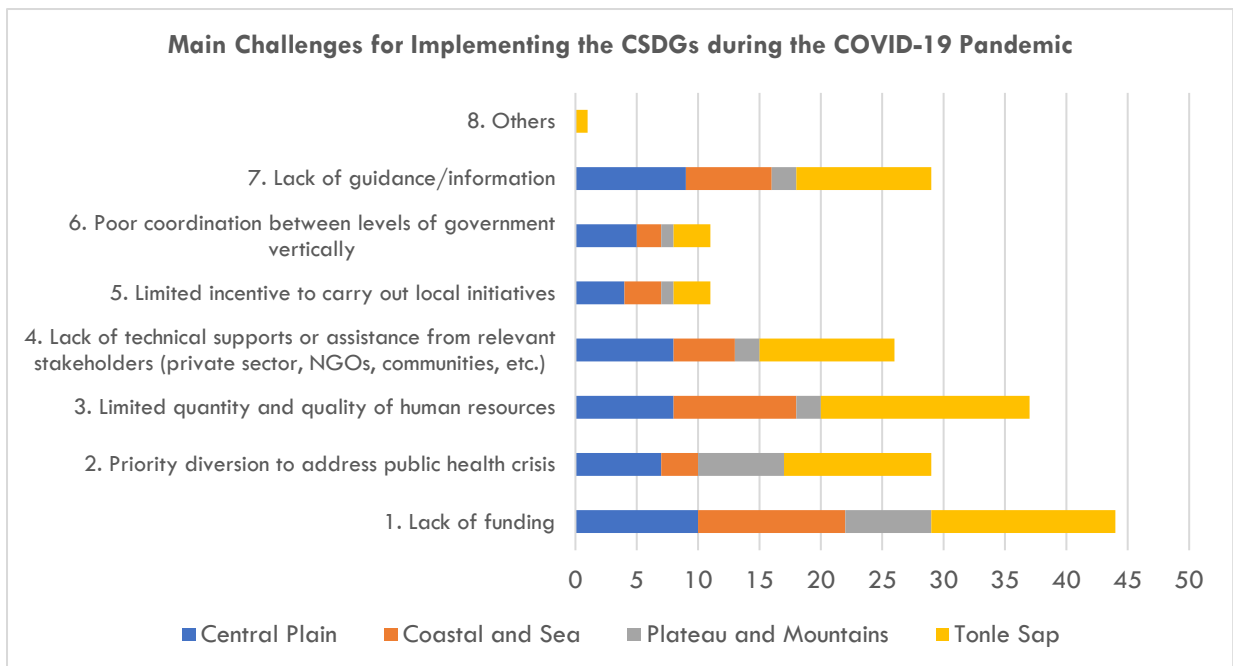ternational NGOs, development partners and donor agencies. Also, individual province and MDKs were encouraged to have a group meeting with relevant stakeholders, including NGOs, and even C/S in their areas, to contribute and answer the questionnaires.

The subnational administration has demonstrated many important roles in localization of CSDGs as mentioned in sections 4.2 and 4.3. The goal no. 1: No Poverty is appearing to be the most important goal not only at the national, but also at the subnational level. At the same time, various approaches are observed around the localization of CSDGs at the subnational level in which most are public awareness (including capacity building programs and law enforcement), and infrastructure development (including climate resilient infrastructure). However, the means of implementation is very much reliant on the available allocated budget at the subnational level, which is currently a major challenge. Hence, the allocated budgets for subnational administration, including local taxes have been increasing year by year.

The statements in section 4.1 mentioned "8 respondents see SNA is in SDGs implementation; 11 respondents see SNA is in the processes of alignment of SDGs in their local development plans; and 38 respondents see SNA is in the phase of awareness and conceptualization of SDGs", but it is necessary to acknowledge the immense work that local governments put into localization, although they do not label their actions as "SDGs".

