One Window Service Offices: Improving Government Transparency and Responsiveness

by
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"Information is a great democratising power, allowing us a chance to conduct change and alleviate poverty." - Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Abstract

Democratization movements have become widely popular, especially since the end of World War II in 1945 and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989. One significant aspect of these movements is the changing definition of government and government officers from "Officials" to "Civil Servants." Governments provide many services and regulate many activities, in part as a way to raise revenues. Dispensing with those services and managing those regulations gives central government agents a considerable amount of power. As "officials" these agents typically use that power to enrich themselves. As "civil servants" they are expected to provide goods and services and manage regulations for the benefit of citizens. Cambodia is now in a major transition from a centralized autocratic society, staffed by "officials," to a more open and democratic country, staffed by "civil servants." One aspect of this transition today is the development of One Window Service Offices (OWSO) and District Ombudsmen (DO) that are designed to make government more transparent and accountable, i.e. to turn "officials" into "civil servants."

Keywords: Cambodia, Public Participation, One Window Service

The Setting

Understanding the Cambodian Context

"Governance" is defined as the traditions and institutions through which a country rules its people. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced and the capacity by means of which the government effectively develops and implements policy. It also includes the interaction between the government and the citizens. The World Bank has identified six indicators of governance: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption (Kaufmann, 2010).

Over the past decade, Cambodia has made significant progress in economic growth, education, improving transparency and governance, and reducing poverty. It has had strong economic growth with an annual average of seven percent over the past few years. This is due to

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prudent macroeconomic policies, large aid flows, and greater openness to trade (Central Intelligence Agency, 2015). After decades of war, the country is experiencing a period of stability and peace with reasonably peaceful and reliable elections being held. This is indicative of a period of transition in the country, with a greater focus on civic engagement, improving government accountability and paving the way for greater access for information.

Despite these positive changes and the growth that has occurred, Cambodia is still a very poor country and its transformation has given rise to complex and often unconstructive forms of state-society relationships. Methods of accountability, transparency, and responsibility in government are still weak, particularly in allowing for public access to information and managing public resources. Operating the government as envisioned by the constitution is difficult due to personal loyalty networks that run through all state levels; however, without these networks it would be difficult for government institutions to work coherently.

In 1999 Cambodia joined the ASEAN Community, understanding that the region would play an increasingly important political and economic role in the country. Cambodia signed the ASEAN Charter in November 2007. The ethos behind the ASEAN Charter is to help develop a common identity and a sharing society in which people are working together to promote common interests in strengthening peace and stability, promoting social justice and supporting mechanisms for effective public services while adhering to the principals of democracy (ASEAN 2008).

Unfortunately, inequality between the rural and urban, the rich and poor, and men, women and youth is increasing in Cambodia. Over 80 percent of Cambodia's poor reside in rural areas and this number has not changed in recent times. As of this writing, given the continued economic growth and the movement towards greater accountability, accessibility to public information and public service responsibility, Cambodia is on target to meet its goal of halving extreme poverty by the end of 2015.

Government budgets depend heavily on extractive industries and, with the expected revenues from oil and gas starting to flow into the Cambodian treasury, the need for transparent policy making with state institutions will become even greater. The oil resources available in Cambodia could provide an opportunity to escape from the poverty trap if they are managed well. If not, the current situation could be made significantly worse. The 'resource curse' is a real risk without the right government reforms in place.

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability present a significant hurdle in improving good governance in Cambodia. Public information is customarily accessed through personal contacts rather than through clear public mechanisms. This practice not only breeds corruption, but makes it difficult for the public to obtain accurate information about government policy. This in turn makes it difficult to hold the government accountable. The lack of access to information hinders due process and the equal protection of the law while making it hard to influence law making. It also makes it extremely challenging for civil society organizations to get information about the drafting of laws in the ministries.

Although it is hard to quantify, the evidence suggests that corruption seriously constrains economic growth, private sector development and poverty reduction. A study on the competitiveness of Cambodia by the World Bank found that the cost of corruption was one of the single most important constraints faced by the private sector (Girishakar, 2011). Cambodia is also

ranked as 156 out of 175 countries on Transparency International's Corruption Perception index for 2014 (Transparency International, 2014).

