



PROJECT REPORT 2016

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United Nations Development Programme Cambodia

ACES – Association of Councils Enhanced Services Project

01-01-2016– 31-12-2016

Project ID & Title: ACES/ID:00064631

Duration: 4 years, with 2 year non-cost extension (2012-2017)

Total Budget: 2,735,669.00 Euro

Implementing Partners/Responsible parties: Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils (ASAC) – General Secretariat of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils (ASAC-S)

Country Programme Outcome: Citizens' expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance.

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Association of Councils Enhanced Services Project (ACES)

2016 Progress Report

(January-December 2016)

1. Executive summary

ACES project – “Associations of Councils Enhanced Services” – is aimed at turning the Associations of Sub-National Administration Councils (ASAC) into an effective representative of local voices for democratic development. The project builds on the previous EU-UNDP support project for Democratic and Decentralized Local Governance (DDLG, 2006-2011) which enabled the establishment and the development of the only Local Government Association in Cambodia. The project originally focused on the National League of Communes and Sangkats (the League) as implementing partner. However, as a result of latest institutional developments, there are currently two national associations of sub-national administration councils which has been established and/or expanded during the project implementation (2012-2014), namely the National League of Municipal, District, Khan, Commune and Sangkat Councils (NLC), a nation-wide association since its expansion in July 2014, and the National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils (NACPC), which was established in March 2013 and currently represents 25 capital and provincial councils. Beginning of 2015, both national associations decided to form a joint secretariat aiming at cost saving and effective and efficient coordination and promotion of service delivery for sub-national councils and councilors. Therefore, it is anticipated that the joint secretariat will play a very significant role to serve members of both associations through capacity development and advocacy work thanks to ACES intervention.

The ACES project is aligned to the League’s 2nd strategic plan 2011-2015, NACPC’s 1st Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and the Royal Government of Cambodia’s (RGC) decentralization policies, in particular the National Programme of Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-SNDD) 2010-2019, including the first Implementation Plan (IP3-I, 2011-2014), which was extended a year in 2014, and The second implementation plan (IP3-Phase II, 2015-2017). Within two years of ACES project extension (2016-2017), the joint secretariat of ASAC will closely collaborate with NCDDDS on capacity development of sub-national councils, social accountability and gender.

Additionally, ACES project is in line with CPAP (2011-2015) guaranteeing continued tailor-made support to the capacity development of Local Government Associations (LGAs) and sub-national administrations. CPAP Outcome 4 – “By 2015, Sub-national administrations have capacity to take over increased functions” – involves assistance to LGAs and through them advocacy, access to information, and capacity development of local councils. The UNDAF Outcome 4 sanctioned by the RGC sets the parameters for this support: “By 2015, national and sub-national institutions are more accountable and responsive to the needs and rights of all people living in Cambodia and increase participation in democratic decision making”. ACES project also contributes substantially to CPD 2016-2018 Outcome 2: “Citizen’s expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance”, and Output 2.1: Mechanisms and channels for government-citizen dialogue exist that establish long-term accountability relations.

Therefore, the intervention is fully aligned with UNDAF 2016-2018 Outcome 3: By 2018, national and subnational institutions are more transparent and accountable for key public sector reforms and rule of law; are more responsive to the inequalities in enjoyment of human rights of all people living in Cambodia; and increase civic participation in democratic decision-making.

In December 2015 the ACES project has been extended until December 2017 and a number of project activities have been revised while some output targets have been accordingly prioritized. Thus, to achieve the project objectives and contribute to the accomplishment of the statements above, the output targets for year 2016 were planned as follows:

- Core staff of Secretariat of Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils recruited and on board.
- POMM implemented by the Secretariat of Associations and MOM implemented by Secretariat of Provincial Associations
- Internal and External Audits conducted to all sources of funds under Associations and Secretariats.
- South-South cooperation through study tour/s aimed at enhancing the institutional capacity of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils are organized/facilitated.
- Training courses delivered to governing bodies and professional staff of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its 25 Provincial Associations.
- Institutional Needs Assessment conducted and Capacity Development Plan formulated.
- Capacity development plan updated in line with international standards, approved and under implementation.
- Training program designed in line with international standards, including thematic training modules.
- Support NCDD to facilitate the capacity development of SNA staff on how to promote social accountability and work effectively with citizens, CBOs and NGOs in 12 target provinces.
- Develop and initiate an advocacy plan to support women leadership in the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and the provincial associations aiming to ensure women's participation in idea generation and decision making, including national workshops, awareness-raising activities etc.
- Grant provided to PALC (organization of sub-national forums of councilors).
- National, Regional, Provincial and district forums organized to response to councilors and citizen needs.
- Advocacy strategy developed and partially implemented.

To achieve the project objectives and progress towards project outputs and targets as set out in AWP 2016, ACES project has implemented a number of activities relating to project deliverables number 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 13.

The ASAC-S core staff members, along with 6 Provincial Back-stoppers (IBO) and a Gender Specialist have been recruited. This highly qualified team is providing operational and day-to-day technical support to ASAC-S and PAs. A number of reflection workshops, retreats and periodic technical meetings have been held during 2016 involving ACES project team, ASAC-S members and leaders of Provincial Associations to discuss the issues and challenges they

faced in managing and implementing ACES project. Additionally, diverse capacity development activities for ASAC's professional staff have been delivered, with focus on training and technical discussions on POMM implementation and internal auditing to NLC and PAs, along with periodic field trips for proactive monitoring and provision of advisory services and coaching on project planning and implementation to support target PAs.

Other capacity development activities and training courses have been delivered to ASAC's leaders and professional staff on subjects such as social accountability, NCDD training on functional re-assignment for sub-national administration, and training on operacy (leadership skills) and conflict resolution.

Moreover, an international consultant team has been hired to conduct an Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan of ASAC, which will provide an updated and systematic capacity building program including thematic training manual. This assignment is ongoing and will be concluded in February 2017 after service contract extension.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for grant provision to 12 targets PAs has been revised, and training sessions were delivered to PA leaders and professional staff on organization of sub-national forums of councilors, financial management, accounting system and operations for grant management and implementation. Grants have been provided to the said 12 target PAs for implementing numerous sub-national forums of councilors and related capacity building activities at regional, provincial, district/khan and commune/sangkat level. Additionally, in order to extend PA's capacity for problem's solution to issues identified at district/municipal fora and to capacitate PA on financial mobilization, proposal development by PAs has been initiated through small pilot call for proposals scheme. After competition with and among 17 PAs, 3 winning PA were identified and selected for grant and project implementation.

Study visit to the Philippines has been organized in collaboration with UNDP Philippines to learn from the experience of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines and the League of Cities of the Philippines as well as other relevant local governance institutions. Likewise, ASAC delegates have participated in the 6th UCLG ASAPAC Congress held in the Republic of Korea, as well as in the UCLG Executive Bureau Meeting and 3rd Asia Cities Summit which took place in New Delhi, India.

A workshop on advocacy and strategic planning was organized by ASAC-S to collect input from NLC and NACPC leadership aimed at initiating process to develop advocacy strategy and strategic plans for both associations. A Memorandum of Understanding and action plan has been drafted, finalized and officially signed between ASAC (NACPC and NLC) and NCDD-S for collaboration on I-SAF between ASAC and NCDD-S, particularly on training and dissemination of Social Accountability guidelines and plans to Sub-national Administration Councils.

As for gender equality activities, ASAC-S has collaborated with the Senate to organize a national forum on women's progress in politics, and is currently devising an advocacy plan to support women's leadership in ASAC and sub-national councils. To this end, the following workshops have been organized: Developing Advocacy Plan for Supporting Women in Local Politics and Revising the TOR for Committee for Women and Children Affairs of NLC/S.

2. Implementation progress

DELIVERABLE 2: The League and its Provincial Associations have revised, improved and put into practice solid internal systems and procedures.

The ASAC-S's core staff members and some additional project staffs have been recruited during 2016. The job vacancies were advertised through Cambodia Daily and Rasmey Khampuchea from 28 January to 22 February, then extended for two additional weeks until 11 March 2016. As a result, there were 15 applicants for Advocacy and Capacity Building Manager, 6 for Policy, M&E and Planning Officer, 6 for Administration and Human Resource Officer, 6 for Finance Officer, and 16 applicants for Provincial Back-stoppers. The applicants were shortlisted based on qualifications and work experience with the following result: 16 applicants pre-selected for Provincial Back-stoppers, 9 for Advocacy and Capacity Building Manager, 5 for Policy, M&E and Planning Officer, 4 for Administration and Human Resource Officer, 4 for Finance Officer and 3 for Interpreter and Translator. Written tests were conducted from 21 to 27 March 2016 and the interviews took place from 29 to 31 March 2016. The whole recruitment process was conducted by the General Secretariat with technical support and supervision from UNDP advisory team to ACES project. The final selection of shortlisted candidates was carried by ad hoc recruitment committee consisting of NLC and NACPC representatives. Recruitment was formalized during April 2016. While the newly recruited Finance Officer, Administration Officer and M&E and Policy Officer are currently placed in their positions, the Advocacy and Capacity Development Manager resigned in May 2016. This position has been re-advertised, the selection process is underway and recruitment will take place in November 2016.

