



# Constituency Dialogues and Citizen Engagement in Cambodia:

Findings from a mixed methods impact evaluation

*February 2013*



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The Institute's work upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also promotes the development of institutionalized channels of communications among citizens, political institutions and elected officials, and strengthens their ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens. For more information about NDI, please visit [www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org).

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This report is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Award No. 442-A-09-00001. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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## Forward

In 2008, the National Academies of Science completed a study recommending that USAID and its partners use randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to better understand the impacts of democracy assistance overseas. To that end, in 2009 USAID requested that the Consortium for Electoral and Political Processes (CEPPS) partners each include a randomized controlled trial (RCT) in their proposals to support USAID's five-year *Accountability in Governance and Politics (A-GAP)* program in Cambodia.

At the time few democracy promotion agencies, or their implementing partners, had the in-house capacity to design or implement an RCT. Nor were the practical implications of such an endeavor fully understood. NDI completed the impact evaluation of its *Multi-party Constituency Dialogue* program in Cambodia in 2013, and the experience greatly strengthened the Institute's internal capacity to monitor, evaluate and learn from its programming.

While USAID funded the design and implementation of NDI's RCT, to successfully complete the RCT the Institute mobilized additional resources, both internal and external, and owes a debt of gratitude to many people. NDI would like to thank the academic reviewers from the EGAP network - *Experiments in Governance And Politics* -- who provided their feedback and insights on NDI's draft RCT design. NDI owes a particular debt of gratitude to Dr. Susan Hyde, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at Yale University. Without her tireless support, creativity and guidance as the Principal Investigator the study would not have been completed.

Linda Stern  
NDI Director  
Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

## Executive Summary

*Background.* The National Democratic Institute (NDI or the Institute) was chosen to participate in a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) pilot program to evaluate the impact of democracy and governance programs in Cambodia. An impact evaluation measures change caused by a program and also measures what would have happened if the program had not taken place. In such a study, participants are randomly assigned to participate in all, some, or none of the program activities, and data are collected before and after these activities to compare any changes across these groups. This report summarizes the impact evaluation conducted to measure the effect of the Institute's program on Cambodians' knowledge of, attitudes toward, and participation in political and civic life. Two companion reports present the different data sets, analyses and findings in greater detail, both of which are summarized in annexes to this report.

*Political context.* While Cambodia has made some progress in its transition to democracy, the country remains under semi-authoritarian rule. The ruling party gained a supermajority in the 2008 National Assembly elections, and opposition parties are marginalized from legislative and other political activities. There is little interaction between Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and citizens. Government officials have publicly threatened not to serve citizens who support opposition parties.

*Program context.* Since 2004, NDI and its local civil society partners have organized and facilitated constituency dialogues (CDs) in rural villages across twelve provinces that bring together MNAs from different parties to hear constituents' concerns in a town-hall setting. This evaluation focused on three provinces to study the existing CD program as well as a citizen deliberation program component introduced for this evaluation.

Deliberative sessions<sup>1</sup> were comprised of small groups of citizens, similar to focus group discussions, convened the day prior to the CD. Deliberative sessions are different from focus groups in that participants used a standardized matrix-ranking grid to discuss and vote on priority community problems and proposed solutions to these problems.<sup>2</sup> NDI trained facilitators to help participants use the matrix-ranking grid and to document the group's discussion. Adding the deliberative sessions allowed NDI to study an innovative activity and to answer additional evaluation questions related to the study's focus on citizen engagement.

*Evaluation context.* The Institute incorporated an impact evaluation into its existing program design and budget. The evaluation design underwent various revisions in consultation with USAID. NDI received preliminary technical assistance from USAID during the evaluation design process and then managed the conclusion of the design process, implementation and analysis with its own evaluation team. Using a practitioner-academic

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<sup>1</sup> This program component was inspired by existing Participatory Action Research approaches and was designed for low-literacy populations to reflect, learn and plan action together.

<sup>2</sup> For each problem deliberative session participants identified two solutions – one internal solution that required community action, and one external solution that required action by an MNA.

research model, the evaluation team was comprised of NDI staff, a Yale University professor, and a Cambodian research firm.

*Development hypothesis.* The CD program is based on the theory of change that when citizens are provided a forum to engage with and voice their concerns to their elected representatives, these representatives will become more responsive and accountable to constituents. The development hypothesis is that participation in the CD positively affects both the supply (MNA) and demand (citizen) sides of this accountability relationship. This study focused on the citizen demand side of that hypothesis. NDI expected that the deliberative sessions would have an additional positive effect on citizens. Specifically, NDI examined two steps in this results chain: that a CD (and a deliberative session) increases participants' understanding of their roles in political and civic life and that multiple political perspectives exist (step 1), which in turn leads citizens to demand that MNAs address their concerns (step 2).

*Mixed methods design.* The evaluation design placed individuals into one of three categories for comparison: those who were not invited to any program activity; those who were invited to attend a CD; and those who were invited to participate in a deliberative session and a CD. Deliberative session participants were then randomly assigned to all-male, all-female or mixed gender groups. In many mixed methods evaluations, qualitative data (such as focus groups) are used only to describe programmatic context as a supplement to survey or other quantitative findings. A unique feature of this mixed methods design was that both survey and deliberative session data were used to study effects caused by the program; other data describe the programmatic context.

*Evaluation questions and key findings.* The Institute posed four main questions to answer through the impact study. Experimental findings describe changes or effects caused by the CD or the deliberative session. Descriptive findings illustrate the context in which the program occurred or describe the content of program activities.

1. Does the constituency dialogue change individual attitudes, knowledge and behavior?

*Experimental findings.* A CD caused increases in knowledge of the political process and self-reported engagement in civic and political behaviors among individuals invited to attend a CD.<sup>3</sup> Respondents were significantly more likely to report a personal interest in politics after a CD was conducted in their village. These individuals were also more likely to report that their MNAs communicated with and conducted activities on behalf of their communities. On average, the CD was not found to have positive or negative effects on surveyed individuals' confidence about politics in Cambodia or their role in the political process. However, women in CD villages were more likely than women in control villages to report positive attitudes about the political process and their role as voters after a CD was held in their village.

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<sup>3</sup> Women in CD villages were more likely than men to self-report some civic and political behaviors, such as filing a case in court or supporting a citizen petition.

*Descriptive findings.* Participating MNAs generally adhered to the standard code of conduct implemented by NDI staff at all CDs that establishes protocols for civil conduct toward other MNAs and citizens. A balance of ruling and opposition party supporters was observed in CD audiences. Heavy police presence was observed at one third of the CDs within the study, and in some cases, CD attendees appeared to be nervous or intimidated by the police.

2. Does participation in a deliberative session before the constituency dialogue change individual attitudes, knowledge, behavior, or priority issues?

*Experimental findings.* The deliberative session had few detectable effects on individuals' responses to survey questions about political and civic knowledge, attitudes, reported behavior, or priority issues. These findings are limited by the fact that fewer individuals than expected acted on the deliberative session invitation, which greatly diminished the sample size available for this analysis.

*Descriptive findings.* Small groups' discussions demonstrated that priority problems varied by province and commune; however, groups across communes identified corruption as a multi-faceted problem affecting their individual, family, and community experiences. Land seizure was acutely noted in one third of the communes, where participants associated this problem with detrimental environmental and health effects and instances of violent retribution or imprisonment for citizens who mobilized in protest.

Additional descriptive findings showed that deliberative session participants were more active at the CD than other CD attendees. Deliberative session participants raised their hands and spoke at a CD more than twice as often as CD participants who had not attended a deliberative session.

3. Does the gender of the facilitator or gender composition of deliberative sessions differentially impact participant attitudes, knowledge, or behavior?

*Experimental findings.* The facilitator's gender and the gender composition of the group had few detectable effects on participant responses to survey questions about their knowledge of, attitudes toward, and participation in political and civic life. These findings should be interpreted cautiously due to the small percentage of surveyed individuals who accepted the deliberative session invitation and were considered in this analysis.

Additional experimental findings demonstrate that the facilitator's gender affected participant voting patterns for priority solutions. Male-facilitated deliberative groups were significantly more likely than female-facilitated groups to vote in consensus, "clustering" their votes for single solutions as well as among their top-ranked solutions.<sup>4</sup> These effects are statistically significant but based on measures piloted in

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<sup>4</sup> Deliberative session facilitators recorded participant vote totals for the priority solutions on each group's matrix-ranking grid. Several measures were used to analyze the degree to which participants distributed

this study. Understanding the meaning of these findings for measuring deliberation – whether positive or negative – requires further study.

4. Does the facilitator gender or gender composition of deliberative sessions differentially impact participant priority issues?

*Experimental findings.* Both the facilitator's gender and the group's gender composition influenced how groups ranked their priority problems. The facilitator's gender also affected groups' vote preference for priority solutions. On average, all groups tended to prioritize external solutions (those that required MNA action) over internal solutions (those that required citizen action) to resolve their identified problems. However, male-facilitated groups were significantly more likely than all other group types to prioritize external solutions, whereas female-facilitated groups were significantly more likely to prioritize internal solutions compared to all other group types.

*Conclusions.* These conclusions are intended to contribute to NDI's current and future work, as well as to the ongoing program design and evaluation dialogue within the international democracy assistance community of practitioners, donor agencies, and academics.

Programmatic conclusions:

- This study showed that a CD caused positive change in individual knowledge levels and self-reported engagement in some civic and political behaviors, but did not detect evidence of the program causing citizens to demand that MNAs address their concerns.

Lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that there is not a link between the CD program and citizen demand in Cambodia, and certain factors beyond the scope of this study could help to better understand this linkage. Data could be collected over a longer period of time to capture medium- or long-term changes, beyond the period immediately after a CD. The study relied on measures of self-reported political and civic behavior, but measures of observed behavior could show different outcomes in actual practice (see evaluation conclusion on behavior indicators below). Data was collected after a single CD (or deliberative session), but participation in multiple program activities could have a positive effect on citizen demand. Finally, the additional program support could be provided to include more explicit civic education or citizen engagement content than the CD events alone.

- The deliberative session pilot effort generated reliable qualitative data within a randomized impact evaluation and demonstrated the differences in men's and women's voices as well as the risks Cambodians face in speaking out about such issues as corruption.

A single deliberative session is unlikely to support sustainable solutions to the problems discussed and could even put participants at risk by encouraging the discussion of such

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their votes, or not, across all possible solutions and between internal (requiring citizen action) or external (requiring MNA action) solutions.

topics. Rather than a stand-alone program activity, deliberative sessions should be considered part of a broader programmatic approach to support citizen engagement and demand for greater responsiveness and accountability of their elected officials.

- The mixed methods approach of this impact study highlighted positive changes in individuals' knowledge caused by the program as well as the contextual challenges and risks of greater citizen engagement in Cambodia.

While the CD caused some positive changes for individuals, data from the deliberative sessions captured participants' experiences – beyond the context of the CD – with corruption, land seizure, intimidation and sometimes violence. Together, the different data sets provide a fuller picture of citizen engagement in the Cambodian context than any of the data sets do alone. These findings point to the need for further study of the conditions related to and consequences of greater citizen demand in a closed political system.

- The scope of this evaluation did not study the effects caused by this program among MNAs, and many questions remain regarding changes in their accountability to citizens.