Government Reforms

There has been substantial improvement over the past several years in social accountability movements aimed at increasing transparency and accountability, however there are still significant challenges within the Cambodian context for effective political reform and anti-corruption actions. A general mistrust still exists between the citizens and public institutions. People question their power to demand change from the government. Previous systems for improving accountability have been shown to be unsuccessful, lacking accessible information and leaving the public fearful to ask for it. Systematic corruption across many levels of government combined with cumbersome bureaucratic processes also has the effect of making it difficult for citizens to access public services.

Despite these challenges, significant work has been done by the government in passing legislation to try and reform some of the policies and improve transparency. The following section looks at the legislation in more detail to provide greater context for the case study.

The Rectangular Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan 2009

In 2004, the Royal Government of Cambodia adopted the "Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity, and Efficiency" as the framework for Cambodia's socio-economic development. Since then it has focused on critical issues, such as the enhancement of the agricultural sector, rehabilitation and construction of physical infrastructure, private sector development, employment generation, and capacity building in human resources. The government considers an aligned policy, the National Strategic Development Plan, its single, overriding development strategy. The Plan links its vision to concrete goals, targets, and strategies, including the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals.

This strategy is in line with the previously introduced policy of decentralization and de-concentration that is intended to bring the government closer to the people through local Commune, District and Provincial Councils. Through these Councils the government is committed to a reform program that aims at strengthening and expanding local democracy and promoting local development to reduce poverty. One of these programs, the "National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development," has the potential to increase public participation in and influence over official decision-making and the distribution of public resources.

In June 2005, the government passed the "Strategic Framework for Decentralization and De-Concentration Reforms" that concerns the distribution of competencies at all levels of government. This policy aims to strengthen and expand local democracy through increased competency at all levels of government, while promoting local development to reduce poverty (World Bank, 2009. p 16).

In August 2007, the Cambodian Government, with input from civil society, produced a draft policy paper on access to information. Over the last several years this draft has been taken further through research and consultation with the Ministry of Information, resulting in positive strides towards achieving this outcome. Drafting of the law has continued through the Ministry of Information. If adopted in 2018, such a law promises to improve the accountability of government officials, reduce corruption, and improve the allocation of natural resources.

The 2009 "Organic Law on Sub-National Democratic Development" enabled the election of district and provincial councils for the first time, while also changing the lines of responsibility and accountability of the district administration. In the same year, with financial support from the World Bank Cambodia office, the Cambodian government began to implement "The Demand for Good Governance Programme" over a four-year period (2009-2013) under the general coordination of the Ministry of the Interior. The program aimed to increase the extent and ability of citizens and non-state actors to hold the state accountable and make it responsive to their needs while enhancing the capacity of the state to become more transparent, accountable, and responsive to citizens.

The Royal Government of Cambodia publicly has recognized the importance of strengthening good governance and acknowledged that achieving good governance will require the active participation and commitment of all segments of society. This in turn will require enhanced information sharing, accountability, transparency, equality, effectiveness, and the rule of law (Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment Equity and Efficiency, 2004). The government also recognizes that progress on these reforms has been slow. One of the greatest challenges is sub-national administration's poor administrative performance, low accountability, and lack of responsiveness to meet the needs of local communities and practice good governance. Resistance from the line Ministries to implementation of the One Window Service Operation (OSWO) has been a further challenge. There have been some conflicts of interest and an unwillingness to share ministry powers with sub-national government.

Administrative Reform in Two Pilot Districts

The Ministry of Interior's outline for the Organic Law was influenced by the experiences in the two pilot districts of Siem Reap and Battambang, where there had been a reform of the district administration. Districts in Cambodia have very limited capabilities to be responsible for public order, social affairs, environmental protection, and statistical surveys. The district councils do not have any real decision making authority and public services are performed almost exclusively by the provinces and the respective ministries.