On 14 January 2016, ACES staff retreat was organized in Sihanouk province and attended by Associations of Sub-National Administration Councils-Secretariat (ASAC-S) staffs, ACES project staffs and representatives of both Associations i.e. NACPC and NLC totaled 27 participants (5 females). The purpose of this retreat was to discuss pending issues with regard to implementation of Practical Operations and Management Manual (POMM) such as review the draft letter of appointment of Approving Officer, Certifying Officer and Requesting Officer, the letterhead and logo of ASAC-S, the appointment of signatories for ASAC-S bank account and draft consolidation financial report. As a result, the letter of appointment of Approving, Certifying and Requesting Officer for NACPC, NLC and ASAC-S has been signed and put into use.

Technical meeting and training session to discuss the Practical Operation and Management Manual (POMM) was conducted in Sihanouk province on 5-6 July 2016 with participation from ASAC-S staff totaling 13 (3 female participants). The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and assess the status of POMM implementation. During this meeting some challenges were identified regarding POMM implementation after ASAC's approval in November 2015. UNDP-ACES advisors requested for official signature of POMM by both ASAC presidents to confirm the legal base of this manual.

Periodic meeting of ASAC-S with 12 Provincial Back-Stoppers (PBS) and PAs Secretaries was organized in Kompong Cham on 5 May and 11 August. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss issues and challenges faced by 12 PAs in managing ACES grant implementation.

During this meeting, the PBS reported on activities implemented and challenges and issues faced in providing technical advice to PAs for grant implementation. Such issues and challenges relate to lack or weak coordination and facilitation between PA chiefs and PBS, weak relationship between PA chiefs and sub-national authorities, PAs new secretaries' insufficient understanding on financial management, especially accounting system introduced by ACES, and frequent absence of PAs chiefs leading to lack of decision-making. Along with technical discussions on grant implementation, UNDP-ACES team has used these meetings to conduct training on accounting system and other financial management related matters.

Proactive project monitoring at the sub-national level has been intensively conducted along with provision of advisory services and coaching on project planning and implementation to support the 12 target PAs. Starting from July, ACES project team and ASAC-S have carried out fieldwork in Mondulhiri, Batambang, Preah Vihear, Sihanouk, Kompong Cham, Kompong Speu, Steung treng, Svay Rieng, Odor Mean Chey, Banteay Mean Chey, Siem Reap, Kompong Speu and Kampot in order to provide support to PAs staff on key management matters including organization of forums of councilors, activity planning, advisory service provision to PAs members, drafting of concept notes, financial management and accounting system. This support has been facilitated by IBOs, recruited under ACES project, and PA secretaries, whose salaries are partially provided from ACES project.

Internal and external audits to NLC and PADMKCS have been strengthened during 2016. Preliminary spot check to ensure the transparent financial management and activity implementation was conducted at Varin district, SRP province during Q1, 2016. Additionally, ACES project team conducted satisfaction assessment of local councils regarding implementation of district forums at Siem Reap Province. The ASAC staff responsible for internal spot check, including internal audit team involving ASAC-S and PAs members, and UNDP-ACES advisors have initiated overall spot check exercise for PAs that have received grant from ACES project (12 PAs). The 1st round started from Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Odor Meanchey and Battambang provinces. The spot check team included also UNDP-CO, ASAC-S members and NLC internal auditors. The results from this spot check exercise will reflect the performance of PAs implementing ACES activities and their capacity in terms of financial management, which will be discussed and addressed in upcoming reflection workshop. Additionally, ASAC is obliged to conduct external spot check according to UNDP regulations. This year the spot check exercise has been conducted by KPMG from 12-16 September 2016. The purpose of this spot check is to ensure that project Implementing Partner complies with UNDP policies, procedures and guidelines as mentioned in the project cooperation agreement and project document and especially in response to the HACT Micro-Assessment exercise. Debriefing was held on September 16, participated by KPMG, ASAC-S and UNDP staff. According to preliminary findings, there are some management related issues that need ASAC needs to address. The spot-check report exercise was finalized in November 2016. Some minor issues have been raised during this external spot-check and the management response submitted to relevant stakeholders.

Following suggestions from NCDD-S and UNDP, a technical meeting was organized at ASAC-S office on 13 July 2016 involving representatives of EU, UNDP, NCDD-S and ASAC-S in their capacity as ACES Project Board members. The purpose of this ad hoc meeting was to review ACES project progress and discuss issues and challenges faced during project implementation in 2016 along with forthcoming activities for second half of AWP. Participants in the meeting discussed relevant issues such as the objectives and functioning of sub-national forums of councilors, the purpose of grants provided to PAs, the related financial and administrative procedures, namely the Practical Operation and Management

Manual (POMM) and Management and Operation Manual (MOM) for ASAC-S and PAs respectively, as well as EU potential support for project proposal through thematic program on non-state actors and local governments.

The 5th ACED Project Board Meeting was held on 14 December 2016 at NCDD's office presided over by H.E Ngan Chamroeun, Undersecretary of State, MOI and as Deputy Executive head of NCDD-S (Chairman of the Board), Ms. Fiona Ramsey, Counsellor, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation (Board member), Mr. Napoleon Navarro, UNDP and other board members including technical staff from UNDP, NCDD, ACES advisors and ASAC-S. Board members have discussed progress and the achievements made in 2016, the draft annual work plan and budget 2017 (AWPB 2017), issues and challenges faced in 2016 and foreseen in 2017, and a preliminary concept note for post-ACES project proposal. As the result, the board approved 2016 ACES report progress and, draft AWPB 2017, and agreed that the concept note of new proposal will be further reviewed and discussed among key stakeholders.

A workshop on advocacy strategy and the strategic plans of NLC and NACPC has been organized in Svay Rieng on 23 June 2016. Leaders of both Associations have discussed advantages and disadvantages of devising a joint strategic plan and advocacy strategy for the next years. The workshop's main conclusion is that further discussion and input is needed to uphold cooperation and coordination between the two Associations in terms of strategic planning.

The National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils (NACPC) has held its National Councils Meeting on 17 November 2017 in Ratanakiri province. This National Council Meeting aimed to approve the achievements of year 2016 as well as the next year work plan 2017. The total number of participants was 102 (22 women). The possibility to devise a joint strategic plan with NLC was discussed at the NACPC council meeting and the decision was to separate both strategic plans due to different types/levels of sub-national administration and different mandate of election.

The National League of Local Councils (NLC) has held its National Councils Meeting on 19 December 2016 in Kompong Chhnang province. This National Councils Meeting aimed to approve the achievements of year 2016 and also approve the next year work plan 2017. In this meeting, NLC also invited all Provincial Management Advisors (PMA) from 25 provinces to attend so as to collaborate and develop common understanding of the management of membership fees at the C/S and NLC level. A presentation on this membership fees management was delivered by the representative of Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoE). The total number participants was 150 (46 women). Similarly to NACPC, NLC decided not to join strategic plan with NACPC.

DELIVERABLE 3: The members of the governing bodies of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils (National League of DMK-CS Councils and National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils) and its 25 Provincial Associations have the analytical capacities to proactively develop policies, to communicate their opinions, and to supervise the activities of their respective secretariats.

An international consultant team has been hired in October 2016 to conduct an Institutional Needs Assessment and propose a Capacity Development Plan for the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and the Provincial Associations. The capacity development plan will be used to build capacities of ASAC's members of governing bodies among other stakeholder. This assignment includes a training program on local governance including the

following thematic modules: i) universal principles of good governance; ii) local democratic governance and decentralization; iii) participatory and strategic planning and project management for local development, including proposal development; iv) institutional framework of Cambodia's multi-level governance system (decentralization and de-concentration regulatory and policy framework); v) orientation training module for newly elected councilors; vi) advocacy capacity building. The capacity development plan will be finalized and provided by consultant team on February 2017 and implementation will start over the following months.

The ASAC-S has supported NACPC to carry out exposure visit on climate change and gender equity at Preah Vihear Province on 16-18 February. This activity has been covered by NACPC membership fees. Participants have learned practical experiences on the following matters: i) Climate change is affecting the livelihood of Cambodian people, so the climate change adaptation project has well demonstrated how to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and improve community's livelihood. ii) Water is a fundamental resource for farming/cropping; livestock and community's asset, therefore community's livelihood at Toek Kraharom Commune has improved during the project's intervention (increased agricultural productivity). iii) Some energy-saving techniques based on solar and wind energy and biogas can be efficiently applied by local communities. iv) New agricultural techniques such as selection of seeds, reduction of water consumption or plastic covering can contribute to climate change adaptation and increase agricultural productivity. v) Provincial Women and Children Committee (under facilitation of provincial councilors) has actively involved in climate change and natural disasters-related activities.

