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CAMBODIA

PAINTING THE LANDSCAPE

A CROSS - CULTURAL EXPLORATION OF
PUBLIC - GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKING

1.1. Cambodia

The context of public participation and deliberation in Cambodia and China are very different. While both countries are geographically near to one another, the political, social and cultural context of how the public engages that emerged in project interviews suggests two very distinct examples of participation and deliberation in the broader Asian context. A significant reason for this difference is the countries' respective political systems and structures.

Finally, please note that all but one interview across the two countries are from the environmental sector; as such these interviews are not representative, rather they provide a glimpse at the practice of public participation/deliberation in Cambodia and China at the time of the interviews.

Cambodia, a country of 13 million people, is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary representative government. Efforts to better manage the country's natural resources are the result of two somewhat related factors: first, the depletion of government's ability at the local and provincial levels to effectively manage natural resources following its 30-year civil war, and second, the significant destruction of most farms in protected areas as a result of illegal activities. As the interviews demonstrate, these factors influenced how and why public participation took place within the country, particularly as they relate to the environmental sector, at the time the interviews were conducted.

Findings

Participants of this research were sourced from various organizations and positions in Cambodia including National Administrator, Local Administrator and NGO Leader.

Research Question 1

What is the nature of public participation/deliberation in government decision-making processes across different cultures?

Structural Shifts and Political Eras

The lack of government resources is represented by what a Cambodian national administrator characterizes at the local and provincial level as "still low capacity, both knowledge and skill." A Cambodian local administrator commented, that despite the existence of law that supports public participation at the local level, "we see that the level, the quality of participation from the public still very limited because of many factors related to the resources, related to the work load, et cetera, et cetera." This situation has led the government to partner with non-governmental organizations in order to bridge this gap.

According to the national administrator, "The government sector said 'Okay, we are the government, they have some advice to protect the natural resources, but we still have lack of field knowledge and some budget,' because we are a poor country and so sometimes it is hard for them to hire to manage their natural resources."

Structured Consultation

The NGO partner as a result has focused on creating structures and systems that engage the public. As one NGO leader said:

We make a public component of feedback on the legislation discussion at the parliament. Because in this country, the parliament members, they represent the party rather than their voters. The party has a strong power to influence the parliament member and that they will ignore the government and the interests of the community as a whole. So, this is a major issue in Cambodia and we would like to see the change in this legislative development process. Most law, legislation has been consulted or discussed with the public with a very limited public involvement.

However, achieving this goal has been fraught with challenges, according to this NGO leader. While ministry, commune and community "want this to happen," there is a "conflict of interest." This interviewee said that "because of the conflict of interest they do not want, they feel like they will lose their professional, they will lack power, and they do not want to see this happening in the commune council, play a role as the key body for rural development. But the community or the public, they want their commune council or district to be active."

Context of Public Participation

There are other competing interests, as well, as an NGO leader describes:

"...the government is very careful about what they are going to discuss. And sometimes if you try to discuss the key issues, sometimes they feel like you are a politician, so we again the development. So, it is very difficult because being a developing nation, the government tries to help development as much as possible. Therefore they want development rather than conservation and protection in the natural resource management here, so the interest is always biased with the development. So it is very difficult. So they want to see a short-term benefit and there is the society as a whole, they may consider a long-term benefit.

As "one of the main partners" with government, this NGO leader said his organization serves in an advisory role, working on policy legislation for natural resource management. In this role, the NGO leader said, "...we always suggest to them to involve community, involve the public as much as possible. We always try our best to set up the mechanisms that can involve communities, the public, the other stakeholders who are affected, or who might be affected by the legislation."

In this vein, "...we do have involvement in public consultation, workshop meetings, and even facilitate their hearings on those draft policy and legislation to the government. And even also we are working with the academy to involve the university

lecturers in the field, try to learn from the field and try to use their lecture opportunity to learn the field experiences with their classes.” Embedding a participatory culture in Cambodia is challenging, however, “because, in many cases, not only in Cambodia but in other countries in the region, they use the single approach of communication as the way to carry the public consultation, and that is not effective by our understanding,” said an NGO leader. “...we want to see the two-way approach of communication.”

For example, the NGO leader described how in the past, the use of radio considered “that people already understood and they will obey.” Today, technology has changed how Cambodians communicate, and perhaps as a result, the government seems “open to receive feedback from the public.” How that feedback is used by the government, though, “is still a question” to this person.

This NGO leader's organization holds “a very strong belief that public participation is the key to success in natural resource management in Cambodia.” This leader also said, “We have learned from centuries and decades of natural resource management not only from Cambodia but also from other countries in the region and the world that public participation is very important in the planning process, in the decision-making process. So, this is the key, the heart of the [organization name] philosophy and belief of the success of the implementation of the [organization name].”

However, not every approach or practice brought into Cambodia can be applied wholesale. This NGO leader said, “...we have to adapt those documents, those information and knowledge and experiences into the particular Cambodian context. So we cannot just do the translation and ask people to read or to learn from that. They have to incorporate how the document is relevant to Cambodia...”

There are two different kinds of communities in Cambodia, the NGO leader said – traditional or seasonal community and the permanent community. “One is the traditional community who migrated from their villages or from their province, come to the forest area or come to the protected area, live there for up to six months. Because they are using the off-farm opportunity to sell labor to other people that they can make extra income, or they go to the forest. That is one of the conditions of people here, to make extra income. So they can go to the forest, collect firewood. They can go to the forest collect non-timber forest products like medicinal plants, mushroom-raising, so on and so forth, even hunting. So, they are seasonal community but they are using natural resources from the protected areas. So, we have to involve them.”

This leader continued: “There has been a long debate about that but given the history of Cambodia, many Cambodians do not take any action because they will do what they have been told by their boss. That is the perspective and the concept that people still holding in their minds in Cambodia. But now, people have changed, but it is very limited. They are saying that they also want to be involved in the commune council meetings, in what is happening in the area, so they come to the commune council meetings. Sometimes the commune councils, they organize a meeting and people will come.”

Research Question 2

How do different cultures support or provide space for public participation/deliberation in government decision-making processes?

This research question sought to understand how different cultures – and in turn, different associated governments – provide support for or how they facilitate the practice of public participation among those they serve. Like all countries included in this study, Cambodian participatory or deliberative processes is related to how participation/deliberation is conceived and defined. We identified support for public participation/deliberation in the data through responses to interview questions concerning how such processes are defined, how people access such processes and the specific tools or practices that are used to support engagement.