The intention of the two pilot districts was to strengthen the urban sections and towns of Battambang and Siem Reap as urban self-administration models. This included measures to introduce public service delivery and establish an institutional framework for transparent administration, participation, and citizen-state interaction. The legal basis for these two districts was created with the passage of Government Decision 47 and several *Praka's* (Laws) regarding the Ombudsman, the new public administration structure (including District Councils), and the One Window Service Operation.

By passing Government Decision 47, specific powers and authorities were given to district administrations. These included promoting good governance, delivering public administrative services in a transparent way, formulating district development planning with people's participation, and coordinating and supporting all the commune councils in the district. It also included enhancing the effectiveness of the implementation of all national policies and all programs of ministries and departments of the royal government.

In addition to the above, the districts are expressly charged to act as experimental centers for the provinces, given the task of meeting local demand and delivering public services to the

communities. Under Decision 47, Article 3, the two districts were given additional powers during the pilot phase, among which were:

- Direct, coordinate, promote, and/or supervise approved master plans, land use planning, and construction;
- Build, repair, and maintain roads; Manage traffic;
- Register vehicles;
- Issue licenses and permits to commercial and service companies and small and medium handicraft concerns;
- Handle educational, social, cultural, and health care affairs;
- Conduct civil registration or certify all documents and all photocopied papers.

A number of reforms were introduced in the pilot districts in order for this to happen. These included setting up a District Council consisting of representatives from all the District's Commune Councils, a Citizens Information Office, a District Spokesperson, a participatory planning process for producing a 'District Master Plan' for development, and finally a series of good governance training sessions for both districts administration and councils on the various forms of citizen participation.

With all of the above positive legislation changes, strategic improvement plans and a general willingness to improve public service accessibility and accountability to the people, the climate was appropriate to begin the implementation of a One Window Service Office.

The Problem

The One Window Service Office (OWSO) was first introduced in Cambodia in 2005 under a pilot program to improve the efficiency and accountability of district authority in the provinces of Siem Reap and Battambang. The aims of the OWSO were to deliver administrative services commonly required by citizens and small businesses at the local level. The programs started by providing six services that were transferred from line ministries. The OWSOs were designed to make available services that are effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, timely, reliable, and inexpensive – all under one roof. Their intention is best stated directly by the Ministry of Interior in the following passage:

> *"People in Cambodia have regarded the government administrator as a superior whose work is to impose laws and regulations for them to respect and follow. They don't feel open and are reluctant to discuss issues and feedback in relation to the administration and public services that would impact their lives. Consequently, they are isolated from the administration of the government. One Window Service Office (OWSO), the most visible and well-known reform of the government at sub-national level has been established to improve public services, and respond to the needs of citizens, making the administration more people friendly. To achieve this ambitious goal, OWSO officials have put a lot of effort in informing the citizens, promoting the services and encouraging participation and feedback from the citizens towards the new innovation."* (Ministry of Interior 2012, p 12).

OWSOs are a unique establishment for Cambodia since the fees for services are transparent and publicly displayed and services are intended to be conducted in a timely and consistent manner. This is markedly different from the previous ways in which public services were accessed, with fees generally not transparent and, in many cases, people paying hefty, unofficial amounts and experiencing long delays in trying to obtain licenses and be registered.

The District Ombudsman (DO) office, also referred to locally as the Citizens Office, was another important institution introduced in both pilot districts as part of the reforms. The DO is responsible for hearing and, if possible, resolving, citizen complaints and conflicts with the district administration. Its role also is to assure that citizen concerns are addressed in line with the laws and rulings; to fight against corruption; and to build good relations between businesses and the administration. The District Ombudsman is selected by an election committee of the District Council (DC) that consists of ten members of the DC, three representatives from local businesses, and three representatives from local NGOs.

