The Training Handbook

YOUTH in LOCAL Governance

No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline.

Kofi Annan, Former UN Secretary-General, World Youth Forum, 2004

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

"[Countries] shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." (Article 12)

"The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice." (Article 13)

The Committee on the Rights of the Child observes that while most States Parties to the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child] attest to the priority and value afforded to children and youths within their culture, they generally do not 'undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures…to the maximum extent of their available resources' to ensure that their rights are realized.

Donna Molloy, Clarissa White and Nicola Hosfield, A Qualitative Study on Understanding youth participation in local Government, 2006

Abbreviations

C/S	Commune/Sangkat
CC	Commune Council
CCSP	Commune Council Support Project
Deika	Resolution/ordinance
NCSC	National Committee for Support to Communes/Sangkats
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PLAU	Provincial Local Administration Unit
Prakas	Declaration
Sangkat	Demoted: Urban Commune
SHD	Sustainable Human Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	The World Bank
YAP	Youth-Adult Partnership
YCC	Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC)
WVC	World Vision Cambodia

Foreword

[CCSP Executive Director]

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Introduction

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing developing and post-crisis societies today is that of building effective systems of governance and democratic rule defined by efficient, accountable and transparent systems of public and private authority, and the civil society, able to deliver economic and social progress. In this complex, a challenge for all government is to create a system of governance that promotes, supports and sustains human development – especially for the poorest and most marginal. Yet the word governance is not simply understood by larger population of the country.

In recent years, number of legislations of The Royal Government of Cambodia opens spaces for people participation but those opportunities are not fully used. This requires catalysts and promoters. There are some developments projects, mostly carrying out by civil society, try to promote people participation in development activities but not much in governance or political level. History of Cambodia tells that people perceived governance and administration works as the works of public officials. This creates a passive behavior of ordinary citizen towards governance works as they feel irrelevance. Impelled by this legacy, the promotion of people participation faces many challenges and requires highest efforts. Empowerment is a prerequisite to participation and in turn, by practicing participation people would feel they are being empowered. There is recognition that youth are the most dynamic potential citizen in every society. They could activate the governance processes more responsive to the needs from their fresh creative ideas, but in Cambodia it seems lack of consideration. Youth see governance as works of public officials and adults. This perception has depreciated youth participation in governance more weaken.

The perspective on democratic development requires those youth who are broad-minded, flexible and with inclusive knowledge. The National Cambodian Youth Policy is intended to make sure that all Cambodian youth of either sex discern the identity of themselves and their nation, and understand the value of participation by ideally develop their capacity, and have a sense of responsibility with positive attitudes, serving as a good model in their work and society, and have a deep understanding of evolution and management system of the social custom and traditions, as well as making equal contribution to the development of the country[1]. With a belief that everyone is born with potential to make a better living, youth would take active roles in social responsibility and governance works.

Along side with this, World Vision Cambodia (WVC) and Commune Council Support Project (CCSP), among others, have putted commitment to promote Youth in Local Governance. They aim to maximize the utilization of youth potential in improving good governance. By engaging youth in governance works, they expect that youth could provide meaningful input to make governance works to equally benefit everyone in the society included youth themselves.

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[1] The national Cambodian youth policy web page

Purpose and objectives of this handbook

Youth in governance could be a broad range of exercises that occurs in a variety of settings in government, private, civil society, civic groups and more but youth in governance in this description is referred to youth in local governance, frankly, youth participation in commune council works.

The primary purpose of this handbook is to build capacity of youth groups and those working with and for youth to effectively involve or facilitate youth engagement in local governance.

The specific objectives of this handbook are:

(1) To provide participants an understanding on good governance and commune councils. This will offer fertile ground for them to participate;

(2) To highlight perspective on youth in local governance and introduce trails for youth participation and the ways they could work together with commune councilors as equal partners;

Why was this hand book developed?

Perspectives on youth engagement are being turned into practice through a various activities by number of organizations in Cambodia but not much in governance. Youth in governance is a difficult term to define and an even harder concept to implement. Yet some have difficulty in translating their commitment into practice that is meaningful for youths, which is effective in bringing about change in their communes. This handbook draws on the findings of assessment study that explored the lack of knowledge and experiences of youths in community, especially in the far-flung areas, to participate in commune council works.

Youths are the most dynamic potential social resources of society who could provide a wealth of advantages through their participation. **Good governance will arrive at its principles if youth potentials are pumped into its endeavor**. Thus this handbook is developed as an instrument to empower and mainstream youth strength into local governance efforts.

In Cambodia, the resource document to inspire the commitment on youth in local governance seems rare. This is why CCSP and WVC are joint efforts in searching and developing this handbook as additional material to the deficiency. This handbook was though out and developed by CCSP with funding support from WVC.

How was this handbook developed?

An assessment study was carried out to understand youth consciousness, perception, attitude to and gauge youth knowledge, capacity and skills to participate in local governance works and also to recognize the climate around youth participation include views of commune councils and public perception of ordinary citizens at local level. Based on this, sets of suggestions and recommendations were made to improve youth engagement in local governance. The handbook was developed based on the results, findings and recommendations of the assessment especially the perception of youth, commune council and ordinary citizens.

Cambodian government policies, law and regulations on decentralization and commune council are reviewed to draw input to this handbook. In addition, national and international experiences on youth participation, youth voice, youth in governance and youth-adults partnership were also used as references for the thinking of this handbook development.

Who is this hand book for?

This handbook is aimed at a range of audiences, including youth groups and those are working with and for youth participation in different ways. This handbook is also useful for commune council to encourage youth participation in their local governance works as well as development activities.

For youth, this handbook makes them recognize trails for participation and understand the ways they could work with commune councils in a meaning full partnership by informing their strength, benefits and what they could bring to help improve the quality of local governance.

For those are working to promote youth engagement in local governance, this handbook provides them with knowledge to facilitate youth participation. This handbook would also make them recognize barriers to youth engagement.

For commune councils, this handbook gives them the knowledge about youth and ways to work with youth as effective partners and utilizing youth potential for the success of local governance work. They will recognize that youth could share the weigh of their workload.

All of them will aware the benefits and advantages of working together with youths. Aside from aforementioned actors, this handbook may also useful for those who work to promote children and adults participation in any activities at local level both governance and development works in general.

What will this hand book do?

This handbook would stimulate active engagement of youth in local governance with ideas about why and how. It would provoke the thinking and draw in the attention to youth engagement and equipped those concerned with knowledge and ways to make it real. The handbook is encourages putting the thinking into practice.

It provides participants the underlying knowledge to backstop participation in local governance works and highlight ways for participation, telling how to work in affective partnership and the benefits. In general, it injects participants with knowledge how youth could work in local governance. It was developed as resource-book for those are in search of youth participation.

By reading and learning from this handbook, participant should be able to:

- Understand the principles of good governance;
- Explain meaning of youth in local governance and youth participation;
- Know what youth can do in local governance works;
- be able to work in partnership with youth and commune councils;
- have knowledge of roles, benefits of youth participation;
- Value and behave positive attitudes toward youth participation;
- Encourage youth to seek for accountability and concrete actions from government in addressing problems of good governance;
- Motivate youth to be agents of transformation within their communities
- Encourage youth to participate in development, which is a key to breaking the cycle of poverty, reduce corruption and ultimately changing entire societies for the better;
- Help create networks of knowledge sharing and learning on governance among youth by encouraging the use of different forms of social and citizen participation;
- Encourage the youth to develop group action plans that delineate various suggestions to commune councils and other stakeholders in their communes to address the challenges in local governance works

What will this hand book not do?

Most of the content and modules of this hand book are telling knowledge for participation in the Cambodia context. It described citizen rights and ways for participation bases on the legal framework and space available in Cambodian government policy. The flexibility of it operation may various according to actual situation and relationship at that particular locality. It does not pledge youth participation in other political, social or legal environment. In addition, it does not claim as the best resource or provides a definite knowledge about youth participation in local governance. Other resources may tell other options or have their own strength and importance to youth participation. CCSP welcomes any constructive comments or suggestions for improvement.

What is in this hand book?

This handbook contains four modules, which cover underlying knowledge on good governance, perspective on youth in governance, its definition and benefits, the trails for youth participation that is analyze base on Cambodia legal context, and the ways that youth adults commune council could work together in affective partnership. Finally, the last module also provides knowledge on how to facilitate youth participation. Each module started with its own introduction.

Module 1: Perspective on Youth in Governance

The second module defines the meaning of youth in governance, rationales, benefits and barriers to youth in governance. It also described the attitude of youth toward governance works. This would help participants have a true understand of what they are talking about youth in governance and able to identify to the important of youth engagement. It will encourage and motivate them to invest their time, resource and capacity to assist and facilitate youth engagement. Furthermore, this module is envisioned and guide participants to see youth as assets for governance.

Module 2: Good Governance

This module provides definition of good governance and makes detailed explanation on the characteristic of each good governance principles. It is also exposed the advantage of good governance and described governance actor. This provides participants a fertile ground that supports the justification of youth participation. Unless they are fully understood what good governance is, people will not find ways to their make meaningful participation. It describe the sphere that make people feel legitimate to participate.

Module 3: The commune councils

This module provides basic understanding about commune council and other actor at the local level. It describe roles and responsibility and important tasks of commune council, civil society organization and their roles in local governance as well as the roles and rights of citizens to participate. With this participant will get acquainted with local actors in local governance which easy for them to relate with.

Module 4: Trails for youth engagement

This module tells ways that youths could connect themselves to governance works. The module has explained the entry points, ways to form partnership at local level and some consideration for youth engagements. Participants will be able to introduce and guide youth to engage with commune council to ensure the quality of local governance

How to use the handbook?

Regardless age, the knowledge of good governance is essential to all and youth in governance will benefits all as well. This handbook offers support knowledge and practical skills for operation and facilitation in which different people may flexibly use it in different ways at different level but in common purpose of promoting participation. All people aim at promoting participation especially youth engagement in local governance could use this handbook.

This handbook is developed from civil society perspective. Other audience may read this handbook from another side. With those who against youth participation, you just simply tell them the basic principle of good governance which is consensus oriented or inclusion is one of the requirements to make it meaningful.

Youth may use this handbook to recognize strength, benefits and trails, and make a go of participation. Other organizations could use this handbook to understand ways youth could work with commune council and facilitate them. Commune councils and government agencies, could also use this handbook to understand how they could pump in the talent and strength of youth to support their works. This handbook could be use to promote participation of children and adults in local governance and development works as well. Readers may use it for general purpose of promoting youth participation in any other aspects.

The trainers are however not obligated to teach participants everything contained in the handbook in a single training course. They could pick up or extract any contents or lessons from any modules in this handbook and make to form their own training agenda which is more appropriate to the level of their audience and time span, so please review and take out any critical points you may think needed for your targets participants. Trainers should carry the handbook during the course of training as it will easy to refer back when facing hard question from youth who are always curious. The training to youth should be based on the principle of easy, fund and participatory exercise. While conducting training, all trainers should decide on how to interpret massages of this know to the level of cognition of the trainee.

Training should be conducted in a participatory manner. In addition, if you mix participants in a wide rage of ages and from different backgrounds, such as citizens, NGO staff and local government officials, you need to be careful that youth or young people are easy to discourage. Please avoid the domination from adults and try to balance their participation. Trainer must have good facilitation skills that could with the dynamic of youth. Don't be too theory with youth while training them, please link your explanation with community facts and raise example related to their daily life otherwise too boring for them. They will like it if always fund. In this regards, please involve youths as much as you can in your training activities, even though in logistic arrangement, they will feel empower in practice since the training stage.

It is not just a training handbook, it could be a referent book that readers could use while planning or preparing strategy for youth engagement. It will drive you with proper thinking on how to deal issues concerning youth participation.

Module 1

Perspective on
Youth in Local Governance

I. Introduction

Most of people believe that there are two major conditions constitute a prerequisite for good governance. The first condition is the existence of a democratic and inclusive public space that guarantees the participation of all the political and social forces of society. The second condition is government ethics which impose transparency, efficiency and accountability of public officials. It defines the modes of intervention, cooperation and negotiation that all member of society including youth could participate equitably in debates and decision-making, appreciate mechanisms of consultation, monitoring and follow-up. Social inclusion stimulates the synergy to make principles of good governance real. The prospect for socio-economic transformation and future of a country lies and rests with the well being of and investing in its youths.

Youth are the most dynamic potential social forces of society. They are key agents of change, but too often the nature and impact of their contributions is not recognized or pumps out as it should be, and youth face difficulties of being heard and engaging more directly in civic life. Youths are not only the future, they are now in society. There are unique and powerful contributions that youth can make to their communities and government—right now—not only at some point in the future when they have become "adults." They could help to improve the quality of governance especially at the local level.

Hence, optimistic perspective on youth in local governance should be piercingly articulated and heard by the rest of society.

II. Definition of Youth

Youth, as a concept, varies from culture to culture and from one society to another. Youth is a special phase of life between childhood and adulthood. They are working at various state, private and civil society institutions as civil servants, workers, farmers, craftsmen, business people, artists etc. and those unemployed youth including the street youth. They are pursuing education at various educational establishments mostly ranging from secondary to higher education. People in this world define youths in different age group.

In Cambodia, out of 13.1 million people there are about 30% youth aged from 15 to 30, among this 57% are female (national plan files 2003 - 2015)[2]. The Cambodian National Youth Policy counted Youth those are male and female people aged from 15 to 30.

III. Defining youth in local governance

Underlying the notion of youth in local governance is a viewpoint that sees youths as resources (mostly untapped resources) rather than "future citizens" or "future leaders". The concept embraces youth as capable of contributing in meaningful, authentic ways to the communities, institutions, government and society of which they are a part. It builds youth from fully prepare to fully engages that increase youth power, impact and visibility on the society. It is congruent with the democratic ideals which allowing youth to share voice, influence, and decision-making authority.