Public participation design framework

This part of our research focused on how public participation is defined and the corresponding design framework

How is public participation/deliberation defined?

Cambodian interviewees reported support for one type of public participation and deliberative process, at the national level. This interviewee, a national administrator, noted the use of “a public forum between the government sector and local people” involving a national ministry and “a big delegation from Cambodia from the House of Representative of the UNATO, the representative of the national assembly,” said a national administrator. “They had the representative of the Advisor of the Prime Minister and some representative of other ministries like Ministry of [ministry name], [ministry name] and [ministry name] and we had some from the [department name] and some of the NGOs go to the workshop.”

The process was initiated by the Cambodian government and included government representatives as well as the Prime Minister. The intent was “to aid the community, forestry and community fishery to involve with the government sector to make about the natural resources,” said the national administrator. “A lot of times we see a lot of the policies of the government being change, and now some of the forestry law or fishery law, they have some reform up there and some what you call that still put on the responsibility on the local community involve with natural resource management.” This effort began by working in the country’s national park system. “We select a difficult local community. Because we are the pilot project, we just want to do this,” said the administrator.

Concept of Public Participation

Cambodian interviewees provided a variety of conceptual definitions of public participation and deliberation that support the practice. One theme was that of **equality and responsibility**. A national administrator said, “...for me, the public participation that

means that both local people, government sector they have equality wise and equality they have the responsibility to be something.”

This corresponds to an understanding of public participation and deliberation processes as **co-management** at the local and provincial levels: “For me, I see that in Cambodia context still the same, public participation and co-management. But most of the people, they like maybe public participation rather than the word ‘co-management,’” said the national administrator. However, this official further stated “Like co-management, when we see the management, we just refer to more power in management, just referred about the power to manage something, to make decisions or something. But if we use the word public participation like maybe very lightly, very friendly” – as our interviewer Beth Gilfillan observed, the result is that “the words have the same meaning but co-management is more about power, and so usually people prefer to talk about public participation because it sounds much more friendly.”

This interviewee also noted, “I do not know if we have any more words about that but I think most people use a lot the word public participation like, for example, in the government sector, okay, they want a local community involved with the resource management, they went to the public sector to do this and that, so this is more like participation, I did not so much that people use the word “co-management” or something.”

Having a voice was also desirable. “...local people should have a voice to send to the government sector,” said a national administrator. This interviewee also viewed **empowerment** as an important conception of public participation and deliberation. “And I think that participation that for me we should -- how more to empower local people especially for the poor and the powerless people to have more chance to involve with the decision-making or to involve with some idea of development planning or something.”

A local administrator described the importance of **impact** in support of the practice. “The ‘public participation’ to me means that how people, how citizens can involved in the activity or any decision on a law related to -- with affecting to their living standard or their lives or something. Okay,” said this interviewee. “Their ability to participate in the decision-making process, to make a really great effect to the living of people - to me, it means that, public participation.” Moreover, it includes “activity, including policy, including guideline[s].”

These responses contrasted with the perspective of an NGO leader who characterized such processes as **differing based on differing contexts**. “For me, as well as for the Cambodian context as a whole, the term “public participation,” it means vary from place to place, from institution to institution, from individual to individual, and from a particular field of focus,” this interviewee said. “It varies from place to place.”

Public participation is defined “as the involvement of stakeholders to contribute to their planning development process,” this person later said, “but the challenge in defining this

term is that what might it mean in practice because you can involve someone in the discussion process, you can involve someone in the planning development process, but their comments, their voice, will not be considered and will not be heard in the decision-making process. And that is the big challenge in our work at the moment.”

The NGO leader also understood public participation as **“a discussion process.”** In this way, “It is a process to involve various stakeholders, to involve related concerns of stakeholders in the planning process to make decision-making.”

Common Terms

In Cambodia, the common terminology for public participation varies slightly. One national administrator described it as “participatory management” when describing the management of mangrove resources. He explained how it involves “mostly the government sector and local people.” By contrast, a Cambodian NGO leader used the term “co-management” as a means for achieving natural resource planning goals, explaining that it refers “to a kind of a discussion, negotiation process that involves CBOs [community-based organizations] and other stakeholders.”

Despite the varying phrases, “the term “participation” is well known in the Cambodian society, in the Cambodian context,” said an NGO leader. “When we use participation, people already get the message that ok, that will involve the private sector, it will involve community representatives, communities, the government side... so when you use the term “participation,” it is already known that there will be at least three key stakeholders included. Then when you come to details, like if you do the natural resource management, if you do park management, if you do EIA, Environmental Impact Assessment consultation, and then there will be other areas or terms to be used.”

Common terms for public participation and deliberation used in Cambodia included co-management, public participation, public forum, participatory management that involves “mostly the government sector and local people” (national administrator) as well as involvement, public involvement and public participation (local administrator). [However, it also should be noted that the terms co-management and participatory resource management are used in other countries as well and as such are not unique to Cambodia.]

The NGO leader commented particularly about the use of the term “co-management”: “...the term you used, ‘co-management’ as our main focus for the organization, we are not very sure yet ourselves whether we are co-management-driven or focused, but what we believe from the organization’s point of view, to better resource management is the participatory management approach. So whether or not ‘co-management’ is the term that we use; we are not using the term co-management. But we do use the term ‘participatory resource management.’”

This individual also said, in his respective organization, they “refer to community-based resource approach, community-based approach, or sometimes we use participatory

resource management approach. But we do have a co-management project on indigenous issues”.

Moreover, “To us and to many Cambodians, these terms are considered as English terms. So we decided to work on the English terms to interpret into the Khmer context, to the Cambodian language context. So it’s no better off in terms of terminology to translate it into the local language. Therefore, we do one translation for all of these three terms into Khmer. However, we do understand, when we are talking about co-management, we refer to a kind of a discussion, negotiation process that involves CBOs and other stakeholders.” This individual also said:

In the last five years, we used community-based resource management, and then we spell out into details like community forestry, community fisheries, participatory land use planning, community protected area development and participatory community management of protected area; so these are the terms we used in the last five years when we are talking about community involved in natural resource management. But now, it seems like we try to work our way out a little bit to be more specific; when people are talking about community management of the protected area, then they say that it is better we use the term “co-management” as the term that -- the government likes this term also. But, then, when we talk about the non-protected area that community involved in resource management, they better use the “community-based resource management,” or they use “community forestry.”