The Ministry of Interior, through additional funding granted by the World Bank in 2009, scaled up the OWSOs to 36 locations around Cambodia under the Demand for Good Governance (DFGG) project. The DFGG project also enhanced the knowledge and skills of local government authorities for providing improved public service (OWSO Evaluation, June 2014). The OWSOs proved successful shortly after their opening, with consistent increases in the number of registrations processed and income received for services provided. A survey by the OWSO project in mid-2011 indicated that 93 percent of all respondents and 97 percent of all elected councillors were satisfied with the progress of the OWSO's.

Despite these positive outcomes some serious deficits still hindered continued success. These included a lack of OWSO staff awareness and knowledge about the public's right to access information and the government's failure to meet their obligation to systematically make information available (World Bank, 2009). On August 31, 2011, the Ministry of Interior's National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development acknowledged that some OWSOs had limited positive results due to the failure to disseminate information that would increase public understanding of OWSOs and their services. It acknowledged that without information, citizens cannot participate and make decisions; and that public participation is essential to making good governance work in Cambodia.

The Intervention

The project, "Enhancing People's Participation in One Window Service," was undertaken by the Advocacy Policy Institute (API) in order to address concerns over the dearth of information about public services and the lack of participation of citizens in the local government affairs. It took place in one municipality in each of three provinces from January to December 2012. The project involved the use of social accountability tools, media, and capacity building activities to promote access to public information while strengthening partnerships between the public service and citizens. It was believed that through the combined efforts and approaches taken by the API, the Ministry of Interior and its partners, there would be improved access and accountability of the OWSOs and DOs services.

The twelve-month intervention conducted by the API's "Enhancing People's Participation in One Window Service Project" was focused on raising awareness through education, public discussion and outreach activities. The goal was to increase public use of the OWSO and improve the transparency and accountability of their public services. The intervention also focused on citizens' satisfaction with the services and the use of the DO in listening to and resolving complaints.

Methodology and Approach

Three target municipalities were chosen for participation: Chbar Morn in Kampong Speu Province, Kampong Chhnang in Kampong Chhang Province, and Pursat in Pursat Province. Together these areas contained 30,323 households and a population of 150,827. A project team consisting of both the API and MOI staff and 38 officials, including 6 women, from OWSOs and DOs coordinated and facilitated project activities. Youth volunteers were recruited to support project activities since the engagement of youth helps support empowerment and education. The public was widely consulted throughout the project and its feedback provided significant information. This in turn drove outcomes and activities.

The API project used four interrelated approaches:

Working with and supporting the OWSOs to improve services by identifying needs, building capacity and strengthening the quality of services;

Strengthening citizens by educating and raising awareness of practical and useful information available from OWSO and their rights to it;

Collaborating with the District Support Team at the Ministry of the Interior to improve the capacity of OWSOs and with the Team's assistance and guidance to provide on-going support to OWSOs and the District Ombudsmen's office staff; and

Working with different target groups, including young people, *Sangkats[2],* and others (e.g. Provincial Association of Commune and *Sangkat*, NGOs) to ensure the distribution of public information.

To ensure the successful implementation of the project, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of the Interior and the API and endorsed by the three participating municipalities. The MOU identified clear roles and responsibilities for each participant. Three detailed project plans for each party formed the basis of implementation and provided for constant project monitoring and evaluation.

Capacity Building

The existing landscape of knowledge and ability among the OWSO and DO officials was identified in a capacity assessment report. This report described the existing knowledge, skills, and experience of 41 OWSO and DO officials (32 men and 9 women). The following areas were marked as requiring improvement: communication, customer service, facilitation skills, transparency and access to information, data analysis, and information management and

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[2] Sangkat is equivalent to the Commune which has number of phums (villages). The Chhbar Morn has 5 Sangkats with 56 villages; Kampong Chhnang has 4 Sangkats with 26 villages; and Pursat has 7 Sangkats with 66 villages.

disclosure. This capacity report provided the foundation for subsequent skills-based interventions, including training material, coaching, and an action-learning-study tour.

Three one-day training courses were developed on communication and customer service, facilitation skills, transparency and access to information, data analysis, and information management and disclosure. These were then facilitated for 69 OWSO officials and all project staff and youth volunteers. Nineteen OWSO officials, leaders, and project staff participated in a three-day study tour of OWSO in Battambang and Siem Reap. In the study tour they learned how the services operate and gained knowledge through hands on best practice.