Since the CD program started in 2004, MNAs have been the target program audience prior to the impact study. In the Cambodian context, it would not be feasible to randomize MNA participation in the program. Similar to the questions noted above about citizen demand, more systematic information is needed to understand program effects for MNAs. Program staff has collected information that demonstrates anecdotes of both citizen demands for action and MNA initiatives to address citizen demands, and this non-experimental data could contribute to evaluation efforts around MNAs.

Evaluation conclusions:

- The academic-practitioner partnership strengthened the evaluation team and the quality of the impact study, and this model should be considered when feasible for future impact studies in the democracy and governance sector.

This partnership merged practitioner and academic expertise on equal footing. It was critical in exploring evaluation design options, troubleshooting implementation challenges and analyzing the complex body of data while preserving the study's rigor.

- The evaluation team considered various indicators to measure change in individual's behavior in the evaluation design, but few of these measures proved viable in practice.

The evaluation team attempted to incorporate measures of observed citizen behavior outside of the program activities, but ultimately relied on survey respondents' self-reported behavior and observation of participants' behavior at the CD. The social and political context and practices rendered other measures of citizen behavior unfeasible (e.g. commune council meeting attendance records are not consistently maintained) or potentially harmful for participants (e.g. citizen petitions could draw negative attention to organizers). These measurement challenges were shaped by the Cambodian political

context, but similar issues are likely to be encountered across democracy and governance programs in other countries.

- The deliberative session matrix ranking measures were effective in capturing reliable qualitative data within a randomized impact evaluation but may be cost prohibitive for many programs.

As noted above in the programmatic conclusions, deliberative sessions should not be considered as stand-alone or one-time program activities. Deliberative session data collection produced a large volume of data, and both the collection and analysis process required significant staff and program resources. This study was limited by the fact that fewer than expected individuals acted on the deliberative session invitation, which resulted in a smaller sample size for analysis. Future work with deliberative sessions should take these factors into account for program design and cost planning.

## **I. Background**

### ***Political Context***

Since the Paris Peace Accords of 1991 and the administration of the United Nations Transitional Authority, Cambodia has made progress in its shift to democracy, particularly in developing an increasingly robust civil society and a decline in election violence. However, the overwhelming dominance of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in all facets of government has kept the country under semi-authoritarian rule marked by patronage, rampant corruption and lack of accountability among government and elected officials.

While Cambodia has little tradition of political rivals participating in a constructive contest of ideas, the role of the opposition was further limited after the National Assembly elections in 2008. The CPP gained 17 additional seats and, with 90 of the 123 seats in the assembly, a two-thirds supermajority that can be used to monopolize legislative debate. Opposition parties such as the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) and the Human Rights Party (HRP) hold 26 and 3 seats respectively, but these seats are distributed in only 12 of the country's 24 provinces. The opposition does not hold any seats in the nine parliamentary commissions. The two other parties represented in the National Assembly – the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (known by its acronym in French, FUNCINPEC) and the Norodom Ranariddh Party (briefly known as the National Party), once a strong royalist party – now hold only two seats each. Ruling party leaders have openly questioned the right of opposition members to comment on the government's legislative agenda, and government officials have threatened not to serve those citizens who support the opposition.

A centralized decision-making process, concentrated almost exclusively within the executive branch, has left Cambodia's legislature a weak and opaque institution. The National Assembly does not conduct legislative hearings nor does it have a formalized public consultation process. Bill drafting is conducted by the executive, and information on the process is carefully guarded; the public cannot access transcripts of policy deliberations. Assembly members do not exercise any oversight function of the government. In addition, little interaction exists between Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and their constituents. Members are elected by party-list system with a proportional distribution of seats by province, allowing an MNA to be elected without interacting with constituents before or after an election. This system provides limited channels for citizens to be included in public policy development or to hold elected officials accountable for use of public resources. Few MNAs have made sustained efforts to conduct independent outreach activities through their political parties, and some lack a clear understanding of their official role as legislators. Based on prior NDI focus groups with citizens, the public also has little understanding of the legislative function of the National Assembly and tends to look to MNAs as providers of material goods, services and money.

### ***NDI Programs in Cambodia***

NDI has aided democratic activists in Cambodia since 1992 to attain more open and inclusive political processes. NDI's programming seeks to promote a more level political

playing field by improving the access of all political parties and civil society to the media, promoting women's political engagement, and enhancing the capabilities of political parties to participate more equitably in elections. To this end, NDI has organized public debates among candidates from different political parties contesting seats in commune councils and the National Assembly. The Institute has supported local election monitoring organizations and citizen volunteers to increase transparency in the electoral process and to identify needed reforms to the electoral framework through systematic voter registration and election observation efforts and voter registry audits. At the grassroots level, the Institute has assisted civil society groups across Cambodia in engaging their communities and elected representatives on issues of common concern.

*Constituency dialogues.* Since 2004, NDI and its local civil society partners have conducted more than 200 constituency dialogues across 12 provinces that bring together MNAs from different parties to hear constituents' concerns in a town-hall setting.<sup>5</sup> The dialogues are moderated by NDI staff according to a standard agenda and code of conduct. Members of the audience can pose questions to the MNAs during two open microphone periods. MNAs are each allotted equal time increments to make comments and respond to citizen questions. Citizen efforts to hold MNAs to account have included expressing concerns to MNAs directly about conflicts over land, public services that were not delivered and cases of local authorities abusing their power. There have been instances of MNA or other government official action take after some dialogues, including: the construction of canals and pathways; the reinstatement of compensation for rural school teachers; the return of land to its rightful owners; and the investigation of local officials.<sup>6</sup>

## ***Evaluation Context***

### **Evaluation purpose**

Following the release of the USAID-commissioned 2008 National Academy of Sciences study, *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge through Evaluations and Research*,<sup>7</sup> USAID sought to strengthen the quantity and quality of its evaluations. As part of this effort, USAID selected NDI's program in Cambodia to participate in a 2009 pilot effort to evaluate the impact of democracy and governance programs. As part of USAID's program description requirements, the Institute incorporated an impact evaluation into its overall program design and budget proposal.

The initial focus of the evaluation was to conduct an impact evaluation of a democracy and governance program. NDI managed the evaluation design process, including the definition of the evaluation questions, with some preliminary technical assistance from USAID.

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<sup>5</sup> This program is implemented with USAID funding through the *Cambodia: Accountability in Governance and Politics* (AGAP) program.

<sup>6</sup> NDI program information and past CD reports can be found at <http://www.ndi.org/content/cambodia>.

<sup>7</sup> National Research Council 2008.

## Evaluation design development

NDI originally submitted to USAID a proposed impact evaluation design to include all CDs to be implemented over the course of the program's five year timeline to study the effect of the program on both citizens and MNAs. The scope of this evaluation design would have required more resources than the funding available; therefore, NDI narrowed its scope. USAID provided short-term technical assistance<sup>8</sup> to support NDI's development of this revised design, which focused on the impact of the program on citizens. NDI faced the implementation challenge of integrating the evaluation design into a long-standing program. Since 2004, CDs had been conducted in villages in many of the communes, or villages in surrounding communes, that were being considered for the study. As a result, NDI mapped out a smaller number of provinces with a sufficient number of villages where CDs had not been conducted previously. NDI further refined the evaluation design with feedback from USAID evaluation experts and academics affiliated with the Experiments in Governance and Politics (EGAP) network.<sup>9</sup>

### *Evaluation Team Composition*

NDI found the EGAP network to be a valuable space for peer review of the evaluation design and for the formation of an academic-practitioner partnership with the Principal Investigator for the duration of the evaluation. The evaluation team was built around this partnership and was comprised of NDI staff in the Cambodia and Washington, DC offices, a political science professor from Yale University, a field researcher, and a local research firm. Evaluation team members and their roles included:

- **Principal Investigator.** Dr. Susan D Hyde<sup>10</sup> contributed to the EGAP peer review of the evaluation design and then served as the principal investigator for the remainder of the evaluation. She provided technical assistance during the transition from design to implementation and led the quantitative analysis and drafting of those findings.
- **NDI Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.** Linda Stern designed the evaluation and served as the technical advisor on the deliberative session methods, including the design and piloting of the discussion guide and protocol for facilitation and data collection. She led the qualitative analysis and drafting of those findings.
- **NDI Evaluation Manager.** Alison Miranda contributed to the evaluation design process and managed team resources and communication through the analysis and reporting phase, including authoring this report.

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<sup>8</sup> The funding mechanism that supported this technical assistance expired prior to the implementation phase of the evaluation.

<sup>9</sup> EGAP is a network of academic researchers and development practitioners working on experimental analyses of governance and politics. Both NDI and USAID are members of the network. Among other resources, EGAP offers a peer review process for member-submitted impact evaluation designs (<http://e-gap.org/>).

<sup>10</sup> Hyde is an Associate Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at Yale University. She served as a *pro bono* advisor on this project.

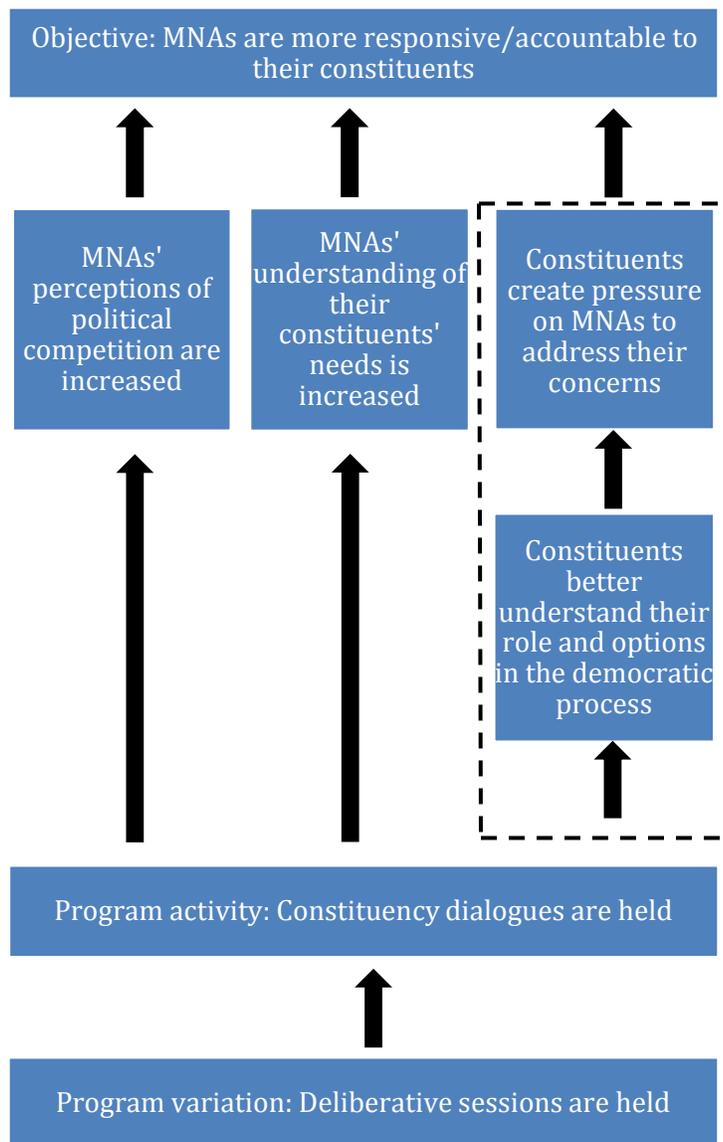
- **NDI Program Managers.** Marjan Ehsassi and Christina Costello managed evaluation team consultant agreements, the overall program budget, including impact evaluation resources, and contributed to this report.
- **NDI Senior Resident Director.** Laura Thornton is based in Cambodia and manages all aspects of NDI's programmatic activities in the country, including oversight of program implementation and supervision of office operations and personnel. She provided management support of field-based evaluation team members.
- **Field Researcher.** Emily Lamb and Molly Watts were each based in Cambodia to manage the overall data flow from collection through translation, and ensure the integrity and quality of the quantitative and qualitative data sets.
- **NDI Senior Program Officer.** Kimsrun Chhiv coordinated the deliberative session facilitators, provided them support in the field, and liaised between the Field Researcher and facilitators, as needed.
- **Research Firm.** Cambodian research organization the Centre for Advanced Study (CAS) supported survey pilot efforts, and managed survey field administration and enumeration.
- **NDI Qualitative Analyst.** Ornanong Maneerattana managed the qualitative data inventory and contributed to final data analysis with the NDI Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.
- **NDI Quantitative Analyst.** Transitioning from the Field Researcher role, Molly Watts managed the quantitative data inventory and contributed to final data analysis with the Principal Investigator.