Youth participation in local governance is a progressive perspective on the role of youths in society. It is ultimately about working and sharing power with commune councils. It involves recognizing and nurturing the strengths, interests, and abilities of youth by provision of real opportunities for youth to become involved in decisions that affect them at individual and systemic levels through youth friendly process, resourceful, youth adult partnership and tapping into passion.

Youth in local governance is a process of youth voluntary active participation which responds to:

- Stimulate a dialogue on governance issues by emphasizing the important role that youth can play in addressing issues affect them.
- Encourage youth to demand accountability and concrete actions from their governments to address their concerns
- Encourage youth to participate in development which is key to breaking the cycle of poverty and ultimately changing entire societies

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[2] *Cambodian National Youth Policy, 2006*

- Help create network of knowledge sharing and learning on Good Governance and anti-corruption issues among the youth by building their vocabulary of experiences
- Increase in youth understanding of what commune council decision impacts them and how they could contribution towards change
- Value and share power, opinions, perspectives between youth and commune councils

Truthfully, youth in local governance refers to the participation of youth in commune councils works; assisting and sharing opinion on both administrative affair and development activities.

IV. Why youth in local governance

Participation is a fundamental right for all people, regardless of age. Youth are directly affected by many public decisions, but typically their views on those public issues are not heard. At all spheres, commune council will not ensure adequate representation of youth best interests in law, policy, and practice. Youth could contribute to the development of vibrant healthy local governance that cherishes, nurtures, welcomes, and celebrates people of all ages, from all backgrounds.

There are also strong legislative and political grounds for consulting with youths on the issues that concern them. For in stance, article 12 of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child grants direct rights to people under 18 years, which include participation, protection and social provision[3].

Youth provides fresh unique perspective and ideas, revitalization, strengths and energy, insights and creativity and optimism with new vision, honesty and integrity. Furthermore they will infuse to commune council with specific knowledge, capability, skills or expertise with incredible richness of talents and abilities in big picture thinking. Youth are economic cornerstones and potential assets for the over-reaching goals of economic and social development and generally exhibit greater receptivity to new ideas and are more often innovative. Youth perspective adds value and promotes diversity of membership and representation within a decision-making.

By involving youth, commune councils can develop and implement more effective solutions to the issues that they face. Marginalization of youth participation from good governance process marks the undemocratic exclusion that poses a serious threat to social stability. Youths will influence outcomes in new and unexpected ways that could make services more responsive, understanding and consideration of the youths. They insist on honesty and integrity, on asking why certain decisions were made. They challenge others to think creatively and consider new ways of operating.

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[3] *Un convention on the rights of the child*

If government is interested in making policy that resonates with the younger generation, it must work to bridge the generation gap by including youth in the governance process. By engaging them, they could develop critical social and leadership skills and sense of social responsibility than become more active members and citizens in their communes. They could help reducing conflict and mistrust through improved understanding of youth and reduced negative stereotyping.

Participation provides opportunity for youth to represent and help others by express their views that could influence local government decisions with the feeling that what youth can achieve should not be underestimated. Youth are dared to participate upon self confidence and their awareness of ways or knowing how to get involved, or when they realizing the benefits.

An example: *A young boy in Kampong Speu (member of child club of World Vision Cambodia) said if he have chance to participate with commune council, he will request a school with road paving by red laterite, room with tiled floor, garden, library, pond and flagpole. This mean that youth can see that they will benefit from their participation with commune council[4].*

V. Barriers to youth in local governance

Youths are frequently subdued and relegated in restrict environment. They are not traditionally considered key players within the governance realm. There are questions about the capability of youths to engage in reasonable and rational decision-making, whether youths should be taking on such responsibilities during their teenage years. Adult's dilemma on youth participation is an extreme barrier. Unless adults develop a major paradigm shift in how they view youth, it will be very difficult to create conducive environment for youths to participate. Youth engagement in local governance may be limited by a range of both simple and complex barriers. There are number of challenges and barriers to effective youth engagement as follows:

Stereotyped Attitude

- Usually, both youths and adults considered local governance work as works of adults or public officials.
- Adult normally considered youth too young to know right and wrong or overjoyed and seldom take cared their jobs. They considered youth just a kid. Therefore, they do not simply accept the views of youth.

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[4] *Assessment study report, youth in local governance, CCSP-WVC, 2007*

- Some youths are normally shy, shudder, panic and coward. Youth in this nature, youth are not confidence or have the courage to participate.
- Distrust of each other creates social attitudes and stereotyping of youth abilities and insights.
- Youth are unwilling to get involved because they have not been invited. Many youth are skeptical that their voice will not count.
- Cynicism from adult makes youth feel disillusionment to express idea that is possible to influence local government decisions.
- Youths are sometimes reluctant to participate because they believed that local government representatives were not interest in or listen to views of youths, they think older people do not trust them and mark as immature.
- Most of youths bellow age of electoral eligibility does not interest or disenchantment because of the complex and dull governance. This make them stand alienate from local governance matters.
- Some youth may consciously deciding to not participate because they have better things to do with their time, such as finding partners, homes and jobs.
- Youths refrain because they could not recognize the interest or believe that their views will either be treated less value or ignore.

Lack of knowledge and skills

- Not many youths have a basic understanding of the social structures and processes which shape their lives. They are unable to explain how local governance, economy, society and culture work.
- Many youth have not been involved in local governance previously. They do not familiar and have no knowledge on decentralization and commune council works or legal frameworks that support their participation. This makes them reluctance and could not identify the entry points to participate.
- Some youths do not participate by reasons they do not know knowledge of ways or how to participate. This left them with no incentive to get involved.
- They may not understand the word local governance or see themselves irrelevant to or unpremeditatedly detouring themselves from local governance works with any other interests.

Lack of opportunity and coordination

- There is fragmentation and lack coordination and support network. Youth are generally having poor lobbying and advocacy skills. Early on, concerted efforts should be made.
- Lack of space and information for participation, and the platform for exchange of best practices and not given enough latitude for freedom to have a say. Commune councils are not publicized the events or agenda broadly.
- Youth are frequently excluded from decision making process. For in stance, during commune planning process no youth are invited to raise

the issues, vote priority and take part in decision-making. When village chief came to call for meeting, he always tell parent to go, even though only children at home he leave messages with children or youth to tell the parent to go, they never tell youths to go.

■ Some youths may not think there is anything they could do or have no idea who to contact at the council about their views

Lack of other enabling factors

■ Because of livelihood, youths mostly go to work as garment workers or construction workers.

■ Lack of physical support for participation such as mean of communication, transportation and service incentives etc.

■ Some of them are deterred by the habits and hinder of:
  • not interesting, no necessary tasks, no time,
  • They may never think of this job and unwanted because they do not know any persons there
  • The invitation are only to parent and never invite youth
  • Parent never encourage to go
  • They perceiving of irrelevance Mostly feel that adults are to go and make decision
  • Youth do not dare to say when adult facilitate because they are dominate when talking
  • Do not know that they have rights to participate this kind of works

VI. Benefits of youth in local governance

Engaging youth in local governance has multiple levels of benefits: to youth, communities and the commune councils that they are working with.

Youth in local governance most often takes place in a context of youth-commune council partnership. Commune councils are also benefit from this partnership. Likewise, communities will be prospering as youths apply their unique skills, knowledge, and talents to solve problems and create new opportunities. When youth are engaged in meaningful ways, they grow up to be adults who are much more likely to be civically involved and philanthropically inclined.

Youth participation assists commune councils to understand the needs and aspirations of a young people within their community. It motivates local council to set mechanisms for youth to feed in their opinions. However, the benefits of youth participation go well beyond simple age-related needs.

Moreover, it inspires youth to talk freely about local issues and influence local government. Participation can significantly increase youth's levels of interest in local government. It makes youth feel that '*anyone*' could become involved in local government and this type of activity is not only open to any type of person. It educates youth with more affluent knowledge and experiences. This

may have the potential to broaden people's views about youths in society who can get involved in local governance.

Youth in local governance not only has important benefits to youth, but it helps to ensure an active, prepared citizenry for the future. At the same time, creating strategies to involve youth in local governance in order to share opinion on decisions that affect their lives is congruent with the democratic ideals of the country.[5]

6.1 For Youths

◆ Builds self-esteem, pride and self-confidence. It is an important step for youth personal development.

◆ Have opportunity to experiment initiatives, creativity, responsibility, cooperation and leadership skill. This is [how] people learn to take charge of their lives and solve their own problems, [and] is the essence of development. This could tame youth to local governance works and prepare youth for a good future citizen or leaders.

◆ Provides youth with opportunities to assume leadership roles and develop valuable skills. Their participation helps them to develop critical thinking and leadership, while giving them a better understanding of the workings of government and civil society.

◆ Avoid youth from sins, illegal or delinquent action, risky behaviors, drug use and juvenile delinquency, and make youths feeling of regard and relevance

◆ Youth values are enhanced and sense of ownership is built. Youths could see them selves useful and invaluable for society.

◆ It educates youth friendly attitude, partnership and philanthropy[6]

◆ Develops important skills. Leadership, public-speaking, problem solving, consensus building and networking and among other skills while teaching skills that are not always learned in the classroom.

◆ Youth will have better employment by experiences gained. It also helps youths plan their careers, build their résumés and gain skills that will be valuable on the job.

◆ Driving the focus of development to the needs and interests of youths and ensuring that youth share the benefit of development

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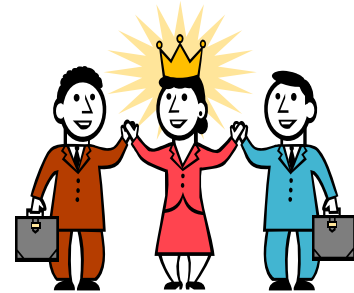
[5] *A Portrait of the Youth Involvement in Civic Governance and Decision-Making, Nebraska, 2004*

[6] *Cathy Dyer, Project Leader, Youth In Care Connections Program Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS. OACAS is in the process of creating a Youth Committee to meet with senior directors, 2005*

- The network of youth and child protection, and prevention of youth rights abuse are stronger

- Gives youth a creative and productive outlet for their energy and creativity to be active citizenship in order to tackle social problems and act on opportunities.

- Connects youth to others that will improve their understanding of citizenship. This connection will overcomes negative stereotypes about youth and achieve respect. It will encourage youths to be a 'good citizen' as it will foster an interest in and commitment to the local community.[7]

- Youth becomes more open to learn and engage in critical dialogue forging mutually respectful relationships with adults and acquires skills from the partnership

- Begets more participation; youth are more inclined to participate in other areas of society, become more resourceful in families, communities and broader society.[8]

- Increased presence and participation of youths in events and activities and institutional environment

6.2 For commune council

- Youth provides fresh unique perspective and ideas, revitalization, strengths and energy, insights and creativity and optimism with new vision, honesty and integrity. Furthermore they will infuse to commune council with specific knowledge, capability, skills or expertise with incredible richness of talents and abilities in big picture thinking;

- Youth can help commune councils in broad range of tasks include administrative works, development, social works and others related with school, youth issues, communities, civic education etc. This will share the burden of commune councils.

- Youth and commune council are connected with one another; develop trusting relationships, and partnership that would convert harm to help. This convert youth being part of problems to be part of solutions.

- Youth are aware of issues on violence against children, hazardous and worst forms of child labor and this awareness are enable them to be effective advocates on these issues in the community. They are expertise in articulating their rights and well understood the issues related to child rights abuses. This will help commune councils in dealing with such issues which frequently bothering them.

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[7] *Youth Involvement in Civic Governance and Decision-Making, Program Halley Research, LLC 2004*
[8] *Concept on Youth in local governance, Youth in local governance Club (Ying Club), 2004*

- Create an environment where youths can, not only experience a sense of belonging, ownership, security and pride, but also develop the skills and commitment to civic engagement that will go with them throughout their lives as youths cannot be developed fully without the investment in the process of their development.

- Commune councils came to understand the needs and concerns of youth and feel more effective and more confident in their planning and decision making relating to youth;

- Youths are honest and neutral. This could be heart helping to ease internal working relationship among councilors, working fun and happy environment;

- Gain a stronger sense of community connectedness, perceive youths as legitimate, crucial contributors and recognize commitment of youths, and gain mastery through working collaboratively with youth;

- Involving diverse groups of youths within decision making process provides commune council with various perspectives, opportunities for new solutions that improve decision-making;

- Having a dynamic resource that is expertise on rights and issues affected youth and children;

- Include youths in the local governance realm necessitates greater public awareness and understanding and therefore promotes practical civic education;

- Youths have a strong stake in the local community through their use of local services, such as schools, transport and leisure facilities. This will result in more relevant and focused decision making and service provision;

- A broader range of views and experience can energize the decision-making process with innovative ideas and dynamic perspectives about the future;

- Helps the commune council improve its services for youth. They can serve youth better if they have a better understanding of youths;

- Creating a youth-friendly commune council inspires the confidence of young users, clients and stakeholders and enhances the reputation, image and credibility of commune council;

- Helps attract other youth as volunteers through the signals that commune council is serious about dealing with youth respectfully and encourages youths to assume a variety of roles;

- The principles and practices of youth involvement became embedded within the culture of commune councils by placing greater value on inclusive representation;

- Including youth in governing processes led commune councils to reach out to the community in more diverse ways.

6.3 For communities and society

◆ It allows youth to demonstrate their skills and commitment and put to rest the mistrust that often break relationship between youth and adult in society. It also builds inter-generational partnerships that benefit the whole community.

◆ Strengthens community capacity and local democracy. Giving youth a stake in local governance builds a broader base of citizen involvement and creates stronger, more inclusive communities.