...The term “participation” is well known in the Cambodian society, in the Cambodian context. When we use participation, people already get the message that ok, that will involve the private sector, it will involve community representatives, communities, the government side... so when you use the term “participation,” it is already known that there will be at least three key stakeholders included. Then when you come to details, like if you do the natural resource management, if you do park management, if you do EIA, Environmental Impact Assessment consultation, and then there will be other areas or terms to be used.

Co-management and participatory resource management were two terms that were unique to Cambodia in particular. Co-management seems more accepted at the local and provincial levels than nationally.

Justifications and traditional understanding of public participation

Several justifications were offered in support of public participation and deliberative processes. These included:

- **Empowerment.** “...I think that participation that for me we should -- how more to empower local people especially for the poor and the powerless people to have more chance to involve with the decision-making or to involve with some idea of development planning or something,” said a national administrator.

- **Policy making.** “For example, we held the commune-planning process. That is also activity, both activity and also become a guideline, the same, I think. Because they conduct activities to get a guideline or policy,” said a local administrator.
- **Sustainability of development and democracy.** “Simply, the reason behind is that the -- actually, the first we call -- we can say that it is democratic process in Cambodia, we call,” said a local administrator. “And then also we want to reach our objective, we call “sustainability of development.” Because if we are not involved, related to public participation, mean that our decision is not strong enough. For example, the commune councillor or member decision-making is not strong enough, we are not sure whether their decision is meant to -- can answer to the question or the problem faced by people, actually. So, actually, I can say that.”
- **Political accountability or satisfaction.** “Public participation related to development sustainability through, for example, I can say -- for example, if most people decide to build one road, actually, to build a main road that can -- for the interest of many people in the village or commune,” said a local administrator. “I mean that people feel very satisfied with the project and they will continue to maintain, to repair it, to use it in an effective way.” Here, the intent is to demonstrate satisfaction as a result of involvement in the decision making process.
- **Ownership.** “...we call it ‘ownership’, to build ownership, because without ownership we will not have any sustainability,” said a local administrator.

Types of public participation/deliberative processes

Public participation takes place in different instances, interviewees reported. At the local level, there is a **commune-level subcommittee**. According to a local administrator, “The subcommittee does not understand really well, so the villagers can bring in any problem and with that some, let us say a supporting idea, why do they think their problem is really important to their lives.” Generally, this individual said, the public is involved in government planning as well as finance or budgeting. The processes used are similar across all villages and communes.

This administrator said that “One of the things the commune councillor is required to consult with villagers, is that -- because at the communal level - you understand already because at the communal level we have like a similar - okay, we call that - we have two bodies. The first one is legislative body and the second one with what we call like the government, the body to implement the decision-making.”

The local administrator also described the use of what is termed “local contribution money.” “They have to issue an announcement or instruction to people that okay, now the commune decided to cut like 2,000 riel from each family,” said this interviewee. “So they decide it, but before they decided to issue the announcement, inform is sent to the villages. They have to draft decision-making to instruct them to people and speak on their information both”.

Civil society appears to have a greater degree of involvement as compared to individual citizens. “But however, because civil society work closely with public people. So somehow, they view their common - their suggestion also can represent the view of public people also,” said the local administrator. “And sometimes before focus to big meeting with - in conference to consult draft law, something like that, NGO, they also may contact with the people in public. For example, related to students, also related to farmer or something like that.”

At the national level, sometimes **individuals are also consulted prior to the drafting of legislation by the central government.** “...I think because many laws, because the national assembly, they try to adopt, try to enact related to law. So I have been informed from other people that before, during the draft of law, they have to consult with the people, with civil society also,” a local administrator said.

An NGO leader detailed **processes that seek to create covenants** as part of involving Cambodians in decision-making processes at the national level. “So then, there will be a different group of stakeholders that they consider. Like Step A , they are talking about involving all the private sector; and then Step B, they involve all the NGO’s who are concerned with conservation, and then the community living in and around protected areas and then the general public, and then the government officers. So they have four or five different steps and stakeholders they have identified. And then they agree to a point that all stakeholders say ‘I like it,’ to come to make a covenant on this particular thing.” This process is voluntary, the NGO leader emphasized: “We are not a membership, like you are invited, but based on your voluntary commitment; if you want to come it is okay. If you do not want, it is okay.”

These efforts are initiated by the central government with support from the NGO. “Like I said it is a government project,” said the NGO leader. “The government has to initiate these ideas and they have to implement. Because if they do not involve the community, the public will complain. So in some areas it is mandatory, you have to do, and some areas it is voluntary. So it depends, you know?”

Expectations

Different expectations for public participation emerged. The national administrator interviewed explained that “for example, in some of the natural resource management, the local people should have a voice to send to the government sector in terms of the protection, in terms of conservation or in terms of developing something.” While he saw those in power in the central government oriented towards control, this individual observed that “Not so much [emphasis is placed on] how to release the powerless, like the public participation should have,” this official said. “We need to share the idea among each other.”

This official also noted that he had learned that there is value in “learning by doing.” “If they provide for both the government sector and local people to do by learning by doing,

maybe they have a lot of chance to improve like power, skill, responsibilities, like that.” As a result, “the policy of the Ministry of [ministry name] it is very strong about the public participation and co-management in terms of natural resource management.”

At the local level, “the expectation is that the first one is related to the public service a step closer to the citizen, the people, public people the first,” said the local administrator. “Quality service provide it effectively to villagers. This is the one. The second one, people or public people have greater opportunity to make decision, to involve in decision making with really effective to their daily lives. Or their future lives. This is two expectation. Another one is okay maybe the same. Corruption, reduced corruption level also, the expectation. By involving public people mean that they can - they have more opportunity to speak out, to spell out, mean that they can give the regionalisation or something like that.”

The role or value of civic participation was also echoed by the NGO leader. “Because this is the fundamental, the core, the heart of the [organization name]; we do hold a very strong belief that public participation is the key to success in natural resource management in Cambodia,” this individual said. “We have learned from centuries and decades of natural resource management not only from Cambodia but also from other countries in the region and the world that public participation is very important in the planning process, in the decision-making process. So, this is the key, the heart of the [organization name] philosophy and belief of the success of the implementation of the [organization name].”