## II. Evaluation Methodology

### *Development Hypothesis*

Constituency dialogues bring together MNAs from different parties to hear constituents' concerns in a town-hall setting. Such a public forum can help to level the playing field between governing and opposition parties and raise MNA's awareness of their political competition and of constituents' needs. For citizens, this is a forum to publicly voice their concerns, better understand elected officials' roles and responsibilities, and hear from multiple political perspectives. NDI's hypothesis is that, over time, these factors will lead citizens to demand more responsiveness and accountability from their MNAs, and ultimately, for MNAs to be more responsive to their constituents (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1 CD Program Development Hypothesis



NDI implemented a field experiment – that is, a randomized evaluation conducted in the field rather than through desktop research – in three provinces, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang and Kratie, to evaluate the impact of the program on Cambodians’ knowledge of, attitudes toward, and participation in political and civic life. The evaluation design placed individuals into one of three categories for comparison: those who received no program activities at all; those who were invited to attend a CD held in their village of residence; and those who were invited to participate in a deliberative session and a CD, both of which took place in their village of residence.

NDI varied the CD program by introducing a deliberative session conducted one day prior to the CD. The deliberative sessions were not an existing component of the CD program but

did contribute to the study's focus on the impact of the program on citizens. NDI's experience in other countries and regions suggested that a smaller forum for citizens to discuss issues – especially in politically uncertain environments – is a pre-condition for change in individual and/or collective behavior such as pressuring representatives to address concerns. NDI introduced this activity after narrowing the evaluation design to include three provinces. Adding the deliberative sessions allowed NDI to study an innovative activity and to answer additional evaluation questions.

Comprised of three to five individuals, the deliberative sessions were small group meetings designed for low-literacy populations to reflect, learn and plan action together. This program component was inspired by, and utilized tools adapted from the existing body of participatory action research approaches. Trained facilitators oversaw the deliberative sessions, but the sessions were structured for group participants to largely self-facilitate their identification of three local problems and six potential solutions (represented by pictures) using a matrix-ranking tool (a large paper grid). For each of the three priority problems identified, participants brainstormed and agreed on two solutions – one internal solution that required community action, and one external solution that required action by an MNA. Finally, participants voted for the priority solutions and closed the session with a brief discussion of the outcomes.

Building on the above results chain outlined by a dashed line in Figure 1, NDI further assumed that participation in a deliberative session and a CD – rather than participation in a CD alone – would increase the likelihood of a positive effect on citizen attitudes, knowledge and behavior. In addition, NDI postulated that the CD and the deliberative session would have different effects on men and women.

### ***Evaluation Questions***

The Institute posed four main evaluation questions to answer through the field experiment:

1. Does the constituency dialogue change individual attitudes, knowledge and behavior?
2. Does participation in a deliberative session before the constituency dialogue change individual attitudes, knowledge, behavior, or priority issues?
3. Does the facilitator gender or gender composition of deliberative sessions differentially impact participant attitudes, knowledge, or behavior?
4. Does the facilitator gender or gender composition of deliberative sessions differentially impact participant priority issues?

These questions were broken down into eight more specific research questions for analysis. The companion reports summarized in annexes I and II reference and analyze the eight questions.

### ***Methodological Approach***

The evaluation team applied three levels of randomization to form the following groups:

- Type 1 (in villages where no CD was conducted): individuals not invited to any program activity;
- Type 2 (in villages where a CD was conducted): individuals invited to attend a CD; and
- Type 3 (in villages where a CD was conducted): individuals invited to attend both a deliberative session and a CD.

## Random assignment

*1: Village assignment.* Since 2004, NDI has collaborated with local partner organizations to identify and select CD village locations, handle local logistics for the CD event, and contribute to the management of relations with local authorities in a given province. In an effort to minimize modifications to the standard program implementation practice, NDI continued to engage local partner organizations in the selection of rural villages where CDs were to be conducted during the field experiment. At least one month prior to the target CD implementation date, local partner organizations identified potential pairs of villages in their respective provinces in which to conduct a CD. Selected villages had to be rural but accessible by road and not have been the site of a CD before. Based on local partner organizations' knowledge, villages with ongoing contentious community conflicts or high levels of political tension were not selected. Flipping a coin, NDI assigned one village to receive no program activity (Type 1, control village) and one village to have a CD (treatment village).

NDI conducted one CD in each of nine treatment villages during the field experiment, along with pre- and post-CD surveys (see Table 1 below). Among the nine villages that did not receive any program activity, only six villages were surveyed. Thus, for the survey data analyses of the effects of the CD, the sample includes only six pairs of treatment and control villages.

**Table 1 Village Assignment for CD**

Province	District	Commune	Village	CD / No CD	Survey / No Survey
Kampong Cham	Memot	Chaom Ta Mau	Bos Ta Oem	CD	Survey
		Kravean	Satum	No CD	Survey
	Chamkar Leu	Ta Prok	Rumcheck	CD	Survey
		Cheyyou	Cheyyou	No CD	Survey
	Kaoh Soutin	Kampong Reab	Kampong Sdei Kraom	CD	Survey
		Pongro	Pongro Kaeut	No CD	No survey
Kampong	Baribour	Pech Chanvar	Tang Trapeang	CD	Survey

Province	District	Commune	Village	CD / No CD	Survey / No Survey
Chhnang		Trapeang Chan	Trapeang Chan	No CD	Survey
	Kampong Tralach	Ta Ches	La Peang	CD	Survey
		Longveaek	Boeng Kak	No CD	Survey
	Rolea B'ier	Krang Leav	Krang Leav	CD	Survey
		Tuek Hout	Kouk Sdau	No CD	No survey
Kratie	Sambo	Koh Khnhaer	Svay Chek	CD	Survey
		Ou Krieng	Ou Krieng	No CD	Survey
	Chit Borey	Thmar Andaeuk	Chuor Krouch	CD	Survey
		Thmei	Chronorl	No CD	Survey
	Kratie Town	Sangkat Orussey	Sre Sdao	CD	Survey
		Sangkat Kaoh Trong	Dem Koh	No CD	No survey

*2: Individual assignment.* Within each village assigned to have a CD, NDI used the pre-CD survey to randomize invitation to the deliberative session. CAS survey enumerators administered the baseline survey one week prior to the CD. They randomly selected a household for the first survey using a map of village households. The survey enumerators then interviewed one adult in each household, flipping a coin to determine whether they interviewed a man or woman. At the conclusion of every baseline survey in villages assigned to have a CD, the respondent was invited to attend the upcoming CD (Type 2). A subset of randomly selected survey respondents living in CD villages were also issued a non-transferable invitation to participate in a deliberative session the day before the CD (Type 3). Survey respondents in control villages were not invited to attend any event. A follow up survey was conducted with the same respondents one week after the CD.<sup>11</sup> For the survey data analyses of the effects of the deliberative sessions, the sample included the nine villages where a CD was conducted.

*3: Deliberative session assignment.* To examine the effect of gender on the deliberative sessions, NDI created four different deliberative group types among participants:

<sup>11</sup> Control village baseline and follow-up surveys were administered on a timeline comparable to the survey timeline of the CD treatment village in the same district.

**Table 2 Deliberative Session Gender Variations**

<b>Facilitator</b>	Female facilitators	Male facilitators
<b>Group composition</b>		
All female participants	Type A	NONE
All male participants	NONE	Type B
Mixed participants	Type C	Type D

Prior to each deliberative session, the field researcher randomly assigned ten trained facilitators to work with a specific group type, taking into account the facilitators' gender and the desired group gender composition. When participants arrived for the session, the field researcher randomly assigned individuals to a group composition type that corresponded to the participant's gender.

All groups used a matrix-ranking tool to record their priority problems and solutions. The pictures representing their top three problems were placed vertically on the left hand side of the matrix grid. The six solutions – one internal and one external solution for each problem – were placed horizontally across the top of the matrix grid. Participants used buttons to cast votes for their priority problems and solutions, and the facilitator recorded the vote totals on the matrix during the session. Facilitators monitored the discussion around the identification of priority issues and solutions and the voting outcomes for each deliberative session and recorded the information on forms for later analysis. The facilitator notes and the deliberative groups' matrix voting patterns were used as data sets as noted below.

### **Mixed methods approach**

This study used a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the program context and answer the four main impact evaluation questions about the effect of CDs and deliberative sessions on citizen attitudes, knowledge, behavior, and priority issues. NDI used a mixed methods approach to 1) collect experimental data (data that can answer questions about causal effects) about the program components; 2) collect descriptive data (data that does not answer questions of causality) about the program components and the broader context in which they occurred; and 3) use multiple data sets to examine specific elements of the program (triangulation), such as individuals' priority issues. In many mixed methods evaluations, qualitative data (such as focus groups) are used only to describe the context in which the program occurs as a supplement to survey or other experimental findings. A unique feature of this mixed methods design was that survey and deliberative session data sets were used to study effects caused by the program; additional data from deliberative sessions and the CDs were used to describe the programmatic context as well. Quantitative and qualitative data collection included:

- CAS fielded pre- and post-surveys to collect baseline and outcome data in CD and control villages.
- Deliberative session participants generated and ranked priority problems and then used a matrix-ranking grid to vote on their priority community problems and solutions; the evaluation team analyzed the groups' matrix priorities and matrix voting patterns.
- The facilitators used a form to record notes from the deliberative group's discussion of the problems and solutions identified for each session they facilitated.
- The facilitators used a CD observation form to record their deliberative session participants' attendance and behavior at the CD and the behavior of police, local authorities and MNAs at the CD event.
- Facilitators also recorded their personal reflections after each session they facilitated to assess perceived changes on a series of standardized questions, including their facilitation ability and the group dynamics, among other factors.
- Finally, NDI staff and representatives of its local partner organizations monitored follow-up by MNAs and local authorities on the issues raised at each CD. The issue monitoring forms were used in both the CD villages and the control villages.<sup>12</sup>

For the purposes of this report, the evaluation team prioritized the analysis of some of the available data sets to identify key findings.

### **Samples for analysis**

This study drew on several of the data sources noted above to conduct various levels of analyses. The findings presented consider the following comparison groups:

- Type 1: individuals not invited to any program activities;
- Type 2: individuals invited to attend a CD;
- Type 3: individuals invited to attend both a deliberative session and a CD; and
  - Among deliberative session participants:
    - Group type A: Female facilitator with all female participants
    - Group type B: Male facilitator with all male participants; and
    - Group type C/D: Mixed participants with either a female or a male facilitator.<sup>13</sup>

A more detailed discussion of the survey analyses and findings is available in the report referenced in annex I, and the matrix voting pattern analyses are discussed in the reports referenced in annexes I and II.