◆ Connections between youth and community will build youths commitment to serve communities in so many different ways. Everyone benefits when community are effective and well develop.

◆ Increase the visible participation of youths in society, especially in those activities related to the policies of local governance. It is a sub-set of a bigger discussion about the full citizenship of youths in society.

◆ Involvement of youths in local governance means involve youth in a broader civic life which is an important objective, as important as carving out democratic spaces for youths in the governance processes. This recognizes youth rights in society.

◆ By putting youth engagement into practice means contributing their creativity and resourcefulness ads to the process of governance and development activities in general.[9]

◆ Youth in local governance awakes youths cease to be passive recipients of services or passive victims. Youths are seen as stakeholders with distinct and legitimate interests and they are entitled to share in the exercise of power at local levels.

◆ The capacity of a society or community to maximize youth participation as citizens in the social, political and economic life indicates the extent to which that society can flourish. Youths are a barometer through which we can measure the level of social cohesion and democracy – or the lack of it.[10]

◆ Youth participation is a precondition for effective strategies of working with youths at all levels of society from families, to schools, communities, businesses, governments, etc.[11]

◆ Youth engagement is about social transformation. They lie at the core of creating compassionate, sustainable and equitable societies. Taken as a comprehensive package, the benefits form part of a long-term social change agenda. Youth engagement will create optimum conditions to ensure that all youths have opportunities to become full

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[9] *Youth in local governance project, Transparency International - Pakistan 2007*

[10] *A global perspective on youths and social change: the importance of youth participation, 2007*

[11] *The benefit of Youth Participation, National Centre for Social Research, 2006*

and competent citizens that contribute to the prosperity of their society as a whole.[12]

◆ Increasing the capacity of citizens and government to interact and develop governance policy in greater collaboration serves to strengthen democracy and provide avenues for civil society to become more involved.

◆ Help to combat the current culture of mistrust and apprehension exhibited toward youth. This will help to demonstrate youth capabilities and combat negative perceptions. It helps to reduce social exclusion of marginalized groups by heightening a sense of social responsibility

◆ Youth in local governance pumps out youth potential for further development of every task of society. It promotes inclusion and fairness for all sections of the population and breakdown generational barriers.

The benefits in aforementioned are inter-connected. When one gets benefits, it will relieve the challenges or issues face by others. It has positive impact on each other.

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[12] *Putting Youth Engagement Into Practice: A Toolkit For Action Commonwealth Youth Programme, Marlborough, Pall Mall, London, 2006*

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Module 2

Good Governance

I.   Introduction

The fundamental principles of good governance are universal and mutually reinforcing and cannot stand alone. All these aspects are essential to sustainable development. Understanding of good governance is essential for youth in order to monitor, explore and participate in governance works. This module will provide youth and other participants the understanding of meaning of governance and good governance. It will describe in detail of each principle of good governance which commune council must abide by when managing local affairs and youth have to aware of this principle while monitor, observe and working with commune council in the framework of local governance.

II.   Definition

Governance

The definition of Governance was determined differently based on the real situation. Simply put, the governance means that: the ways in which nation-state, institutions manage its economic and social affairs, and security, in the interests, and on the behalf, of its citizens. The World Bank (WB) defines governance as "the exercise of power in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development".[13]

In general, governance is the processes that determine how power is exercised and how decisions are made on issues of public concern. It is a set of arrangements by which the affairs of a nation or an institution are ordered. It is also referred to the patterns and distribution of the institutionalized capacity to take and influence decisions in the processes and systems by which society operate. Frequently a government is established to administer

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[13] *World Bank web page on governance and anti-corruption*

these processes and systems. The term governance is sometimes erroneously used synonymously with the term government that is an act of governing; exercising authority; monitoring (through policy and regulation) the long-term strategy and direction of a country. Hereby, public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and govern the population.

> UNDP (1997) also defines governance as "the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It is a neutral concept comprising the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences"[14].

Good governance

Good governance is the process that ensure free of abuse and corruption, rule of law, respect for human rights, political openness and accountability, and participation, a sound judicial system, transparency and efficiency, tolerance, freedom of association, freedom of information and expression how citizens are given a voice, as well as capacity to effective management of public resources in which solutions and decision-making are done based on the needs and common interests of citizens and the nation as whole.

UNDP has adopted the most inclusive definition: "Good governance is, among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources"[15]. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said "good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development". And yet, good governance has never been subject to a unanimous definition[16].

Good Governance is a main element for supporting the process of institutional resources management and sustainable development. It is defined as an ideal which is difficult to achieve in its totality. However, actions must be taken to work towards this ideal. In general, good governance can be understood that:

> *Good governance is the vigilant exercise of economic, political and administrative power and authority to manage a country's affairs for the interest of every citizen and the nation with a set of major principles included:*
> | | | | |
> |---|---|---|---|
> | *1)* | *Participation* | *5)* | *Equity* |
> | *2)* | *Rule of Law* | *6)* | *Effective and efficiency* |
> | *3)* | *Transparency* | *7)* | *Accountability and* |
> | *4)* | *Consensus oriented* | *8)* | *Responsiveness.* |

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[14] *UNDP Policy Paper on Governance*
[15] *Decentralized governance country thematic assessment, Bureau for Policy Development, UNDP*
[16] *UN resolution on poverty alleviation*

These characteristics assure that

- corruption is minimized,
- the views of minorities are taken into account
- the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making
- benefits are equitably shared among all in society and
- the needs of society in present and future are responded

III.   Aims of good governance

The aim of good governance should be to manage its social and economic affairs and crises (such as threat to national security, natural disasters and so on) in a manner that provides optimal benefits to its citizens.

To achieve the above aims, a widely accepted idea of governance is sustainable human development (SHD). The key points of SHD are following:

- ❖ Good and affordable health care for all people so they can live long and vigorous lives and so they have the energy and well being to participate fully in economic and social activities.

- ❖ Good and affordable education so that all people have sufficient knowledge and skills to make best of the opportunities available to them.

- ❖ Opportunity for all to have access to gainful economic activity, employment and sufficient income to feed, clothes, house themselves and their families.

These 3 things should be done in ways of ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources and conserving environment.

IV.   Major principles of good governance

In Cambodia, based on the importance of "Good Governance" the National Committee for Support to Communes/Sangkats (NCSC) introduced a course on Good Governance to Commune/Sangkat (C/S) Councils by simplifying to the real situation of C/S in Cambodia in order to assist the C/S Councils in managing and developing their C/S. The course is brought together as simple and applicable principles as aforementioned.
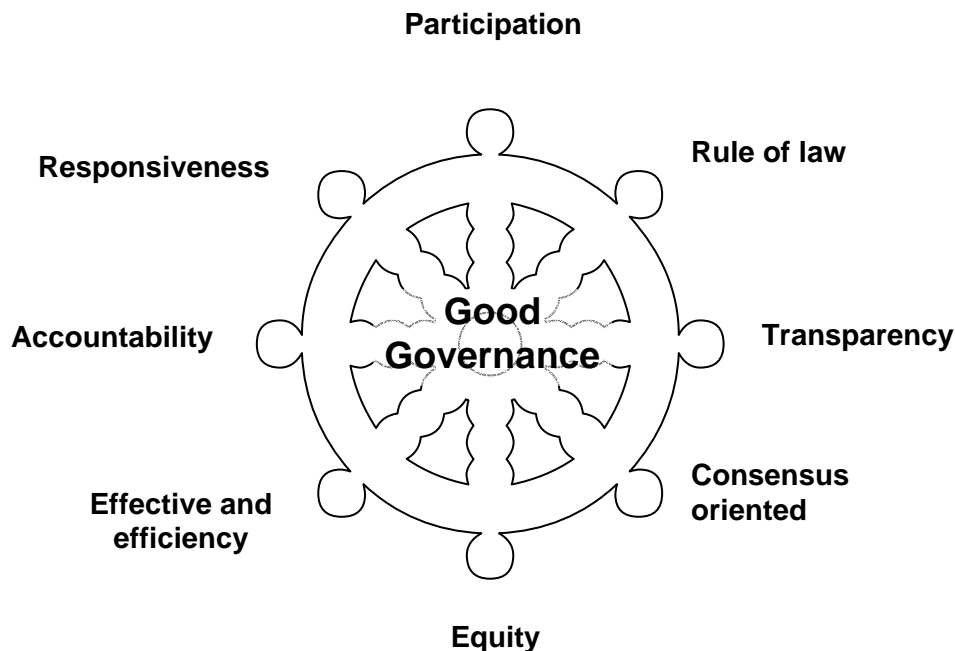
Political legitimacy is known as the first condition of good governance. The consideration of political legitimacy focuses mainly on:

❖ Supported by most or all of their citizens and
❖ Serve the advantage and benefits to all or most of their citizens

In case of state, institution or organization has no political legitimacy; good governance can not be discussed. The C/S Councils have full political legitimacy after the February 2002 elections.

> **Referring to the law on Commune/Sangkat Administration and Management in article 41st of chapter 4 mentioned that "A C/S administration has duties to promote and support good governance by managing and using existing resources in a sustainable manner to meet the basic needs of its C/S, serving the common interests of the citizens and respecting national interests in conformity with the general policy of the State".[17]**

Good Governance is defined as the ways in which nation-state manages its economic and social affairs, and security, in the interests, and on the behalf, of its citizens by following 8 major principles[18]:

Participation

Responsiveness   Rule of law

Accountability   **Good Governance**   Transparency

Effective and efficiency   Consensus oriented

Equity

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[17] *Law on commune/Sangkat administration and management*
[18] *Hip Pocket on good governance by Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, November 2005*

4.1   Participation

Participation in good governance intents to be participated by both men and women in the process of decision making and implementing those decisions made.

All men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through organizations that represent their interests. Participation is built on the freedom of association and speech. The important of participation is to make sure that all information about the problems, needs, and purposes of people are collected and analyzed before decision made.

Generally, there are two kinds of participation called direct participation and participation through representative.

4.1.1   Direct Participation

Direct participation means that all concerned people participate directly within decision-making process and implement those decision made.

❖ Participation by both men and women.
❖ Participation could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives.
❖ Participation also means freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organized civil society on the other hand.

People participate directly in C/S development activities as following:

❖ Village meeting in a various steps of C/S development planning or 3-year rolling investment plan processes
❖ Identifying project's location
❖ Environment impact assessment
❖ Land study
❖ Bidding meeting
❖ Monitoring the implementation of C/S contract.
❖ Project Management Committee meeting
❖ Providing information related to project implementation
❖ . . . Etc.

The local contribution of labor and others resources in C/S development activities are also considered as their direct participation.

4.1.2 Participation through Representative

It means that the representatives of people participate in the decision-making process and implementing those decisions made.

The representative must represents the willing and advantage of people to be represented.

The people representative can be selected in different ways based on real situation such as:

- ❖ Appointment,
- ❖ Consensus,
- ❖ Voting,
- ❖ Traditional method
- ❖ . . . Etc.

The following is the representatives of people participating in C/S development activities:
- ❖ Commune/Sangkat Councils
- ❖ C/S planning and budgeting committee
- ❖ Bidding committee
- ❖ Project management committee
- ❖ Women and children committee
- ❖ Project maintenance and user group
- ❖ Natural resources management committee
- ❖ Community based organization
- ❖ . . . Etc.

Selection of representative should be considered on the following key points:
- ❖ Have good qualification and capacity to play roles as representatives
- ❖ Being real representatives of certain group
- ❖ Select or appoint following the suitable procedure based on real situation
- ❖ Clearly determine the role and responsibility
- ❖ Have clear work plan
- ❖ Clearly determine the procedure for changing the member of the representative
- ❖ Have regularly support and capacity building.

4.1.3 The Method to Promote Participation

In order to improve participation and to make sure that the local people and representatives of the poor and vulnerable fully participate, C/S Councils should take consideration on the following:

- ❖ Disseminate to all people on how important and advantage of their participation
- ❖ Disseminate on meeting information and other relevant information to all people
- ❖ Set up available timeframe and location for meeting
- ❖ Create an open, constructive and happy environment of the meeting
- ❖ Prepare an appropriate meeting place

❖ Create a clear, transparent information systems
❖ Building good relationship with people.

4.2 Rule of law

Rule of Law in the meaning of good governance requires fair legal framework to serve and protect public benefits and need to be enforced impartially. Furthermore, it also requires full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities, and vulnerable groups. Thus, it needs independent judiciary and incorruptible authority forces.

Rule of law in good governance meaning focuses mainly on:
❖ Fair legal frameworks
❖ Enforced impartially
❖ Full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities.
❖ Independent judiciary
❖ In-corruptible and impartial authorized forces

4.2.1 Legal Frameworks

Legal framework is legislative letter issued in different forms of legislation such as law, sub-degree, Prakas, Decision, Instruction, Deika, and others.

The legal frameworks related to the C/S Councils' work:

❖ Law on C/S Administration and Management
❖ Sub-degree on C/S fund
❖ Prakas on C/S Development Plan
❖ Prakas on C/S Procurement
❖ Decision on Promulgating of the C/S Fund Project Implementation Manual
❖ . . . Etc.

4.2.2 Enforced Impartiality

The legal frameworks are ongoing issued. Thus, all implementations must be followed these legal frameworks impartially and neutrally.

Example: appointments of committee members, selecting project location, conducting bidding process, C/S project implementation …etc must be followed the guidelines.

4.2.3 Protection of Human Rights

Good governance must involve protection of individual and group rights and security. Laws should be fair and imposed impartially; it must apply to all including government officials.

Human rights are the original needs of human beings which asking for everything's for human livings within reasonable and dignity.

In the Prakas on the C/S development plan has mentioned on method to make sure participation from indigenous groups, women and vulnerable. Meanwhile, gender mainstreaming in the C/S 3-year rolling investment plan process is also specially considered.