Regularity/frequency

Apart from the voluntary engagement that the NGO leader described earlier, where different types of stakeholders come together at one place and time, a national administrator explained that at the national level, they regularly host “a lot of workshops and training about how to manage the resources” for local governments. At the local level, the local administrator interviewed said that public participation in the commune investment planning process occurs annually in each village.

How people access participatory processes

How access to public participation is made possible depends on who initiates the process.

[Editor's Note: The categories to which these strategies/techniques have been assigned were made by the project team (and not by interviewees) as one means for organizing what appear to be like activities together.]

Meetings, Committees and Community Dialogue – Face to Face

Sometimes public participation occurs **through national initiatives**. A national official said that the public’s role “is very important for Cambodia context,” for projects established at the national or national level for mangrove protection in the country’s national parks. “That time, our project started in what we call community protected

areas and we formed what we call the village management committee. The village management committee is representative of the whole community and worked with the government sector of the project to manage the mangrove resources.” This national official described how he used outreach to provincial and local governments to facilitate participation:

And this that time, when I start go to that area where to the start and beginning of the project, we just interviewed with other provincial governor or provincial government in [community name] and with some local people by just thinking about the resource management, that more local people would say ‘Okay.’ The management of the natural resources is depend on the government sector.

Participation occurs at meetings but now, “especially when the local people have some issues, now they can contact by phone or lcom” – lcom’s are a radio-like device used “to communicate.” They are valuable for helping “to explain the program activities like to solve about the fishery conflict, to solve about some illegal activity and more on the government sector that they have more about these things,” said the national administrator.

At the commune or local level, citizens play a more active role in establishing access through the **commune planning process**. “The commune planning process, actually, mainly because the commune councillor elected by local voters, local citizens. So the commune councillor are supposed to serve to the best degree to the voter. Okay? So therefore, the commune councillor to serve their community perfectly means that the commune councillor has to consider about development activity in their own commune,” explained a local administrator.

Required by law, each commune must “develop their own development plan we call ‘commune development plan’ and ‘commune investment program,’” said the local administrator. “The first we have a five-year development plan, long term development plan, and a second one we call a ‘commune rolling plan.’ So in the process of commune planning, we involve the commune. The commune involve all villager, especially to analyze problems. One aspect is problem identification. What the problem? What issue that faced by villagers? What their suggestion to improve in terms of, let’s say, to improve the welfare of the village, actually.” Similarly, the local administrator said, “related to the budget because a certain amount of budget allocated from central government to the commune. So the commune councillors are obligated to plan their budgets annually, how they will spend their own money to serve the community, to serve the administrative operation, et cetera. So actually they also have to consult with the people at the village level.” Citizens have access “from the project preparation, implementation and also related to when the project is due by people,” said the local administrator. All the three main stage require the village to be involved.” Citizens are involved in decision-making, “especially during the project preparation. They have to decide what the project size, whether they have to contribute their own land or not, how well the project affects their living standard, or something like that. So actually, they are entitled to contribute to the decision-making process.”

“We have problem identification; we have another one related to strategic planning; we have project preparation, and we have other also related to approval process” said the local administrator. “So, actually the villager is involved mostly in the process through -- that they can – at the first step that we call problem identification. We can say a consultation process.”

The commune council can refer the issue back to the planning and budget committee. “They already analyze the problem because they give the existing data,” said the local administrator. “For example, how many cow you have, how many people that raise pig in their village. So they already have the data and they analyze. After they analyze at the commune level, they took the problem, the issue to the village level. Actually, they conduct meeting at village level.” Also, decisions made by commune councillors may positively or negatively affect villagers. “So the commune councillor can get feedback from villager,” the local administrator stated. “If some people say that it is not good or something like that, the commune councillor has to consider again - appropriate to do it or not.” Villagers who are involved in the development planning process “just give ideas,” said the local administrator. “They give the idea what the problem - they just give the idea on what a problem, what is the cause of the problem, what is the best solution to solve problems to the commune councillor and commune councillor later on consolidate it at the people from the village to make a final decision.”

Some commune laws dictate public participation, while in other instances public participation is required by guidelines that are not legal in nature. The commune councillor usually is responsible for the “co-facilitation” and coordination of the public process. Commune project management committees also provide support. After commune-level meetings, meetings are held “in all villages of the commune” which are arranged by the subcommittee and its members. Meetings are sometimes held in special places. “One place, we have pagoda” said the local administrator. “Another one, sometimes they have like a community hall. Some NGO constructed a community hall, the place where literacy class is conducted, so they actually conduct meeting in that place.”

At these meetings, first, “the representative from subcommittee makes a presentation, explains the objectives, the expected output after the meeting and explain the process,” the local administrator said. “And then, they explain the problem, the problem already discussed, identified at the commune level, they present to the villager who is involved in the meeting. So afterwards, people are divided into two different groups – gender – women’s group and men’s group, different separate groups, so they can discuss in different groups what the problem really exists in their commune, in their village or not. If it is not existing, they can delete it. But what other new problem that facing in their village so they can bring in. Later on, they consolidate it, the two groups consolidate into one, for example, one problem, okay. And then they prioritize the problem. Actually, they prioritize - for example, the road construction is the first top priority. Building a school is the second top priority, or something like that.”

There are also participation guidelines – “more strict guidelines” at the village level. “For example, if in the guidelines it said that, for example, they said that 60 percent, over 60 percent of family representatives will attend village meeting. So there should be punishment to commune councillor or sub-committee that, okay, you have to do it. It is not enough to the standard, you could not conduct a meeting or something like that.” After the village-level meeting, if the villagers “agree that the problem is their own problem, the subcommittee takes that to the commune level and reprioritize again. Because they bring results from all the village so they consolidate into one - for example, one list.”

These myriad village findings are consolidated in a “process we call ‘district integration workshop.’” A district integration workshop “means that the commune - all commune representatives bring the priority investment project all together at the district level. And then NGO international, local NGO, line department and other potential donor, they meet each other at the district level.” The main purpose of this workshop “is to make sure that-- to integrate the work plan at the commune level and line department and to integrate altogether to make sure that they correspond to each other. For example, maybe commune top priority is to build road, to conduct agricultural training activity. So, meaning that they can, that line department and NGO can support. They give the fund - - actually, raising fund, fund-raising.”