*CD analysis.* The CD analysis compared experimental survey data among individuals in control villages (Type 1) and individuals in CD villages (Type 2) (see Table 3 below). At baseline, individuals in villages selected for CDs were slightly more likely to have attended

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<sup>12</sup> The issue monitoring forms were not analyzed for this report or the findings presented in the qualitative and quantitative companion reports.

<sup>13</sup> For analysis purposes, mixed participant deliberative session groups were considered one type, whether the group was facilitated by a male or female, and compared to the other single-gender group types.

a prior CD and much more likely to report having heard a CD broadcast on the radio before, compared to individuals in control villages. It is unlikely but unclear whether prior CD attendance or radio exposure caused any substantive differences in the CD effects reported below. Among those individuals who completed the endline survey across all treatment villages, 56% of respondents reported having attended a CD. No respondents in the control villages reported having attended a CD.

**Table 3 Sample for CD Analysis**

	<b>Control villages</b>	<b>CD villages</b>
Villages	6 villages (2 villages x 3 provinces)	6 villages (2 villages x 3 provinces)
Baseline survey respondents	720 baseline respondents (120 respondents x 6 villages)	720 baseline respondents (120 respondents x 6 villages)
Endline survey respondents	661 endline respondents (92% of baseline respondents)	655 endline respondents (91% of baseline respondents)

*Deliberative session analysis.* The deliberative session analysis examined experimental survey data within a CD village, comparing individuals who were invited to attend both a CD and a deliberative session (Type 3) with those individuals who were invited to attend a CD only (Type 2) (see Table 4 below). Of the survey respondents invited to attend a deliberative session, 46% reported that they actually attended. Among survey respondents invited to attend a CD only, 7% reported that they attended a deliberative session.

The evaluation team also conducted an extensive analysis of citizen priorities across provinces and communes using descriptive qualitative data. These findings are based on deliberative group matrix-identified priority problems and solutions, facilitator documentation of both the deliberative session discussions and the CD environment, and facilitator CD observational data.

**Table 4 Sample for Deliberative Session Analysis**

	<b>CD villages</b>	
Villages	9 villages (3 villages x 3 provinces)	
Baseline survey respondents	1,080 total baseline respondents (120 respondents x 9 villages)	
Treatment	<b>CD only</b>	<b>Deliberative session + CD</b>
Baseline survey respondents	540 respondents invited (60 respondents x 9 villages)	540 respondents invited (60 respondents x 9 villages)
Endline survey respondents	498 endline respondents (92% of baseline respondents)	499 endline respondents (92% of baseline respondents)

*Deliberative session gender analysis.* As a sub-set of the deliberative session analyses, the evaluation team explored whether the gender composition of the group or facilitator gender had an impact on deliberative session participants' attitudes, knowledge, behavior, or priority issues. The total number of groups formed during the study is presented in

Table 5 below. These analyses compare each group’s gender composition to the other possible group composition types. Similarly, the effect of having a male facilitator is compared to that of having a female facilitator.

These questions were analyzed using survey data among individuals who were invited to attend a deliberative session. However, as noted above, fewer than expected individuals completed both surveys and attended a deliberative session. The limited findings presented should be interpreted with caution. Additional experimental findings presented were drawn from the analysis of the matrix voting patterns generated by the deliberative groups. These experimental findings are discussed in both companion reports, and the specific measures are described in detail in the qualitative findings report.

**Table 5 Sample for Deliberative Session Gender Analysis**

	<b>CD villages</b>			
Villages	9 villages (3 villages x 3 provinces)			
Treatment	<b>Deliberative session</b>			
Deliberative session participants	322 total participants			
Group type	<b>A. All female group</b>	<b>B. All male group</b>	<b>C. Mixed group Female facilitator</b>	<b>D. Mixed group Male facilitator</b>
	24 groups	24 groups	16 groups	16 groups

### **Data limitations**

There are several known limitations to the data collected, which should be taken into consideration in interpreting the findings presented and in exploring the possibility of future data collection related to this study.

*Survey sample.* The survey sample is stratified on gender, which means that a sufficient number of male and female survey respondents were chosen to allow for comparison of effects between these two sectors of the population. In consultation with CAS, NDI determined that it would not stratify the survey sample by age, in part because of budget considerations (more surveys would have been required to compare effects by age group). The findings cannot be generalized to the broader village or country population. Within each gender, the survey respondents are representative of the village population that is most likely to be exposed to the CD.

*Survey timeline.* The two week period between the pre- and post-survey is a relatively short time horizon. Surveys were administered on a rolling basis, depending on the date of the CD. This plan allowed for the same data collection timeline relative to each CD; however, CDs were conducted over a nine month period, spanning seasons that require the population to travel for agricultural work. With input from local research firm CAS, NDI chose this data collection timeline to minimize the challenge anticipated in locating the same individuals for the second survey. While this data does not address the sustainability of any changes caused by the program activities, a subsequent survey in the target villages

would reveal whether these findings persist at the village level – rather than the individual level.

*Compliance rates.* Compliance rate refers to an individual’s completion of the steps related to the treatment group to which s/he was assigned. For example, an individual assigned to receive no treatment (Type 1) was to complete a pre- and post-survey without attending any program events between these surveys. An individual invited to attend a deliberative session (Type 3) was to complete a baseline survey, attend a deliberative session, then attend a CD, and finally complete an endline survey. There are many factors that could have prevented individuals from complying with each of the desired steps in their assigned treatment group. In anticipation of this, the evaluation team invited more individuals to attend the deliberative session than were anticipated to act on the invitation. In this study, not all survey respondents in CD villages actually attended the CD. Similarly, far fewer individuals invited to the deliberative sessions actually attended, and other un-invited individuals attended the sessions. The findings presented almost certainly underestimate the effects – positive or negative – that would have been measured if all survey respondents had participated in their assigned program treatment(s).

*New measures.* During the deliberative session, facilitators recorded participants’ priority problems and vote totals for their priority solutions on each group’s matrix-ranking grid. For this study, the evaluation team piloted new measures based on these matrix voting patterns. Several variables recorded how closely (or not) participants’ votes were distributed across all solutions or on a specific solution. Another variable recorded the proportion of votes cast for internal solutions (requiring citizen action) versus external solutions (requiring action by an MP or other official). These measures were used to understand how facilitator gender and group gender composition affected participant behavior and voting patterns during the deliberative session. The analysis of statistical significance was valuable in identifying gender as a factor in deliberative session outcomes; however, the meaning of these voting measures as indicators of deliberation is not entirely clear. These data confirm that creating a separate space for women to deliberate with other women leads to different outcomes than mixed-gender or all-male groups. It is less clear whether certain voting patterns are indicative of “better” deliberative outcomes.

### **III. Summary of Key Findings**

A summary of key findings based on descriptive and experimental data collected during the impact study of constituency dialogues and deliberative sessions is presented below. Detailed descriptions of the analyses and discussions of findings for the qualitative and quantitative data sets are included in the companion reports referenced in annexes I and II.

#### ***Constituency Dialogues***

##### **Experimental findings**

Holding a CD had statistically significant positive effects for individuals in treatment villages on indicators of knowledge of the political process and self-reported engagement in civic and political behaviors. The effect of a CD on individual attitudes towards politics,

the political process and citizens' role in that process is not consistently positive or negative or statistically significant for most of the relevant survey indicators. There are some differences in how men and women responded to the CD across knowledge, attitudes and reported behavior indicators.

*CD effect on knowledge.* The survey included open-ended and closed questions (that offered fixed or multiple choice options) about the roles and responsibilities of the National Assembly and MNAs and individuals' right to talk to MNAs about their concerns.

- The baseline data alone demonstrated the stark difference between men and women in political knowledge. Women had significantly lower survey scores than men, which would indicate that women in villages served by the CD program have, on average, much less political knowledge than men.
- After a CD was held, respondents in treatment villages were significantly more likely than respondents in control villages to provide any response to various open-ended questions and to answer closed questions correctly. On several questions, the positive effect is either greater or exclusively among men.

*CD effect on attitudes.* To assess individuals' confidence in and attitudes towards the political process, the survey included a series of questions about respondents' general interest in politics, their individual role in solving problems at the community and country levels, the role of opposition parties in a democracy, the meaning of voting in elections, and perceived MNA responsiveness to respondents' communities.

- Compared to individuals in control villages, respondents in CD villages were 5.6% more likely to report being "very interested" in politics and 8.7% less likely to report being "not interested" in politics after the CD was conducted.
- Across other attitudinal questions, there were not consistent and statistically significant effects of the CD, either positive or negative, on confidence in the political process or citizens' role in that process.
- Although respondents' attitudes did not change overall, women in CD villages were more likely (than women in control villages) to agree with the following statements because of the CD: "It is good for democracy in Cambodia to have opposition parties," and "I can choose who represents me in government."
- The CD caused survey respondents in treatment villages to be 27% more likely to agree that "MNAs communicate with [my] community about what they are doing in parliament", and 15% more likely to report being aware of specific activities MNAs had conducted on behalf of their communities.

*CD effect on behavior.* To assess the effect of a CD on behavior, the survey included a series of questions on self-reported membership in community associations and groups,

engagement or willingness to engage in specific [legal] civic or political actions, and engagement or willingness to engage specific political actors or officials.

- The CD had significant positive effects on treatment village respondents' self-reported membership to two out of the nine types of groups or neighborhood associations listed. Individuals living in CD villages were 6.3% more likely to report belonging to a political party and 9.5% more likely to report belonging to a "self-help" group after the CD took place, compared to individuals in control villages. The latter effect was more pronounced for women (10.9%) than for men (8.3%).
- A series of 12 civic and political actions were combined into an index for survey analysis. The index included actions other than voting, such as attending a political party event or commune council meeting, filing a case in court, or distributing information on political issues. On this index of citizen engagement, the CD caused an average of a 6.3% increase in the probability that respondents in CD treatment villages said they "already had" or "would" take some kind of action. The CD effect was significant and positive for 10 of the 12 specific actions, ranging from a 4% to 15% increase in the likelihood that respondents said they "already had" or "would" engage in those behaviors. Results for some of the specific actions on this index are noted below.
- Among the commune-level actions, the CD caused a 4% increase in respondents reporting that they "already have" or "would" attend a commune council meeting. The findings are not significant for the related actions of speaking at a commune council meeting or filing a complaint with the commune council. The CD caused women, relative to men, to be more likely to report specific actions, including filing a case in court, participating in a peaceful demonstration, participating in a strike in the workplace, signing or thumb-printing a petition, and writing a letter or contacting an MNA.
- Finally, the CD caused an increase in the frequency with which respondents reported talking about politics with other people, such as friends or neighbors. The CD did not have a significant effect, positive or negative, on whether respondents would have a hard time discussing controversial issues with friends or neighbors.

### **Descriptive findings**

Opposition and ruling party supporters were both present at all nine CDs in generally balanced numbers. Participating MNAs respected the CD code of conduct most of the time. The CD environment varied by commune with a strong police presence observed at three of the nine CDs. At some of these CDs, police were perceived to be attempting to intimidate CD participants who raised concerns.