A number training courses have been conducted or facilitated by ACES project to NACPC leaders. Operacy (leadership) course was delivered to NACPC leadership on 25-28 April 2016; NCDD training on functional assignment for sub-national administration was conducted on 29 April 2016. These courses have been provided to 2 councilors from each province or capital, 9 NACPC presidency members, 1 NLC presidency member, 1 MoI representative and all ASAC-S staffs (totally is 56 participants). Additionally, ACES has provided funding and technical support in organizing a two-day training course (from 24-25 August 2016, at Kampong Chhnang province) on communication and conflict mediation to 5 NACPC-clusters. There were 55 participants coming from 5 clusters including heads and deputy heads of clusters, PPMAs (provincial project management advisor) and chiefs of provincial council offices (located at respected clusters) and ASAC-S staffs. The training was not only for capital and provincial councilors, but it also provided a learning opportunity to heads of khan councils and capital administrative officials. As an example of good practice in public administration, NACPC has fully delegated responsibility to heads and deputy heads of clusters in conducting training to councilors at their respective cluster. This is one more nationwide training course provided by NACPC to members and covered with membership fee. Even with limited resources and less support from donors, NACPC has effectively delivered training services to all members (nationwide—393 provincial and capital councilors, at 25 capital and provinces).

DELIVERABLE 4: The support staff of the NLC, NACPC and the 25 Provincial Associations has the technical skills to comply with the internal systems and procedures

As indicated above, an international consultant team has been hired in late September 2016 to update ASAC's capacity development plan and develop a new training program. This new training program was delivered to ASAC-S core staff and PAs secretaries from 28 November to 2 December 2016. The total number of participants in this ToT was 22 (9 women). The

consultant team is currently revising the training manual, which will be finished in February 2017 as previously mentioned.

Meanwhile, a significant number of capacity building activities for support staff of NLC, NACPC and PAs have been conducted during 2016.

A reflection workshop on organization of forums and other capacity development related activities was organized on 12 January 2016 in Preah Sihanouk. A pre-meeting session was organized in Preah Sihanouk held to discuss the methodology to organize reflection workshop, attended by Provincial Back-stoppers and ASAC-S staffs totaled 27 (5 women). The meeting provided participants with an opportunity to discuss the process and roles assigned to facilitators during the reflection workshop. Subsequently, on 13 January 2016, the reflection workshop was organized to reflect on implementation of activities such as provincial and district forums, capacity development and advisory services to members of 6 target Provincial Associations during 2015. The workshop was attended by members of 25 PAs i.e. the leaders, secretaries, assistants, provincial back-stoppers, ASAC-S staffs and representatives of both Associations (NACPC and NLC) totaled 77 (19 women). During the sessions, all participants discussed and assumed roles related to issues and challenges of project management and implementation. ASAC's M&E officer and internal audit team leader presented to the audience the findings and results of internal audit conducted to 6 target PAs on financial management and accounting procedures (membership fees collection and grant management). As a result, issues and challenges relating to implementation of provincial and district forums, capacity development and advisory services were compiled for improvement of ACES grant management in 2016. Six additional PAs were selected for ACES grant provision during 2016, namely Banteay Meanchey, Odar Meanchey, Kampong Speu, Svay Rieng, Modulkiri, Preah Vihear. Additionally, it was agreed that 12 pilot commune forums will be implemented in 2016 to raise awareness on social accountability at the grass-roots level.

On 03-05 February 2016, training on management and organization of provincial, district and commune fora was conducted to 12 Provincial Associations (PAs) leaders, secretaries, assistants, ASAC-S staff and representative of both Associations (NACPC and NLC) totaled 61 (13 females). The purpose of this training was to orient the 6 new PAs on concept and process of subnational forums of councilors, financial management and accounting, and revision of MoU for ACES grant management. A training session on introduction to social accountability was also delivered. As a result, the 12 target PAs, including the 6 new PAs, are capable of organizing forums of councilors, preparing activity and budget plan, conduct financial management and accounting to manage fund. Additionally the MoU was revised and agreed. During this training session, contracts for PAs secretary have also been discussed so that all 25 PAs secretaries are able to have their salary by the beginning of March 2016.

On 24 February 2016, the MoU-signing ceremony was held at the Royal Phnom Penh Raffle Hotel presided by Mr. Say Kosal, president of National League of Councils (NLC) and participated by 12 PAs leaders, secretaries, ASAC-S staff, representative of NACPC and NLC, and representatives from UNDP and EU. Once the MoU have been signed, the first installment of grants has been provided to 12 PAs to start implementing activities such organizing provincial, district and commune forums and capacity development and provision of advisory services to councilors as PAs members. The average grant for each province is around USD \$10,000.00. Subsequently, the secretaries of 6 new PAs were invited to attend training on financial management and accounting system conducted at ASAC-S office. The purpose was to train the secretaries of 6 PAs to understand the Management and Operation

Manual (MOM) in order to manage ACES grant in a transparent and accountable manner. Based on the results of these training sessions, ACES team decided to focus on job coaching over the next months. In addition to these face-to-face training at ASAC-S office, the project team has also provided technical advice and coaching services to leaders and professional staff of target PAs through field visit and long distance communication (e-mail and phone calls).

On 5th and 6th May 2016, ASAC-S organized technical meeting and training session for NLC leaders, Provincial Back-Stoppers (PBS) and ASAC-S staff to discuss issues and challenges faced during ACES grant implementation and technical support provided to the Provincial Associations. The meeting was attended 35 participants (5 women). A number of issues and challenges were highlighted and addressed such as coordination with PA leaders, accountability mechanisms between the Secretariat, PAs and the Provincial Back-Stoppers. In addition, the Management and Operation Manual (MOM) was disseminated and explained to PBS. ACES team has verified that PBS understand MOM very well, and therefore they are now equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to strengthen the financial management of PAs for both ACES budget and membership fees funds.

DELIVERABLE 5: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils' financial sustainability strategy is implemented including the revision of membership fees, the spread of donor dependency, and research on service charges

The previously mentioned Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan includes the general outline of an advocacy and financial sustainability strategy. Such a strategy will be further refined and developed during 2017. The ToR of the assignment includes the outline of an Advocacy Strategy which will strengthen ASAC's visibility and sustainable contribution to Cambodia's democratic decentralization process, including support to key local governance related issues such as financial and political decentralization, regional and local participatory planning, social accountability and women's participation in local politics.

For the purpose of collecting inputs from key stakeholders to develop such an Advocacy Strategy, ASAC-S organized a workshop on advocacy strategy and strategic planning on 23 June 2016. Presentations on advocacy methodology including issues such as international successful examples of LGA advocacy strategies were delivered to 38 members of NLC and NACPC governing bodies. As a result of the workshop, NLC and NACPC decided to continue consultation process in order to decide whether or not they will devise a joint advocacy strategy.

With regard to finance of SNA councils, on 17th August NCDD has officially informed NLC that municipal, district, commune and sangkat councils are allowed to use MDCS fund within 2% of administrative fund (excluding personnel cost) to pay PA annual membership fee. With this new rate of membership fee, NLC and PAs (in some provinces) would be less dependent on external funding from donors, particularly if NLC and PAs reduce the size of their governing structures.

DELIVERABLE 6: The capacities of Sub-national administration Councils have been developed by mutual learning, stimulating the communication and exchange of information among Cambodian Councilors, and between Cambodian Councilors and other Councilors from the developing world.

A representative of ASAC-ACES project attended the UCLG APAC Executive Bureau Meeting in New Delhi on May 5, 2016. It is mandatory for UCLG-ASPAC to organize Executive Bureau meeting twice a year in order to review progress made by Secretariat, discuss and respond to issues and challenges raised by members and approve next 6 month activity and budget plan. Following the Executive Bureau Meeting, there was a 3rd South Asia Cities Summit on 6-7 May 2016. Representatives from about hundred cities and local government associations met to share best practices and information regarding city development approach called "Smart Cities". Many issues were raised and discussed with/among city's representatives from different cities in Asia Pacific Region. Those issues and challenges related to economic growth, effective infrastructure and transportation facilities, urban poverty, waste management, people's participation in decision making, innovative ideas to promote public services, good governance, ecological development etc. A report of these events (UCLG APAC Executive Bureau Meeting and a 3rd South Asia Cities Summit) was developed and shared with presidencies of NLC, NACPC and ASAC-S.

