

PROJECT REPORT 2013

QUARTER 1

United Nations Development Programme Cambodia

ACES – Association of Councils Enhanced Services Project

01-01-2013– 31-03-2013

Quarter 1, 2013

Project ID & Title: ACCESS/ID:00064631

Duration: 4 years

Total Budget: 4,990,398.00 USD

Implementing Partners/Responsible parties: National League of Communes and *Sangkats* (NLC/S)

Country Programme Outcome: Capacity development of sub-national administrations.

Association of Councils Enhanced Services Project (ACES)

2013 QUARTER 1 REPORT

1. Description

I. Executive summary

Progress (and alignment with National priorities):

3 year implementation program (IP3) and 10 year program of NCDD aimed to create local representatives through direct and indirect election of sub-national councils with anticipation of strengthening effective local service deliveries and development at localities. The political agenda committed to transfer applicable duty, function, personnel and finance to sub-national unified administrations, so, in the future sub-national councils can exercise their decision at their localities.

In alignment with national program (NCDD) and NLC/S five year strategy, a four year project (2012-2015) called Association of Councils Enhanced Services Project (ACES) was launched in June 2012 in order to strengthen the existing national league of communes and *sangkats* (NLC/S) and 24 provincial association of communes and *sangkats* (PAC/Ss) such as advocacy for local council interests, capacity development and service provision for local councils, supporting a development of league in the process of strengthening its internal systems and procedures and implementing a viable approach to increased financial sustainability, promotion of mutual learning among local councilors, promotion of gender equity in local politics, so, the final destination will be benefited to citizens and public. Specifically, the membership's expansion of current PAC/Ss and NLC/S was a first deliverable of ACES project. The League's expanding aims at incorporating the District/Municipal/Khan Councils to espouse by RGC policies and the key roles they play in service provision, downwards accountability, and bottom-up policy making processes.

In year 2011-2012, representatives of local councils (capital, provincial, district, municipal, commune and *sangkat* councils) discussed and agreed to form two tiers of sub-national council associations—i) association of regional councils (capital and provinces) and associations of local councils (district, municipal, commune and *sangkat*), then, this agreement was officially endorsed by government (NCDD/MOI) on September 27, 2012.

The membership's expansion was discussed among concerning parties such as NLC/S, UNDP and NCDD-S by putting in two year plan (2013-2014), but, this plan has been not yet finalized in first quarter, 2013. With this regards, a decision from ACES board is strongly and urgently required at least 2013 annual work plan.

Project Management, Coordination and Operations:

- Operation, admin and financial arrangement at NLC/S's secretariat approved by UNDP and NLC/S in 2012. Currently, NLC/S has been applying and using NCDD-S rule while waiting for a new SOP to be developed by international consultant.
- Temporary manual of financial and account system developed and introduced to PAC/S. This manual will gradually revise and justify, then fully apply in year 2015.
- Three positions under NLC/S contract (ACES's financial support) such as institutional building officer (IBO), human resource officer (HRO) and finance officer (FO) are under

- recruitment process--I/O candidates conducted a written test and interview will be conducted by the end of March or early April). HRO and FO positions have shortlisted. However, HRO, FO and 12 provincial back stopper positions are also pending and waiting until 2013 AWPB finalized by UNDP and NLC/S management or ACES project board.
- Two year work plan has been discussing, revising, modifying and justifying in according with comments and suggestions from NLC/S, UNDP and NCDD-S. The plan is still not yet finalized by ACES project board.

II. Implementation progress

PROGRESS TOWARDS PROJECT OUTPUTS:

Due to 2013 annual work plan has not yet finalized by project board. Therefore, the progress will report against first quarterly work plan as an agreement between UNDP and NLC/S.

INTENDED OUTPUT: Local Government Associations are better able to advocate for their members and provide them services.				
Output Indicators	Baseline (Aug 2012)	Target (Multi-year)	Q1 2013 Target	Current status
District council members of expanded League of Councils or a separate association. <u>Deliverable 1</u>	District councils do not have a Local Government Association which represents them	District councils are members of expanded League of Councils or a separate association has been established	5 DMK-CS associations established in consultation with NCDD/IP3.	Local council associations (DMK-CS) will start its process once regional council association (capital and province) formally established and registered with government. Currently, leaders of national working group decided to organize a congress for regional council association on 27-28 March 2013. The process and plan for establishment of local council association (DMK-CS) drafted and submitted to NLC/S for comments. Additionally, ACES team and PID specialist have been providing technical assistance and other supports to NLC/S (NCDD/SP6) during establishment process of regional council association.
Systems and procedures for operation of Local Government Associations. <u>Deliverable 2</u>	Insufficient systems and procedures for operation of Local Government Associations	Systems and procedures for operation of Local Government Associations developed and used by association.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOR for SOP consultancy developed and consultant recruited. Operational manual for PACS internally developed and tested 	The term of reference for SOP consultancy drafted, currently, it is waiting for comments from UNDP CO before advertisement. Temporary SOP for NLC/S currently used by NLC/S. This paper will be improved or justified by SOP international consultant. Temporary operation, finance and account system developed, tested and introduced with/to PAC/S leaders and secretaries.
Number of training courses designed and delivered to councils by Local Government Associations. <u>Deliverable 3-6</u>	No training courses have been delivered	6 training courses designed and delivered to councils by Local Government Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TNA to governing bodies conducted, Capacity Development Plan developed and implemented (1 training course conducted). TNA to secretaries 	TNA assessment for both PAC/S leaders and secretaries conducted through desk study, site validation and surveyed questionnaire, then, participatory finalized by PAC/S leaders and secretaries in workshop organized from 21-22 March 2013 at Kampong Cham province. Capacity development strategy or approach and three year capacity development plan developed and approved at