## ***Deliberative Sessions***

### **Experimental findings**

The deliberative session had few detectable effects on participant knowledge, attitudes, behavior, or priority issues as measured by the same survey questions summarized in the CD findings section. As noted in the data limitations discussion above, and in the companion quantitative report, these findings should be interpreted cautiously as fewer survey respondents acted on their deliberative session invitations than anticipated. There is some survey evidence that the deliberative sessions affected men and women differently, and sometimes in opposite ways.

*Deliberative session effect on knowledge.* The survey did not detect any significant effects – positive or negative – of the deliberative sessions on participant knowledge of the political process. There is one exception among women.

- The deliberative sessions caused a 6.6% increase in the probability that women correctly responded that “giving gifts,” one of the options for a survey question, was not a responsibility of MNAs.

*Deliberative session effect on attitudes.* The deliberative sessions had no effect on survey respondents’ reported interest in politics and no average effect across men and women on questions about confidence in the political process. However, there is some evidence that deliberative sessions affected attitudes among men and women differently.

- Among men invited to attend a deliberative session, significantly fewer agreed with the statement, “None of the MNAs from my province are aware of issues facing the local people.” Among women, significantly fewer agreed with the statement, “It does not matter how I vote, nothing will change.”

*Deliberative session effect on behavior.* The deliberative sessions had no average effects detected on the survey across men and women on self-reported civic and political behavior. There are some differences between men and women around specific behaviors.

- Contrary to the evaluation team’s expectations, the deliberative sessions did not affect the frequency with which respondents reported talking about politics with other people, such as friends or neighbors, or whether respondents would have a hard time discussing controversial issues with friends or neighbors.
- The deliberative sessions caused male respondents to be 2.3% more likely to join an NGO and 1.1% more likely to join a fisher’s association. These changes are statistically significant but are small shifts, and less meaningful, in actual practice.
- The deliberative sessions caused women to be 6.5% more likely to say they would write a letter or complaint to a government authority. While this change is not statistically significant, it could be a meaningful change in actual citizen practice.

*Deliberative session effect on priority issues.* The survey included a list of priority issues from which respondents could choose the top three issues they personally considered most important. The deliberative session had no significant effects on individuals' priority issues, as detected in the survey.

### **Descriptive findings**

Systematic observation at the CD showed that deliberative session participants were more active at the CD than other CD attendees. This observational data compares deliberative session participants to other CD-only participants. The deliberative session participants included some individuals who were not randomly selected to be invited to these sessions, and this data includes many self-selected individuals; therefore, these are descriptive findings. Across all deliberative sessions, 65.7% of participants attended a CD the following day. Among these individuals, deliberative session participants raised their hands and spoke at a CD more than twice as often as CD participants who had not attended a deliberative session. This was true for both male and female deliberative session participants: women spoke at a CD one and a half times more often than CD-only female participants; and men spoke two and a half times more often than CD-only male participants.

Further descriptive findings provide context to the priority issues identified by deliberative session groups – many of which are similar to, but ranked somewhat differently than those listed on the survey. These findings are based on descriptive qualitative data from 80 deliberative sessions and nine CDs conducted during this study.

- The issues identified through the deliberative session group ranking process highlighted the interrelated nature of problems faced by the participants. The groups' discussions demonstrated that the problems raised had wide-reaching effects on their families, community politics, the local economy, and the natural environment.
- The priority issues identified through the deliberative sessions varied by province and commune; however, corruption was a common theme across communes. The corruption experienced by participants took many forms, affecting service delivery, distribution of humanitarian aid, and land concessions. Land seizure was acutely noted in a third of the communes. Participants associated this issue with other problems, including dispossession of land and infringement of legal rights, detrimental environmental and health effects, and violent retribution or imprisonment for citizens who mobilized in protest.

### ***Deliberative Session Gender Dynamics***

#### **Experimental findings**

Experimental survey data were used to examine the effects of deliberative session gender variations on participant attitudes, knowledge and behavior. Experimental matrix-ranking

data were used to examine the effects of facilitator gender and group composition on priority problems and solution ranking.

*Deliberative session participant attitudes and knowledge.* The deliberative session facilitator's gender and the gender composition of the group had few detectable effects on participant responses to survey questions about their knowledge of, attitudes toward, and participation in political and civic life. This analysis is limited to the participants who attended the deliberative session and could be matched to a pre- and post-survey. The significant findings could be due to chance rather than an effect caused by the program.

*Deliberative session participant behavior.* There are few survey findings on deliberative session effect on respondents' reported behavior. For example, participants in all-female groups were more likely (than participants in other group gender compositions) to report a willingness to vote in the 2012 commune council elections. Again, these findings should be interpreted cautiously due to the small percentage of surveyed individuals who accepted the deliberative session invitation and were considered in this analysis.

The evaluation team considered the deliberative session voting results recorded on the group matrices as an observed behavior among deliberative session participants. These effects are based on measures piloted in this study, which suggest that the facilitator gender and group composition affected participant behavior. While the findings are statistically significant for gender, understanding their meaning for measuring deliberation – whether positive or negative – requires further study.

- Facilitator gender affected how deliberative session groups distributed votes across their matrices. Male-facilitated groups were significantly more likely than female-facilitated groups to vote in consensus, “clustering” their votes for single solutions as well as among their top three out of six priority solutions.

*Deliberative session participant priority issues.* As noted above, the deliberative session had no significant effects on individuals' priority issues, as detected in the survey. However, some differences were detected in the analysis of deliberative session qualitative data and matrix voting patterns.

- The gender composition influenced how groups ranked their priority problems. All-male groups placed a higher priority on the lack of infrastructure and were less likely (compared to other group types) to rank corruption as one of the top three priorities. Mixed-gender groups were more likely than other group types to identify a lack of health clinics among the top three priorities.
- The facilitator gender also caused a difference in how deliberative groups ranked their priority problems. Male-facilitated groups were more likely than female-facilitated groups to vote for lack of infrastructure. They were less likely than female-facilitated groups to vote for high cost of living and access to markets among the top priority issues.

- Facilitator gender also affected the types of solutions for which groups voted. All groups tended to identify external solutions – those that required MNA action – over internal solutions – those that required citizen action. However, male-facilitated groups were significantly more likely to prioritize external solutions compared to the other group composition types. Female-facilitated groups were significantly more likely to prioritize internal solutions compared to other group types.

#### **IV. Conclusions**

The findings from NDI’s mixed-methods impact evaluation will contribute to the current CD program and to similar future programming in Cambodia and other countries. The findings of this study are also relevant to ongoing program design and evaluation dialogue within the broader community of international democracy assistance practitioners, donor agencies and academics. Conclusions are presented below, first those related to the program followed by considerations for future evaluation initiatives.

##### ***Program Design and Implementation***

- This study showed that a CD caused positive change at the individual knowledge levels and self-reported engagement in some civic and political behaviors, but did not detect evidence of the program causing greater citizen demand of their MNAs.

The survey data demonstrated that a CD caused an increase in basic civic and political knowledge among individuals, which is the first step in the results chain examined by this study. However, the evaluation team did not detect evidence that individuals were more likely to put pressure on MNAs to address their concerns, which is the subsequent step in the results chain. Lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that there is not a link between the CD program and citizen demand in Cambodia. Among others, certain factors merit further study to understand the linkage between citizens’ increased political knowledge and awareness and more active citizen demand for MNA responsiveness, including:

- a. expanding the data collection timeline beyond the period immediately following a CD to allow time for medium- or longer-term changes in citizen behavior to take place and to assess the sustainability of effects;
  - b. identifying measures of observed, rather than self-reported behavior change, to study outcomes in actual practice (see the evaluation conclusion on behavior indicators below);
  - c. determining the “dosage” – or the quantity of program events– needed to affect citizen demand beyond a single CD or deliberative session; and
  - d. exploring additional program support for citizen engagement, such as the addition of an explicit civic education or citizen participation component to the CD.
- The deliberative session pilot effort generated reliable qualitative data within a randomized impact evaluation and demonstrated the differences in men and women’s voices as well as the risks Cambodians face in speaking out about issues like corruption.

While the experimental survey data did not detect any changes caused by the deliberative sessions, the experimental matrix voting pattern data did show that the facilitator's gender and group gender composition caused groups to reach different outcomes. These findings underscore the differences in men and women's voices. These discussions also demonstrated the risks that Cambodians face in speaking out about issues like corruption. A single deliberative session is unlikely to support sustainable solutions to the problems discussed and could even put participants at risk by encouraging the discussion of such topics. Rather than a stand-alone program activity, deliberative sessions should be considered part of a broader programmatic approach to support citizen engagement and demand for greater responsiveness and accountability of their elected officials.

- The mixed methods approach of this impact study highlighted positive changes in individuals' knowledge caused by the program as well as contextual challenges and risks of greater citizen engagement in Cambodia.

Together, the different data sets provide a fuller picture of citizen engagement in the context of this program than any of the data sets do alone. Descriptive observational data from the nine CDs showed that the participating MNAs generally adhered to the code of conduct, and that the CDs were inclusive of both the ruling and opposition party MNAs and their supporters in the audience. Experimental survey data showed that the CD caused a positive effect on individuals' knowledge; however, this data did not show a clear or statistically significant effect of the CD or the deliberative session on individuals' confidence in the political process or system. The descriptive deliberative session data highlighted participants' experiences – beyond the context of the CD – with intimidation, corruption, land seizure, and sometimes violent retribution against individuals who spoke out against local problems. These findings point to the need for further study of the conditions related to and consequences of greater citizen demand for individuals in a closed political system.

- The scope of this evaluation did not include the “supply” side of the program theory of change, and many questions remain regarding how the program may change MNA behavior.

Since the CD program began in 2004, most of the programmatic inputs (prior to the introduction of the deliberative sessions) have focused on MNAs and the supply side of the theory of change. The program has collected descriptive qualitative data that demonstrate anecdotes of both citizen demands for action and MNA initiatives to address citizen demands. Similar to the questions noted above about citizen demand, more systematic information is needed to understand the extent to which the program contributes to or causes positive or negative change in MNAs' perception of political competition and their understanding of constituents' needs. There are challenges to studying the program effect on MNAs. In the Cambodian context, it would not be feasible to randomize MNA participation in the program or even to randomly assign MNAs to different phases of a delayed program roll-out. Non-experimental data could help to explore programmatic contribution to MNA's understanding of and action on constituent needs.

## ***Evaluation Design and Implementation***

- The academic-practitioner partnership strengthened the evaluation team and the quality of the impact study, and this model should be considered when feasible for future impact studies in the democracy and governance sector.

This partnership merged practitioner and academic expertise on equal footing, which enabled the evaluation team to mitigate anticipated risks and effectively troubleshoot challenges that arose during implementation and to collect and analyze a range of quantitative and qualitative data sets. The practitioners' relationships and country experience proved critical for understanding the political and programmatic contexts. This perspective served to represent the original program purpose in the midst of evolving evaluation design options and to inform the development of data collection tools and their translation into Khmer. The academic perspective was invaluable in exploring evaluation design options and preserving the rigor of the impact evaluation design as challenges arose during implementation. This expertise was essential for exploring analysis options for the complex body of quantitative and qualitative data sets. Finally, the extension of the academic-practitioner partnership into the analysis phase of the evaluation ensured that evaluative findings have utility for a broader audience, including program implementers, policymakers as well as the academic community.

- The evaluation team considered various indicators to measure change in individual's behavior, but few of these measures proved viable in practice.