With support from ACES project, a Cambodian delegation consisting of Under Secretary of State (MoI), NACPC president, NLC president, ASAC secretary general and PIDS and ACES advisor participated in the 6th UCLG ASPAC congress organized from 5-8 September 2016 at Gunsan City, Jeollabuk-do province, Republic of Korea. The main results of ASAC's participation in the congress are as follows: i) ASAC is globally and regionally building network with other local governments and cities in order to promote effective roles in service delivery, development and problem's solution for citizen at localities –the theme of UCLG ASPAC congress was "*Region, Life and Culture*" and slogan is "*Locals go to SDGs*"; ii) learning experience on the concept of localization of Sustainable Development Goals, local financing and new urban agenda (UN-Habitat—public space and smart cities); iii) key recent achievements of NLC and NACPC were shared with UCLG ASPAC assembly members during the Congress; vi) NLC advocated successfully for membership of UCLG ASPAC and World UCLG Executive Bureau and Council. Additionally, NACPC was officially nominated by Congress as member of World UCLG Council for the term 2016-2019; v) Lesson learned on appropriate size of UCLG ASPAC Executive Bureau (15 members) and Council (45 members), enabling association's effective, dynamic and efficient performance.

UNDP Cambodia and Philippines have jointly organized a study tour to the Philippines for ASAC members. On October 24-29 a delegation of high-level representatives from the National League of Local Councils and the National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils has visited the Philippines to meet their counterparts and other relevant stakeholders in order to exchange experiences and learn lessons on good practices in strategic management of local government associations. The Philippines decentralization and local governance strengthening process since the enactment of the Local Government Code in 1991 has emerged as a very significant learning experience for regional counterparts. As the Cambodian LGAs endeavor to refine further their strategic objectives, they aim to acquire practical lessons from the Philippines on core issues such as advocacy policies, capacity building plans, diversification of service provision to members, social accountability, financial sustainability and income generation, gender equity and social inclusiveness, etc. To this end, UNDP Philippines has organized a very complete plan of activities involving key national actors in decentralization and local governance. Thus, the Cambodian delegation has had the opportunity to meet with high-ranking officials and leaders from the Office of the Vice President, Department of Interior and Local Government, League of Cities of the Philippines, League of Municipalities of the Philippines, Quezon City government, local governments in Central Luzon and CSO.

With regard to in-country mutual learning experiences, the best practice award program will be assessed in 2017 in order to draw conclusions for future related activities. However, the ASAC-S and ACES team has encouraged all PAs, especially the 12 target PAs to develop case stories regarding achievements and success stories of local councils or associations. A competition of best practices among the 2015 6 ACES-grant PAs implementation was organized during the reflection workshop in January 2016 at Sihanouk Ville and PA, and

Stoeng Treng Province was collectively designated as the most successful grant implementer and awarded with USD100.00. PAs have initiated collection and dissemination of case stories and good practices of public service delivery, especially the 12 target provinces. BTB wrote about effective role of district chapters in service delivery to members; KCM raised a story on good partnership between PA and provincial line department; KPT-SVH-SRP illustrated the services delivered by PA to members under ACES-project support; STG revealed a good practice on collection of membership fees and PA effective advisory provision; and ASAC-S depicted a story on effectiveness and potential of advisory services to local councils through forum organization in 12 PAs. Selected cases will be posted at ASAC website shortly.

DELIVERABLE 7: The interests of Local Councils and citizens have been promoted employing constructive methods for advocacy of clearly defined needs and demands.

The subnational forums of councilors organized by PAs with grant provided by ACES project are mostly aimed at promoting the interest of sub-national councils and citizens. The official launch of grant provision scheme for 2016 took place on February 24, 2016. Previously, 6 new PAs have been identified as priority PA through participatory methodology involving ASAC-S, NLC presidency and 25 PAs at reflection workshop on January 13. Thus, the 12 selected provinces for 2016 forum organization are: Mondulkiri, Batambang, Preah Vihear, Preah Sihanouk, Kompong Cham, Kompong Speu, Stung treng, Svay Rieng, Odor Mean Cheay, Banteay Mean Cheay, Siem Reap and Kampot.

During 2016 the ASAC-S and UNDP advisory team have provided technical advice and support to prepare, coordinate and organize such forums and other capacity development activities. Detailed information of progress made until October 2016 on implementation of ACES grants to PAs is provided below:

Activities implemented by PAs through ACES grant:

- 100% of the total grant - 135,000.00 USD- has been transferred to 12 target PAs, and about 98% has been delivered.
- By the end of December 2016, the 12 target PAs have completely implemented the following activities: 12 commune fora, 85 district and municipal fora, 12 provincial fora, 20 training courses/workshops (8 using membership fees) and 122 advisory services (14 were using membership fees). 100% of activities stipulated in MoU have been successfully implemented (advisory provision was carried out through PA membership fees).
- Additionally, pro-active project monitoring at the sub-national level has been intensively conducted along with provision of advisory and coaching service on project planning and implementation to support the 12 target PAs. Starting from July, ACES project team and ASAC-S staff have carried out field trips in Batambang, Preah Vihear, Sihanouk, Kompong Cham, Kompong Speu, Steung treng, Svay Rieng and Kampot in order to provide support to PAs staff on key project management practices including organization of forums, activity planning, advisory service provision to its members, drafting of concept notes, financial management and accounting system.
- At local level, PAs has also conducted advisory provision services: 122 trips carried ut by PAs to disseminate and clarify roles and function of local councils and promote transparent and effective administrative services to people (public information of duration/service charge on certified documents, civil registration etc.). This support has been facilitated by IBOs recruited under ACES project, and PA secretaries, whose salaries are partially provided by ACES project.

- 20 workshops and trainings conducted in response to issues identified during district and municipal fora.
- A regional forum has been organized in collaboration with Senate on 15-16 June 2016 to disseminate information on roles and responsibilities of senators and councilors, discuss challenges and issues and raise awareness on public service delivery and responsiveness to citizen needs. Vice-president of Senate has chaired this forum, and 344 public servants have attended the event, including representatives of 5 PAs (BMC, PLN, BTB, OMC and SRP), Senate, 7 ministries, provincial board of governors, police, sectoral departments etc. Relevant issues on division of functions for public service delivery and local governance were openly debated among participants.
- To scale up the impact of the sub-national forums and other ACES-grant activities, PAs have developed additional proposals and funding requests aimed at addressing problems and needs identified during the district fora. In order to facilitate this initiative, a proposal writing orientation was organized in Kompong Cham on 10 August 2016 and attended by 25 Provincial Associations i.e. the chiefs, secretaries, ASAC-S staff, and 2 leaders from both Associations of Sub-National Administration Councils (ASAC), and representatives from NCDD and ACES-UNDP team. The purpose of this orientation was to develop the capacity of PAs in terms of writing small proposal to donors, government and or private sector in order to mobilize resources for implementing activities for the interests of its members and citizens, including themes such as social accountability, environment protection, climate change, gender, etc. ACES has reserved fund around 15,000.00 to support this activity. ASAC-S received 17 proposals from MKR, BAT, RAT, OMC, PUR, SHV, KPC, KPS, SVR, STG, KAM, SRP, KRT, PVG, KKG and TAK. A selection committee has screened and selected the 3 best proposals submitted by PAs of Svay Rieng (training to all local female councilors at the province), Stung Treng (solid waste management at STG municipality) and Ratanakiri (I-SAF training and dissemination to local councilors and people's representatives). These projects were successfully implemented during November-December 2016 and the following results were achieved: 1) Svay Rieng: there were 134 participants including 122 female councilors, who trained on administration, budgeting and gender; in addition, a case study on role model of local leadership was developed and disseminated across the province; 2) Stung Treng: the main outputs are public awareness raised for clean city and concrete actions including 15 waste bins, 3 educated billboard and 3 disposal's sites for solid waste placed - direct participation of this project is 317 people; 3) Ratanakiri: the total of trainees was 479, coming from provincial sectoral departments, local councils, community and people's representatives

Results achieved:

- Capacity of PA leaders and secretaries has significantly improved through direct grant implementation as a practical exercise on planning, budgeting, activity management and implementation, coordination and communication, partnership building, procurement, financial management and reporting mechanisms. Along with direct grant implementation by PAs, in-class and distance (mail and phone calls) training has been provided by ASAC-S and project advisory team.
- Confidence of local councils (DMK-CS) is gradually building to voice out their concerns and needs to upper levels such as district and provincial authorities, provincial sectoral departments and ministries.

- The challenges of local councils are being openly discussed, clarified and whenever possible solved during the fora. As for unsolved problems, PAs are collecting and submitting issues to relevant stakeholders such as NLC and Senate.
- Activity reports drafted and inputs collected to reflect and analyze the actual impact of sub-national forums of councilors in order to maximize its potential to enhance public service delivery. Likewise, this information will be instrumental to devise an advocacy strategy and a social accountability promotion initiative.
- 11259 beneficiaries included (2585 females) participated in activities implemented by 12 PAs in 2016. 6925 sub-national and different-politic-party councilors participated and benefited from these activities (CPP: 5379 people=77.68%, HR and CNRP: 1450 persons=20.94%, FUN: 68=0.98%, Norodom: 27=0.38% and NLD: 1 person=0.014%).
- 730 issues identified and 708 issues were clarified and solved by relevant stakeholders during 2016 grant implementation (*please note that there are overlap issues counted due to it appeared at different 85 districts/municipalities as well as provinces*).
- 5 tops issues for sub-national councils identified through the DM fora such as i) lack of coordination and transparent between/among councilors (chiefs, deputies and clerks) and do not convene monthly meeting ii) civil registration—birth certificates, extra charge on certification of legal documents, iii) ID card and family book service deliveries: difficult to get, take too long time to apply and receive, iv) land conflict—properties, boundaries, overlap land title and v) lack of capacity to do budgeting and transparency on profit's share

On another note, ASAC-S is timely producing quarterly newsletters, which have been disseminated to all local councils and other stakeholders. Information regarding ASAC activities has been updated in ASAC-S website. To make a link with other organizations websites, ASAC-S has communicated with other agencies including NCDD-S and UNDP requesting official permission to set connection.