Monthly partnership meetings were held for a total of 83 representatives of OWSO, DO, and the line departments to enhance capacity among the projects. These meetings facilitated discussion about lessons learned, best practices, challenges, solutions, and recommendations.

This capacity building element was significant in creating trust among participants and improving the relationships between state and non-state actors. It also increased core skills and leadership potential in participants.

The Outcomes

The project had some significant positive outcomes, including improved access and public understanding of the OWSOs and DOs, improved satisfaction with the services, greater enhancement of the DO office, and increased income generation for the service. The project also supported a new methodology for how civic and state organizations can work together to make improvements that benefit the public.

The different approaches -- direct marketing, awareness campaigns and public forums -- increased the overall number of people knowing about the OWSOs. Prior to the intervention, 31 percent of citizens using the OWSO had received educational information. By the project's completion, 74 percent of potential users of the service reported that they had received such information from the API (Advocacy and Policy Institute 2012).

Increasing Public Awareness
Increasing public awareness of the services of the OWSO and improving community engagement in government processes were key foci of the project. It achieved these in several ways.

> *Producing and distributing educational materials* (booklets, posters, brochures and banners). These included 132 banners with three different messages; 9,600 copies of three OWSO posters; 88,120 copies of two brochures; and 12,850 copies of a booklet titled "Information on OWSOs." The educational materials were distributed to the majority of households in the three target municipalities to give information about the location of the OSWOs, contacts, public services fees, the expected time for service delivery, relevant supportive documents, municipality services, and roles and responsibilities of the Ombudsman's Office.

Providing forums. 17 forums with direct participation by 1,523 community members (992 men and 531 women) to promote OWSO and DO services and report achievements, challenges, and future perspectives.

Organizing outreach activities. These included 34 activities that reached 20,719 households. They provided factual information about the work and services of OWSOs to encourage people such as students, business people, and farmers to use their services. The activities also provided opportunities for citizens to voice their concerns and complaints about the municipality administration and services (Advocacy Policy Institute 2012).

Citizen Feedback Cards

The API used "Citizen Feedback Cards" (CFC) toward the conclusion of the project in November 2012 as a tool to gauge the public's awareness of OWSOs, the OWSOs' performance, and to identify problems and provide solutions for improvement of their services. The CFC is an established survey tool that measures through both qualitative and quantitative data the public's satisfaction in receiving public services. The CRC used by the API in this project measured OWSOs' performance using five main indicators: duration of service, price of service, communication of responsible officials, venues of OWSOs, and information dissemination. The results of the CFCs were then disseminated through public forums. Participants in the CFC were users of the OWSOs as well as potential users.

The CFCs revealed a significant decrease in the average spending on some services within the construction sector: This went from 1.5 million riels (USD 378) to 157,000 riels (USD39) as people shifted from accessing services at line departments to the OWSOs. The survey indicated that OWSOs provided services faster than the line departments across three areas; tourism (4.6 days compared to 10.3 days); transportation (14.3 days compared to 24.8 days); and construction (22.4 days compared to 26.5 days). The CFCs also showed that the causes of delays were generally because the line department officials served clients directly in their homes. Overall, 88 percent of respondents were satisfied with OWSO service delivery and only 3.7 percent were very dissatisfied. Dissatisfaction could be due to delays in getting supporting documents from many different line departments, taking time and causing extra expense.

Of those that had not yet used the OWSO service, 69 percent were aware of their OWSO, but 22 percent were unable to explain the purpose of the OWSO. Understanding of the prices, technical procedures, and requirements for accessing OWSO services was low in all sectors. The majority of respondents (86 percent) believed that they would access the OWSO sometime in the future with the remaining citing various reasons for not using the service. These included a long distance to the OWSO, complex and convoluted processes, a fear of extra payments, long waiting times, and a distrust of the OWSO in general. The survey showed that 10.3 percent of potential customers still use the line departments because the service payment is cheaper and service is personal.