In summary, the SNAs are playing an important role in the localization and implementation of CSDGs, in their respective territories, in collaborative efforts with the national government. They utilized nationally allocated resources, DP/DA assistance, local revenues and locally mobilized resources. Furthermore, most of the projects implemented by MDK and C/S have benefited the grassroots communities.

6.2. Implications

During the VSR, some of the key development actors at the subnational level were made aware of the CSDGs, as they were not well informed that they are delegated and empowered to localize CSDGs. Thus, the VSR is somehow help raising awareness of SNA on SDGs localizations.

In addition, some key actors in SNA expressed their need for training and awareness building on CSDG interpretation and localization, in order to enable them to adhere to

their local development plans. They had also expressed needs for supports, guidance, backstop, M&E, and technical assistance from a national level, NLC and from DP/DA. In addition, they expressed that they preferred to have a fundamental data/ information in place for their local development planning to be in alignment with CSDGs.

This means that SNA need more support to be familiarized with the CSDGs and their tasks in CSDGs localizations; and that their commitments in CSDGs localization and realization are there. The real needs are technical inputs and guidance, as well as monitoring.

Commune/Sangkat councils are directly elected by locally respective citizens to allow them to represent the lowest level of the government and to serve locally public welfares. The commune/Sangkat councils further vote for CP and MDK council, and even indirectly vote the majority of senators. They (CC/SC) play very important roles in CSDGs localizations, in which they are entitled to accountable to voters.

6.3. Recommendations

1. Provision of awareness raising, capacity building, technical assistance and backstopping to SNA on CSDGs localization and realization. We would like to propose NLC, NCDD, DP/DA and likeminded NGOs to continue providing the above services and technical know-how. Participatory monitoring would also be a tool to help SNAs as well.
2. The availability of fundamental data and statistics, which are simply accessible to/and suitable to SNA capacity would be very helpful for them to align and translate them in their local development planning vs. CSDGs. Hence, the data and statistics should be updated regularly and avoid every discrepancy.
3. To encourage and mainstream the subnational administration to use CSDGs as one of the key references for preparation of PDP and PIP, including the relevant Provincial Departments, and to also encourage the Subnational Investment Fund (SNIF) to also focus on the CSDGs would help accelerating CSDGs realizations.
4. It is commonly acknowledged that the use of a social safeguard and environmental safeguard in every project at subnational level should be strengthened, as they help to avoid any adverse impacts of the projects and help contribute to the SDGs overall objective to "ensure an inclusive, equitable, prosperous and sustainable future".
5. The efforts of commune/Sangkat councils in CSDGs localization and realizations should be considered in integrating into the VSR processes, at least in Cambodia.
6. It would be interesting to learn how SNAs work together as a team in CSDGs localizations. This can be included in the questionnaire e.g. knowledge, attitude and practice. In many cases, KAP helps a lot in building stronger teamwork and personal best performances.
7. Many CSDG indicators require active participation from the private sector— therefore, it would be necessary to encourage more engagement or roles for the private sector in localizing the CSDGs at the subnational level.

8. In accordance with the 5-year strategic plan of NLC and in response to the demands of PALC—NLC may be requested to consider raising funds for supporting PALC and C/S in low-emission Food Security and Nutrition projects; this project should be embracing WASH improvement as well.
9. NLC may be requested to advocate for increasing of funds for SNA, especially funds for localization and implementation of CSDGs.