DELIVERABLE 8: Sub-national administration Councils have improved access to information from Government and non-government sources.

The previously mentioned ToR for an international consultancy on Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan has included the outline of an advocacy strategy and access to key actors and the information they manage.

DELIVERABLE 9: Sub-national Administration Council civic engagement policies and processes have been enhanced by transparent governance mechanisms and proactive communication

While a comprehensive plan to promote civic engagement and social accountability will be outlined in the coming months, ACES project is undertaking some actions to disseminate and mainstream social accountability among ASAC members.

On the occasion of a Regional Forum of Councilors organized by Senate and Banteay Meanchey PA on June 2016, ACES team delivered a presentation on social accountability, its importance for good governance and international good practices. The forum was attended by 336 civil servants, including the Vice-president of Senate, representatives of Senate's thematic units, Senators from Region 4, Vice-governor of Banteay Meanchey, Chairman of Banteay Meanchey Provincial Council, sub-national councilors from 5 provinces of Region 4, and representatives of relevant ministries. The Forum revealed that information on social accountability among sub-national councilors is rather limited and demanded.

DELIVERABLE 11: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its Provincial Associations have reinforced their partnerships with RGC, civil society and donor agencies in order to promote Sub-national administration Council and citizen interests.

During 2016 ASAC-S has been reinforcing its partnership with RGC, civil society and development partners by getting involved in national policy dialogue on the Implementation of Social Accountability Framework (I-SAF).

On February 19 ASAC Secretary-General participated in second meeting of I-SAF PSC. The committee members have decided to accept ASAC participation as observer, while a decision on full membership has been postponed. On March 24 representatives of NCDD-S/M&E unit and ASAC-S met and agreed to collaborate on the Implementation Plan for Social Accountability Framework. In this regard, ASAC-S has taken the following steps over the past months:

- MOU between I-SAF PSC, NACPC and NLC has been drafted by technical team (NCDD-S M&E and ASAC-S) and officially signed by NACPC, NLC and NCDD-S. This MOU includes a detailed activity plan on capacity development, i.e. I-SAF training for 3 target provinces—BMC, SRG and MDK, selected PA leaders and ASAC-S core staff. NACPC is a co-signatory party with NLC and NCDD-S on the MOU since NACPC has contributed its own membership fee for I-SAF training for provincial councilors at 3 target provinces (Banteay Meanchey, Svay Rieng and Monduliri).
- Three of ASAC-S staff members and 3 leaders of Provincial Associations of Banteay Mean Chey, Svay Rieng and Monduliri attended I-SAF training course organized by NCDD-S (called “master trainers”) in Battambang Province on 6-8 April 2016).
- Training of Trainer (ToT) organized in Kompong Chhnang on 16-18 August 2016 on social accountability for chiefs of Provincial Associations from 25 provinces and ASAC-S staff totaled 50 (8 women). The purpose of this training is to raise awareness to all provincial associations and its members (councilors) with regard to social accountability at sub-national level which mainly focusses on primary education, health and Commune/Sangkat administration. After this ToT training, chiefs of Provincial Associations who are selected as trainers in collaboration with the NCDD focal point will conduct training to members (councilors) at their respective provinces. ASAC-S staff will facilitate this training especially at the three target provinces, namely Banteay Mean Chey, Monduliri and Svay Rieng.
- On August 3 and 5, ASAC staffs and PA chairmen of KTE and KPT participated in I-SAF field visit conducted by NCDD-S. During the field visit, the participants have i) visited I4Cs posted at Communes, health centers and primary schools (I4Cs—information for citizens on budget and services of health center, primary school and commune administration); ii) attended discussion between national I-SAF delegates and I-SAF field actors--community facilitators, district board of governors and councils, communes, health centers and primary schools; iii) attended discussion between I-SAF delegates and provincial administration officials.
- On 5 December 2016, ASAC-S was invited to participate in the third I-SAF PSC meeting as an observer. Progress made in 2016, activity plan and target areas/provinces for 2017 regarding I-SAF were discussed, commended and approved.
- On 6 December 2016, a technical meeting was organized in Kompong Cham province to discuss ISAF training plan to be delivered at 2 selected provinces (Munduliri and Svay Rieng). Unfortunately these two provinces decided not to implement this year due to time-constraint for voters’ registration.

- On 7-8 December 2016, an exposure visit was organized in Tbong Khmom province to learn the best practice of municipality and district in implementing social accountability framework. The participants totally 60 (13 females). After this exposure visit, participants were well aware of social accountability concept as implemented at local level and focused on service delivery for citizens. A reflection meeting was conducted right after the field trip. The main findings and conclusions were as follows: a) 6 ASAC trainers showed strong confidence and readiness to train other councilors with/without NCDD-S supports, b) 25 PA leaders committed to disseminate I-SAF concept to members at their respective province and c) Key areas for 2017 I-SAF MoU between ASAC and NCDD-S identified, namely i) continue training to selected provinces, ii) expanding commune fora related to I-SAF, iii) exchanging experiences among communes or districts, iv) national or regional workshops with diversified speakers (policy makers, implementers, academy and practitioners), v) attending I-SAF events organized by NCDD-S) and vi) ground monitor and support to I-SAF local implementation (2017 targets --communes and districts).

DELIVERABLE 13: Women participation in the League, the Provincial Associations and Local Councils has been enhanced.

The selection process of UNDP-ACES Gender Specialist started in Q1 2016. The newly recruited Gender Specialist, Ms. Sophorn Tous, has assumed her new functions on 26 September 2016. She is member of UNDP advisory team to ACES Project and is responsible to manage ACES project's gender component (deliverable 13) and provide technical and strategic advisory services for project implementation. Two gender workshops have been organized in December 2016.

The first workshop—*Developing Advocacy Plan for Supporting Women in Local Politics* was held on 27th December 2016, which it aims to identify key challenges, good practices and needs of implementing roles and responsibilities to support women in leadership at local the level. The workshop also seeks suggestions for improving and to initiating the draft of advocacy plan to support women leadership at in the Associations at Sub-national Administration Councils and the Provincial Associations. There were 95 participants (54 women), who are the presidents of NLC/S and NACPC, PA leaders and IBO, Chief of Commune, Commune Councilors, and representatives from Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Civil Services, NCDD. As for the accomplishment of the workshop, there were inputs for identifying objectives and initiating an action plan to devise the Advocacy Plan, as well as outstanding commitments from the presidents of ASAC to promote gender equity in local politics, and planning forward to approve the advocacy plan in March 2017.

The Second Gender workshop on *Revising the TOR for the Committee for Women and Children Affairs of NLC/S* was held on 28th December 2017 and there were 85 participants, including 47 female participants. The objectives of the workshop are to discuss roles and responsibilities of CWCA for it to play a more effective role in strengthening the capacity of NLC members to mainstream gender in the League, and define affirmative actions of CWCA NLC to support women political leaders and councilors and to mainstream gender in the local councils' development plans. As a result, there were inputs for revising for the ToR of the Committee in charge of women and children's affairs, as well as inputs for the two-year work plan for the Committee. NLC will take next steps in re-discussing the composition of the Committee based on a number of criteria that were defined at the workshop, as well as other issues including seeking the endorsement of the two-year work plan from the Board of ASAC.

Prior to the recruitment of the Gender Specialist, ASAC-S has supported the Senate to organize a national forum on women’s progress in politics, which took place on 5th October 2016 at the Senate campus. Over 360 participants from relevant institution, including 9 female senators, 97 female commune councilors and 75 female district and provincial officials gathered to learn and share experiences on women’s political participation in Cambodia.