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conducted. Capacity development plan developed. Training on PAC/S operation conducted to leaders and secretaries. 	<p>NLC/S and 24 PAC/S leaders at workshop on 21-22 February 2013. It is a matrix table including top priority of training topics, timeframe and target trainees.</p> <p>A day training course on general concept regarding finance, account and procurement conducted for leaders, secretaries and assistants of secretaries coming from 24 capital and provinces dated 11 March 2013 at Siem Reap province, then, additional three day training continued with a detail and substantial content providing for secretaries and assistant of secretaries from 12-14 March 2013.</p>
<p>Number of inputs/proposals into NCDD sub-committee debates</p> <p><u>Deliverable 7</u></p>	<p>3 inputs / proposals into NCDD sub-committee debates have been addressed</p>	<p>13 inputs/ proposals into NCDD sub-committee debates have been addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NLC/S quarterly newsletter produced and disseminated to PACs and concerned stakeholders 	<p>NLC/S quarterly newsletter developed and submitted to NLC/S management for comments. This newsletter will be printed and disseminated in early April, 2013.</p> <p>Based on decision of local councils, NLC/S requested NCDD for an establishment of single national secretariat for both associations (regional and local association). This proposal was positively responded by NCDD dated 28 January 2013.</p> <p>The recruitment and placement of 12 provincial back stoppers was pending due to delaying of ACES project board meeting and management meeting of NLC/S and UNDP CO.</p>
<p>Number of services designed and delivered to councils</p> <p><u>Deliverable 8-13</u></p>	<p>1 service has been designed and delivered to councils</p>	<p>4 services are designed and delivered to councils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOR for COC consultancy developed and consultant recruited. NLC/S leaders attended NCDD/IP3 events. 	<p>The term of reference for COC consultancy drafted by PID specialist, currently, it is waiting for comments from international expert (Velibor), UNDP CO before advertisement.</p> <p>NLC/S management has regularly been attending events organized by NCDD-S. It is indicated that NLC/S is a strong partnership with NCDD and government and has been paying significant role in administrative reform and decentralization process in Cambodia.</p>
<p>ACES project has almost achieved the setting outputs as stipulated in work plan of first quarter, 2013, except the recruitment of consultants (SOP and COC) and staffs under NLC/S contract (IBO, HRO, FO and 12 Provincial back stopper).</p>				
<p>delivery exceeds plan</p>	<p>x delivery in line with plan</p>			<p>delivery below plan</p>

III. Project implementation challenges:

Project risks and actions:

#	Risks	Proposed Action
1	Limited resources leading to justify the project's scope.	- Intensify efforts to identify and mobilize additional donors. - Consideration of cutting down some outputs is needed.
2	The election of national assembly in 2013 and election of capital, provincial, district, municipality and khan councils in 2014 is slow down project momentum.	NLC/S and PAC/S should delegate responsibilities and tasks to secretariats and project staffs.

Key project issues and actions:

#	Issues	Proposed Action
1	Pending finalization of ACES AWPB due to a delaying of project board meeting and unavailable time arrangement for a meeting between NLC/S and UNDP.	Continued setting-time for a meeting between UNDP and NLC/S, then, fix time and date for ACES project board meeting.
2	Limited budget availability making difficult to plan with a full project activities and outputs.	A shapely decision in cutting down some activities or outputs is strongly required
3	The cost for establishment of the DMK-CS associations is very high compared to available budget of ACES project.	UNDP and NLC/S or ACES project board should trade off or prioritize between establishment of the DMK-CS associations and other activities.
4	International Governance Advisor is still not yet hired, so, the coordination, technical oversight and other roles is falling to ACES team, especially PID specialist to resume these roles while absence of international advisor.	- Intensify efforts to identify additional donors, - Start recruitment process of International Governance Advisor as soon as possible
5	The delay in staff recruitment due to pending finalization/approval of 2013 AWPB.	- 2013 AWPB's finalization is strongly and urgently required. - The ACES team is looking into delegating the responsibilities of the project with the hiring of more staffs such as human resource officer, finance officer and 12 provincial back stoppers in Q2.
6	A code of conduct for local councils is a new concept for Cambodia. Therefore, it is difficult to find supported people drafting the TOR for consultancy.	- PID specialist agreed to draft COC TOR, but, a support from international expert (Velibor, UNDP) is needed. - Reviewing of COC TOR by NLC/S and leaders of national working group or leaders of national association of capital and provincial councils is strongly required.

Donor Visibility:

Under current UNDP financial support, all ACES activities have been posting UNDP logo on backdrop and acknowledgement made. Representative of UNDP CO invited as honor guests and participants in all activities.

With strong expectation and hope receiving financial support from EU for ACES, the logo of EC also showed up.

40 USBs with UNDP logo and website address disseminated to NLC/S staffs and PAC/S secretaries and assistants during training course organized in March 2013.

Summary of Budget, January 1 to March 31, 2013 (Will be included by Sayon)

Annexes:

Annex 1: Financial report, January 1 to March 31, 2013

Annex 2: Three year CD plan (Matrix table)

Annex 3: Inventory list of training or workshop under ACES project