Main References

1. Rectangular Strategy Phase IV
2. National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023
3. Cambodian Development Goals Framework 2016-2030
4. National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2025
5. Cambodia Industrial Development Policy 2015-2025
6. National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2025
7. National Strategic Plan on Green Growth 2013-2030
8. Long-term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality (2021)
9. Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023
10. National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2016)
11. Agricultural Development Strategic Plan 2019-2023
12. Neary Rattanak IV (5-Year Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2014- 2018)
13. Health Strategic Plan 2016-2020
14. Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023
15. Policy on Labor Migration for Cambodia 2015-2018
16. National Employment Policy 2015-2025
17. CAMBODIA INTERGOVERNMENTAL FISCAL ARCHITECTURE STUDY
18. Provincial AWPB of Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kratie, Kampot
19. Case study Reports of PWG-FSN, PWG-ODF
20. Overall SDGs achievements and progresses
21. Localizing the SDGs: a boost to monitoring & reporting
22. Country Profile of Cambodia, Observatory on Subnational Finance and Investments

Appendix A: List of Key Informants

No.	Name	Sex	Position	Organization
1	Boun Cheng	M	Director of Function and Resource Department	MOI
2	Eung Keorathanak	M	Deputy Director of Function and Resource Department	MOI
3	Chev Sambath	M	Chief of Office	MOI
4	Boun Chamchreaun	M	Chief of Office	MOI
5	Lay Chhan	M	Deputy Director General	NIS/MOP
6	So Sovannchakriya	F	Deputy Director General	NIS/MOP
7	Bouy Somethea	M	Director of Department	NIS/MOP
8	Chan Somreth	M	Deputy Director	NIS/MOP
9	Som Boni	M	Deputy Director	NIS/MOP
10	NA	F	Representative	MOWA
11	NA	F	Representative	MOWA
12	NA	F	Representative	MOWA
13	Ms. Nimnoun	F	Head of Policy	UNDP
14	Mr. Theara	M	Policy Analyst	UNDP
15	Sok Vanna	M	Country Representative	UN-Habitat
16	Long Sona	M	Representative	NCSD
17	Pok Sokundara	M	Secretary General	NLC
18	Tep Ketsiny	F	Staff	NLC
19	Song Polrith	M	Advisor	NCDD
20	Chim Charanay	M	WASH Consultant	CARD/CM
21	Pol Chanrithy	M	Advisor	GIZ-MUSEFO
22	Keang Sengky	M	Chairman	PALC KPT
23	Yos Yeoun	M	Chairman	PALC BTB
24	Eng Samrith	M	Chairman	PALC PST
25	Chhor Than	M	Chairman	PALC KCH
26	Cheam Sok	M	Chairman	PALC BMC

Appendix B: List of Projects Implemented by NLC/NACPC by Partnering with SNAs

Project No. 1: First three-year Implementation Plan of National Program

Objective: Developed a management system of Capital/Provincial, Municipality/District/Khan and Commune/Sangkat based on the principles of democratic participation (transparency and accountability) in order to promote local development and delivery of public services to meet the needs of citizens and contribute to poverty reduction within the respective territories.	
Budget:	$1,000,000 US
Period:	2011-2017 (completed)
Funded by:	NCDD
Target City/District:	National wide
Target Province:	National wide
Matching or Targeting SDGs	16, 17, 5, 10

Project No. 2: Association of Councils Enhanced Services Project (ACES)

Objective: Turned the Associations of Sub-National Administration Councils (ASAC) into an effective representative of local voices for democratic development.	
Budget:	UNDP TRAC: $1,600,000 US Total: $4,990,398 US
Period:	2012-2017 (completed)
Funded by:	EU-UNDP
Target City/District:	National wide
Target Province:	National wide
Matching or Targeting SDGs	16, 17, 5, 10

Project No. 3: The Partnerships for Municipal Innovation in Local Economic Development (PMI-LED) Project

Objective: NLC and LED stakeholders working collaboratively to create and improve enable environment that fosters local economic prosperity and helping the LGs and LGA promote regional business attraction, retention/expansion, investment and trade, also strengthening support for the development of micro, SMEs to support their economic development and open up new market.	
Budget:	$1.5 million US
Period:	2015-2020 (completed)
Funded by:	Government of Canada
Target City/District:	Battambang, Monkul Borey, Serey Sophorn and Poipet
Target Province:	Battambang and Banteay Meanchey
Matching or Targeting SDGs	16, 17, 5, 10