2.1. Progress towards project outputs:

<p>Output 4.3: Local Government Associations are better able to advocate for their members and provide them services (revised)</p> <p>Output 2.1: Mechanisms and channels for government-citizen dialogue exist that establish long-term accountability relationships (project extension)</p>			
Output Indicators	Baseline (Dec 2015)	2016 Targets	Current status
<p>Systems and procedures for operation of Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils</p> <p>(Deliverable 2)</p>	<p>POMM and MOM approved by ASAC in 2015 and lack of core staff for operations.</p>	<p>Core staff of Secretariat of Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils recruited and on board.</p> <p>POMM implemented by the Secretariat of Associations and MOM implemented by Secretariat of Provincial Associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASAC-S’s core staff members and 6 additional IBOs have been recruited in March 2016 according to the principles of transparency and merit. - After resignation of Advocacy and Capacity Development Manager in May 2016, this vacancy has been re-advertised and will be re-advertised again. - ASAC-S Deputy Secretary General resigned in September 2016. A new Deputy Secretary General has been appointed in October 2016. <p>POMM is endorsed and under implementation but official signing is still pending, while MOM has not yet been officially approved but it has been applied at 12 target PAs for ACES grant management. .</p> <p>Other activities related to POMM and enhancement of systems and procedures for operations are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On 14 January 2016, ACES staff retreat organized in Sihanouk. The purpose of this retreat was to discuss pending issues related to implementation of Practical Operation Management Manual (POMM). As a result of the meeting, the letter of appointment of Approving, Certifying and Requesting Officer for NACPC, NLC and ASAC-S has been signed and put into use. - Proactive monitoring of ACES-grant implementation has been regularly conducted through field visits to 12 target PAs, phone calls, e-mail and Facebook. Special attention was paid to new 6 target PAs in order to ensure these provinces can carry out ACES-grant activities. - Training and meeting to discuss Practical Operation and Management Manual (POMM) conducted in Sihanouk province on 5-6 July 2016 with participation from ASAC-S staff totaled 13 (3 females) to discuss the

		<p>Internal and External Audits conducted to all sources of funds under Associations and Secretariats.</p>	<p>status of POMM implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly meeting organized in Kompong Cham on 11 August participated by ASAC-S staff, secretaries and 12 Provincial Back-Stoppers (PBS) to discuss issues and challenges faced during project implementation, with special focus on POMM and MOM implementation. - The 5th ACES Project Board Meeting held on 14 December 2016 at NCDD-S office. Board members discussed and approved the 2016 ACES progress report, the 2017 AWBP and a preliminary concept not for post-ACES project proposal. - ACES technical group meeting held on 13 July 2016 at ASAC-S office to review project implementation and provide advice. - The National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils (NACPC) held its National Councils Meeting on 17 November 2017 in Ratanakiri province. This National Councils Meeting aimed to approve the achievements of year 2016 and also approve the next year work plan 2017. The total number of participants was 102 (22 women). - The National League of Local Councils (NLC) has held its National Councils Meeting on 19 December 2016 in Kompong Chhnang province. This National Councils Meeting aimed to approve the achievements of year 2016 and also approve the next year work plan 2017. The total number of participants was 150 (46 women). - Internal spot check conducted at all 12 PAs in September and October to ensure ACES grant is managed according to MOM and transparency principles. - External audit including spot check conducted to ACES project by KPMG on 12-16 Sept, 2016. Audit report has been submitted by consultant team and IP response provided in December 2016.
<p>Number of training courses designed and delivered to councils by Local Government Associations.</p> <p>(Deliverables 3, 4, 5, 6, 11 and 13)</p>	<p>Capacity development plan of NLC outdated and focused only on commune/sangkat, and training provided to PAs based on informal methodologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - South-South cooperation through study tour/s aimed at enhancing the institutional capacity of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils are organized/facilitated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representative of ASAC-ACES attended UCLG-ASPAC meeting May 5-7, 2016 in India. Report on best practices of "smart cities" drafted and submitted to presidents of NLC and NACPC. - Cambodian delegates representing NACPC, NLC, ASAC and ACES project attended 6th UCLG ASPAC congress from 5-8 September 2016 at Gunsan city, Jeollabuk-do province, Republic of Korea. - With support of UNDP Bangkok Regional Office, representatives from ASAC attended workshop on municipality/city finance organized by UNCDF from 5-6 September 2016 in Bangkok - Study tour to the Philippines

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training courses delivered to governing bodies and professional staff of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its 25 Provincial Associations. - Institutional Needs Assessment conducted and Capacity Development Plan formulated. - Capacity development plan updated in line with international standards, approved and under implementation. - Training program designed in line with international standards, including thematic training modules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organized and conducted on October 24-29. ASAC delegation consisting of 8 members have met relevant counterparts from League of Cities of the Philippines, League of Municipalities of the Philippines, Department of Interior and Local Governments, etc. - Retreat organized in Sihanouk Ville on January 14, 2016 with 27 participants from ASAC, PAs and UNDP-ACES. - On 05-06 May 2016, ASAC-S organized a technical meeting and learning session to discuss the issues and challenges faced during ACES grant activities implementation attended by leaders of NLC, PBS and ASAC-S staffs totaled 35 (5 females). - Technical and financial contribution to NACPC for training on operacy course and NCDD functional assignments of sub-national administration organized from 25-29 April 2016 at Pursat Province (50 participants). - Technical assistance to NACPC for conducting training course on conflict solution and communication for Capital and Khan councilors, organized on 29-30 June 2016 (40 participants). - ToT training for cluster heads and deputies conducted by NACPC from 24-25 August 2016 at Kampong Chhnang province on communication and conflict mediation. The total number of participant is 55. - International consultant team was hired in September 2016 to conduct Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan. The assignment is underway and will conclude in February 2017. - International consultant was hired in September 2016 to conduct Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan. The assignment will conclude in February 2017. Subsequently the updated capacity development plan for ASAC will be finalized and endorsed. - International consultant team was hired in September 2016 to conduct Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan. The assignment will conclude in February 2016. The updated capacity development plan will include thematic training modules.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support NCDD to facilitate the capacity development of SNA staff on how to promote social accountability and work effectively with citizens, CBOs and NGOs in 12 target provinces. - Develop and initiate an advocacy plan to support women leadership in the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and the provincial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ToT delivered to ASAC-S core staff and PAs secretaries at ASAC-S office on 2 December. This training is an output of the above mentioned consultancy on Institutional Need Assessment and Capacity Development Plan. Total number of participants: 22 (9 women). - MoU for ASAC/NCDD collaboration on ISAF officially signed by ASAC's presidents and NCDD. It includes action plan on I-SAF training. - Three of ASAC-S staff members and 3 leaders of Provincial Associations of Banteay Mean Chey, Svay Rieng and Mondulhiri attended I-SAF training course organized by NCDD-S (called "master trainers") in Battambang Province on 6-8 April 2016). - 30-31 May 2016, ASAC-S, leaders of NLC and NACPC attended I-SAF dissemination meeting organized by NCDD. - Training of Trainer (ToT) organized in Kompong Chhnang on 16-18 August 2016 on Social Accountability to chiefs of provincial associations from 25 provinces and ASAC-S staff totaled 50 participants (8 females). - On August 3 and 5, ASAC staff and PA chairmen of KTE and KPT participated in I-SAF field visit organized by NCDD-S - On 6 December 2016, a meeting organized in Kompong Cham province to discuss the ToT training and the concept note for selected province i.e. Mondulhiri and Svay Rieng. The participants totaled 29 (7 women). As a result of the meeting, the two provinces decided not to implement further I-SAF related activities this year due to time-constraint related voters' registration. - On 7-8 December 2016, an exposure visit organized in Tbong Khmom province to learn best practices of municipality and district in implementing ISAF. The participants totaled 60 (13 women). After this exposure visit, participants were well aware of social accountability concept as implemented at the local level. - ASAC-S attended the third I-SAF PSC meeting on December 5, 2016. - Gender Specialist recruited and on board as member of UNDP advisory team to ACES project since 26th September 2016. - Workshop on Developing Advocacy Plan for Supporting Women in Local
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		<p>associations aiming to ensure women's participation in idea generation and decision making, including national workshops, awareness-raising activities etc.</p>	<p>Politics was held on 27th December 2016. There were 95 participants (54 women). Relevant inputs were collected to devise Advocacy Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop on Revising the TOR for the Committee for Women and Children Affairs of NLC/S was held on 28th December 2017. 85 representatives of NLC attended the workshop (47 women).
<p>Number of inputs/proposals into NCDD sub-committee debates</p> <p>(Deliverable 7)</p>	<p>No inputs / proposals into NCDD sub-committee debates have been addressed, and lack of advocacy strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant provided to PALC (organization of sub-national forums of councilors). - National, Regional, Provincial and district forums organized to response to councilors and citizen needs. 	<p>Grants provided to PAs are mainly used to organize activities aimed at strengthening the advocacy work of the PAs and the ASAC-S.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The following sub-national forums of councilors and related activities have been implemented during 2016 by PAs through ACES-grant: 12 commune forums, 85 district fora, 12 provincial fora; 1 regional forum; 20 trainings/workshops, 122 advisory service provision (trips); and case stories developed by 12 target PAs. <i>Results of grant implementation in 12 target PAs:</i> i) 11259 beneficiaries (2585 women) have participated in forums of councilors and related activities; ii) 730 issues were identified and 708 issues were clarified and solved by relevant stakeholders; iii) 5 tops issues for sub-national councils identified through the DM fora - Participatory governance facility successfully implemented by three PAs, namely Stung Treng, Svay Rieng and Ratanakir, including activities related to social accountability training and dissemination, solid waste management and training provided to local female councilors. - On 10 August 2016, a proposal writing orientation course organized in Kompong Cham province as a follow up activity to strengthen the results and impact of sub-national forums of councilors. Course attended by 2 leaders and 1 staff from all 25 provinces, IBOs of 12-PA grant provinces, NACPC, ASAC-S and ACES. - On 15-16 June 2016, the regional forum organized in Banteay Mean Chey in collaboration with Senate participated by councilors from 5 PAs i.e. BAT, BMC, PLN, SRP and OMC, representatives from Senate, representatives from ministries and ASAC-S staff and UNDP advisor. - ASAC-S and ACES team have engaged with the Senate to support the implementation of a national forum on women's progress in politics which took place on 5th October 2016. Over 170 female subnational councilors and officials have participated in this Forum.