This evaluation included several measures of individual behavior, including survey questions on participant-reported action or intent of future action, and systematic observation of deliberative session participants' behavior at the CD. The social and political context and practices rendered other measures unfeasible or potentially harmful to participants. The evaluation team explored the use of commune council meeting records and other means of tracking individual actions (letter campaigns, citizen petitions, SMS messages, citizen visits to an MNA's office) in the months following the deliberative sessions and CDs. Commune council meeting records are not regularly maintained nor made publicly available. MNA records of constituent contact are not systematically maintained, if they exist at all. Citizen action through written formats would exclude large parts of the target program population, which has high illiteracy rates. The more visible measures of citizen behavior expose individuals to scrutiny and possible retaliation from government or other state officials. These measurement challenges were shaped by the Cambodian political context and are likely to be encountered across most democracy and governance programs.

- The deliberative session matrix-ranking measures were effective in capturing reliable qualitative data within a randomized impact evaluation. However, collecting and analyzing this qualitative data may be cost prohibitive for many programs.

The introduction of the deliberative session was a valuable pilot effort both for this impact evaluation and to assess a potential citizen engagement program activity. As noted above in

the programmatic conclusions, deliberative sessions should not be considered as stand-alone or one-time program activities. The volume of qualitative data collected and analyzed through the 80 deliberative sessions conducted for this study required significant staff and program resources. These costs should be considered against the broader program design and available resources and may be prohibitive for many programs to absorb. Future program design and evaluation work around this program component should also take into consideration challenges faced with high levels of participant attrition. The study was limited by invited participants not acting on the deliberative session invitation as frequently as anticipated. The participant attrition resulted in a diminished sample size for analysis, which may not have detected actual effects.

# ANNEX I to CEPPS NDI Cambodia Impact Evaluation Report

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Evaluation Report: The Constituency Dialogue  
Program in Cambodia

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February 2013



# Evaluation Report: The Constituency Dialogue Program in Cambodia<sup>1</sup>

February 11, 2013

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed represent only the views of the author, and do not reflect the views of NDI or its staff. The author served as a pro-bono consultant on the project, acting as the principal investigator during the implementation and analysis phases in exchange for access to the data. Travel to Cambodia, lodging, and per diem were paid for the researcher by NDI. Molly Watts and Emily Lamb served as field researchers and provided excellent support in implementation and analysis of this study. All errors and omissions are the sole responsibility of the author.



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## I. Executive Summary

Cambodia has held periodic multiparty elections since 1993 but is still considered an electoral authoritarian regime. The Cambodian People's Party (CPP), led by Prime Minister Hun Sen, dominates Cambodian political life.<sup>2</sup> Cambodia is one of the poorest countries in the Asian region, with a per capita gross national income of USD \$2,230 in 2011. The effects of the civil war, Cambodian genocide (1975-1979) and Vietnamese occupation are still evident.

Within this context, the constituency dialogue (CD) program in Cambodia is a multi-year democracy promotion effort implemented by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) which brings elected members of the National Assembly (MNAs) to rural villages in their province in order to participate in a multi-party town hall meeting. The evaluation team conducted a randomized evaluation of the program to better understand some of the effects of participation in a CD, as well as the effects of small group meetings, or deliberative sessions, held before the CD. This document provides a detailed description of the study design and the quantitative results, primarily based on survey evidence but also including quantitative evidence collected during the deliberative sessions. In a companion document authored by Linda Stern of NDI, the qualitative results from the same study are presented.

The central questions in the study focus on how rural Cambodians were influenced by attending a CD, as well as how participants were influenced by an additional deliberative session held before the CD on problems facing their community and possible solutions to those problems. Before this evaluation, program staff had little systematic knowledge about the population of citizens that are typically served by the program, nor strong predictions about the effects the program has on citizens.<sup>3</sup> This study focused on the hypothesis that if rural citizens attended a CD, their political knowledge, attitudes toward democracy, and reported political behavior would change in a manner that would make them more aware of democratic institutions, more willing to discuss issues facing their community, more aware of their rights as citizens, and by extension, more likely to hold their elected officials accountable.

The second component of this study was the addition of deliberative sessions held the day before the CD took place, where a small group of participants discussed problems facing their community, proposed solutions to those problems, and voted on their preferred solution to each of three priority problems within their group. These groups were varied by gender composition of participants and facilitator gender. This component of the study explored the general expectations that the deliberative sessions would also influence attitudes, knowledge, and behavior, and have effects on what citizens outline as priority issues for their community. NDI also was interested in whether the effects of the program varied by gender.

In interpreting these results, it is important to note that the evaluation focused on change among citizens and did not test the effect of the program on MNA behavior. In this

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<sup>2</sup> McCargo 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Prior to the evaluation, program staff had stronger beliefs about the likely effect of the CD program on participating MNAs. In planning the evaluation design, program staff articulated a theory of change that encompassed this belief as well as the "bottom up" effect of changing citizen demands on MNAs. This is described in greater detail in the companion qualitative report and summary report.

case, MNAs were not randomly assigned to participate in a CD event for a variety of logistical reasons; therefore, the evaluation focused primarily on citizen-level or “bottom-up” change.<sup>4</sup> Citizens in treatment and control villages were surveyed before and after the CD. Quantitative data collected during the deliberative session voting processes were also used to test for facilitator and group composition gender effects on the outcomes of the deliberative process. Overall the study found:

1. Participation in a CD had positive and significant effects on citizen knowledge of the political process, self-reported engagement with the political process, familiarity with politics, and perceptions of MNA responsiveness.
2. Citizens exposed to the CD were also more likely to have reported voting in the last election, more likely to say they would vote in the next election, and more likely to say they belonged to a political party or “self-help” group.
3. Contrary to expectations, the CD does not consistently change citizen confidence in the political process.
4. The deliberative sessions overall had few detectable effects on knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, as measured in the average effects on survey responses.
5. There is some evidence that men and women were affected differently by the additional deliberative sessions.
6. The gender compositions of the deliberative group’s participants and the facilitator’s gender have consistent effects on deliberative session voting behavior.

Note that null effects should be interpreted with care, as they indicate that the study, as designed and implemented, did not detect consistent effects of the intervention. Null results can occur because there is no effect of the intervention; however they can also occur for a variety of other reasons, such as problems with the implementation of the study, or if the effects of the intervention were not captured by measures used.

## **II. Project Description**

This document summarizes and presents the results of a study of the constituency dialogue program in Cambodia, a multi-year democracy promotion effort implemented by NDI that brings elected members of the National Assembly to rural villages in their province for a multi-party town hall meeting. The CD events are open to the public and are intended to provide an opportunity for citizens to learn more about multi-party democracy, voice their concerns to their MNAs, and request that actions be taken to resolve specific problems. Each event is attended by MNAs from two or more political parties and is moderated by an NDI staff member. The events take place in rural villages that are rarely visited by national level officials. CDs are a major event in the community and are typically attended by 400-1,000 residents.

At each CD, an NDI staff member gives a short introduction in which they make brief remarks about multiparty democracy, the importance of open discourse, and the roles and

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<sup>4</sup> Note that as part of the evaluation, NDI’s local partner non-governmental organizations (NGOs) did collect data on whether MNAs had followed up on any of their promises in both the treatment and control villages. But, because MNAs were not randomly assigned to participate in the CD event, the causal effect of the CD on MNA behavior is difficult to tease out.

responsibilities of the MNAs. Each MNA is given a set speaking time at the beginning and end of the CD. After the MNAs' opening remarks, the floor is open to questions from anyone in the community. The forum thus provides a rare opportunity for policy debate and showcases the distinctions between legislators from multiple political parties and their approaches to both local and national concerns. In the context of Cambodian politics, it is an extremely rare opportunity for opposition parties to appear on more or less equal footing with the dominant Cambodian People's Party. MNAs often use the opportunity to update citizens on the activities of the legislature and government and provide other information relevant to their constituents. The dialogues encourage two-way communication and are unscripted, allowing for sometimes challenging questions and demands from citizens.

The study, as a whole, planned to address eight specific evaluation questions:

- (1) Does exposure to the CD change individual attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior? Are men and women affected differently participation in the CD?
- (2) Does participation in a deliberative session before the CD change individual attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?
- (3) How does participation in the deliberative sessions before the CD differentially impact individuals' priority issues?
- (4) Does the gender composition of the deliberative sessions differentially impact participant attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?
- (5) Does the gender composition of the deliberative group differentially impact the priority issues of participants?
- (6) Does the gender of the deliberative session facilitator differentially impact participant attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?
- (7) Does the gender of the deliberative session facilitator differentially influence the priority issues of participants?
- (8) Do individual deliberative session facilitators differentially impact the priorities of participants?

The evaluation of this program consists of several components, and the study relied on three separate randomizations and two datasets which are described in greater detail below. Overall, the study can be divided into three parts based on the randomized treatments:

**Part A: Constituency Dialogue:** Through a random selection process, one village received the CD treatment out of a pair of villages from the same district. Data include pre- and post-treatment survey data for six village pairs (twelve total villages), as well as qualitative observation of actions in the treatment and control villages. This randomization addresses question (1) above.

**Part B: Pre-CD Deliberative Sessions:** Within the CD treatment villages, half of pre-treatment survey participants were randomly invited to participate in an additional deliberative session the day before the CD event. Using an invitation with a unique identifying number that respondents were asked to bring with them to the deliberative session, the evaluation team attempted to match whether an individual participated in the deliberative session with that individual's survey responses. This component of the study addresses questions (2)-(3); although issues with implementation, including difficulty in matching survey participants with the

invitation numbers and lower than expected acceptance rates of the invitation, present challenges.

**Part C: Deliberative Group Composition and Facilitators:** The evaluation team randomly assigned individuals at the deliberative sessions to small groups of three to five people such that groups consisted of only women, only men, or both. Women-only groups were facilitated by female facilitators, men-only groups were facilitated by male facilitators, and mixed groups were facilitated by either a male or female. This final level of randomization addresses questions (4)-(8). Deliberative session facilitators recorded information on the substance of the group discussion, including lists generated by the groups of priority issues facing the community, solutions posed by the group to the top three problems, and participant voting data taken from a 3x6 matrix of problems and solutions intended to capture the deliberation. Deliberative session facilitators discretely observed their group participants at the CD event the next day to determine whether these individuals were more or less likely than the average CD participant to raise their hand or to ask a question of the MNAs.

The next section of this report provides a very brief overview of academic work relevant to this study. The remainder of the document summarizes the quantitative findings from the survey about the effects of the CD and the effects of the deliberative session on citizen knowledge, attitudes and behavior; priority issues identified by citizens on the survey; and voting behavior during the deliberative sessions.

### **III. Existing Studies of Democracy Promotion and Deliberative Democracy**

Although this report evaluates only one part of a broader democracy promotion program, it is relevant to several larger questions of interest to academics in international relations and comparative politics, as well as to policymakers engaged in democracy promotion. Can local-level pro-democracy change be spurred through the intervention of outside actors? Can meaningful change in political attitudes be induced in the short run? How malleable are the aspects of political culture associated with democratization? What are the effects of deliberation in a non-democratic context? This study does not attempt to answer these questions definitively, but it does provide rigorous field experimental evidence that speaks to these questions.