In C/S Fund Project Implementation Manual (PIM) has also described the procedure of conducting land study which is given the rights to land owner to decide to provide or not provide their land or assets to the project without compensation.

4.2.4 Independent Judiciary

The C/S Councils are often dealing with problems or conflicts happening in their C/S such as land disputes, domestic violence and other problems or conflicts.

The C/S Councils is the first level for compromising all these problems or conflicts. If C/S can not deal with the problems, those cases should be judged by court systems.

The court body's role is to judge the cases independently and impartially. So, independent and impartial court is a key mechanism to promote rule of law.

### 4.2.5 In-corruptible Authorized Forces

Actually, the role of the C/S Councils is only to compromise the conflicts and report to the authorities who take responsible for those issues or conflict. The responsible authority must follow the law impartially and in-corruptible which is the great part of good governance.

4.3   Transparency

Transparency implies the provision of relevant and reliable information to all. It is built on the free flow of information. Processes and information must be directly accessible to those concerned with them, and that enough information is provided to understand and monitor government actions.

Transparency in good governance means that all decision making and implementation of those decisions made must:
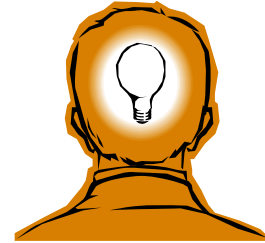
- ❖ Decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules, regulations and other legal framework
- ❖ Information related to decision making and implementation of those decision made is openly disseminated and freely access specially to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement
- ❖ All information must be simple and accurate. It must be freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement.

Example 1: All decision-making of the C/S Councils must be followed the "Internal Regulations" such as:
- ❖ Regular meeting at least once a month, possibly in addition special meetings.
- ❖ All regular meetings are public
- ❖ Councilors are invited 3 days prior to the meeting
- ❖ C/S meeting schedule must be disseminated in public.
- ❖ A written agenda is prepared, CS members and public can raise issues to add to agenda
- ❖ Clerk and other participants (not C/S member) can express freely opinions, but have not authorization to make decision.
- ❖ Decisions are made by majority according to internal regulations.
- ❖ Decisions are written in the minutes, circulated and accessible to the public.

Example 2: CS bidding meeting must be followed the procedure stated in PIM such as:
- ❖ The bidding committee is established and function based on the guideline
- ❖ Relevant documents on bidding are exposed to the public
- ❖ The bidding meetings are conducted in public
- ❖ The results of bidding are also exposed to the public

Example 3: The use of CS fund must be followed guidelines such as:
- ❖ Participatory annual budgeting
- ❖ Expense is to follow the procedure set.
- ❖ Recording must be done regularly and accurately
- ❖ Financial report is disclosed to public.

4.4   Consensus oriented

Good governance mediates differing or varying interests to reach a common decision or agreement on what is the best interest of the community.

In good governance, it means that the long term perspective and consideration of different interests and needs in society to reach a broad consensus on best option and method to serve interest of the whole community.

❖ Need of mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus in society on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved.

❖ It also requires a long-term perspective for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development.

4.4.1   Variety in Society

Different people in society have different ideas, problems, needs, priority, solutions, satisfy, knowledge and perception etc. Thus, the long term perspective and consideration of different interests should be focused on:

❖ **Situation:** including problems, needs, priority, sex, age, social status, occupation . . . etc.
❖ **Vulnerability:** HIV affected person, handicapped, Drug-addicts people, orphans, street children, sex-workers, homeless, old age . . . etc.
❖ **History :** history of each groups
❖ **Culture and tradition:** languages, wedding, ceremonies, and other traditional activities.
❖ **Religious affiliation:** such as Buddhist, Muslim, Jesus Christ …etc.
❖ **Political affiliation:** such as CPP, SRP, FUNCINPEC …etc
❖ **Ethnic groups:** Kuoy, Phnong, Charay, Kroeung, Kachak, Chinese, Khmer-Muslim, Vietnamese ...etc.

4.4.2   Guideline for Facilitating to Reach Consensus

a). **Condition:** The conditions of broad consensus are:

❖ Consensus relates to agreement and harmony.
❖ Consult with various different groups of actors
❖ Promote participation of various actors in decision making
❖ Create understanding between various different actors-groups.

b). Process of Compromising

The Below is the guideline for compromising to reach consensus:
- ❖ Face to face meeting for all relevant groups
- ❖ Learning from each others and keep deeply mutual understanding
- ❖ Discuss with all stakeholders on common interests and set variety of options

Compromise to reach a broad consensus on what's the best interest of the whole community with in harmony.

4.5   Equity

In good governance, Equity means that all people or groups in community, specially minorities and vulnerable groups have opportunity to participate, raise issues and needs, involve in implementation, and get reasonable interests to improve and maintain their well-being. Furthermore, they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstreaming society.

Well-being of each people or group is the well-being of the whole society. With equity in decision making, the community members feel that they have a stake in it and have opportunity to contribute in their community development process. Moreover, they do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society.

 "Well-being" states of feeling happy, comfort, security, safe, and good in term of welfare and health …etc. The well being of people does not cover only physical aspect but also spiritual.
- ❖ Ensuring that all members of society feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream.

- ❖ This requires all groups, and especially the most vulnerable to have opportunities to maintain or improve their well being.

If community members participate directly or through representative in the process and implementation of decision-making of C/S Councils and those decisions are benefited to the whole community, so all members are happy and satisfied the functioning of the C/S Councils. But, If people do not have opportunity to participate in the process and implementation of decision-making of C/S Councils and those decisions are not benefited to the whole community, they will feel that C/S Councils do not take them into account and they will not agree or happy with the decisions of C/S Councils.

Actually, to ensure equity in C/S development, C/S Councils have:

- ❖ Established women and Children committee
- ❖ Established women and Children focal persons
- ❖ Established planning and budgeting committee
- ❖ Allows representative of indigenous groups to participate in planning and budgeting committee meeting.
- ❖ …etc

4.6   Effectiveness and efficiency

Good governance produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources such as funds. Effectiveness and efficiency in good governance is the process and institutional management system in best use of resources at their disposal with saving manner to produce high quality and quantity of outputs, and able to provide maximun benefits ant to meet real needs of the community. The concept of effective and efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

❖ Processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal.
❖ It also means sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

To get effectiveness and efficiency, C/S Councils should consider on the following points:
❖ Appropriate use of resources
❖ Getting the right priorities
❖ Avoiding bureaucracy
❖ Long term (future) thinking of natural resources use
❖ No corruption
❖ Decentralized decision making
❖ …etc

4.6.1   Appropriate Use of Resources

When resources are used correctly, the effectiveness will be increased. Those resources are including human, capital, materials and time . . . etc.

Example 1: Appointing staff to work with their skill is an example of correct human resource use because they can work fast, accurate and produce good quality. Furthermore, their knowledge is also improved.

Example 2: If the CS Councils purchases a generator for their office, the important thing is not only consider on the price but also the fuel consumption, availability of spare parts, and maintenance cost etc.

4.6.2   Getting the Right Priorities

It means that the real, important and urgent needs of the whole community members are considered as first priority and taken action.

If the prioritized needs of community are taken in to consideration and action to solve, villagers will participate in project implementation process with strongly commitment to maintain these achievements. Moreover, they will happy to

contribute their own resources to the project due to the project outcome responds to their real needs.

4.6.3 Avoiding Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy should be avoided in order to get effective and efficiency because of time frames are often not met due to delays in approvals, document reviews from one level to one level, and documents are also tended

to often going back and forth from desk to desk. As results, action plan is not achieved and budget is not expended on time. Finally, the needs of people can not meet as required.

4.6.4 The Use of Natural Resources

Long term thinking of natural resources use means that all decision making on using of natural resource must considered on the value of resources, sustainable use, environment impact, and level of renewable of those resources.

> **Example:** A commune has a small lake.
> - ❖ Some people use the lake to catch fish for their living.
> - ❖ Other people use the lake to keep ducks and to bring their buffalo and cattle to the water there.
> - ❖ Other people want to pump water out of the lake to irrigate rice fields and vegetable gardens.
>
> If too much water is pumped out for irrigation, there will be no fish and no water for the ducks and the cattle. The Commune Council tries to make a plan to use the lake for the most benefit for everybody.
>
> All decision made by C/S on sustainable use of this resources is a long term thinking manner.

4.6.5 No Corruption

No corruption in the working of C/S Councils is a very importance factor in effectiveness and efficiency works and receiving trust from local people. In contrast, if C/S Councils make corruption in their works, there will be no effectiveness, and they will lose value and confidence from people.

Example: A corruption case occurs in the use of C/S fund with bidders or contractors. Due to this corruption, it causes extremely high cost of the project, poor project quality and also lost confidence from people. Finally, people will not participate with C/S development project.

4.6.6 Decentralized Decision Making

C/S Councilors are living and working directly with villagers, so they are able to understand the problems, major needs of people and also able to identify

the high effectiveness of solution with adaptable to their situation. So, the participatory decisions of C/S councils are better than outsiders.

4.6.7 Strategic vision

Good local governance requires foresight. Local governments should focus more on prevention rather than cure, as it is easier and less expensive to solve problems rather than respond to them. Thus, local governments should be able to anticipate the future and to make decisions based on foresight.

4.7   Accountability

Decision-makers in government are accountable to the public. The essence of accountability is answerability or being able to answer questions regarding decisions or actions. It holds them responsible for government behavior and makes it a must for them to be responsive to the needs of the citizenry.

Accountability in good governance means that the implementation of role, tasks in the precess decision making and implement those decision made and take responsibility in all of their performances by reporting, explaining the reasons on those decisions made.

Accountability is not only to those who told or asked us to do something, but for all stakeholders.

❖ Governmental institutions as well as the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders.

❖ In general organizations and institutions are accountable to those who will be affected by decisions or actions

Not only governmental institutions, but private sectors and civil society organizations also must be accountable to public and to their institutional stakeholders, especially to whom affected by all of their decisions made.

Thus, accountability is intended to be accountable to leaders and to public.

4.7.1 Accountable to Leaders

The staff must have accountable to their leaders and donors.

> **Example:** Commune Chief has asked commune clerk to send the Commune annual report to PLAU.
>
> ❖ The performance of taking report to PLAU is the implementation of role and tasks of this clerk.
>
> ❖ When he turns back and report to the Commune Chief that he already gave the report to Mr. Sok Sophal, PLAU staff on 18th April yesterday and adds that the staff also singed for informing his received.
>
> Performance of taking report to PLAU and report to Commune Chief means that this clerk has accountable to Commune Chief.

4.7.2 Accountable to Public

Public servants are accountable to the public that they are appointed to serve. In the past, it was often seen that the major responsibility of the public servants was to rule the people. Nowadays the emphasis is on service. So they must have accountable to public in general. For private sector, the direct accountability is not only to their clients or customers (individuals), but to the public in general also because of providing specific interest to one group of clients, it may cause disadvantage to others or general public.

Example: C/S Councils decided to build 3 km-long road in one village by using commune fund.

❖ C/S Councils decide to use C/S fund for building road is the implementation of their role and tasks.

❖ After decision made, C/S Councils inform villagers on:
  − Process and reasons of decision made for building the road
  − Providing reasonable and acceptable answers to all stakeholders, especially for people who affected by such decisions.
  − Progressive and result of building the road

C/S Councils decide to build the road by using C/S fund and report to their citizens mean C/S council has accountable to their citizens (public)

4.8 Responsiveness

Good governance is one that promotes health and well being of its citizenry in a manner that is equitable. In good governance, it means the efforts of C/S and

institutions to serve all stakeholders equally without discrimination within reasonable timeframe.

The responsiveness can be:

- ❖ Providing services to people as required.
- ❖ Institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe.
- ❖ Solving by taking actions to solve problems or difficulties.
- ❖ Providing the reasons why, the problem can not be solved by taking action.
- ❖ Requesting for intervention from responsible institutions or organizations to deal problems or difficulties and report to people on the progress of those request.

Example 1: One villager comes to commune office to ask for her baby's birth certification. When she came, she did not know who is responsible. At that time, one Commune Staff asked her on what service she needs? After knowing, he told her and brouth her to meet the person who is responsible on birth registration. This officer fills up tasks for her in politely and friendly ways. This performance is the commune responsiveness manner to local people.

Example 2: In village "A", the unexpected outbreak of cattle disease. Village Chief wrote a request to Commune Chief for intervention. After getting request from Village Chief, Commune Chief conducted a special CC meeting to discuss the problem. Based on CC decision, Commune Chief wrote a request to Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for intervention on vaccination in villages nearby village "A" and treatment service in village "A". Commune Chief also inform to villagers on the request letter to provincial office as information

V.   Advantages of good governance

- ■ Good governance is claimed as remedy to solve the problems such as bureaucratic delays and inefficiency, corruption, poor quality public services and a judicial system. It is a necessary condition to remediate the social sickness and maintaining stable growth.

- ■ Good governance encourages politics of inclusion, accommodation and tolerance. It is about functioning parliaments, judiciaries, electoral bodies and institutions that is creating and maintaining enabling environments for equitable development.

- ■ Good governance is close to the people; decentralizing governance to the local level enables and empowers people to participate more directly in decision-making processes. By allowing local communities to

manage their own affairs, and through facilitating closer contact between central and local, decentralization enables responses to people's needs and priorities and makes development more sustainable through genuine ownership.

■ Good governance promotes efficient and effective public management; it demands high standards of integrity. It build capacities with an emphasis on processes to elicit broad support and consensus that accountable for actions.

■ Good governance strengthens not only central and local governments but also the involvement of civil society organizations and the private sector in partnerships at all levels. It builds capacity in all three domains of governance - state, civil society and the private sector which enable the innovative sharing of responsibilities and creating enabling environments that provide incentives and support people and partners to pursue their legitimate objectives.