During the workshop, “the public give their feedback - more often they can talk directly to a commune councillor, their first option. The second option is that they can attend commune councillor monthly meeting. People also can attend to observe and to give some suggestion or something like that. This is actually -- mostly, this part is -- I mean, that the result is under the evaluation also. It is not good to implement this. And actually it is provided in guideline but actually not many people provide suggestion.” The consolidation workshop process “is similar to commune planning process. It is similar. With the commune planning and budgeting committee, they draft it at the commune level and then they conduct meeting at village level to listen to the feedback from villagers about the -- if they have any suggestion related to the annual budget. It is similar. And then there is commune councillor approve officially.”

Both Meetings, Committees and Community Dialogue – Face to Face and Community Building and Partnerships

An NGO leader described the role that his organization plays at the national level in providing access to **public processes as part of policy making**. “We are one of the main partners of the government organization. So, we have been asked with other organizations to help them in their policy legislation from Malaysia on natural resource management. So, we give the opportunity to play an advisory role on those legislation developments for the Malaysian process. So we always suggest to them to involve community, involve the public as much as possible. We always try our best to set up the mechanisms that can involve communities, the public, the other stakeholders who are affected, or who might be affected by the legislation.”

This NGO has “involvement in public consultation, workshop meetings, and even facilitate their hearings on those draft policy and legislation to the government. And even also we are working with the academy to involve the university lecturers in the field, try to learn from the field and try to use their lecture opportunity to learn the field experiences with their classes.” The NGO has “identified many approaches to involve the stakeholders” in Cambodia, this official said. These include using two-way radios “as the key mechanism, as a strategy to announce their projects to involve people.” These radios allow for the distribution and the collection of information. “Not only the one side giving information to the other, but also, there should be a mechanism that the stakeholder that they will access the information but also they should also be able to make their concerns or their comments back to their proponents,” the NGO leader explained. Among the other mechanisms used include radio and television media. “Media and also people use the meetings and workshops as the mechanism to consult people.”

Information Sharing

Access is generally not electronic, as internet use is still emerging in Cambodia: “We use the internet for the purpose of the stakeholder and the public to not necessarily meet because not many stakeholders and the public have access to the internet,” the NGO leader said. “Especially if you are going out about 20 or 15 kilometers from Phnom Penh you will see it is a very different Cambodia. So the internet is still not accessible in many areas. That is number one. Number two, it is very expensive so people will not afford to do the internet.”

Newspapers are popular and effective, although literacy is an issue. “Many projects, many organizations use the local newspapers and radios. There is also television; it is a way to go. But we have to be aware that there is some percentage of people who are illiterate. Reading and writing are still a problem in many rural areas, so we have to consider that. Television is a more appropriate tool of getting information and getting people concerned.”

There are also **fears of submitting comments in writing**. “We do try, we did try to use different approaches to collect the public comments, but, so far, given the fear of the public in some particular areas, it is very sensitive,” the NGO leader said. “They will not provide you the comment in writing because they feel very afraid that their comments will be very critical so they fear about their security. But sometimes they use newspapers to share their worries. So they use other names. They can put under an unidentified name of a person or something like that. Like the general comment by the public section of the newspaper, so they can use that as a way to express their ideas. I have got some cases; written comments are working.”

Other

Generally, there is an understanding that **engagement must be customized**. In addition, “...we have learned from the [organization name], we have developed a communication strategy and we have learned that different people have different ways to learn,” the NGO leader said. “Some people, they learn the best from reading, some

people they learned the best from listening, and some people they do learn a lot from reading, from visiting the sites, from going to the workshop and meeting, and so on and so forth. So in the past, there is only one way. If the government lets go for the radio reading and then they will go for the radio reading, but they don't think that some people, they do not have radios, and so they don't really inform, they are not informed about what is going on. So then at the end, they say 'No, I am not happy,' or, 'I don't agree with the plans you made with the project,' and so on and so forth."

"And also now they try to open, even from the government side, they try to open to receive feedback from the public. But how might they come to serve the public opinion is still a question," the NGO leader said. The interest in serving public opinion "depends on the project and it depends on the..., because there is no requirement by law so you can do whatever you want and it will depend on your resources."

"The natural resource management is the key area in Cambodia that the public would like to be involved with, and they are very concerned about this because people are heavily relying on natural resources for generations and they can be -- they survive on those natural resources, so they are very worried about that so they want to participate in the process," the NGO leader said. "But also now the people with the NGOs and development partners, now support, now people and the public as a whole, they are also aware about their local administration, so they also would like to be involved in the decision-making process and planning process in their particular area of development administration," meaning commune councils.

The public's involvement "varies from project to project, organization to organization," said the NGO leader. "But, basically, we are still in a 1955 kind of situation. We are still using very typical, like announcements, and then share with your concerned partners, the recent document. That is one thing. But now we are also using the television, radios as the way to communicate, for communication. But also we try to use the internet to share information. But it is still a very low number in terms of response. Still very low numbers in response."

Who is included and excluded

Interviewees identified several precursors to participation that enabled inclusion, as well as others that prevented people from participating. Who is included in Cambodian participatory processes varies according to the level of government.

Who is included

In one national-level project, **local people** are involved in working with government to protect mangrove forests, according to a national administrator. This effort was developed following the country's 30-year civil war. "But it took a lot of years like two or three years how to learn that people could come work together," said the national administrator. "After two to three years, I can see a lot of positive change between the perception between the government sector and local people." This official described one example.

Like our project is a very small project, only just have some, only maybe 10 team members but we are very work very hard to our level of the sector. I can divide to three levels in Cambodia context. One, the team works very, very closely with the local community, and second involved with what we call provincial level, the provincial level.” At the provincial level, “Both line department and the governor in the provincial level. And the national level, we just select only just involve with like from the Ministry of [ministry name] and Ministry of [ministry name], [ministry name] and [ministry name] some of the times because we do not have enough time to spend more time with the national level, but we have convened with the national level during the big conference on national workshop or something.”

This administrator continued, “So here we have around 24 villages. We work with all the villages in protected areas, 24, around 10,000 people. We spend more time with the selected village. We get like four villages that are very difficult to work with because you have the people like they call the charcoal producers, dynamite fisher, some who work the labor for the logging company or something. So we just train all these people and like how these people become aware of their natural resource management, how to involve with the protection.”