The project provided citizens with better access to public information and the means by which to obtain information about the services. Over 20,700 people improved their knowledge of the OWSO through posters leaflets, brochures and booklets. In addition, 12,340 women and

8,379 men who participated in various forums and activities throughout the project. This means that 41,438 people were reached (Advocacy Policy Institute 2012).

By promoting the mandates, roles, and responsibilities of the public officials while increasing their capacity to perform their duties, the API improved services of the OWSOs and DOs. The project coached the DOs to be able to respond to the needs and complaints of citizens, further improving transparency and responsibility within the public services. The results of the CRC indicated that only 7.7 percent of respondents complained about poor service delivery and bad practices with the DOs and that 55 percent of potential customers were aware of the DO's roles and functions. There were some complaints that could not be addressed by the DO officials because they were beyond the scope of authority of the DO or not relevant to the OWSO's responsibility. These were referred to the appropriate authority for resolution.

By the end of 2012, there was a 33 percent increase in the number of people requesting OWSO services and a 192 percent increase in the OWSO budget when comparing the last quarters of 2011 and 2012. In 2012, there were 2,357 services provided to clients, compared to 1,769 in 2011. The increase in income in the three target municipalities during the same comparison periods was USD 13,796 in 2012 compared to USD 4,733 in 2011 (Advocacy Policy Institute 2012).

Through the project activities, public service officials improved their skillset and capacity in providing services and the public increased its knowledge in using the OWSO and DO. Importantly, the accountability, transparency, and responsibility of government services will be increased through the empowerment of people resulting from the increased understanding given by public access to information.

Building an accountable and open government with responsive policies and actions has a long way to go in Cambodia, requiring both political will and technical support. The reform agenda needs to be embedded into all aspects of government and requires in-depth commitment and engagement from all actors. Like Cambodia, many other developing countries have faced numerous challenges in setting up good governance, social accountability, and transparency. The establishment of the OWSOs is a positive step forward for Cambodia because they will allow citizens and local authorities to interact and communicate freely and confidently over issues and concerns. The OWSOs also pave the way for improved trust between both sides and a chance for the public to become more engaged with the government. A local businessman, Mr. Pov Tuy, reflected this in his comment regarding the OWSO's:

> *Before the establishment of One Window Service Office, I had not planned to get a license for my business at first, as I found the process was complicated, and it required me to meet many officials, who were not helpful. I decided to apply for my business license when I heard about OWSO through the information campaign by the municipality. I can't believe that the service by OWSO is such a fast, transparent service with an acceptable price. I could get the license easily* (Ministry of Interior 2012, p 12)*.*

Providing accessible information about the work and services of the government and making that information available to the public is very demanding. The API made these recommendations to improve the OWSO's delivery and the DO's performance:

Realize access to information. Information, education, and communications materials and their distribution are recommended for the promotion of OWSO services. These materials were found to be the most effective means to get information to the villagers and promote accurate knowledge of correct practices and regulated fees. Less frequently used services such as tourism, agriculture, culture, and art should be included in future campaigns and should be prioritized.

Maintain and improve the current performance of OSWOs and DOs. The majority of customers verified their basic satisfaction. However, the reasons for dissatisfaction in the services, particularly the longer time scales and higher than advertised prices on the OWSO list, require attention. Enforcing policy, such as set prices, will increase OWSOs' credibility and improve their effectiveness and efficiency.

Ensure the sustainability of OWSOs. The sustainability of OWSOs is a concern. OWSOs need to function beyond the donor supported project, and there needs to be a self-sustaining mechanism for this. One of the main challenges is how to maintain transparency when there is no longer the incentive of funding from development partners. This raises questions around whether or not Cambodia has sufficient political will at all levels to impose sanctions on people who defy their ethical code of conduct. If not, transparency becomes ineffective and the positive results gained toward good governance may gradually erode. Although the Ministry of Information issued a *Prakas* (law) on the establishment and functioning of the OSWO in the General Department of Local Administration, and the Cambodian Government has agreed to finance the operation of OSWOs and DOs after the end of the Demand for Good Governance Project (Ministry of Interior, 2012), there likely will need to be independent support and technical expertise to ensure the promises are kept.