■ A flourishing civil society is necessary for the existence of vibrant, creative, and responsive governance through channelling and mobilizing people's participation in economic and social activities and through organizing them in ways that can influence public policies and provide access to public resources, particularly for the poor.

■ The fundamental principles of good governance are universal but not a standard prescription. It provides flexibility and varieties regarding historical experience; indigenous systems, cultures and values; and reflects everyday realities.

■ Good governance and democracy is center-stage for development and sate prosperity. In a short description, it will lead to:

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o   Improve the quality of public administration;
o   Debaurocratization;
o   Effective implementation of decision;
o   Effective public services delivery;
o   Political stability;
o   Promote social justice and independence judiciary;
o   Building trust on judical system;
o   Nurturing the reliable competency of governance;
o   Effective anti-corruption;
o   Attractive of investment;
o   Promote transparency and accountability etc.;
o   Finally it build a prosperous hapiness county;
o   Promote a new managerial system to ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

VI. Governance Actors

Previously, it used to be thought that only government is the actor in governance, but recent thinking rightly suggests that private firms (the private sector) and other not-for-profit organization in civil society also play an important role, particularly in managing the social and economic affairs of the nation-state. Thus, there are four actors catagorized in governance:

- The state or government itself (the main actors);
- The private sector and
- Civil society
- Citizens

This four actors must work closely and in consistence with each other. The influence of non-state actors varies considerably between countries depending on, for example, the political system, government policy, natural resource endowments, population and geography, culture and history, level of economic development and so on. This mean that in some countries civil society, the private sector and citizens might be large and powerful while in others they can be relatively underdeveloped and have relatively little power or opportunity to influence nation affairs.

Actors in governance are included those in position to make decision on law and policies, those in authoprity to implement that decision and those involved. Government is usually considered as main actor in worksbut other actors are much importance to ensure the quality of governance. Stakeholders to governance works are vary according to level ogovernance and specific issues it addresses.

Actors and stakeholders in governance works may take roles in accordance with their concerns. They take diverse roles and responsibilities in governance works and make different influences depend on their own stregnths. Those may have influence on governance processes are range from individual citizen to powerful institutions. Aside from government, those infuential actors included:

- ❖ non-governmental organizations;
- ❖ civisiciety organization such as communities, traditional or sectoral association, youth groups, interest group, farmer group, religous organization etc.;
- ❖ private sector comprises business associations, corporative companies, comerecial banks, transnational companies, investors;
- ❖ Individual: individual citizens, elites, elders, politicians, businessman lawyers and advocates and
- ❖ others: miliary, media, pagodas, donors, political party, finance institutions etc.

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Module 3

The commune councils

I. Introduction

Decentralization is the transfer of powers, function and resources from the national level of government to democratically elected commune councils. Objectives of decentralization in Cambodia include:

1. promote democracy and good governance
2. strengthen efficiency of government services
3. give its citizens greater opportunities to influence the decisions that affect their lives
4. improve upon the quality of life of its citizens and
5. ensure sustainable development

Citizens are given the right to elect the members of commune[19] councils. Besides that, they have the rights and responsibility to play an active role in communal life and local development processes. They are given a range of responsibilities and duties. The first and foremost task of the councils is to support the development of the commune and the wellbeing of the citizens. In the performance of their duties, council members are fully responsible and accountable to their citizens. They have to ensure that local communities participate in a proper manner in the decision-making process. This is very important because councilors will make decisions that have an impact on the lives of their citizens. For example, they will make decisions on how they spend the resources that are available to them. In order to be able to carry out their duties, commune councils have their own financial resources and staff to support them. They will have a clerk appointed by the Ministry of Interior.

Commune council makes a lot of decision that relevance to or has impact on youths but voice and opinion of youth are not really heard or incorporated in the deliberating process that arrive at that decision.
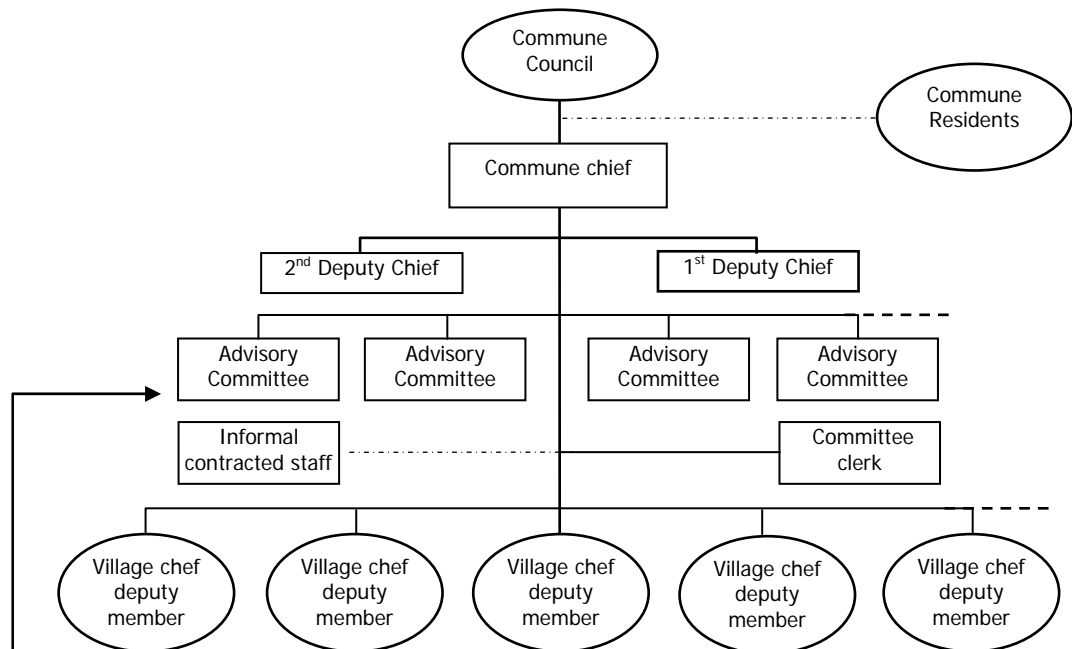
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[19] *Commune : Commune/Sangkat*

Commune Councils is responsible for a wide range of youth's concerns and interests.

In this reason, youth should have knowledge about commune council; who are they? What they are doing? How could youths be part of their working process?

II. The commune councils

Figure 1:   **Commune administrative structure**

- **Planning and budgeting**
- **Project management**
- **Procurement**
- **M&E**
- **Focal person on women and children etc.**

Article 27 of law on commune administration and management stated that a commune chief shall have the power to appoint various committees to provide advice and to assist affairs as it is necessary.

Source: Law on commune/Sangkat administration and managment[20]

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[20] *Law on commune/sangkat administration and management, 2001*

2.1   overviews

■ Commune councils are elected by citizens in its commune with principle of general, universal, free and fair, equal, direct and secret elections through a system of proportional representation for the mandate of 5 years. Khmer citizens of both sexes who are eligible and intend to stand as a candidate for the election of the commune council can do so in accordance with some criteria set in the law. Commune councils are obligated to govern the administration of the commune in a democratic manner. A system of local governance is being implemented at commune level.

■ They are the body representing the citizens of its commune and have the mission to serve the general interests of its Commune. There are 1621 communes and Sangkats in Cambodia and every commune is governing by a commune council with member from 5 to 11 councilors, depending on its demography and geography. Both legislative and executive powers for local administration are vested to commune councils in the communes. They have two types of roles, first to serve local affairs in the interests of the commune and its citizens, second as an agent to represent the State pursuant to the assignment or delegation of power of the State authority.

■ The legislative power of a commune shall be exercised through orders (Deika) of the commune in order to manage affairs with the framework of its roles, functions and powers. Orders (Deika) of a commune shall be adopted by decision of the Commune Council and shall be signed by the Commune chief. A Commune administration shall publicly and immediately publicize any adopted orders (Deika) within its commune. These order (Deika) shall be effective for enforcement within its territory only, and not be contradictory to international treaties and conventions that have been recognized by the Kingdom of Cambodia

■ They must be accountable to the needs of citizen. Accountability in the implementation of good local governance means commune councils must response to the needs of citizens and their electorates. They must communicate with citizens at their locality; informed people about local affairs and the problems they face in the performance. The acheivement of accountability could be ensured by setting performance indicators to measure progresses toward a desirable standard. Lack of accountability is equal lack of trust from citizens and lead to an ineffective use of resources that would undermine the capacity of commune councils in local development and effective services delivery.

■ Commune administration is responsible to maitain all information related to commune and the citizen included statistic, demography, people movement etc. apart from this they mediate the conflic among people and

impartially provide administrative service such as civil registration, issue local ordinance for governing the commune, filing and keep document, organize meeting on local issues, response to request of citizen and other social affairs. A Commune administration has duties to promote and support good governance by managing and using existing resources in a sustainable manner to meet the basic needs of its commune, serving the common interests of the citizens and respecting national interests in conformity with the general policy of the State.

■ Ministry of Interior monitors and controls the general activities of commune council include examination of the legality of work management, exercise of powers and the performance of roles and duties in each commune and assess the intervention and support to be provided to communes to strengthen their capacity for work management, exercise of powers, and the performance of roles and duties.

2.2 Role and responsibilities

■ The commune council is require to perform local own function stated in the law include:[21]
- **Maintain public security and public order;**
- **Arrange for the provision of necessary public services and ensure the proper implementation and be responsible for the good process of those services;**
- **Promote and encourage the comfort and contentment and welfare of citizens;**
- **promote social and economic development and upgrade the living standards of citizens;**
- **Protect and conserve the environment, natural resources and national culture and heritage;**
- **Reconcile the different views and opinion of citizens and encourage mutual understanding and tolerance among residents;**
- **Perform general affairs to meet the needs of citizens.**

■ **Presiding councilor** headed commune council and is selected from the top of the candidate list that receives the first majority of votes within the commune and he or she is also the Commune Chief. Presiding councilor have to preside over the meetings of commune council and ensure that the commune council meets at least once a month and in accordance with democratic rules and regulations stipulated in the by-law as well as maintain good order during meetings and be held in public and in a democratic manner.

■ **Commune council member** have to ensure the effective performance of powers, roles and functions and participate in meetings. more importance is liaise with electorates.

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[21] *Sub-decree on decentralization of power, role and duties to commune Sangkat council, Cambodia, 2002*

- **Commune chief** is entitled to appoint various committees to give advice and to assist in various affairs as necessary and that committee may either have one of the commune councilors as the Chairman or any citizen who is entitled to vote in the Commune rather than a councilor as the Chairman. A commune chief shall perform roles and duties to implement the decisions of the commune council, and provisions and principles delegated by the commune council. The chief has to prepare reports on work activities to his/her commune council at least once per month and provide recommendations and assistance to the commune council in the preparation of financial planning, and the carrying out of the roles, functions and powers of the commune council and other affairs delegated to him/her by the council.

- **Deputy chiefs** have to assist commune chief in accordance with the aw on commue administration and management. The first deputy assists commune chief on matters related to economic and finance while the second deputy assists the chief on issues of administration, social affair, basic services and public order.

- **Commune clerk** is appointed and assigned by and within the administrative framework of the Ministry of Interior, and has duties to assist with the affairs of the Commune and to ensure the continuity of administrative affairs. Each commune has a clerk act as an adviser on legal and administrative issues to the Commune councils and has to be neutral and impartial towards all members and political groups of the council and its committees. A commune may employ staff outside the State framework to assist with its affairs as required and according to work necessity and upon a decision of the commune council.

  The clerks is performing his/her work under the leadership of the CC. and assists CC and representatives in exercising powers, roles and functions in accordance with law, performs administrative duties and assists CC and committee to organize , and attend, the meetings, establish notice boards accessible to public and displays all notices that the CC requires

- **Village chief,** elected by commune council, is agent of commune council responsible for village development, represent villager in commune council and perform works as request by commune council. The chief responsible to put into practice tasks given by CC, ensures village social and economic development and ensures public order

- **Sub-committees** are created by commune chief with approval of commune council or through guideline of Ministry of Interior. They responsible to provide advice and assist in the affairs of the CC in specific subject matter areas, e.g. planning, budgeting. They have to reports monthly on progress, recommends actions to be undertaken concerning its respective subject matter.

- **General public** elects CCs member in every 5 year and participate in village and communal affairs through established procedures, for

example in the development planning process. They have the rights to demand information, responsiveness and accountability from the CC and Get involved in the monitoring of implementation of development projects. When the law requires they have to pay taxes, duties and fees as provisioned in law

■ **Actors in private sector** are the groups that are very active in business and economic activities. They can liaise with CC on issues related to the economic development of the commune, or provide employment opportunities to citizens.

■ **Contractor and service providers**. This group are includes the construction company who come to bid and construct road, canal, irrigation, school and other local infrastucture, and service providing agencies. The service providing agencies could be government agency, civil society organization and private companies,

■ **Local NGOs and self-help groups** are asked to help Mobilize local communities to participate in the promotion of social and economic development of local communities and advocate for interests of people they represent. They have to liaise with the CC on important issues related to development of villages and commune and support commune council in building public awareness about decentralization and commune management and administration

Roles and responsibility of parlimentarian

123 parliament members are voted by people through periodic election for the mandate of 5 years. Parliament members of Nation Assembly in Cambodia have roles and responsibilities as following:

❖ Represent people in particular voting territory and the general citizens.
❖ Voting in the assembly to select Prime Minister and all member of council of minister
❖ Oath to treaties and conventions
❖ Enact the laws and declare war
❖ enact law on amnesty
❖ Approve national budget
❖ Have the rights to propose the law(s)
❖ Have the rights to request for amendment of ratification of the law(s)
❖ Have the rights to make statement to object to government in letter through president of the assembly
❖ To understand and collect problems and concerns of general citizens
❖ Foreword concerns, queries, and problems of citizen to the representative of the government
❖ Quizzing the representative of government about law enforcement and public expenditure.