		- Advocacy strategy developed and partially implemented.	- International consultant team has been hired in September 2016 to conduct Institutional Needs Assessment and Capacity Development Plan. The assignment will include an outline of ASAC advocacy strategy. - Consultation workshop on strategic planning and advocacy strategy for ASAC organized on June 23, 2016. The conclusions and results of the workshop will be used as inputs to develop ASAC strategic plans and advocacy strategy. Other activities have been implemented to promote visibility of associations and advocacy as detailed below: - Quarterly newsletters of ASAC-S published, printed and disseminated to local councilors and stakeholders in July and October 2016.
Number of services designed and delivered to councils. (Deliverable 9-13)	1 service has been designed and delivered to councils.		
Overall structure of joint secretariat of Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils developed (Deliverable 2)	Insufficient systems and procedures for operation of Local Government Associations		
- delivery exceeds plan	- delivery in line with plan	- delivery slightly below plan	

2.1. Progress toward country programme (CPAP and CPD) output:

Outcome 4: By 2015, Sub-national administrations have capacity to take over increased functions
Output 4.3: Local Government Associations are better able to advocate for their members and provide them services (revised)

Outcome 2: Citizens' expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (project extension)

Output 2.1: Mechanisms and channels for government-citizen dialogue exist that establish long-term accountability relationships (project extension)

Outcome Indicators	Baseline (Aug 2012)	Target (2017)	Current status
1. Number of key functions developed for Sub-national administrations by line ministries.	1. 0	1. Well-defined CS functions	- Functional reassignment underway in Batambang province on public health, primary school and rural development. - 8 ministries have been reviewing a list of functions to be transferred to sub-national administrations. 5 of these 8 ministries have finalized a list of transferred functions: i) Ministry of Education (11 functions), ii) Ministry of Public Health (5 functions), iii) Ministry of Rural Development (9 functions), iv) Ministry of Environment (8 functions) and v) Ministry of Social Affairs (8 functions). Source: <i>NCDD website (ncdd.gov.kh.)</i>
2. Citizen satisfaction on Sub-national Administration services.	2. 56 LG-citizen forums	2. 200 LG-citizen forums	- 1 national forum on women's progress in politics, 1 regional forum, 12 provincial fora, 85 district fora and 12 commune fora organized by PAs through ACES project grant.
3. Number of social accountability mechanisms agreed by both government and civil society organizations present in priority provinces	3. 0	3. 2017: 18 provinces, 98 districts.	- Social accountability mechanisms under implementation in 18 provinces (national implementation strategy), including pilot initiatives in 3 provinces under ACES support —BMC, SVR and MDK.

		2016-2018 19 provinces, 120 districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 433 communes (97%), 1,839 Primary Schools (91%) and 308 Health Centers (90%) have entered I4C data (information for citizens). Source: <i>IP3 Progress Report, NCDD, 22 September 2016.</i> - <i>Incomes and expenditures have been publicly posted by 385 out of 447 communes, 1599 out of 2441 Primary Schools and 259 out of 358 health.</i> Source: <i>Third I-SAF PSC Meeting, 5 December 2016.</i> - Activities on the demand-side led by CARE are behind schedule because local NGOs have been required to demonstrate financial sustainability. Source: <i>IP3 Progress Report, NCDD, 22 September 2016.</i>
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3. Capacity Development:

ACES grant directly provided to PAs is a value added to capacity development for ASAC leaders and staff at sub-national level because members of PAs have the opportunity to learn effectively and in a practical way on diverse professional skills and tools such as activity planning, financial management, project management, facilitation skills etc. Therefore, PAs are expanding their capacities to deliver key services to members, including counselling/advisory services and workshop organization to share viewpoints and discuss councils' effective roles, performance and accountability relations with their constituencies (citizens).

During 2016 ASAC-S and UNDP-ACES advisory team have invested a lot of effort and time to capacitate 12 PA leaders, staffs and IBOs on planning, activity implementation, monitoring and financial management. As a result, 12 PAs are now able to implement activities and manage ACES grant. Additionally, the ASAC internal audit committee has been trained on financial auditing covering both theory and field practice exercises. The internal audit committee is currently conducting audits by itself and producing audit reports without support from ASAC-S staff. In 2017 the ASAC audit committee will be able to capacitate SNA staff on project monitoring and evaluation.

An international consultant team has been hired in October 2016 to conduct an Institutional Needs Assessment and devise a Capacity Development Plan for the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and the Provincial Associations. The assignment aims to systematize, consolidate and update all ASAC's current efforts and initiatives on capacity development delivered to members. The updated capacity development plan will include a training program on local governance consisting of the following thematic modules: i) universal principles of good governance; ii) local democratic governance and decentralization; iii) participatory and strategic planning and project management for local development, including proposal development; iv) institutional framework of Cambodia's multi-level governance system (decentralization and de-concentration regulatory and policy framework); v) orientation training module for newly elected councilors; vi) advocacy capacity building. The capacity development plan will be provided by consultant team on February 2017 and will be implemented during 2017. This project output is conceived as a long-lasting and tangible result that should be the basis for ASAC's sustainable plans and strategies on capacity development.

4. Gender:

The ACES project has emphasized the need to enhance women's participation and leadership in the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils, the Provincial Associations and the Sub-national Administration Councils. Thus, the project has supported the strengthening of the Commune Committees for Women and Children Affairs and the Provincial and District Women and Children Consultative Committee. However, these platforms do not guarantee strong women involvement in local politics. To exploit their political options in full, women candidates and councilors need tailor-made training, coaching and mutual learning experiences and safe places to express their views. The Standing Committee for Women and Children's Affairs of the NLC, which is mandated to set policies to promote gender equity in sub-national politics, needs to be reactivated. The findings of EU-ROM mission conducted in October 2016 indicated that ACES project's performance on gender equity needs to be strengthened to ensure an inclusive approach to political participation and equitable social impact.

After a long selection and recruitment process, a highly qualified Gender Specialist has been recruited in September 2016 as member of the UNDP-ACES advisory team to assist the ASAC-S in undertaking gender analysis and mainstreaming, and promoting gender-sensitive practices and policies and women's political participation in close cooperation with NCDD, Senate and other relevant stakeholders. The Gender Specialist is already devising and leading an action plan to enhance ASAC's overall performance on gender equity and enhancement of ASAC's female leadership and women's political participation at sub-national levels.

5. Lessons learnt:

Grant provided to PAs is a fundamental capacity development tool and approach because their capacities are improving efficiently and faster as compared to other capacity-building schemes based on conventional training. According to results of reflection workshop conducted in January 2016 leaders and staff of 6 PAs are increasingly gaining confidence on how to manage funds and implement activities by themselves. During 2nd and 3rd quarter of 2016 ACES project has followed the same "learning by doing" approach or experimental learning to implement ACES grant while building capacities of sub-national councils.

NACPC is revealing its potential as a good role model on service delivery to members. Despite limited membership fee collection, during 2016 NACPC has provided training on diverse matters to its members nationwide. The delegation of functions and roles to NACPC regional clusters for implementing capacity development activities is resulting in an effective measure to extend management responsibilities while enhancing leadership skills and capacity building exercises.

6. Project implementation challenges:

6.1. Project risks and actions:

The anticipated risks and issues were identified at the early stage of ACES project and MTR. The risks and issues have been progressively mitigated during project implementation and under project board guidance.

A pending and challenging issue by beginning of 2016 was the proposal addressed by ASAC to the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy and Finance to increase ASAC's membership fees. Decisions and further actions on ASAC-S's human resources are difficult

given the limited revenues ASAC can raise through membership fee collection. NCDDS has brought this issue to discuss further with the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

During the 3rd quarter of 2016 we have seen significant progress with regard to financial sustainability. Thus, on 17th August NCDD has officially informed NLC that municipality, district, commune and sangkat councils are allowed to use MDCS fund within 2% of administrative fund (excluding personnel cost) to pay annual membership fees for PAs. With this new rate of membership fee, NLC and PAs (in some provinces) will be less dependent on external funding from donors, particularly if NLC and PAs reduce the size of their governing structures.