A local administrator described how his locality works externally with others on co-management or public participation efforts. “We have one strategy we call ‘partnership strategy’ to mean that we communicate with **local NGOs, civil society** to make sure that they understand clearly the main objective of our program, and also to make sure that they can contribute, actually,” said the local administrator. “And also we work with **commune councillor**. Indirectly, I work with commune councillor. I work with the **provincial government counterpart** and then they can continue to work with commune councillor. Sometimes I also work directly -- for example, we want to understand clearly about a process, about the effect they make, about the effect of something they want to decide, so I also need to consult directly to commune councillor.” At the local level, this administrator reported that “it is usually the provincial-level government that initiates public processes.”

The local administrator described his role. “I think become mediator or we can say only facilitator/coordinator or something like that to assist commune councillor. So, at the commune level, actually, they have a subcommittee. Under that sub-committee in commune council, we have a sub-committee. So the sub-committee composed of different people, **commune councillors, village chief or something like that.**” Others involved include “...**villager and also some representatives of beneficiary.** We call it beneficiary representative involved in the process.” In addition, “Some of commune councillor, village chiefs and also representatives from -- we call **village development committee.** Before, many civil society, many local, international NGO conducted the activity. So they support it, the establishment of village development committee. So in the subcommittee, also involved from the representative of village development committee also.”

Finally, there is also the involvement of a “monitoring and evaluation focal person” and of notable villagers: “...we have also other we call **influential villager**, for example. There are some people that respect -- many villager respected in the village, so actually they are involved with the public participation also.” Such processes are open to the public although the composition of the committee is “more selective.” The local administrator estimated “actually around 35 to 40 percent of family representatives involved with the process,” although “Actually, in the guideline, the instruction guideline requires about over 60 percent of representatives from family.” Access to the process at the local level “...is quite average; not difficult, not easy,” said the local administrator. “I am saying that because they can involve in process; for example, related to commune planning, very easy. They can involve easily but the result maybe different from one situation to another.”

At the national level, an NGO leader described how his organization engages three main stakeholders – “**the government, the non-governmental organizations, and the community-based organizations.**” At the government level, he identified several ministries whose work relates to natural resource management that the organization engages. “So we are a bridge to connect at least three key partners together in natural resource management in Cambodia.”

According to the NGO leader, the level of engagement of these stakeholders is quite active. “Recently, we do the field research using principles, criteria, and indicators of the community forestry project in one of the programs in Cambodia. We are using these principles, criteria, and indicators to consult different groups of people, government, community members, and NGOs. So we do involve and engage them into the discussions and even in the writing up.”

Who specifically is involved in public processes outside of government that are established as part of natural resource management efforts varies. “It depends on the project that we are working on,” said the NGO leader. “Let us say for the community participation area guideline development, the [department name] at the Ministry of [ministry name], they are the decision body that help to make the decision who they should involve. But we always approach them to involve those people. So, they are the decision makers but we advise them that there should be another group of people, that they have to consider.” Sometimes the private sector and other NGOs may also be involved, as well as permanent or seasonal communities, as well as “...the most affected by the research or by any kind of development process. So we do involve also **the marginalized groups of people into the process, government offices, including the local administration.**”

Who is excluded

Likewise, who is excluded from public processes depends on a range of conditions:

- **Exclusion based on a lack of understanding.** “I think it is a bit difficult at the moment because it is really related to what the understanding of the people. Some people they do not understand really well what the benefit to them

or not -- it depends on the reason a project implemented each year,” explained a local administrator.

- **Process-based exclusions.** Other processes are less transparent, this official further stated. “So in the bidding meeting, also involved with the public also. But it is not so publicly -- only involved with the representative from beneficiary, for example. They are to construct, for example, the irrigation system, something like that. So representative from the beneficiary involved with the bidding meeting.” In such a meeting, “...they can invite private sector to bid their projects. However, the representative from the beneficiary only observe, meaning have a chance to observe what the bidding meeting conducted transparently or not.”
- **Difference between stated policy and what takes place.** “I think in the policy, they are required to involve with different groups of people,” said a local administrator. “For example, vulnerable group, handicapped people, religious entity or something like that. But actually implementation, the participation is limited.”
- **Exclusion based on timing or work conflicts.** Minority groups often are excluded, said the local administrator. “For example, only related to vulnerable group, I think, yes,” said this individual. “Because, for example, very poor people, they are more often work at the rice field because of the planning process and the commune conducted during the cultivation season, farming season. So yes, they go to the field because they cannot stop. They go to work for other people for their own living every day.”
- **Self-exclusion.** “...richer people also do not participate actively because they do not care much about what commune councillors are doing because they can get more profit by concentrating on their own daily business,” stated a local administrator. “So they do not care much about it.”

Barriers to participation

Interviewees identified several barriers to participation:

- **Bias against local people.** “...some of the government people they said, ‘Oh, local people did not have knowledge and skill to do the management,’ so sometimes we still have some different perceptions between government sector wants to talk to community involvement with natural resource management but some need government support,” said a national administrator.
- **Lack of support by central government.** “I think from my understanding in provincial and local level is more aware in terms of participation, in terms of co-management, in terms of how to do something. But for me, I feel in the national level it is a little bit hard,” said a national administrator. This individual also said, “something that I think in national level most is still a top-down approach, not so much about the sharing, power sharing. If you hold more power, like I tell now that in policy, the legal chamber of the country that the government supported by the local participation too but it is still limited. The grassroots people do not have enough rights. They have some rights but not enough, then they have limited rights to do something.”

- **Historic top-down perspective and bias.** “More of the people do not understand, but in Cambodia, co-management is still on the process of learning and it is a learning process because if we look about the history of Cambodia, we still allowed to use a top-down approach and we still are in the colony of France,” said a national administrator. People in “high position or big position always right while low position and low power always wrong,” said the national administrator. This official also observed that skills of lower-level administrators are inadequate. “We still are just a baby because like most of the upper level not so much strong belief about the low level how they can do it. It is true, because I work like ten years or more experience in the local level. I do it because sometimes some hard for them too in terms of skill, knowledge, because when our project provide a lot of knowledge and skill on the natural resource management but more of the local people, both provincial and local community they have some limited knowledge to do something.” An NGO leader concurred:

There has been a long debate about that but given the history of Cambodia, many Cambodians do not take any action because they will do what they have been told by their boss. That is the perspective and the concept that people still holding in their minds in Cambodia. But now, people have changed, but it is very limited. They are saying that they also want to be involved in the commune council meetings, in what is happening in the area, so they come to the commune council meetings. Sometimes the commune councils, they organize a meeting and people will come.
- **Capacity and skill limitations following civil war.** “...after the Khmer Rouge, after the 30 years of civil war, the human resources is very low. It is only between the rural community and provincial level. So sometimes, some people that have obligation to manage something, they have limited skill and knowledge to do something. So sometimes the national level people, they worry about if they share more role or responsibility to the local level maybe they do wrong. Maybe they are not correct. Maybe the fisher not correct,” said the national administrator. Further, the role of NGOs complicates the cultivation of Cambodian capacity, this person said. “So, because like you said in Cambodia, because some of the development work is still supported by the outside donor and for me I feel because some project still like they want to do a lot about the co-management or public participation, but for me I feel they are just in the paper or theory. Because they still set up from their own program, they are still set up by the experts or something and try to do the follow-up on the field, the schedule, or time or planning. But most of the field actor, they do not learn so much because they just follow how to complete about their own -- they are learning from the program or from the project or something. So [cross talking] are the gap between practice and theory is still a big gap on that.”
- **Lack of success to show for public involvement.** “How you manage the natural resources and if there were only government side, they spend a lot of money, they spend a lot of time but the protection is not success,” said the national administrator. A local administrator concurred.

- **Competing priorities.** “The first one, the willingness of commune councillor to promote -- to reinforce the law or the guideline because we have -- let's say commune councillors have many things to cope with, follow the deadline,” said a local administrator. “They have many things to do, so some -- more often they do not know what to prioritize their activity in their commune. Okay, this is the first factor. The second one is also related to the villagers themselves.”
- **Lack of understanding about the purpose of public involvement.** “The villagers, they are also not -- they do not understand why related to the participation,” said the local administrator. “Maybe, because in the Cambodia context is that before we had a Communist government, so people cannot be involved in any decision-making process. People have to obey the rules, the guidelines provided by the central government. So people related to the village, they do not believe very much to the government. So this is one factor.”
- **Time constraints and relatedly, the length of time for p2 processes,** according to the local administrator.
- **Lack of a capacity to understand citizen rights and fairness.** “What I'm saying is related to the knowledge, the capacity or understanding to their rights, to the role of local government, and also related to the prior experience also. The prior experience, the fair -- feel fair or something like that,” said the local administrator. This interviewee also said, “Their rights because villagers have the right to ask, for example, other people to help. So the understanding about their rights, about the government's role to be accountable to public people. That is the main, yes.” In addition, this interviewee identified a lack of an understanding of the advantage of public participation.
- **Lack of funds to support p2.** “Resource is another challenge because the more the commune councillors are trying to balance different people needs, the more resource, the more money they need to consider. This is one challenge,” said the local administrator.
- **Literacy,** according to an NGO leader.
- **Lack of perceived prevalence of p2 processes outside of resource management.** “Another thing is that the public should be involved in their planning process, their planning development plan in their areas and the budget and their information about the effect to health care, education, and so on and so forth,” said an NGO leader. “But these sectors are not widely shared or consulted with the public at the moment.”
- **Powerful interests.** “For example if it is in best interest of the public but also interest into a powerful politician in the area,” then civic participation is successful, said the NGO leader. “And it goes very well, that government institution, but sometimes it is not the case because the politician is also involved in that particular project and then it interrupts their interest; the public may not be very powerful in that sense.”
- **Acclimation to a governance approach focused on mutual responsibility.** The national administrator interviewed explained how this transition can be a potential barrier to involvement because it is a shift in the role that citizens play:

For example, like now in forestry law or fishery law, fishery sub-decree or forestry sub-decree, some of the people they have a role, a responsibility to involve with the fishery management and forestry management but they want the local people to stop illegal fishing or something, they need to cooperation with the fishery sector. They cannot be alone. They need to have some permission from the fishery sector or forestry sector first to stop illegal fishing or the fine or something. So this time I learned some of the difficult parts like, for example, I go to fishing, and I'm a fisher and I go to fishing and I see some illegal fishing. I cannot stop them. I need to report to the fishery agency they come with me to stop all these people. But if I go to report to the fishery sector, maybe all the people are gone. But if I catch without permission, then sometimes we have some violent something and they say I'm wrong because in the law they did not have enough rights for the local people to make or to catch illegal fishing or make findings on the illegal activities. And some of the government people they say okay, this is the role of the government, not the local people. But I feel if we didn't clear to give the right and the responsibility to the local people to management of the resources, natural resources, maybe still the natural resources will decline because we should have more role or responsibility or right to track these people through the powerless people to have some power, to have some right to do something, a little bit.

Best Practices

Best practices identified by the three interviewees included:

- **An emphasis on quality and influence.** “The process, I think, is the same but, however, one quality really affect to the quality of public participation is that whether we build -- at what level that we build rapport, build relationship with the public people,” said the local administrator. Likewise, this individual said the influence of public participation was also important.
- **Building trust.** “Build confidence, build the village or something like that. The more we can build the trust from people, the more participation they involve in the public,” said the local administrator.
- **Good cooperation.** “At the provincial level, there should be a good cooperation, a good coordination among different stakeholders to be careful in conducting activities involving the commune councillors,” said the local administrator.
- **Equal opportunity for involvement and expression of concerns.** “The two-way approach, we see that it can effectively motivate people to engage in the process and what we mean is like, we share our concerns,” said the NGO leader. “Let us say, in the other proponents we can propose what are our interests and what are our concerns and what we are going to do over project A, B, and C and so on. And then, there will be the opportunity for the stakeholder to also react to our interests, to our concerns, and to our future plans. And then there should be the incorporation between the two parties, and everyone should

hold their equal opportunity of expressing the ideas and the opportunity to involve in the planning and decision-making process.”

However, the NGO leader noted, equal opportunity in this way “is a very theoretical, and sometimes it is not successful because it is still new and being a government officer, they tend to be the most knowledgeable in the area and they do not want to listen to the other stakeholders. But then that causes the big problem at the end.”

Research Question 3

What positive and negative outcomes occur as a result of public participation/deliberation in government decision-making processes?

This question sought to examine the results of participatory or deliberative processes and associated accountability mechanisms. The goal was to isolate what interviewees and their respective organizations saw as beneficial and also not beneficial as a byproduct of such efforts. The ethical dimension of engagement was also considered.