Sources: Youth Council of Cambodia, 2007[22]

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[22] *Advanced democracy seminar, a training handbook of Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC), 2007*

2.3   Important tasks of commune councils

2.3.1   Commune strategic development plan

> LAMC Article 60: "Commune/sangkat councils must prepare, approve and implement a commune/sangkat development plan in the purpose of determining the perspectives, programs and the development of the commune/sangkat."

■ Commune council shall prepare, approve and implement commune strategic development plan within the first year of its mandate. It must respond to the needs and interests of the population and shall be compatible with national economic and social development plans. It shall be reviewed annually by the commune council in order to update data. In the preparation of a commune strategic development plan, a commune council shall take the following steps:

- *Evaluate the existing level of development and development activities in the commune;*
- *Gather all the needs of the commune and prioritize those needs based on existing resources of the commune and other resources received;*
- *Preparation of programs which may respond to various needs through the provision of services and development and all these programs shall be included in the annual budget of the commune;*
- *Provision of services and development in accordance with its budget;*
- *Monitoring, control and evaluation of the results of implementation of the development plan;*
- *Use of the results to evaluate the level of new development in the commune;*
- *Report on the results of implementation of the commune development plan to the citizens of the commune council.*

■ Most importance, a commune strategic development plan shall also determine methods and means to enable citizens, especially youths, of the commune to participate in the entire process! Commune council shall monitor, control and evaluate the implementation of plans, programs, projects and the provision of services with transparency and high accountability. it is up to CCs, local communities and citizens to decide and implement what shall happen in each area. Six months before the end of the mandate of the CC, the results and impacts of the implementation of the developent plan have to be evaluated.

The cycle of commune development planning and commune investment program[23]

> ### *Cycle of CDP*
> Step 1: Draft development framework and budget
> Step 2: Consultation meeting on commune development
> Step 3: Draft CDP
> Step 4: Approve CDP
> Step 5: Evaluate implementation of CDP

> ### *Cycle of CIP*
> Step 1: Commune project formulation and budgeting
> Step 2: District integration workshop
> Step 3: Dissemination and consultation with commune residents
> Step 4: Approve CIP
> Step 5: Monitoring and evaluation of CIP

2.3.2 Ensure public participation in planning process

> LAMC Article 64: "The commune/sangkat development plan must determine the methods and means to provide opportunities for participation by the citizens of its commune/sangkat throughout the whole process."

Participation of citizens and local communities is an important feature of commune/sangkat development planning. This means reaching out to women and men, poor and rich, old and young, employed and unemployed. When it comes to the implementation of projects and programs, CCs have to ensure that beneficiaries are adequately involved in the detailed design and supervision of all projects of the development plan.

What are the benefits of participation?

- Participation ensures that projects really address the interests and needs of the people; they are therefore more successful.

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[23] *Inter-ministerial Prakas (declaration) on commune strategic development and investment program planning process, Ministry of interior-Ministry of planing, 2007*

- Citizens will feel more responsible for projects in their area when they are involved in the decisions, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of development activities.
- Participation makes people more independent from outside assistance because they start thinking of doing by themselves, finding solutions to their problems and initiating action.
- Participation supports poverty reduction efforts because poor people also get involved.
- Participation therefore helps CCs to use their resources effectively and efficiently.

What might be the difficulties in public participation?

- The concept of participation is new to everybody; councilors have to learn how to facilitate participation; citizens have to learn the processes for getting involved.
- People who are directly involved in decision making may dominate others.
- There may be people, for example, women, the poor, the disabled, etc., who are afraid to speak out about their needs and are not, because of prevailing social taboos, able to stand up to defend their interests.

What might be possible ways to improve public participation?

- In village meetings, citizens are to be given an opportunity to discuss their needs and interests. It has to be ensured that all sections of the population – women and men, old and young, rich and poor etc. – are given an opportunity to express their needs and concerns.
- CSOs can contribute in the preparation of the CDP and CIP by representing the interests of local communities and specific groups of the population, e.g. poor people, women, ethnic minorities, etc.
- CSOs can impart knowledge and ideas in the preparation of the CDP.
- The people should be given an opportunity to comment on the CDP.
- Citizens should be involved in monitoring implementation of the CDP.

2.3.3 Manage commune finance

LAMC Article 73: "Communes/sangkats must have their own financial resources, budgets and assets."

LAMC Article 82: "Communes/sangkats shall establish a system for management, monitoring and control of its finance."

■ Each commune has its own financial resources, budget and assets. Commune council is entitled to obtain revenues directly from fiscal taxes, non-fiscal taxes and other service charges. The taxes include land tax, tax on immovable properties and rental tax. They receive the transfer of revenues from fiscal taxes and non-fiscal taxes, endowments, grants resources, subsidies or transfers from the State revenues. They could also receive fees for the performance of agency functions representing the State as assigned, as supplementary to revenues of the Commune. Each commune council shall prepare and approve its budget every year and ensure that budget is reflecting the priorities and needs of the commune.

■ Furthermore they must properly manage, and could use and generate incomes from assets vested to it. For cost effective, commune council must create a system to manage, monitor and control for transparent, efficient and accountable management of its finances. Accountability related to commune finance is refrred to effective menagement of commune budget. Citizens could demand commune council to use commune budget and other resources in effective ways by, among other means, making their compaints to commune fund accountability boxes hung infront of or nearby commue offices and elwhere.

■ Commune councils have to prepare and adopt a budget on a yearly basis and the budget must balance total income and expenses and reflect the priorities of the commune development plan and investment program. Communes are entitled to part of the state's assets as the asset of the commune. CCs are given the power to manage their financial resources. They are given the responsibility to manage these reliably and responsibly, so that the public can trust them. Nothing can arouse public mistrust like question marks over money spent. What are the major sources of income of CCs?

CCs have three major sources of income.

- They are empowered to collect direct revenue, e.g. to fix local taxes for land or for buildings. They are allowed to charge fees when they deliver services. The law also states that details will be spelled out in a separate law.
- They will also receive a share of the Commune/Sangkat Fund. This Fund shall be established to transfer resources from the national level to the CCs. The Fund will have a component for administrative expenditures and a component for development expenditures of councils. The share of the Commune/Sangkat Fund that will be received by each CC will be determined by means of a transparent formula.
- They are entitled to accept fees when they perform duties on behalf of the national government. This is termed "agency functions".

CCs have to apply a range of procedures to ensure that resources are spent in a transparent and accountable manner.

1. The commune/sangkat budget
2. The commune/sangkat accounting system
3. Financial reporting
4. Expenditure cycle
5. Procurement rules
6. Commune/sangkat durable assets
7. Audit of commune/sangkat accounts and operations

2.3.4   Organize commune council meeting

■ A meeting of commune council shall be valid only if it is participated in by more than half of the total number of commune councilors and shall approve by an absolute majority of votes of the total number of councilors on any of matters related to commune strategic development plans, commune budgets, by-laws and orders (Deika) of the commune and imposition of local fiscal taxes, non-local fiscal taxes and other service charges and other matters as determined by the Minister of Interior.

> Meetings provide an opportunity:
> ◆ To get everyone's idea about a subject
> ◆ To get support for an idea
> ◆ To brief on things that will happen or have happened
> ◆ To discuss and reflect on important issues
> ◆ To get advice from people who are knowledgeable
> ◆ To make a decision

■ A well organized meeting leads to well thought-out decisions and good communication among councilors, staff and others invited to participate. A meeting that actively involves and values the contributions of everyone present encourages a sense of ownership for the outcomes of the meeting. Internal rules and regulations stipulate that CCs can have two types of meetings: **regular meetings**, which should be held at least once a month; and **special meetings**, held to discuss special issues that require special or urgent attention by CCs.

- The commune/sangkat clerk and other CC officials have the right to attend CC meetings. To discuss specific issues, it may also be required to invite people with special knowledge, skills or experience, for example technical knowledge for the design of a project the council seeks to undertake. The clerk and ordinary citizens who are not members of the council are not allowed to take part in the decision-making and voting process.

- Order of business during a meeting: There is a given procedure and sequence according to which CCs have to conduct their meetings:
  1. Confirm legality of a CC meeting
  2. Discuss and adopt agenda of meeting

3. Review and adopt minutes of previous meeting; signing of the minutes by presiding councilor
4. Deal with documents and correspondence submitted for consideration and decision making
5. Other matters

- Every councilor is entitled to vote at every CC meeting. Voting is done by raising hands. The number of votes in favor and the number against the tabled proposal have to be announced immediately and recorded in the minutes.

2.3.5 Record keeping and filing

What is record keeping?
Record keeping means safekeeping of all information for future use and reference. Most documents will be in a written style but there could also be audio or video tapes. Record keeping is an important aspect of the administration of CCs.

What are the benefits of record keeping?
- Easy access to information to guide CCs in deliberation
- Continuity, so that information remains available even after officials move out and new ones move in
- A record of history
- Improved transparency of the operations of CCs

What are examples of the types of records to be kept?
- Minutes of meetings
- Incoming and outgoing correspondence
- The commune/sangkat development plan and budget
- Financial records
- Inventory of properties of the CC
- Address books with names, addresses, phone and fax numbers, locations, email addresses of collaborators and partners, e.g. NGOs, donor agencies, sector departments
- Contract proposals or fundraising activities
- Existing business links in the district or region and so on
- Village data books
- Commune Deikas

Record keeping must be done in a new and open way, making public access and knowledge of information and records a high priority, as opposed to secrecy. If CCs are making efforts to enhance **transparency** and **accountability**, they can do many things to ensure that the public are made aware of key decisions and other pieces of information that affect them.

- They can arrange spots at council offices where people feel able to come and find out whatever they want to know.
- They can make people aware of records and information in the office that are open to the public.
- Councils can work in an open way, offering information and responding promptly and positively to requests for information. Information is a key tool for democracy and development.
- Print documents can be arranged in files so that people have easy access to them.
- Records should be kept in the office as long as stipulated in the respective regulation.

2.3.6 Developing action plan

An action plan is a document which shows in a detailed way how people want to make something happen. It is a list of activities that they intend to do over a period of time. It shows *what* they intend to do, *when* they intend to do it and *who* will do it.

CCs have many tasks to accomplish. These need to be put in order so that everyone knows what will happen in the future. It is important to know who is responsible for different tasks and who will do what and when. An action plan:

- Guides future activities
- Reminds people about activities so that they can prepare in advance
- Helps new staff and outsiders to know what everyone is doing

2.3.7 prepare an annual report

■ This report must be copied and retained as a public document and distributed to important organizations, associations and the public at the original cost of reproduction. Any comments made regarding the report provided shall examine and consider and good comments shall be incorporated into the commune strategic development plan. In the report should include:

- Prioritized works and objectives of service delivery and development plans of the Commune in the previous fiscal year;
- Results of implementation of prioritized works and objectives of service delivery and development plans of the Commune;
- Measures to improve other areas in which there have been deficiencies in the implementation to date;

- Prioritized affairs and objectives of service delivery and development plans of the Commune in the current fiscal year.

2.3.8 Delegating and segregating tasks and responsibilities

■ CCs have many tasks to perform. If they delegate tasks and responsibilities to others this enables many people to participate in development activities. This is good for two reasons:
- More work can be done – which means more positive developments in the commune/sangkat.
- More people are involved and participating – which means that they will feel a sense of ownership.

■ Delegation of tasks is not easy: it is not just a matter of passing on the work. This is a set of skills that most people have to learn in order to do it well. What needs to be considered to ensure that delegation is well done?

❑ Define the task clearly	• What exactly is the task a person is asked to do? • What standard is required? • Have you given the person all the information and material needed to do the job? • Set a time limit on when to accomplish the task
❑ Define exactly who should be doing the task	• How many people are required to do the job? • What level of knowledge, skill or experience is needed? • Are there enough people with the right level of knowledge, experience or skills?
❑ Supervision	• What and when do the people have to report to you? • How much freedom are you giving them to do it their way? Or has the task to be accomplished in a particular way?
❑ Check understanding	• Ensure the person knows exactly what to do • Allow them to ask questions.

2.3.9 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is a process of gathering information about the progress of work and using this information so that decisions and planning for the future are well informed. Monitoring helps see what is going well and what needs to be changed or improved.

CCs are particularly requested to monitor the following:
- Implementation of plans, programs, projects and services delivered for the wellbeing of citizens
- Finances, e.g. accounting practices, asset management, audit management and financial management

Monitoring helps
- In observing how things are progressing
- In identifying problems and matters that are not going correctly
- In making decisions for appropriate changes to get things back on track
- In using resources more effectively and efficiently
- In maintaining good quality

III. The civil society organizations

Civil society organization is a group people come together with common purpose. Those groups include non-governmental organization, community based organization, traditional groups, religious groups, self-help group etc. They are working within commune to support local community and youth. In general, they are playing very important role in both development and governance works such as:

- Implement development project to reduce poverty
- Provide basic social service
- Solving social problem
- Provide capacity, training and empower people
- Provide support to commune council members
- Monitor, observe or advocate
- Ensure the practice of good governance principles
- Promote peace, democracy and respect of human rights

3.1   Civil society roles in local governance

In order to support commune council in local governance work, civil society organizations have play active roles in following:

- Support CCs in the mobilization of local communities to participate in local planning process
- Involve bidding for sub-contract from commune council works;
- Promote and protect the interest of the poor by facilitating and maintaining relationship among the poor, youth, villagers and commune council, and encourage them to genuinely articulate their needs;
- Building capacity or provide advice to commune council and youth;
- With people monitor the performance and advocate commune council on issues concerning local community and youth;

- Dissemination information and document related to commune councils;
- Support and facilitate the forum among commune council, civil society, local community and youth
- Create other mechanism for people participation;
- Help people to make complaints or submit petition;
- Raise public awareness about decentralization, commune councils and their roles and responsibilities to youth and villagers ;
- Participate in commune sub-committees
- Participate in commune council meetings
- Bring people and youth voice to commune councils
- Build up network among councilors, villagers, youths and civil society, and encourage the share of information, opinion and experiences
- Facilitate meetings and exchange of experiences and lessons learn among commune councils
- Communicate with commune council on issues related to commune development
- Support commune development project and ensure the maintenance

3.2   Rights and roles of citizen in local governance affairs

Citizens, including youths, have the rights and roles to fully participate in commune council affairs. Those rights and roles include:

- Rights to get regular information about works, budget and decision of commune councils;
- Rights to read document of commune council such as meeting reports, internal rules, commune development plan, budget plan, financial reports, annual report, notices on information board etc.