Delegate appropriate functions to OWSOs. OWSOs can facilitate the requisite paperwork and documentation for customers to access services and thereby avoid customers using OWSO services without sufficient supporting documents. This also would contribute to reducing unofficial fees and support a positive image of the one-stop services.

Promote proactive District Ombudsmen. A proactive DO will ensure the most effective solutions to customer complaints. When customers have limited information about their options they are less likely to demand justice or to challenge unsatisfactory situations. The DO would work more closely with the people to better understand their needs and create an enabling environment. Further enforcing authority for DOs should be considered. Laws against irregular practices such as unofficial fees for providing a package of services and other necessary services should be enforced so that these are consistently provided as a public service by official agencies.

Address the staffing issues of OWSOs. This is needed for both technical skills and leadership. All OSWO staff contribute to the performance of the OWSOs, professionalism and customer satisfaction and good quality work will result in greater efficiency and fewer complaints.

Line ministries should delegate to OWSOs. Delegation is important for all of the official procedures and functions required to deliver a complete service. The name 'One Window Service Office' implies that it provides all relevant services at one place. Informal fees and procedures for other related services should be barred and disclosed to the public to avoid people approaching line government offices prior to using services at the OWSOs where they would be better served.

Create more good quality OWSOs. The Government has created more OWSOs, starting with the plans for 37 new OWSOs in 2014. Now there are 40 OWSO offices around the country, both district and municipality, that provide 240 services in 12 sectors. Those sectors include Tourism, Agriculture Forestry &Fishery, Culture and Fine Art, Industrial, Transportation, Commerce, Construction, Legalization, Civic registration, Cadastral, Health, and Education.
OWSOs now are needed at the district offices for rural and poor people who are potential customers but do not live in or near the municipalities. They also must have proper training and have support mechanisms in place. Without them the new OWSOs will provide a service that is essentially no different than the old structures, with poorly regulated and unfair fees. This in turn breeds corruption, extortion, and a lack of trust in the government by the people.

Build government-civil society organization partnerships. Government reforms show its willingness to begin to improve its own transparency and accountability. However, a lot of hard work is required to maintain this momentum. Part of this has to do with the interaction with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). One approach used very successfully in this project was an MOU between the various partners, particularly the Ministry of Interior and the API. This MOU built a successful partnership with clear responsibilities and ensured a stronger working relationship between state and non-state parties. This partnership would also continue to help address the mistrust between the citizens and the government. With the help of CSO interventions, such as the one described in this case study, citizens gain both understanding about what they need from their government and the skills and sense of empowerment needed to demand it. The involvement of CSOs in government initiatives should not be seen as adversarial, but rather a positive influence to help support, influence and drive government initiatives.

Improve Public Official Knowledge and Expertise. Public officials can become subject matter experts who continue to improve learning and capacity among other government departments and officials. Coaching, mentoring, and training

are useful tools for influencing and promoting transparency among public officials. This in turn helps to establish a method for improving transparency and governance within the departments.

Using monitoring and social accountability tools such as the CFC, in deep consultation with state and non-state actors under a partnership project, meant that the findings and citizen feedback were both recognized and more likely to be accepted. Organizing reflection meetings among public service providers and other relevant public institutions also improved public service performance. This process created a positive contribution toward national policymakers' ability to improve OWSO and DO performance.

Overall, the direct impact of the project was significant in improving the perception and subsequent use of the One Window Service Office and Direct Ombudsman services, and these findings should be used for the implementation of future OSWOs by the Ministry of Interior. The lessons learned through the project also are important for future advocacy work and should be taken into account when considering approaches for project implementation. This is especially true if Cambodia is to continue towards its goal of reducing poverty and improving the quality of life and people's development through democratic processes, fair and sustainable resource allocation, and transparent and accountable government.

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