

1. Title: NGO GPP becomes a role model of self-regulation practices in promoting good governance and professionalism for CSOs

2. What was the problem and past status?

In Cambodia, civil society organizations (CSOs) increased drastically from just about 20 organizations in earlier 1990 to nearly 5,000 organizations in 2016 and nearly 25,000 community based organizations operating in diverse sectors across the country. The civil society is regarded as one of the most significant development actors which contribute more than 550 Million USD annually to the development of the country. While their roles and contribution have been appreciated, the sector is also found out as the body with good practice in social integrity system in Cambodia. However, Cambodian CSOs remain having many significant challenges such as many restricted laws, too complicated administrative requirements and bureaucratic process limitation of internal governance and accountability, organizational capacity and financial viability that hinder them to operate their roles freely and sustainably.

In addressing these challenges, the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) as longest established and the largest membership based organization in Cambodia has introduced the NGO Governance & Professional Practice (CCC-GPP) in 2004, the Code of Ethical Principles and Minimum Standards for NGOs in Cambodia was developed in 2005, aiming at promoting professionalism and good practices for NGOs operating in Cambodia. The voluntary certification system was introduced in 2007 to reinforce the standards. As end of September 2016, the system has certified about 80 local and international NGOs.

3. Who were active in addressing the problem and what did they do (activities)?

The Code of Ethical Principles and the Minimum Standards for NGOs and Voluntary Certification System (VCS) particularly address key issues related 1) internal governance, 2) strong internal and external relationships, 3) sound financial management, 4) accountability and transparency, 5) sound human resources management, and 6) quality assurance. The system has been widely supported by NGOs and various stakeholders as well as the voluntary and independent experts who are involved in the assessment works of the certification system including the working group members, voluntary field assessors, NGO Code Compliance Committee (NCCC). The system has been actively supported by donor community such as DFAD, BfDW, EU, Oxfam, NPA and many others, and also recognized by the Royal Government of Cambodia as a tool to promote and ensure accountability and good governance in the NGO sector. On the regular basis, CCC has arranged for capacity development services to the GPP applicant NGOs in terms of training courses, mentoring and coaching, and other tailored made capacity development workshop. At the same time, certified NGOs have also received regular compliance monitoring and related capacity development events such as learning forum, multi-stakeholder workshop, as well as the tailored made learning events.

Since 2014, CCC-NGO GPP has initiated annual multi-stakeholder forum on ‘Inclusive Partnership to Promote Good Governance’ which attracted high attention and participation from the stakeholders to learn, share and discuss on their common agenda.

4. What is the result? What was the change (impact and/or outcome)?

The number of certified NGOs has been increased gradually. From scratch, the applicant CSOs received GPP certificates increased from 2 in 2007 to 80 in 2016 in which 8¹ are the international NGOs. At the same time, 59 of application remains standing in the system and need to be assessed accordingly. Recently, the GPP certification system has also incorporated some new procedures including the complaint mechanisms, the

¹ International NGOs who received certificates: HAGAR, VSO, IDE, CWS, Save the Children (SC), AVSF, ADRA

decertification policy, and a few of the certification processes, which enable the hosting body to handle the certification even more effectively. Moreover, CCC-NGO GPP has successfully promoted the GPP code and VCS as a tool to strengthen good governance, transparency and accountability for civil society both nationally and internationally. In the country, GPP has contributed to the improved governance status of the civil society sector as indicated in the report on the national integrity system conducted by the Transparency International Cambodia in 2014 that the integrity system of civil society in Cambodia scored in average at 48, higher than the other sectors.

At the international level, CCC has become one of the eight project partners of the Global Reference Standard for CSO Accountability, where through this engagement, CCC has made significant influences to other countries to integrate some possible codes into their current certification systems.