Project No. 4: Improve the capacity of the Cambodian SNAs in participatory, integrated and sustainable urban planning and land management in order to upgrade the urban poor settlements and ensure access to basic services for vulnerable communities

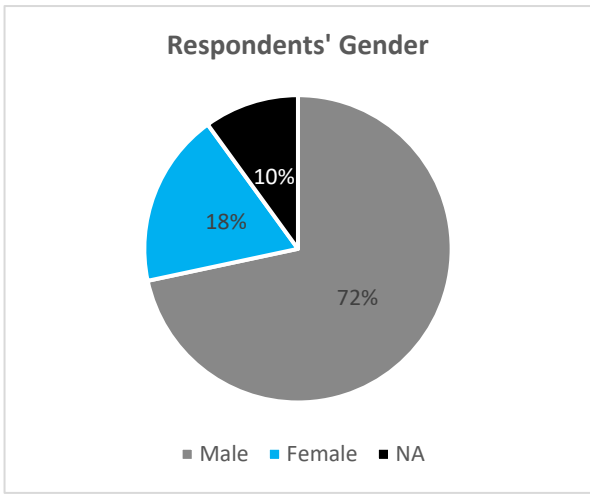| Objective: The general objective of the action is to enhance the capacities of the SNAs in urban planning and land management in order to upgrade the urban poor settlements and ensure access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services to vulnerable communities.	
Budget:	• EU Budget (75%) : 750,000 € • Total : 1,004,410 €
Period:	2019-2022 (completed)
Funded by:	EU-AIMF
Target City/District:	National wide
Target Province:	National wide
Matching or Targeting SDGs	16, 17, 5, 10

Project No. 5: The Partnerships for Municipal Innovation – Women in Local Leadership (PMI-WILL)

Objective: Improve quality of life for women and girls, in particular for those who are from marginalized groups,[16] in Benin, Cambodia, Ghana, Sri Lanka, and Zambia.	
Budget:	$1.5 million US
Period:	2021-2027 (on-going)
Funded by:	FCM
Target City/District:	Kep, Tek Chhou, Rolea Bier, Kralanh and Mesang
Target Province:	Kep, Kampot, Kampong Chhang, Siem Reap and Prey Veng
Matching or Targeting SDGs	16, 17, 5, 10

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[16] Marginalized groups or communities will be defined differently in each country, and may include factors such as ethnicity, religion, disability, and sexual orientation.

Appendix C: Respondents' Profile

Respondents are from:

- District: 62%
- Municipality/Khan: 25%
- Province: 13%

Distribution by Region

- Tonle Sap: 45%
- Plateau and Mountains: 13%
- Coastal and Sea: 23%
- Central Plain: 18%

Distribution by Age Groups

- Young: 33%
- Middle: 27%
- Senior: 40%

Respondents' Gender

- Male: 72%
- Female: 18%
- NA: 10%

Year of Start Working as a Government Official

- 1980-1990: 12
- 1991-2000: 9
- 2001-2010: 17
- 2011-Present: 13
- NA: 9

q3_Where did you (or your colleagues) learn about the SDGs?