This study joins a growing body of research that relies on field experimental methods to study policy relevant questions.<sup>5</sup> Although the project is motivated by an interest in understanding the effects of democracy promotion efforts, there are no known studies that have used field experimental methods to evaluate an analogous type of international democracy promotion program, particularly in an electoral authoritarian context such as Cambodia.<sup>6</sup> Existing studies on democracy promotion are diverse, and

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<sup>5</sup> Humphreys, Masters, and Sandbu 2006; Humphreys and Weinstein 2009; Wantchekon 2003; Olken 2007; Hyde 2010; Paluck and Green 2009; Fearon, Humphreys, and Weinstein 2009; Beath, Christia, and Enikolopov 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Leonard Wantchekon's study of town hall meetings introduced as a campaign tactic to political campaigns in Benin is the closest, but is different in that his study is not of a foreign democracy promotion program and the town hall meetings are campaign-related (Wantchekon 2011). The CD town hall meetings are not campaign

many rely on cross-national and case-study evidence.<sup>7</sup> Finkel et al.'s study of the effects of US foreign assistance on democratization found that foreign aid can have a positive effect on levels of democratization, but the cross-national nature of the study makes it very difficult to eliminate the possibility that selection concerns or omitted variable bias can be fully addressed. Scholars including Thomas Carothers and Michal McFaul provide numerous anecdotal examples of successes in democracy promotion, while also highlighting examples of the limits of democracy promotion efforts.<sup>8</sup>

The National Research Council (NRC) report on *Improving Democracy Assistance* highlighted the shortcomings of existing research and tools for evaluation of democracy promotion programs and called for organizations that engage in democracy promotion to use more rigorous methods of evaluation, as many democracy promotion programs should, in theory, have short-term micro-level consequences that can be measured.<sup>9</sup> This study joins a handful of studies that are a response to the call made in the NRC report and represents one of the first pilot impact evaluations initiated because of the report.<sup>10</sup>

Much of the existing field experimental research relevant to democracy and governance interventions does not study democracy promotion specifically.<sup>11</sup> Rather, as Devra Mohler summarizes, academics have examined the political consequences of a number of interventions that are relevant to good governance or democratization – and could therefore be linked to a democracy promotion agenda – but that are not evaluations of existing democracy promotion programs. There are important exceptions to this generalization, including several studies that are not yet published, but there are still only a small number of studies that can identify the causal effects of international democracy promotion efforts.

#### **IV. Experimental Design(s)**

In order to test the proposed program evaluation questions, the evaluation team designed and implemented several randomized components of the study and collected several types of quantitative data. In the following sections, this report presents detailed evidence relevant to many of the research questions outlined above. Overall, the report documents a number of positive effects on citizen knowledge, attitudes, and behavior as a result of exposure to the CD event (question 1), some of which vary by gender. The effect of the CD on citizen confidence in the political process, however, is weak.

Consistent effects of the deliberative sessions (questions 2-3) were not detected in the survey data, with several exceptions detailed below. There are also not consistent effects of the deliberative session's group composition or facilitator gender on reported

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events and are attended by members of multiple political parties. For the deliberative session intervention, an important motivating study is Humphreys, Masters, and Sandbu (2006).

<sup>7</sup> Brown 2005; Bush 2011; Carothers 1997a; Carothers 2004; Carothers 2006; Gillespie and Youngs 2002; Goldsmith 2008; Knack 2004; Ottaway and Carothers 2000; Schraeder 2003; Youngs 2001; Crawford 2001; Finkel, Pérez Liñan, and Seligson 2007; Finkel et al. 2006; National Research Council 2008; and Pevehouse 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Carothers 1997a; Carothers 2004; Carothers 2006; Ottaway and Carothers 2000; Carothers 1997b; McFaul 2004; and McFaul 2009.

<sup>9</sup> National Research Council 2008.

<sup>10</sup> For an excellent summary of relevant work, see Moehler 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

priority issues for MNAs, as measured in the survey (questions 5, 7, and 8).<sup>12</sup> Using data collected from the deliberative sessions, there are significant differences found in voting patterns based on group gender composition, facilitator gender, and individual facilitator (questions 4 and 6).

The absence of evidence regarding effects of the deliberative sessions on priority issues and on knowledge, attitudes, and behavior as reflected in the survey data could indicate that the deliberative sessions have no effect on knowledge, attitudes, behavior, or priority issues. However, it could also be due to lower than expected compliance with the deliberative session treatment and difficulty in matching the survey data with participation in the deliberative sessions. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that the survey data represents only a subset of evidence on the deliberative sessions, and the deliberative sessions should also be evaluated using the qualitative data collected during the deliberative sessions (see companion report).

### ***Constituency Dialogue Randomization***

First, for analysis of the CD, randomization was introduced to the process by which villages were selected to receive a CD event. For a variety of reasons, NDI (in consultation with USAID) determined that national or regional random assignment of the CD to villages was not feasible. During the normal course of the CD program, and outside of the context of this study, villages are selected for the CD event by a local Cambodian NGO that is already active in the relevant province. This decision is delegated to NDI's local partners, who consider a number of factors based on their localized knowledge of villages within the province. Typical criteria for a town hall meeting event include finding villages that are small but accessible by road (rather than boat or footpath), as the goal is to serve rural areas; and that have some political tension but neither too much or too little political tension in the month before the CD. They also look for villages that have local police or local officials who are not hostile to the program, primarily because local officials have the ability to prevent a CD from occurring or pressuring villagers not to attend. NDI views the cooperation of its local partners as essential to the program.

As a result, NDI's field staff determined that this delegated selection process was essential to the program, and abandoning it in favor of NDI-mandated (randomized) selection of villages would compromise the program. The evaluation team instead came up with a method to introduce randomization into the process of assigning the CD events to villages while staying true to the delegated village selection process and the timeline in which villages are only vetted and suggested a minimum of one month before the CD event. The evaluation team requested that the local NGO choose two candidate villages for each potential CD. We also asked the local NGO to ensure that the two villages selected as candidates for the CD were sufficiently far apart as to make travel between them on the day of the town hall meeting unlikely, but that otherwise met all of their criteria for selecting villages. Thus, for each planned CD event, the local NGO used their normal criteria to select two villages (rather than the usual one village) within each target district that would be otherwise equal candidates for a town hall event and similar on variables of interest.<sup>13</sup>

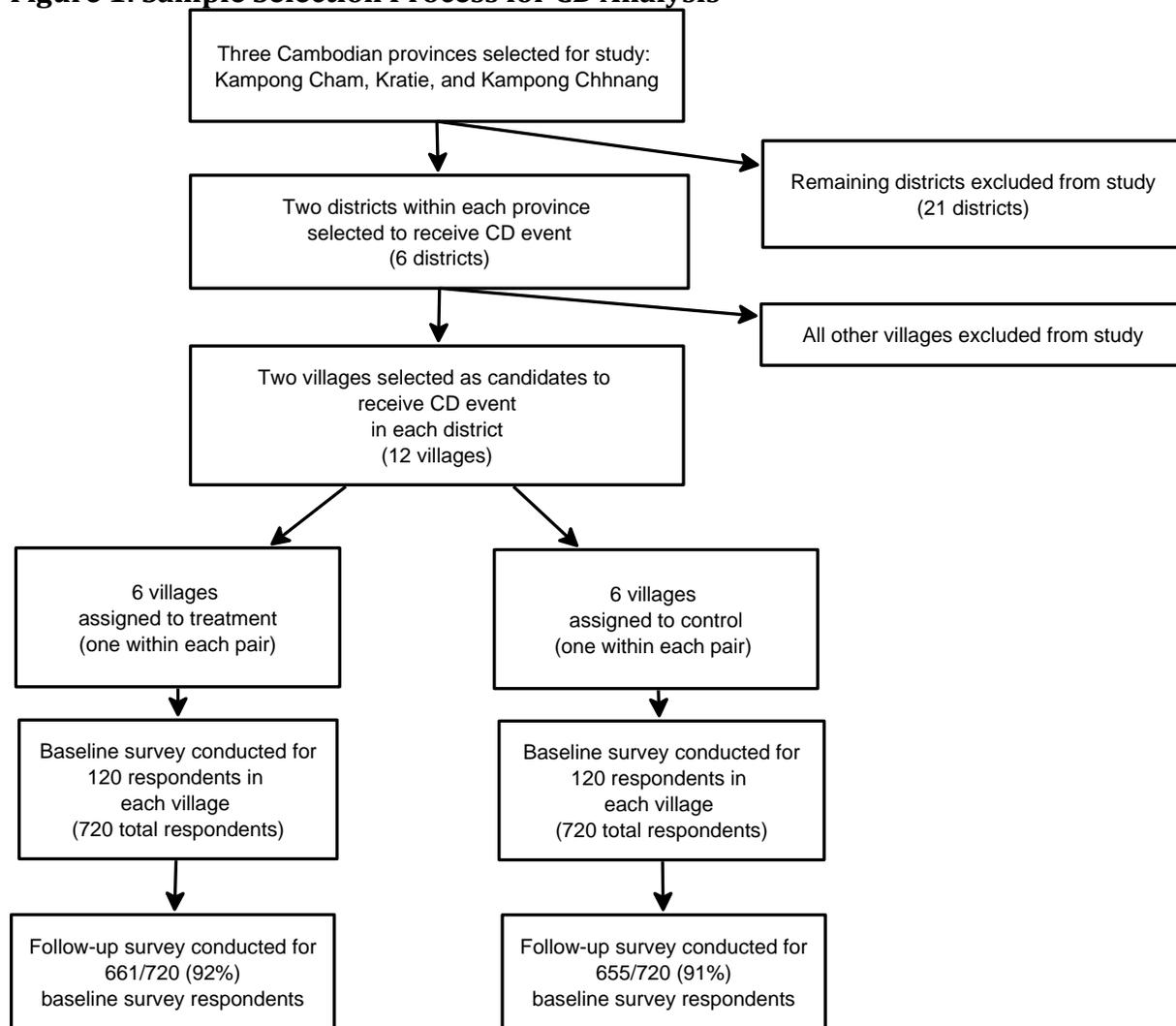
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<sup>12</sup> One future line of inquiry is the comparison between individual survey priorities, group-level priorities after the deliberative sessions, and CD level priorities, as discussed during the deliberative sessions.