6.2. Key project issues and actions:

As previously reported, POMM and MOM have been approved by both national associations (NACPC and ASAC) and both manuals are being applied by ASAC-S, especially POMM. However, an official signing of POMM by ASAC is still pending and it is strongly required (signatures of ASAC's presidents). Additionally, official adoption of MOM to be used by PAs is strongly needed. It is important to note that some PAs of 12 PA-grant provinces have not yet approved MOM as operational and management guideline (SRP, OMC and BMC).

Due to limited financial resources, only 12 PAs out of 25 have received funds from ACES project in 2016. It means the remaining 13 PAs are not having the opportunity to strengthen their institutional and human capacities with through ACES contribution. Additionally, the fund allocated to 12 PAs in 2016 has been reduced 55% as compared to original estimates (USD20,000.00 in 2015 and only USD9,000.00 average in 2016-2017). As a consequence, some PAs might not be able to reach annual objectives in terms of advocacy work and capacity building. In addition, the budget reduction will affect the level of services provided by PAs to members (sub-national administration councils/councillors), particularly with regard to effectiveness of advocacy and capacity development as core functions of LGA.

The problems faced by ASAC-S to recruit a highly qualified Advocacy and Capacity Building Manager is affecting ASAC's performance since advocacy plan is a key component of ACES project's work plan in 2017.

Since the elections of C/S councils will take place in June 2017, the voters' registration process is currently underway, which is affecting ACES project implementation due to involvement of councillors in such process. It is also anticipated that the councillors will be busy with the political campaigns from January to June 2017.

7. Donor Visibility:

Under current EU-UNDP financial support, all ACES activities have been posting EU and UNDP logo on backdrop and acknowledgement has been made. UNDP and EU representatives have been invited to participate in relevant project activities.

ANNEX

1. Financial report
2. Inventory of trainings, workshops and forums of councillors
3. Issues log template

4. Risk log template

IV. Financial status and utilization			
Table 1: Contribution Overview from 01/01/2012 - 31/12/2016			

Donor's Name	Contribution Committed	Received [USD]	Balance [USD]
UNDP_TRAC2	1,403,276.07	1,403,276.07	-
EU	2,058,823.54	1,345,037.60	713,785.94
TOTAL	3,462,099.61	2,748,313.67	713,785.94

Table 2: Quarterly expenditure by project output or Activity [01/10/2016 – 31/12/2016]

Output	Budget Plan (Q4)	Expenditures (Q4)	Balance [USD]	Delivery (%)
DELIVERABLE02: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its Provincial Associations have revised, improved and put into practice solid internal systems and procedures.	111,298.19	81,865.88	29,432.31	74%
DELIVERABLE03: The members of the governing bodies of the League and its 24 Provincial Associations have the analytical capacities to proactively develop policies, to communicate their opinions, and to supervise the activities of their respective secretariats	32,100.00	24,187.35	7,912.65	0%
DELIVERABLE04: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils' financial sustainability strategy is implemented including the revision of membership fees, the spread of donor dependency, and research on service charges.	33,651.50	33,778.84	(127.34)	100%
DELIVERABLE05: The League's financial sustainability strategy is implemented including the revision of membership fees, the spread of donor dependency, and research on service charges	28,034.00		28,034.00	0%
DELIVERABLE06: The capacities of Sub-national administration Councils have been developed by mutual learning, stimulating the communication and exchange of information among Cambodian Councillors, and between Cambodian Councillors and other Councillors from the developing world.	26,621.60	21,880.24	4,741.36	82%
DELIVERABLE07: The interests of Sub-national administration Councils and citizens have been promoted employing constructive methods for advocacy of clearly defined needs and demands.	174,549.10	128,252.88	46,296.22	73%
DELIVERABLE09: Local Council civic engagement policies and processes have been enhanced by transparent governance mechanisms and proactive communication	3,873.40		3,873.40	0%
DELIVERABLE11: The League and its Provincial Associations have reinforced their partnerships with RGC, civil society and donor agencies in order to promote Local Council and citizen interests	29,318.00	6,621.79	22,696.21	0%
DELIVERABLE13: Women participation in the League, the Provincial Associations and Local Councils has been enhanced	31,393.80	31,674.40	(280.60)	101%
TOTAL	470,839.59	328,261.38	142,578.21	70%

Output	Budget Plan 2016	Cumulative Expenditure 2016	Balance [USD]	Delivery (%)
DELIVERABLE02: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its Provincial Associations have revised, improved and put into practice solid internal systems and procedures.	240,974.74	214,816.09	26,158.65	89%
DELIVERABLE03: The members of the governing bodies of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils (National League of DMK-CS Councils and National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils) and its 25 Provincial Associations have the analytical capacities to proactively develop policies, to communicate their opinions, and to supervise the activities of their respective secretariats.	32,100.00	24,187.35	7,912.65	75%
DELIVERABLE04: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils' financial sustainability strategy is implemented including the revision of membership fees, the spread of donor dependency, and research on service charges.	38,101.63	43,096.04	4,994.41	113%
DELIVERABLE05: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils' financial sustainability strategy is implemented including the revision of membership fees, the spread of donor dependency, and research on service charges.	28,034.00	0.00	28,034.00	0%
DELIVERABLE06: The capacities of Sub-national administration Councils have been developed by mutual learning, stimulating the communication and exchange of information among Cambodian Councillors, and between Cambodian Councillors and other Councillors from the developing world.	28,526.20	26,593.98	1,932.22	93%
DELIVERABLE07: The interests of Sub-national administration Councils and citizens have been promoted employing constructive methods for advocacy of clearly defined needs and demands.	590,587.10	520,373.49	70,213.61	88%
DELIVERABLE09: Sub-national Administration Council civic engagement policies and processes have been enhanced by transparent governance mechanisms and proactive communication.	6,826.60	0.00	6,826.60	0%
DELIVERABLE11: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its Provincial Associations have reinforced their partnerships with RGC, civil society and donor agencies in order to promote Sub-national administration Council and citizen interests.	36,037.60	13,625.35	22,412.25	0%
DELIVERABLE13: Women participation in the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils, the Provincial Associations and Sub-national administration Councils has been enhanced.	38,207.59	31,674.40	6,533.19	83%
TOTAL	1,039,395.46	874,366.70	165,028.76	84%

Table 4: Cumulative Expenditure by Project Output or Activity [1/01/2012 – 31/12/2016]

Output	Total Budget	Cumulative Expenditure	Balance [USD]	Delivery (%)
DELIVERABLE01: The consultation processes required for the expansion of the League's membership with District, Municipal and Khan Councils have been designed, endorsed by the RGC, and implemented	267,359.57	267,359.57	0.00	100%
DELIVERABLE02: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its Provincial Associations have revised, improved and put into practice solid internal systems and procedures.	1,010,004.42	743,424.62	266,579.80	74%
DELIVERABLE03: The members of the governing bodies of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils (National League of DMK-CS Councils and National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils) and its 25 Provincial Associations have the analytical capacities to proactively develop policies, to communicate their opinions, and to supervise the activities of their respective secretariats.	86,358.88	51,284.16	35,074.72	59%
DELIVERABLE04: The support staff of the NLC, NACPC and the 25 Provincial Associations has the technical skills to comply with the internal systems and procedures.	118,850.32	68,196.52	50,653.80	57%
DELIVERABLE05: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils' financial sustainability strategy is implemented including the revision of membership fees, the spread of donor dependency, and research on service charges.	3,976.50	167.80	3,808.70	4%
DELIVERABLE06: The capacities of Sub-national administration Councils have been developed by mutual learning, stimulating the communication and exchange of information among Cambodian Councillors, and between Cambodian Councillors and other Councillors from the developing world.	67,313.67	45,175.37	22,138.30	67%
DELIVERABLE07: The interests of Sub-national administration Councils and citizens have been promoted employing constructive methods for advocacy of clearly defined needs and demands.	1,670,350.90	1,105,210.02	565,140.88	66%
DELIVERABLE08: Sub-national administration Councils have improved access to information from Government and non-government sources.	0.00	0.00	0.00	#DIV/0!
DELIVERABLE09: Sub-national Administration Council civic engagement policies and processes have been enhanced by transparent governance mechanisms and proactive communication.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
DELIVERABLE10: The members of the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils have endorsed and implemented standards for public ethics and good practice in local government.	10,653.02	10,653.02	0.00	100%
DELIVERABLE11: The Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils and its Provincial Associations have reinforced their partnerships with RGC, civil society and donor agencies in order to promote Sub-national administration Council and citizen interests.	50,623.72	28,710.12	21,913.60	57%
DELIVERABLE12: The Sub-national administration Councils are operating efficiently, effectively and transparently utilizing the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils' operational and advisory support services with a specific eye on the accomplishment of the CMDGs and SDGs.	34,530.00	23,325.30	11,204.70	68%
DELIVERABLE13: Women participation in the Associations of Sub-national Administration Councils, the Provincial Associations and Sub-national administration Councils has been enhanced.	82,846.25	47,122.60	35,723.65	57%
TOTAL	3,402,867.24	2,390,629.10	1,012,238.14	70%