- Rights to complaint or request commune council and receive the response to their requests.
- Rights to participate in the meetings of commune council, and sub-committees without invitation
- Rights to pose question commune councils
- Rights to provide opinion on bidding and procurement procedure and other decisions
- Rights to participate in budget planning, public forum, commune planning process
- Rights to monitor the performance of commune councils
- Participate in preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project carried out by commune councils
- Pay local contribution to project cost.
- Involve in maintenance local infrastructure and other achievements

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Module 4

Trails for Youth Engagement

I. Introduction

Multiple participatory strategies are likely to yield a richer source of expertise and therefore, to increase the benefits for the institutions concerned. If used strategically, multiple participation mechanisms can be used to cross-fertilized and reinforce each other. There are many ways to include youth in the decision-making process. They can team up with commune council to perform community needs assessments, conduct voter-registrations, community service, or identify ways they could together in local governance.

In short, youth in local governance is new to Cambodia it's but decentralization context open new ways of doing it. Youth in local governance is referred to the authentic and meaningful engagement of youth people in the commune council's works include administrative, development and social activities, where they have or share voice, influence, and decision-making of commune councils to improve the quality of local governance.

In local governance works, there are many things youths could do, many roles that youth could play, many ways that youth could walk into and in many form that youth function... but to ensure real equability in participation, youth participation should be incorporated at all stages: decision making, designing, planning, development, programming, operation, monitoring and evaluation.
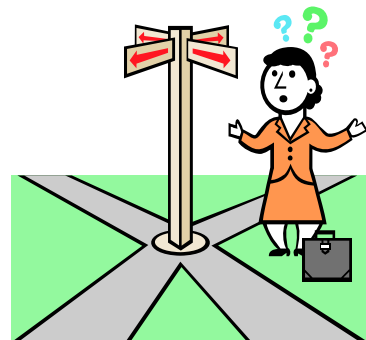
Recognizing the ways and know how to participate are prerequisite to successful engagement in local governance.

II. Trails or areas for youth engagement

Several questions should be raised to awake youth consciousness on local governance issues such as how do they think about the performance of commune councils? Have they ever raise or drive commune councils attention to youth issues? How commune council addresses the issues affecting youth and your communities? etc. in the following there are some roles and task that youth could do to make commune councils and relevent agency obey the good governance principles:

The law on commune administration and management and other regulations governing local governance do not reject youth's participation. There are many roles and tasks youths could help to reduce the weigh of loads of commune councils. According to law[24] and inter-ministerial declarations[25], those roles and tasks could be carried out by youth included:

2.1   *Youths and commune administrative affairs*

❖ Participate and assist commune council in the performance of local own function stated in the law include:[26]
  o Maintain public security and public order;
  o Arrange for the provision of necessary public services and ensure the proper implementation and be responsible for the good process of those services;
  o Promote and encourage the comfort and contentment and welfare of citizens;
  o promote social and economic development and upgrade the living standards of citizens;
  o Protect and conserve the environment, natural resources and national culture and heritage;
  o Reconcile the different views and opinion of citizens and encourage mutual understanding and tolerance among residents;
  o Perform general affairs to meet the needs of citizens.

❖ Participate in commune council meetings
  o initiate or request meeting agenda on issues related to commune and youths than propose to CCs to include in the meeting or bring the agenda of propose by people to the meetings
  o remind commune councils and village authority about schedule of regular monthly meetings;

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[24] *Law on commune/snagkat administration and management, 2001*
[25] *Inter-ministerial Prakas (declaration) on commune strategic development and investment program planning process, Ministry of interior-Ministry of planing, 2007*
[26] *Sub-decree on decentralization of power, role and duties to commune Sangkat council, Cambodia, 2002*

- o assist in prepare logistic and venue;
- o help commune clerk to take note;
- o Participate, listen and make comments and suggestion or question to CCs meeting and represent other youth, if do not have rights to vote for decision during council meeting;
- o Help to disseminate to the public about schedule, agenda or subjects, place and time of the meeting;
- o Place information about meeting and report on information board
- o Help commune council find citizens or persons with specific expertise related to topic to participate and advice the meeting
- o Help in disseminate the decision of the meetings made by councilors or sticks it on information board for at least 48 hours.

❖ Help commune on administrative works such as
- o record keeping and filing
- o draft invitation letter
- o be messengers
- o make note, record and report
- o maintaining office equipments
- o commune finance management tasks
- o developing action plan
- o prepare an annual report

❖ Facilitate the liaison and working relation between citizen and CCs during working hours as well as other chances

❖ Remind CCs and chief about the request and issues raise by citizen in the commune

❖ Help to keep commune office clean and in order

❖ Help commune council to make information board install and function at commune and villages with prolific information include youth issues

Sub-decree on decentralization of power, roles and duties to commune/ Sangkat council

Article 30: Every commune/ Sangkat resident can attend every Commune/Sangkat Council meeting but cannot vote.

Commune/Sangkat residents can ask the commune/Sangkat chief or councilors the questions at the meeting of Commune/ Sangkat Council in accordance with the internal rules and regulations for the meetings of Commune/ Sangkat Council.

Sub-decree on decentralization of power, roles and duties to commune/ Sangkat council

Article 31: Every commune/ Sangkat resident can put a written suggestion or complaint to the Council and the latter is compulsory to response to the complaint or suggestion.

Any suggestion or complaint that the commune/Sangkat chief can deal with within his/her competence, he/she shall do it and shall inform the residents of the response and shall report to Commune/Sangkat Council at the next meeting.

Any suggestion or complaint that the commune/Sangkat chief cannot deal with within his/her competence, he/she shall include it in the next meeting of the Commune/ Sangkat Council.

Commune/Sangkat chief shall inform the resident of the response by Commune/ Sangkat Council.

❖ Help commune council disseminate information to villagers, school and other agencies. It could be information about meetings, development plan and budget, decision of commune councils and other related information

❖ Request CCs to participate in various sub-committees within commune structure for example women and children committee or lobby commune council to establish commune youth committee...

❖ Participate in village meeting and help village chief identify appropriate place for monthly meetings such as school, Pagoda, church, house etc. and help village chief and commune disseminate meeting agendas, times and places. Moreover, help to ensure that village meeting spaces are open to welcome villager at least one day a week and village authority must be there to meet with people.

❖ Help in other work as civil registration and inscribe voter registration, construction, public order etc.

❖ Help commune council compile the annual report of affairs performance, priority issues, basic social services and commune development activities and make sure that the report available for public, copy to civil society organization as request.

2.2 Youth and advocacy works

❖ Participate in the formulation of their association or voluntary community based organizations to articulate and solving common problems of citizens, and participating in every community meetings.

❖ Participate to present and explain concerns of citizens in the community to commune councils, make request and propose solutions

❖ Involve in monitoring the performance and commitment of commune councils on affairs to serve citizens in community. Quizzing them about the process and progress of development, inactivity of government roles and responsibility, and future plans.

❖ Demand responsiveness from commune councils and parliamentarians

Sub-decree on decentralization of power, roles and duties to commune/ Sangkat council

Article 32: For suggestion or complaint provided in Article 45 of the Law on Administration and Management of Commune/ Sangkat, the commune/Sangkat chief shall report to the competence ministries, institutions or agencies of the Royal Government.

Article 33: Commune/Sangkat Council shall ensure to regularly inform the residents of commune/Sangkat of all matters within its competences and the decisions made at the meetings of the Commune/Sangkat Council.

❖ Making complaints or protest against projects or plans of commune councils and parliamentarians that not work for the interest of communities. Those complaints could be made through petition drives, riots, peaceful protest, public gathering, dialogue etc.

❖ Ensure that commune councils are accountable to citizen in its respective commune

❖ Help and encourage citizen to provide feedback to commune council

❖ remind commune councils the principle that discussion and performance of commune administrative affairs are must be open and in transparency

❖ Working closely with women and children focal person or committee to ensure that youth and child issues are heeded.

❖ Youth and citizen could make requests, complaints or petition drive by verbal or in letters to commune chief or CCs meetings, and attentively follow up the response from commune council.

❖ Monitor and evaluate administrative services and other services of commune council to citizen are faire, impartial, on time and transparence

❖ Observe the delegation and segregating tasks and responsibilities

2.3   Youth in commune development

❖ Help commune council facilitate development work especially related to youth and children, in mobilizing resources from different agencies

❖ Help commune council to establish and facilitate popular democratic mechanism and other popular activities and processes in consultations with communities, civil society and others stakeholders and encourage youth and community member to participate in entire local planning processes.

❖ Help commune communicate, cooperate and partnering with neighbor communes by provide information gain from youth network or forum about common issues facing by citizen and youth in a cluster of communes and propose commune council to have inter-commune project on both social service and infrastructure.

❖ Participate as member of commune planning and budgeting committee to make contribution to commune strategic development plan and investment program.

❖ Participate in monitoring and evaluation of implementation of commune strategic development plan and investment program

❖ On behalf of civil society as youth group to involve in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation by represent community interest and the interest of special group in society such children and youth, poor, indigenous group etc.

❖ Commune plan are kept at commune office and made available to the public so youth could ask CCs to read and understand commune plan

❖ Youths group could also register to bid for providing social service such as education on child rights and other subject

❖ Participate with commune council in promoting and facilitating the commune development and delivery of services

❖ Provide idea and labor for commune affair and development works

2.4   Youths and other tasks

❖ Involve with commune council to organize social and traditional event

❖ Help commune council in other social activities such as emergency relief, raise charity or social fund to support miserable family, child and youth, elder, disable etc

❖ end of each year, youth could participate and listen to the report of commune chief to CC meeting on prioritized services, result and achievement of implementation, challenge and recommendations, priority service and issues and action plan for the next year. They can ask council and invite their friend to read report and other document at commune office

❖ Works related to youth/child exploitation and abuse, provide report and information for child protection, protect youth/child interests and child education

❖ Help commune councils in organizing training and public awareness session on issues related to commune and youths

❖ Encourage and support women councilors and/or women in village authority to perform their tasks especially on women and young people issues.

❖ They even could ask commune council to use commune council office for celebration of activities related youth and social activities.

❖ Voting to select the rights councilors and parliamentarians according to personal opinion, understanding and their own choice.

❖ Involve in activities of political parties in line with their own willingness

❖ Help commune council in social work such as provide transplant service to miserable families or visited families suffering of domestic violence and other emergency

III. The meaningful youth participation

The meaningful youth participation means that:

- Youths and all relevant stakeholders take part in discussion on any issues that importance for themselves, their village, community and their commune; what should do and what should not do.

- Able to drive the focus of commune development based on priority identify by villagers and youths;

- Ensure the decisions made by commune council are in the right direction with democratic and transparent manner;

- Create options and mechanism for other public to participate in identifies, design, prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate the commune projects;

- Hold commune councils perform their work by principles of good governance

- Youths are treated as equal partners

- Youth voice, opinion and comments are valued and listen

The meaningful participation should result:

- Projects are successfully implement and result in the needs of youth, vulnerable groups and general public

- Citizens will share responsibility of the projects in their respective areas when they have chance to involve in the entire process

- It build self responsibility and ownership, decrease dependent on outside assistance start think and solve problem by themselves

- It help commune to manage local resource in transparence, efficiency and in sustainable ways

- Women and men will share their roles accordingly and the benefit to women and youth will be assuring and the importance of participation will be disseminating to their families and communities that will gain trust and ownership in local development.

- Larger population will monitor decision making, public expenditure and development commitment that have an impact on them.

- Sustainability, transparency and accountability are guaranteed

- Projects and activities that benefits commune resident will be implement in desirable principles and procedure.

- Local government officials are opens, people and people have opportunity to express their opinion and feel empowered. More importance is commune council will take care of needs and benefits of youth and ordinary people.

- Information flow regularly happen from local government to people and vice-versa

IV. Youth in partnewrship for local governance
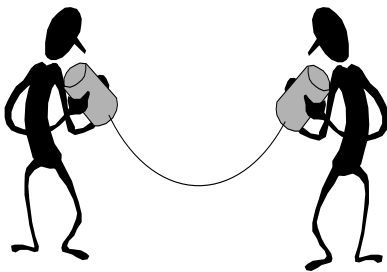
Youth in partnership for local governance means a joint effort between youth and other actor in local governance at commune level to establish and achieve common goals.

The partnership is one in which both parties share equal power and control over making decisions on what gets done, who does what and how. Partnerships is tools to successfully recognize the assets of all relevant members and discover methods to draw out the hidden talents in everyone, young and old

It is indeed highly potential strategies for building good local governance in cooperative efforts. By working in partnership with adults on equal footing youth can be actively engaged in making the decisions that affect their community. This is called youth in local governance and youths are qualified to work in this local governance as equal partners.