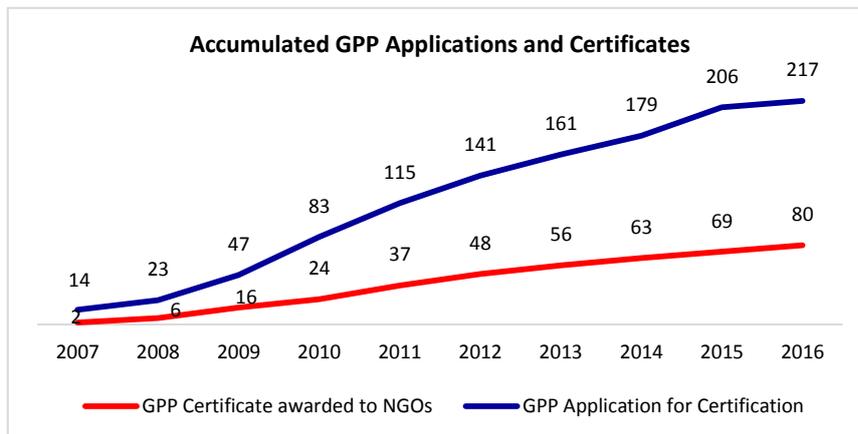


Figure 1: Accumulated GPP Applications and Certificates by November 2016

On the broad spectrum, the contribution from the GPP certification system is also taken as a significant factor promoting the organizational capacity of civil society organizations in Cambodia. A study on **CSO Sustainability Index 2014 and 2015** conducted by the Management System International (MSI) under the facilitation of CCC in revealed that the organizational capacity of CSOs in Cambodia is better than the average and this score stays on top of other elements

2014 CSO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX FOR ASIA

COUNTRY	CSO Sustainability	Legal Environment	Organizational Capacity	Financial Viability	Advocacy	Service Provision	Infrastructure	Public Image
Bangladesh	3.5	4.0	3.2	4.0	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.4
Cambodia	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.4	4.1	4.2	4.0
Indonesia	4.1	4.3	3.8	4.5	3.6	3.9	4.3	4.3
Nepal	4.4	4.0	4.5	4.8	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.7
Philippines	3.3	3.2	3.4	4.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.4
Sri Lanka	5.0	5.1	4.8	5.4	5.2	4.6	4.9	5.2
Thailand	4.8	5.1	4.0	5.1	4.9	4.4	4.8	5.0
Average	4.2	4.3	3.9	4.7	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.3

Figure 2: 2014 Sustainability Index of eight countries in Asia

constituted within this index study. Remarkably, the score is relatively high comparing to the three countries in Asia including Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

'The GPP certification system has boosted MORODOK to be more transparent, accountable and more responsive to its beneficiaries. At the same time, staff become having better relationship with each other, the organization experiences better working approaches and management practices, beneficiaries become more satisfied with MORODOK services, staff understand better on the organizational policies as well as also develop their capacity gradually.'

'This year we noticed more visits from our donors. We received appreciation from them as well as received an increased funding support comparing to last year. We have successfully raised local funds from charitable people, government officials, and key private business in Preah Sihanouk Ville. More people trust us and get to know us.' Said by Mr. Prom Thet, Deputy Director of M'lop Tapang Organization (MTO).

'GPP is a compass showing direction of the organizational development. It compels the organization to build staff capacity and foster performance in accordance with the GPP Standards. As we are certified, we are able

to maintain existing donors and attract new donors. This has been commonly expressed by three GPP certified and applicant NGOs including the CWCC, SACRED, BSDA and UPWD.

5. Why is this result important?

Through the process, the applicant NGOs can identify the areas to improve, learn, and become a strong and sustainable institution. They gained good recognition and trust from the local, national authorities and donors. As applicant NGOs are working in various sectors and target groups, they were able to contribute significantly in a very transparent and accountable manner toward the improved livelihood of general public, especially vulnerable and marginalized groups and individuals, empowerment of the citizens to participate in development process, and promotion and protection of human rights and democracy in Cambodia. They also become strategic and inclusive partnership with the government and other stakeholders.

6. Why was the result achieved/not achieved?

The GPP standards and system were developed by and for the civil society in Cambodia. The standards and system re formulated and reviewed with inclusive supports and participation from all stakeholders and also in line with changing environment happening nationally and globally. To ensure sustainability of the system, CCC-GPP trusts that development partners, government, private sector and the NGOs in Cambodia will be able to participate and continue to support and use the system. Last but not least, CCC believes that related interventions under its new five year Governance Hub Program (GHP 2017-2021) will be able to improve the system progressively to keep GPP as the unique and role model system in promoting governance and professional practices for civil society at all levels and as well significantly contribute a strong and capable civil society, cooperating and responding to development challenges at both national and sub-national levels.

Geographic location: Cambodia

Name of organisation(s) involved: Lead and direct Partner of NPA: CCC - Cooperation Committee for Cambodia; Key donors: BfDW, DFAD, EU, Oxfam, DCA/CA, Diakonia and NPA

Time perspective: Nov 2004 to Nov 2016

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