Several outcomes of public participation identified by Cambodian interviews include:

- **Laws and guidelines** (local administrator)
- **Community improvements** (local administrator)
- **Consideration of people’s needs by commune councillors** as a “critical and apparent impact” (local administrator)
- **Fear on the part of the public.** According to an NGO leader, “...so far, given the fear of the public in some particular areas, it is very sensitive. They will not provide you the comment in writing because they feel very afraid that their comments will be very critical so they fear about their security. But sometimes they use newspapers to share their worries. So they use other names. They can put under an unidentified name of a person or something like that. Like the general comment by the public section of the newspaper, so they can use that as a way to express their ideas.”
- **Greater awareness of opportunities to participate.** For example, the central government may “produce movie or something like that related to public participation, the importance, the advantage of that,” said a local administrator. “And then they televise over the country is one.”
- **Cooperative efforts with NGOs.** “They sign contract they cooperate with NGO, international NGO to conduct, for example, conduct forum for meeting between national parliamentary members with voters,” said a local administrator. “So they conduct the forum. All political party representatives meet with people and they can discuss each other.”

Impact on decisions

Interviewees also reported that public participation efforts influenced or had the potential for impact upon programs and services. As a local administrator said, “each decision might have a positive or negative impact on villagers”. Obtaining feedback from

villagers is therefore critical. "So the commune councillor can get feedback from villager. If some people say that it is not good or something like that, the commune councillor has to consider again -- appropriate to do it or not."

Participatory processes have also resulted in a rethinking of priorities during project implementation. This differs from the overall process, where villagers "only think about the problem and the solution," said the local administrator. "But in the process of project implementation, they are saying specifically what really happen. Because sometimes the project identified by the villager more often has no fund to support. But during the project implementation, it a reality, meaning something will happen." Local administrative officials have also advocated for participatory processes as a result of their experiences. "...for example, we tried to repeat to conduct orientation workshop to commune councillor also to make sure that they understand, really understand the advantage of involving with people from village," said the local administrator. "We also tried to encourage them."

This official also described the impact of public participation as a shift in control or power. "Actually, the process, for example, related to the planning process, actually, they consider. Yes, they consider," said the local administrator. "They conduct meetings, and finally, they considered it based on the suggestion, recommendation from the village. So I mean, the impact is that the development been oriented to -- directed to the community needs rather than the government needs. This is the impact."

However, the use of participatory processes has resulted in caution among some in government. "...the government is very careful about what they are going to discuss," said the NGO leader. "And sometimes if you try to discuss the key issues, sometimes they feel like you are a politician, so we again the development. So, it is very difficult because being a developing nation, the government tries to help development as much as possible. Therefore they want development rather than conservation and protection in the natural resource management here, so the interest is always biased with the development. So it is very difficult. So they want to see a short-term benefit and there is the society as a whole, they may consider a long-term benefit."

How is feedback provided?

Feedback likewise is an important outcome of public participation. A local administrator noted how this process works at the commune level. "They have a draft of commune plan which consists of everything -- investment project or everything about a project, they get that part, what project they will not that part, what project the commune will give their own fund," said the local administrator. "So, they present the result, the draft back to the villagers before they finally approve. That is the feedback."

An NGO leader described that there is also an interest in feedback from the public as the result of public participation. "People use radio, television media, I would say, in short. Media and also people use the meetings and workshops as the mechanism to consult people. And also now they try to open, even from the government side, they try

to open to receive feedback from the public. But how might they come to serve the public opinion is still a question.”

Efforts to balance opinions

Finally, efforts to balance varying opinions are not always easy. “...at the local level, for the local people and for the provincial level, for people at those levels, they think that there should be more power in terms of what public participation should be,” said a national administrator. These individuals believe the public needs more power and rights and responsibilities, whereas at the national or central government level, the power of the local people has been limited because that is more what they see the public participation should be.

This tension at the commune level requires that councillors try “to balance different people needs, so means that they have to consider, they have to listen more to people and consider about their available resource,” said the local administrator. In fact, this official conducts “training workshop, orientation workshop with the provincial counterpart to make sure that they understand the importance of balancing different groups of people's interest so that they can continue to encourage, to balance between the time and between the -- for example, the bad result, so they have to balance it.”

From the perspective of an NGO working in Cambodia, an NGO leader commented: “Yes, to me, I do understand that public participation is a discussion process. It is a process to involve various stakeholders, to involve related concerns of stakeholders in the planning process to make decision-making.” In fact, balancing opinions through public participation is at the heart of this particular NGO's mission. “I think there is a need for the public to be involved in policy development.”

Effect on capacity

The effect on capacity is varied. A local administrator reported that public participation “is difficult for” commune councillors “to conduct -- for example, to conduct village meetings effectively.” Training, as was noted previously, has been offered.

The local administrator interviewed noted that he plays “a very main role” in building capacity “by encouraging the process, by trying to improve the enforcement of law, guidelines, by trying to build the capacity, try to coordinate with different stakeholders. “ In this role the local administrator is part of a provincial facilitation team that seeks to improve the capacity of the commune councillors to do public participation. The administrator faces some limitations in this role: “What I am trying to say is it means that sometimes we cannot do it 100 percent perfectly because of time constraint,” said the local administrator. “However, they should do this, should do that to feed the situation because by understanding that, they can -- you know, you understand what I mean. By understanding the importance of that, by their willingness to do it, means that they can cope more effectively with the same time constraint.”

Building the capacity of commune councillors in turn enhances the capacity of villagers. The training emphasizes “Increased awareness and understanding, basically education that you can share to the villagers,” said the local administrator, which builds “the capacity of people responsible for the government also. For example, if the government official, they understand really well related to the public participation, they will try their best to make the public participation more qualified. So I think, the capacity, especially, the way people see things.”

Summary

Cambodia	
Common Terms For P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Participatory management” (federal administrator) • Public Participation (Local Administrator) • Participatory Resource Management (NGO Leader) • Co-Management (NGO leader)
Conceptual Definition For P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a voice • Co-Management • Equality and responsibility • Influencing an activity of decision • Discussion process
Select Barriers To Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic top-down perspective • Capacity and skill limitations following civil war • Lack of success to show for public involvement • Lack of support by central government • Lack of understanding about the purpose of public involvement • Literacy
Select Examples Of Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An emphasis on quality and influence • Trust building between the government and the public • Cooperation/Coordination between local governments and stakeholders/agencies • Equal opportunity for involvement and expression of concerns
Select Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws and guidelines • Community improvements • Consideration of people’s needs by commune councillors • Fear of publically stating opinions/concerns • Cooperative efforts with NGOs • Greater awareness of opportunities to participate