Youth involved in positive, meaningful, respectful relationships with adults have been shown to improve skills and competencies in areas such as communication, leadership, openness and mutual respect, trust, and shared decision-making.

Youth can build their partnership with many groups of people who concern with commune affairs, local governance and youths issues.

Word sense

A **partnership** is a relationship between individuals or groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility in achieving a common goal. It is grounded on the quality and quantity of interactions, perceptions held by the partners about each other, and the d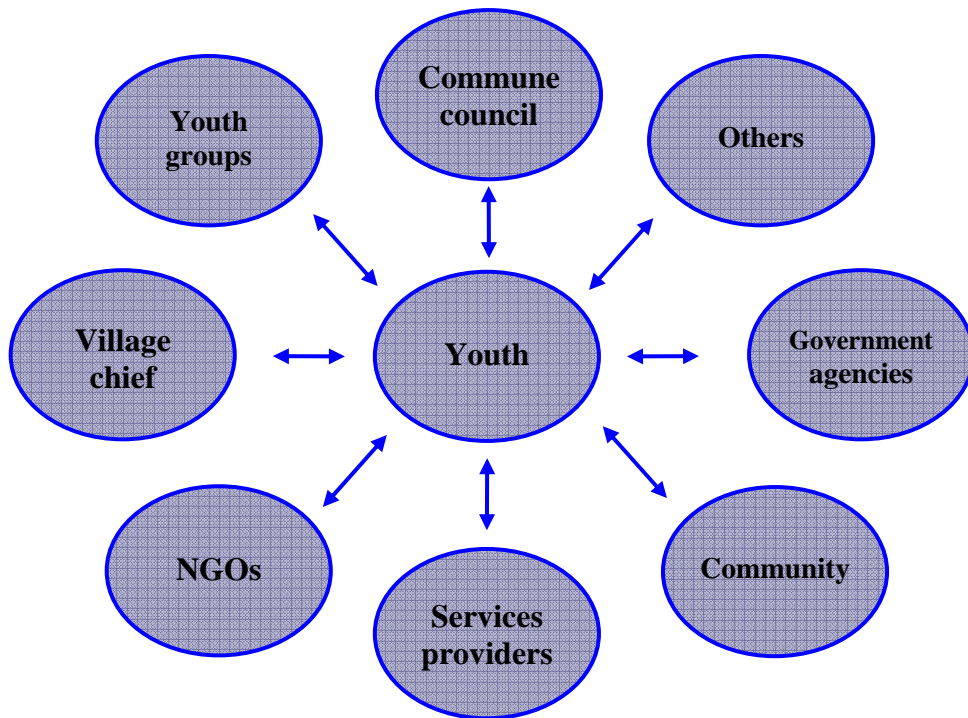egree of commitment by the partners to the relationship. Partnerships are relationships among equals, where one partner does not override the choice of the other. Partnership is multi-vocal rather than univocal, and those in the partnership get the opportunity to express their opinions.

Who could youth build partnership with? Youth could form partnership with:

Youth could form partnership or alliance with one or more of these groups to work together on their primary concerns for example:

- Function of health center or epidemic issue
- Health services
- Primary education
- Potable water systems
- Small scale irrigation
- Rural road projects
- CC meetings
- Electricity
- School development and primary education
- Youth and child play ground construction
- Employment issues
- Youth and child abuse
- Sponsorship program
- domestic violence
- Administrative services etc.

> When youth work in equal partnership with adults on boards, committees, coalitions, commissions, or other governing structures, it is called *Youth in Governance.*
>
> *Transparency International Pakistan, 2007*

The partnership is the joint forces to demand accountability of services and bring effective solution to the issues mentioned above. Youth could work with these partners to make local governance works in aacordance with principles of good governance, democracy and in line with decentralization politcy. More impotance is to take advantage of its synergy to influance and change behavor of commune councils from **ruling to governing**.

V. Points for consideration while involing youths

2.1 Some roles youth would like to play[27]

❖ **Administrators**   In some cases, youths prefer to with carrying out basic administration through activities ranging from bookkeeping and typing to conducting research and collecting data… and they are like to be entrusted with these tasks in their dynamic. In doing so, they play an integral role in carrying out day-today works of commune council, while developing marketable skills they can use to secure employment later on...

❖ **Advocates**   Through the formation of youth groups, participation in public rallies and campaigns, and contributions to policy papers and public debates, youths play an important role in advocating for their own rights and calling for action on urgent social issues…as they see it and want to present other in dealing with issues they concerns... This would bring youths and other social issues into consideration of commune council.

❖ **Counselors / Peer to Peer Support**   Within many program settings, young people wanted to be counselors who listen and advise their peers on issues such as drug and alcohol use, sexuality, parent-child relationships, peer pressure, trouble at school, and other causes of anxiety and depression…With this, they feel philanthropy, gaining respect, value, friendship and...so they can help commune council on social intervention and reconciliation.

❖ **Decision-makers**   Experiences are telling that youths are participating in decision making in government, private, civil society, community and in family. Those youth are involved in government position, parliamentarian, on the boards of youth-serving NGOs, several effective models of youth-led structures within Institutions etc…Youths always have their own ideas with fresh and creativity so it is no doubt that youth would like to involve and make decision to ensure the realization of their imagination. The decision of commune council may quickly reach better solution with this creative comments

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[27] *Youth Participation: Challenges and Opportunities, International Youth Foundation, 1996*

❖ **Income generators.**

Through activities such as sewing, carpentry, growing produce, and serving food at a youth-run restaurant, youth learn valuable skills, earn money for themselves, and often help finance their family, their Institution, club and program activities…They could help commune council in creative ways to mobilize resource for commune development.

❖ **Monitoring and evaluation**

While certainly not the rules in most activities youths would like to monitor and evaluation the implementation of activities. Youth are always like to make exploration and attentively wondering the result of promise. This make youth active in following up and gauging the output of implementation and activities. They are actively help monitor and evaluate activities on an ongoing basis…This would help commune council go on track of their development objective

❖ **Planners**

In a number of cases, youths referred to their role in assisting to plan activities designed for them and others by reason that would to see new thing happen, want the expectation is done…They would like to design, drawing new thing and more....

❖ **Community worker**

Many of youth starting their job as community workers. This is a kind of journey that youth could gain a wider socialization. Commune council could employ youth in community work.

❖ **Outreach agent**

Youths are in the age of learning and sharing. Many youth would like do job as outreach agent to disseminate what they have learned, known and heard to a large population. Youths are quite active in this area as they work for promotion, marketing, raising public awareness etc...They play very active role in civic education. This would help to relieve the task of commune council in citizen education and information dissemination.

❖ **Event organizers**

Event organizing is another kind of job that youth in vibrant to do it. They could help commune council to organize any social and cultural event within commune...

❖ **ETC.**

This is just some example from observation of jobs that youth would like to do. In more detail, there are many thing more that youth would like to take part and those experiences would be assets to the commune council

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2.2 Some strategies and structure should be in place:[28]

If Institutions are to successfully engage youth in local governance and decision-making they need to put in place appropriate strategies and structures:

- ➢ **Recognizing the diversity of youth:**
  - The needs and types of "youth", like adults, cannot be generalized;
  - Different groups of youth have their own "culture", issues and ways of communicating so no single engagement method can be expected to cover all youth interests;
  - Alternative structures may need to be established to represent the diversity of youth interests and to ensure that youth voices are heard;
  - High achieving youth may not be representative of the "consumers" of an Institution's programs and services; and
  - Special efforts are needed to attract and support youth who are not the traditional high achievers.

- ➢ **Recognizing the stages of youth:**
  - It may be difficult for younger youth to govern a program on behalf of much older youth as younger youth may lack the personal self-confidence and possibly the respect of older youth; and
  - Youth need to have developmental opportunities to develop the skills necessary for effective engagement.

- ➢ **Being responsive to youth time horizons:**
  - Youth have a very different time horizon from adults. For the youth consulted as part of this study, short term is a matter of days or weeks, long term is a matter of months; and
  - Youth have a strong interest in seeing immediate action and their tolerance for long-drawn out planning processes may be limited.

- ➢ **Avoiding tokenism:**
  - If youth are to be represented "at the table" on predominantly adult structures, it may be necessary to have at least three or four places at the table (to ensure a strong voice and to provide a group of peers).

- ➢ **Clarifying expectations regarding the scope of "local governance":**
  - It is important to be very clear about whether or not youth are "at the table" to represent the views of the youth constituents served

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[28] *4-H Youth in Governance Initiative, A Priority of the National 4-H Leadership Trust, 2005*

by the Institution. If youth are there as constituency representatives, then the lines of communication and accountability to and from youth constituents need to be clear; and

- The scope of decision-making powers of youth must be clearly defined (e.g. voting rights, budgetary responsibilities etc.) to avoid conflict and frustrations.

➢ **Providing effective orientation and learning opportunities:**
- Youth orientation and training is an ongoing investment due to constant turnover among youth leaders;

- Youth may need an orientation to "the ways that Institutions work;"

- Adults may need an orientation to "what youth think" and how they develop; and

- Youth need developmental opportunities to develop and fine-tune key skill-sets (e.g. communications, planning, priority-setting).

➢ **Providing ongoing staff support:**
- Dedicated staff support is critical to provide continuity, mentoring and essential knowledge of how Institutional and community systems work'

- Staff should ideally be relatively young, or at least have the demonstrated capacity to relate effectively to youth; and

- Staff should have a high comfort level in enabling youth to take safe risks.

➢ **Tailoring the time and place to youth needs:**

- There are many constraints on youth time (due to school, part-time jobs, etc.);

- Meetings should be held at a time and location that is convenient for youth and recognizes that they are often reliant on public transportation to get to and from meetings; and

- Meeting places that are extremely formal and intimidating are unlikely to create an atmosphere that encourages effective engagement.

➢ **Recognizing the contribution of youth:**

- Youth should receive public recognition of their efforts; and

- Youth are most likely to be motivated and get involved if there is an incentive to work towards (e.g. the opportunity to travel to conference to represent their Institution).

2.3 Ladder of Youth Participation

❖ **Youth-initiated, shared decision-making with adults**
Young people initiate and manage projects, share decision-making with adults and use understanding adults with relevant skills as mentors and coaches. (Usually older youth incorporating adults into projects they design and manage)

❖ **Youth-initiated and directed**
Young people design, implement and manage their own projects with limited or no adult involvement. (young people beginning and managing their own project without adult participation)

❖ **Adult-initiated, shared decision-making with youth**
Adults initiate a project but share decision-making equally with young people. Young people are considered to be key stakeholders in the project. (True participation)

❖ **Youth consulted and informed**
Projects are designed and run by adults but young people understand the process, are consulted and their opinions are treated seriously. (projects designed and run by adults but young people understand the process and their opinions are treated seriously)

❖ **Assigned but Informed**
Adult-initiated and run but young people understand the intentions, know who made the decisions, and why, have a meaningful role and volunteer after the project is explained

❖ **Tokenism**
Projects are adult initiated and run. Young people may be consulted but are not given opportunities to provide feedback or shape the agenda. Adults may feign that young people are stakeholders.(adult-initiated and run and young people seem to have a voice, but no choice about subject, no chance to form own opinion)

❖ **Decoration**
Projects are adult initiated and run. Young people may have a limited understanding of events or activities but have no say in organising them.(adult-initiated and run with young people who have no understanding about event, no say in organizing and adults using young people without pretending young people initiated event)

❖ **Manipulation**
Projects are adult initiated and run. Young people have no understanding of issues behind actions, activities or events. Adults use young people but do not consider them to be key stakeholders. (adult-initiated and run with young people having no understanding of issues and actions, or young people consulted but given no feedback, but adults pretend young people are participating)

Maximum youth participation
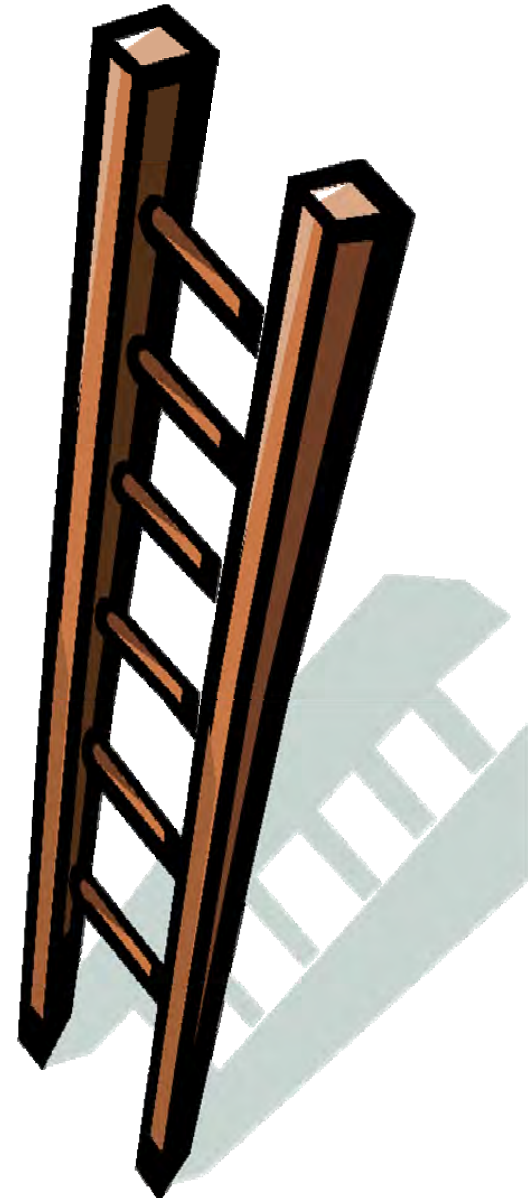
Minimum youth participation

*Adopted from: Roger .A. Hart, Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship
              UNUCEF Innovative research Center*

References

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