Legend: Central Plain, Coastal and Sea, Plateau and Mountains, Tonle Sap, Overall
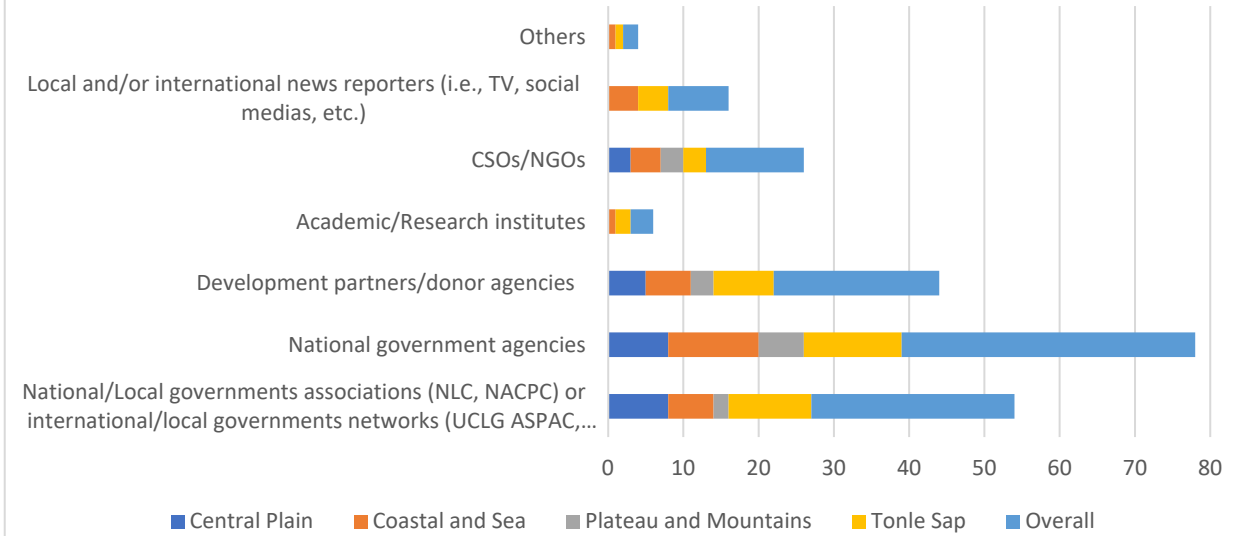
q5_Contribution to the National Volunteer Review Report on the SDGs?

Legend: Yes, No, Don't know
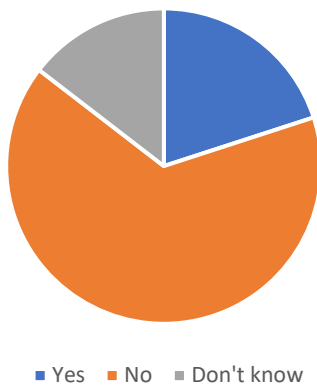
If NO, would you like to contribute in the future?

Yes: 97%, No: 3%, Don't know: 0%
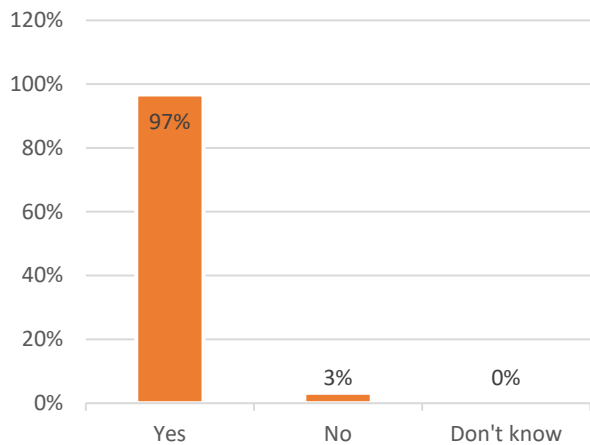
q5_Has your municipal or provincial government had the opportunity to contribute to the National Volunteer Review Report on the SDGs?

Appendix D: CSDG Progresses (2021)

