



Monitoring Aid Effectiveness From A Gender Perspective

This pamphlet looks at the importance of monitoring aid effectiveness from a gender perspective. Two of the key principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness are managing for results and mutual accountability. Both of these principles require the government, the development partners, and civil society to play a role in monitoring aid effectiveness, ensuring the desired development results are achieved and there is transparency and accountability in the use of development resources. Here we are particularly concerned with ensuring that the results of development assistance promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.

What is accountability?

In the Cambodian context, the word “accountability” is often not widely understood. In the context of aid effectiveness, mutual accountability, a core principle of the Paris Declaration, refers to the obligation of the power-holders, both the government and the donor community, to take responsibility and to answer for their actions and the resulting consequences. This means that they have an obligation to report, to explain and to be answerable for the results of development activities, and to ensure that aid money is used in a transparent way. Governments and donors have to be accountable to all stakeholders in development, including the intended beneficiaries of aid, citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs).

What is transparency?

The 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, South Korea in November 2011, noted that transparent practices form the basis for improved accountability. Transparency refers to openness in communication and information. In terms of aid effectiveness, transparency refers to information concerning aid funds and programmes, and the management and use of this aid, being provided to the public in an understandable, accessible and timely way. The Busan Outcome Document 2011 calls for the full range of information on publicly funded development activities, their financing, terms and conditions, and contribution to development results, to be made publicly available. The declaration also calls for countries who receive Official Development Assistance (ODA) to establish transparent public financial management systems and aid information management systems.

What is Managing for Results?

Managing for results, another key principle of the Paris Declaration, refers to aid being managed and implemented in a way that focuses on the desired results and uses the information to improve decision-making. This requires monitoring. Monitoring is the regular, planned collection and aggregation of data, which is then analyzed and compared to targets or standards to assess performance. Monitoring can help stakeholders to see if plans are on track and if there is progress towards objectives. Monitoring on aid effectiveness requires access to information about public policies and procedures, budgets, expenditure, programs and services.

Why is monitoring important?

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and donors have made some commitments in terms of what will be achieved in aid and development. These commitments are laid out in key government strategies, such as the National Strategic Development Plan Update (2009-2013). In order

to see whether progress is being made towards these commitments, it is necessary to continuously collect data and follow-up on progress. Monitoring can provide all stakeholders with early indications of progress, or lack of progress, towards achieving the agreed objectives. Monitoring assists the main stakeholders and implementing agencies to address any barriers to progress and make adjustments so that results can be achieved within the designated timeframe.

Monitoring for Gender Equality



It is commonly recognized that women and girls are frequently marginalized and excluded in Cambodian society, and that full economic and social development cannot happen unless there is the active participation of women. The Busan Outcome Document 2011 states that reducing gender inequality is a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. The RGC is a signatory to agreements and conventions that make provisions for the inclusion and development of women and girls, and the key government strategies contain commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. Monitoring for gender equality and women's empowerment means tracking how aid funds and programmes are directed to these issues to ensure that aid is having a real and positive impact on the lives of women and girls.

Mechanisms for Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability in Cambodia

Since the first High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness took place in Rome in 2003, the Cambodian government has developed a range of tools and processes to ensure accountability and monitoring with regards to ODA resources. In line with the mutual accountability principles of aid effectiveness, the donors are also involved in these mechanisms. The key tools and mechanisms are as follows:

● **The ODA database:**

The Cambodia Rehabilitation and Development Board of the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CRBD/CDC) is responsible for managing the Official Development Assistance (ODA) database. The database provides access to information on aid project financing from both donors and NGOs. The database allows public access to information on ODA in Cambodia, with the data available on the ODA website: <http://cdc.khmer.biz>. While the ODA database is an effective tool for monitoring and tracking ODA, it does not yet provide a complete picture of aid flows to gender equality and women's empowerment. Some projects which incorporate gender are classified under a different sector, such as health or education, and many of the NGOs working in gender and women's empowerment do not yet upload their data onto the database.

● **The Aid Effectiveness Reports**

The CRDB/CDC also produces Aid Effectiveness Reports, which have been published in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011, and provide an overview and analysis of ODA to Cambodia and progress towards meeting the Paris Declaration indicators. They also examine how well aid is aligned with the national development priorities. The 2011 report is titled the Development Effectiveness Report. The reports are available on the CRDB/CDC website: <http://www.cdc-crdb.gov.kh>.

● **The Joint Monitoring Indicators**

The Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMIs) are measures that are set by the RGC and donors to help track progress towards the development targets of Cambodia. The targets are outlined in the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals and the National Strategic Development Plan. The JMIs are monitored by government and donors with some participation from civil society through the aid coordination mechanisms. There is one gender JMI focusing on increasing the socio-economic empowerment of women through improved access to quality services and legal protection.