SDG #	Measurement		
	Indications	Data (Year)	Data (Year)
SDG 1: No Poverty	Poverty headcount ratio at $2.15 a day (2017 PPP) (% of population)	No data available	
	Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines (% of population)	23.9 (2009)	17.7 (2012)
	Multidimensional poverty headcount ratio (% of total population)	No data available	
SDG 2: Zero Hunger	Prevalence of stunting, height for age (% of children under 5)	42.8 (2000)	32.4 (2014)
	Prevalence of undernourishment (% of population)	24.0 (2001)	6.0 (2020)
	Prevalence of severe food insecurity in the population (%)	16.9 (2015)	15.1 (2020)
	Prevalence of stunting, height for age, female (% of children under 5)	48.5 (2000)	31.9 (2014)
	Prevalence of stunting, height for age, male (% of children under 5)	49.4 (2000)	33.0 (2024)
SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)	488 (2000)	160 (2017)
	Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)	106 (2000)	25 (2021)
	Incidence of HIV, ages 15-49 (per 1,000 uninfected population ages 15-49)	98 (2000)	0.1 (2021)
	Mortality rate, under-5, female (per 1,000 live births)	98 (2000)	22 (2021)
	Mortality rate, under-5, male (per 1,000 live births)	114 (2000)	28 (2021)
	Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19)	54 (2000)	46 (2021)

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	School enrollment, primary and secondary (gross), gender parity index (GPI)	0.82 (2000)	1.04 (2021)
	Lower secondary completion rate, total (% of relevant age group)	16.5 (2001)	57.7 (2021)
	Literacy rate, youth total (% of people ages 15-24)	83 (2004)	96 (2021)
	Lower secondary completion rate, female (% of relevant age group)	10.7 (2001)	63.0 (2021)
	Lower secondary completion rate, male (% of relevant age group)	22.2 (2001)	52.5 (2021)
SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%)	7 (2000)	22 (2021)
	Women Business and the Law Index Score (scale 1-100)	63.1 (2000)	81.3 (2021)
	Female share of employment in senior and middle management (%)	15 (2000)	29 (2019)
	Firms with female top manager (% of firms)	57 (2016)	57 (2016)
SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	People using at least basic drinking water services (% of population)	53 (2000)	71 (2020)
	People using safely managed sanitation services (% of population)	No data available	
	People using at least basic sanitation services (% of population)	10 (2000)	69 (2020)
	Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources	1.04 (2006)	1.04 (2019)
	People using safely managed	17 (2000)	28 (2020)

	drinking water services (% of population)		
SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Renewable energy consumption (% of total final energy consumption)	81.58 (2000)	53.36 (2019)
	Access to electricity (% of population)	16.6 (2000)	86.4 (2020)
	Access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking (% of population)	4 (2000)	37 (2020)
	Access to electricity, rural (% of rural population)	6.6 (2000)	82.9 (2020)
	Access to electricity, urban (% of urban population)	60.6 (2000)	93.3 (2020)
SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	GDP per person employed (constant 2017 PPP $)	3,192 (2000)	7,777 (2021)
	GDP growth (annual %)	10.0 (2000)	3.0 (2021)
	GDP per capita growth (annual %)	8.0 (2000)	1.8 (2021)
	Account ownership at a financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population ages 15+)	3.66 (2011)	33.39 (2021)
SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	CO_2 emissions (metric tons per capita)	0.2 (2000)	1.0 (2019)
	Manufacturing, value added (% of GDP)	16 (2000)	18 (2021)
	Research and development expenditure (% of GDP)	0.05 (2002)	0.12 (2015)
SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	Annualized average growth rate in per capita real survey mean consumption or income, bottom 40% of population (%)	No data available	
	Annualized average growth rate in per capita real survey mean consumption or income, total population (%)	No data available	

	Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income (%)	No data available	
	Average transaction cost of sending remittances to a specific country (%)	13.56 (2016)	11.75 (2020)
	Average transaction cost of sending remittances from a specific country (%)	No data available	
SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Population living in slums (% of urban population)	85 (2000)	40 (2020)
	Urban population growth (annual %)	2.5 (2000)	2.9 (2021)
	PM2.5 air pollution, population exposed to levels exceeding WHO guideline value (% of total)	100 (2000)	100 (2017)
SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Adjusted net savings, excluding particulate emission damage (% of GNI)	8.1 (2000)	17.4 (2020)
	Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	2.5 (2000)	1.0 (2020)
	Droughts, floods, extreme temperatures (% of population, average 1990-2009)	6.6 (2009)	6.6 (2009)
SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Disaster risk reduction progress score (1-5 scale; 5=best)	No data available	
	Total greenhouse gas emissions (kt of CO2 equivalent)	19,380 (2000)	40,060 (2019)
SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Marine protected areas (% of territorial waters)	0.2 (2016)	1.4 (2021)
	Total fisheries production (metric tons)	298,798 (2000)	933,260 (2020)
	Aquaculture production (metric tons)	14,430 (2000)	400,400 (2020)
	Capture fisheries production (metric tons)	284,368 (2000)	532,860 (2020)

SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Forest area (% of land area)	61.1 (2000)	45.7 (2020)
	Terrestrial and marine protected areas (% of total territorial area)	20.6 (2016)	31.8 (2021)
	Terrestrial protected areas (% of total land area)	26 (2016)	39.7 (2021)
SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget (%)	94.1 (2007)	94.69 (2020)
	Bribery incidence (% of firms experiencing at least one bribe payment request)	59.5 (2007)	64.7 (2016)
	Completeness of birth registration (%)	66 (2005)	73 (2014)
	Completeness of birth registration, rural (%)	66 (2005)	72 (2014)
	Completeness of birth registration, urban (%)	71 (2005)	84 (2014)
SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Individuals using the Internet (% of population)	0 (2001)	33 (2017)
	Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)	2.8 (2000)	4.3 (2021)
	Foreign direct investment, net inflows (% of GDP)	3.2 (2000)	12.9 (2021)
	Debt service (PPG and IMF only, % of exports of goods, services and primary income)	0.7 (2000)	1.9 (2021)
	Tax revenue (% of GDP)	8.2 (2002)	17.9 (2020)
	Exports of goods and services (% of GDP)	49.8 (2000)	64.6 (2021)

Source: https://data.worldbank.org/country/cambodia?view=chart

Appendix E: Note of the Validation Workshop

The Validation Workshop held on 25th April 2023, morning, in Bayon Restaurant. It was chaired by four persons representing MOI, MOP, MOWA and PALC, and was presided over by H.E **Say Kosal**, president of NLC. The event was fully participated by 47 key persons from NLC, PALC, MOI, MOP, MOWA, API, UNDP and Cabinet of Council Ministers.

In the objective to present the VSR analytical findings and to openly discuss and generate inputs from all participants—the event went through four sessions, namely (1) introductory and opening remark by H.E Say Kosal; (2) presentations of VSR methodology applied, key analytical findings and recommendations; (3) open discussion and gathering participants' inputs to validate the VSR report; and (4) wrap-up and closing remarks by H.E Say Kosal.

In the introductory and opening remarks, H.E Say Kosal recalled a rational background and informed participants on the Cambodia's VSR. He expressed thankfulness to donors and supporters, and also motivated participants to pay attention to details on the VSR presentation and to motivate them to share their feedback.

In session 2, the consultant made a presentation on (1) VSR methodology applied; (2) the compositions and components of respondents, by age, and by years of experiences in SNA position; (3) the analytical findings and interpretations with the supports of concrete evidence and visual illustrations; and (4) the conclusion and recommendations.

In session 3, at the latest stage the consultant encouraged participants to share their thoughts, comments, advice and other related inputs, as summarized in below table.

Participants provided their impression with the VSR report, which captured what had been done at subnational level. Participants were satisfied and supported all the recommendations presented. In addition, they are happy, as what they endeavored had been recognized and documented.