● **The Aid Coordination Mechanisms**

The Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum (CDCF) is the highest level meeting between the RGC and donors. At this meeting, normally held every 18 months, the participants review the progress made during the previous year, the donors commit new support, and new development targets and goals are agreed and set. The Government Donor Coordination Committee (GDCC) meetings are attended by representatives of government and donors and convened two or three times annually to follow-up on the decisions reached at the CDCF. The Government-Development Partner Joint Technical Working Groups (TWGs) are the technical coordination mechanisms that focus on specific sectoral or cross-cutting themes that are prioritized in the RGC development strategies and plans. Importantly, the TWGs develop and monitor the Joint Monitoring Indicators. The Technical Working Group for Gender monitors progress against the JMI for gender.

While the RGC and the donor partners have made significant progress in setting up tools and mechanisms to allow for increased accountability and a results-based approach in aid management, there is still room for improvement. In terms of gender and women's empowerment, there is not yet enough information about the amount of ODA that is directed to these priorities. Gender is also not fully represented as a cross-cutting issue throughout all the TWGs.

Since the adoption of the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008, there have been efforts to increase the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the aid effectiveness processes. In Cambodia, CSO representatives do attend the government-donor coordination meetings and they also participate in the majority of TWGs. An important role that CSOs can play is to participate in the monitoring of aid effectiveness, particularly in terms of ensuring the commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women are achieved.

The role of Civil Society in Monitoring Aid Effectiveness from a Gender Perspective



"Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a vital role in enabling people to claim their rights, in promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation." (Busan Outcome Document, 2011)

The 1993 Constitution of Cambodia states that the Cambodian people are the masters of their country and any suggestion from the people shall be given full consideration by the state. Also, in line with its global commitments, the RGC in the National Strategic Development Plan Update (2009-2013) advocates for strengthening partnerships with all development stakeholders, including civil society. Civic engagement and social accountability in Cambodia mainly takes place through civil society, which includes non-government organizations, associations and trade unions. As such civil society has a role to help the government to be more effective and accountable with regard to aid effectiveness.

Three umbrella networks, the NGO Forum, the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) and MEDiCAM have been working to engage the NGO community at national and sub-national level to build awareness of aid effectiveness and to create opportunities for participation and contribution to the national debate on policy issues related to aid effectiveness. These three organizations have a joint Aid Effectiveness project, which began in 2008, with the intention to engage NGOs across the sectors to improve their cooperation on monitoring and advocating on foreign aid issues.

The main ways in which CSOs are currently involved in the aid effectiveness processes are:

- Participation in the Joint Technical Working Groups. The Terms of Reference of the TWGs was updated by the RGC in 2010 to include CSOs as full members. Of the 19 TWGs there is currently NGO representation at 15. The TWG Gender has the active participation of NGOs working in gender and women's empowerment. Consultation in the drafting of policy documents, such as the National Strategic Development Plan Update, tends to be done through the TWG mechanism.
- Participation in the Cambodia Development Cooperation Forums (CDCF) and the Government Donor Coordination Committee Meetings (GDCC). Part of the participation of the CSOs in these meetings includes the preparation of detailed Position Papers, which reflect the CSO views on the progress towards the JMIs and the National Strategic Development Plan indicators and targets and highlight priority issues and recommendations to the RGC and development partners. The NGO Position Papers 2009-10 included a paper on gender focusing on the progress to reduce and respond to domestic violence.

How can Civil Society increase its participation in Monitoring Aid Effectiveness from a Gender Perspective?

In terms of monitoring gender and women's empowerment in aid effectiveness processes, CSOs could increase their active participation by:

- Ensuring that CSOs upload data on their project activities related to gender and women's empowerment to the ODA database. This will help to provide a better picture of the aid that is provided to gender and women's empowerment
- Conducting regular analysis of the data in the ODA database concerning aid allocated to gender and women's empowerment
- Continued involvement in the TWGs and, where possible, ensuring that gender issues are addressed in all the TWGs
- Ensuring the collection of sex disaggregated data and providing this data to inform policy decisions and to contribute to the analysis of progress against national gender-specific indicators

- Continued production of the NGO Position Papers, ensuring that a gender paper is included and that gender is considered in other sectoral position papers
- Ensuring the objectives of networks include information dissemination on aid effectiveness and the importance of ensuring that gender and women's empowerment priorities are included in planning processes at commune, district and provincial level
- Organizational planning and budgeting to enable proactive CSO involvement in policy analysis and aid effectiveness processes and activities regarding gender equality and women's empowerment
- Ensuring public dissemination of information regarding aid effectiveness and progress towards reaching the stated targets with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment



CRDB/CDC website: <http://www.cdc-crdb.gov.kh>

ODA database: <http://cdc.khmer.biz>

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