Table 1: Summary of Feedbacks and Responses

No	Participants' comments/advices	Response, clarification, answers made
1	MOP: MOP has done VNR. The processes included interviews with sector departments and line ministries. Why VSR is done by NLC and not by MOP?	H.E Say Kosal responded "VSR was fruited from a series of discussion and negotiation with local and international key stakeholders in 2019. The initiative was then integrated into NLC's mandatory plan. NLC tried very hard to secure support for this task, as we believed it's time to review what SNA had done; since NLC is a roof of SNA, and with supports of UCLG and FCM this VSR has happened on the shoulder of NLC".
2	MOP: Why VSR applied the presented methodology and what was a sample of interviewees?	Consultant: The methodology applied in VSR is in accordance to the guideline. It's a standard guideline applied internationally. A sampling of interviewees was gotten no-objection from donor. The consultant had presented a list of key

No	Participants' comments/advices	Response, clarification, answers made
		informants.
3	MOP: will the VSR be shared to MOP?	NLC's General Secretary: As per methodology presented by the consultant, once this VSR report finalized it will be submitted to UCLG for publication. It's depending on UCLG, but we believe that MOP will receive a set.
4	NGO: NGOs have also doing VSR. It looking at the participations and contributions of civil society organizations in SDGs localization and implementation. We will share our VSR report once it's ready.	Thank you very much for information. We are looking forward to seeing that VSR report, said by H.E Say Kosal.
5	NGO: Table #5 presents very low percentage. Why is it so low? SNA has done a lot of works in CSDGs localization and implementation.	Consultant: The percentages present on table #5 of the VSR report is NOT the percentages of achievement, but they are the percentages of respondents who see themselves implemented approach/activities under each CSDGs and indicators.
6	NGO: The central government should allocate more funds to SNA for CSDGs implementations. So far, only 12.9% of GDP has been done. It should be more than this percentage in order to accelerate CSDGs achievements.	H.E Say Kosal: Thank you for your policy recommendation. We totally agree that funds for SNA should be increased more than 12.9% of GDP. We will advocate this proposition upward.
7	MOWA: We have been trying very hard to implement CSDG#5, but according to table #5 of the VSR report, the percentage is very low.	Again, The percentages present on table #5 of the VSR report is NOT the percentages of achievement, but they are the percentages of respondents who see themselves implemented approach/activities under each CSDGs and indicators, clarified of consultant.
8	MOP: We suggest including Sub-degree No. 114 to the reference of this VSR report. Sub-degree No. 114 entitles MOP to coordinate and to provide technical supports to SNA in CSDGs localization and implementation.	Sure, we will review the said sub-degree No. 114, and if found appropriate, we will include it to the SVR report without hesitation, said of consultant.
9	PALC: A figure on poverty rate	MOP: The poverty rate assessed by MOP was

No	Participants' comments/advices	Response, clarification, answers made
	in the Country Profile 18%. I founded 12-13% in 2019? Why it is different?	13% in 2019, but with WB introduced tool, MOP reassessed and concluded 18%.
10	PALC: Localization and implementation of CSDG#17 at SNA level was high and active. We implemented so many activities related to Partnership in Social Accountability (figure 14).	Consultant: Yes, we learned that PALC in Kampong Thom was active in implementing CSDG#17. However, the figure presenting on this VSR report is Cambodia nationwide, and not specific to any province. It is an overall priority perceived by respondents.
11	PALC: PALC is representing CS and MDK. So, it should be spelled out Provincial Association of CSMDK.	Consultant: Thank you. It is clear that PALC is representing CSMDK. We will correct in Khmer translation as to PALC.

Session 4, the workshop MC (Master of Ceremony) had wrapped up one-by-one the key results of the validation workshop. She shared a telegram account of the consultant to all chairpersons and participants for further feedback and/or input. In closing remarks, H.E Say Kosal expressed appreciation for the result of the workshop, which had attained its objective. Again, he thanked everyone for their participation and contribution. He encouraged national level representatives to continue supporting SNA, and supporting NLC in implementing recommendations raised in this VSR report.

The validation workshop ended on the same date started, at 12:10 am, with smiling faces and pride among SNA participants that their efforts made have been recognized and documented.

END