<sup>13</sup> This design is also partly a result of a challenge that arose during implementation, which led to a modification of the original plan for randomization at the village level. The original plan was for five villages

After the two village names were forwarded to NDI’s offices in Phnom Penh, a field staff member (with one witness) flipped a coin to determine which village would receive the CD “treatment” and which village would go untreated. NDI and its local partners selected 18 villages in this manner, creating nine pairs of villages, each containing one CD treatment village and one control village. From these 18 villages, the CD analysis drew on pre- and post-test survey data from only 12 villages, or six village pairs. This is due to the fact that the final three control villages selected did not receive the survey.<sup>14</sup>

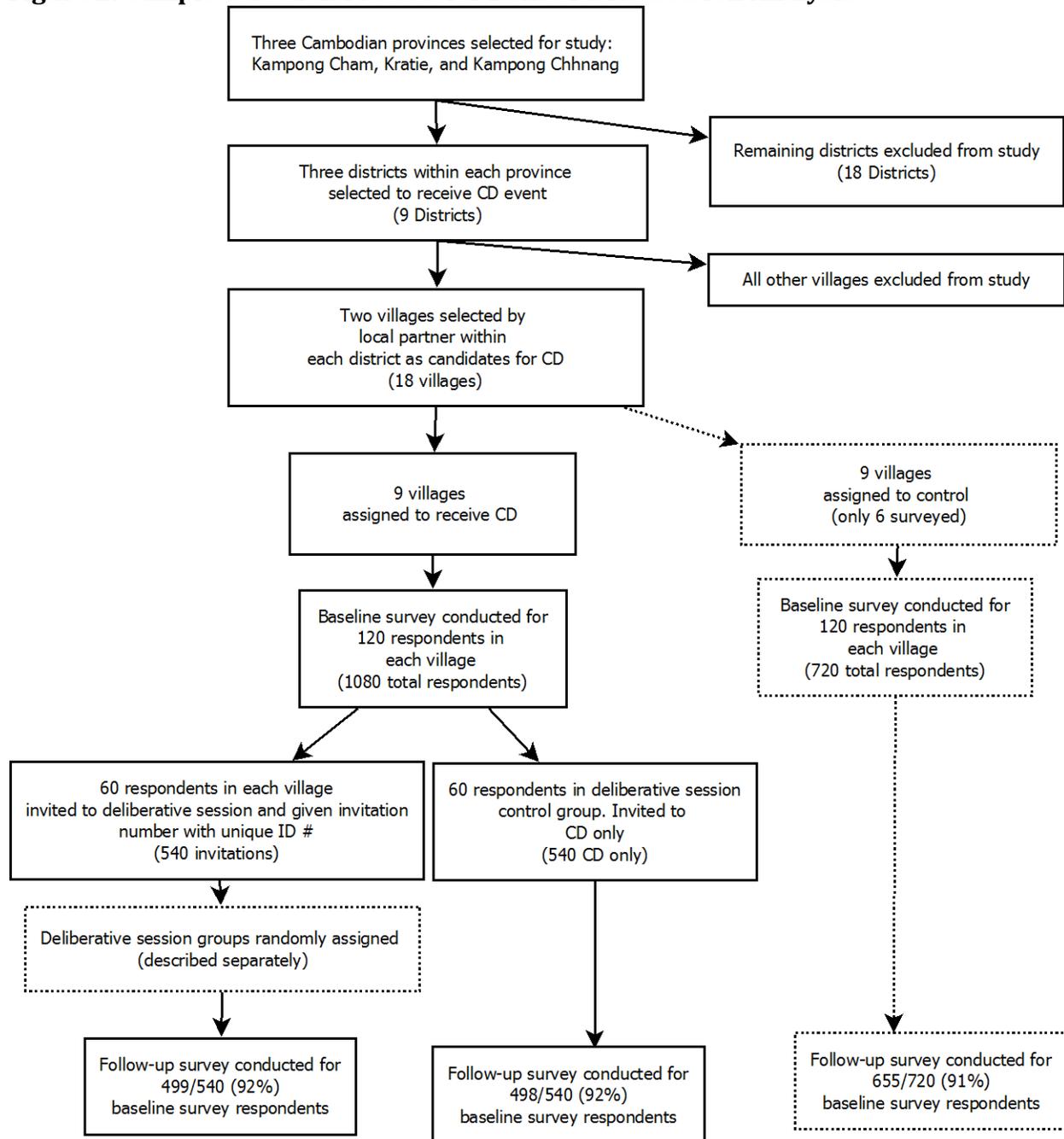
**Figure 1: Sample Selection Process for CD Analysis**



to be proposed simultaneously in each province, three of which would then be randomly selected to receive treatment. It was eventually discovered that the local partners could not propose all five villages in a province simultaneously, and the village-pair procedure was adopted instead.

<sup>14</sup> Prior to establishing the coin toss protocol to randomize village selection within village pairs, this study planned to randomly select three treatment villages out of five villages proposed by the local NGO partners. This initial plan would have used all fifteen villages surveyed in the analysis of the CD and deliberative session programs. When it was discovered in the field that the local NGOs could not choose all five villages simultaneously, the plan had to be altered. Logistically, the survey plan could not be adjusted to include all village pairs. All 18 villages received the qualitative follow up monitoring on activities in the village.

**Figure 2: Sample Selection Process for Deliberative Session Analysis**



***Deliberative Session Randomization and Quantitative Data***

The second component of this study was the addition of small-group deliberative sessions held the day before the CD took place. At each session, participants were divided into groups of 3-6 individuals and one facilitator, and discussed problems facing their community and their proposed solutions to those problems. Each group voted on their preferred solutions to each of three priority problems.

The evaluation team used the surveys in CD treatment villages to randomize deliberative session participation. Within CD villages, half of the pre-treatment survey

respondents were randomly invited to participate in the deliberative sessions while the rest of the respondents were invited to participate in the CD only. About half of all invited participants actually attended the deliberative sessions, which was a lower compliance rate than anticipated and made it less likely that effects of the deliberative session could be detected in the survey data. Evaluation of the deliberative sessions included data from nine villages in which CDs were held, six of which overlap with the CD analysis. The deliberative session analysis compares individuals who were invited to participate in both the deliberative sessions and the CD to those who were invited to participate in the CD only; all individuals reside in the same village, and the comparison should be thought of as within-villages.

In contrast, the CD analysis compares survey respondents in villages that were selected to receive the CD with survey respondents in villages that were not selected to receive the CD. Thus, in the CD analysis the individuals compared are from two different villages in the same district. Thus, the populations for the CD and the deliberative session + CD survey analyses are not identical.

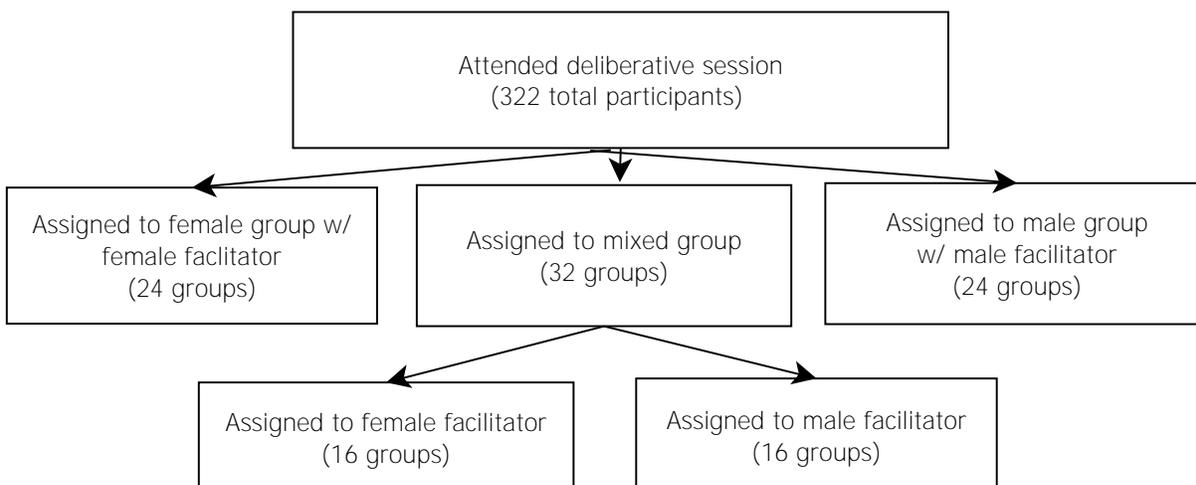
### ***Randomization of Group Composition and Facilitators at Deliberative Sessions***

The third level of randomization took place once participants arrived at the deliberative session, when the evaluation team randomly assigned participants to small groups (3-6 individuals) of all men, and all women, or mixed gender. Each group was then randomly assigned a facilitator conditional on the group type (all male groups could only have a male facilitator, and all female groups could only have a female facilitator). There are several types of quantitative data used in this part of the analysis.

First, using the deliberative session invitation numbers, the information about group gender composition and facilitator gender was matched to the survey data. However, there are two important details to note. First, this matching could only be completed for surveyed individuals who actually participated in the deliberative session. Second, individuals who participated in the deliberative session and took the pre- and post-test survey could only be matched to their survey responses if they brought their invitation number with them to the deliberative session. There were 540 individuals invited to participate in the deliberative sessions, and 499 of these individuals completed the post-test survey. Using invitation numbers collected at the deliberative sessions, 241 individuals were successfully (and anonymously) matched to the survey data. We suspect that a small portion of these “matches” are likely errors resulting from respondents giving away their invitations and/or lying about their participation in the deliberative sessions and the survey.

After participants were randomly assigned to their small groups, the facilitator led them through a scripted process to brainstorm problems or challenges facing their community. To accommodate illiterate participants, the facilitators used pictures to represent each problem from the brainstorming session. Each participant then used 15 chips (buttons) to distribute across any combination of up to three problems, represented by the pictures. Using this voting process, each deliberative group identified the top three problems among those discussed. Additional quantitative data were collected during the voting at the deliberative sessions, as described below. Whereas the survey data could only be matched to a subset of deliberative session participants, voting data were collected for all deliberative group participants.

**Figure 3: Sample Selection Process among Deliberative Session Attendees<sup>15</sup>**



Once each group identified their top three problems, the facilitator placed the corresponding pictures on a large 3x6 paper matrix, visible to all participants, and asked participants to brainstorm, deliberate, and agree on one “internal” solution to each problem (what citizens could do to help solve that problem) and one “external” solution to each problem (what an MNA or other outsider could do to solve the problem). Finally, citizens were asked to vote for their favored solution, casting votes for only one problem at a time. For problem A, for example, citizens could vote for any of the six solutions, and could distribute their 15 chips (in any combination) across all six possible solutions, *even those that were not originally suggested as solutions to Problem A*. The same process was then repeated for the other two problems. These voting data were recorded by the facilitator.

**Table 1: Deliberative Session Matrix**

	Solution 1 internal	Solution 1 external	Solution 2 internal	Solution 2 external	Solution 3 internal	Solution 3 external
Problem A						
Problem B						
Problem C						

Thus, in theory, for each deliberative group containing  $n$  participants, there were  $15n$  votes cast for each of three problems. In practice, there were some slight variations in the total number of votes recorded. These errors could be the result of participants leaving early, failing to cast all their votes, or a data entry error by the facilitator. To evaluate whether the group type, facilitator gender, or bias from specific facilitators influenced the behavior of deliberative session participants, four calculations were made for each deliberative group based on the matrix voting data. These measures were developed after

<sup>15</sup> Note that two of the all-female groups were excluded from the analysis because on one, too many participants left during the deliberative session, and in the second, the facilitator made errors that invalidated the exercise.

the data were collected, and the evaluation team did not have a clear *ex ante* hypothesis about how these measures would vary across deliberation session group composition and facilitator gender. However, these measures are expected to indicate whether group composition type and/or facilitator gender had any measurable effects on group voting patterns. Please refer to the companion qualitative report for additional discussion of these data.

The first aims to measure the degree to which participants voted for the solutions originally proposed for specific problems. This variable is called *On-Diagonal Voting* and records the percentage of all votes cast in the shaded cells in Table 1. A high score would mean that participants generally voted for one of the two originally proposed solutions. A low score would mean that participants voted for solutions other than the two that the group originally proposed for each solution.

The second variable created from the matrix voting data, the *External Solution Vote Share*, aims to measure the proportion of votes cast for internal solutions versus external solutions. This measure is an indicator of the degree to which participants tended to vote for external solutions instead of internal solutions across all of the problems. The percent of votes cast for external solutions is the inverse of the percent of votes cast for internal solutions.

One concern in public voting sessions is that one group participant will dominate the choices by voting first, and all other participants will cast their votes for the same choice, or that citizens will feel pressure to vote the same as others. If this happened, it could be reflected in clustering on one solution, although it could also reflect actual consensus resulting from deliberation. To capture this potential pattern, we created a measure of the degree to which voting is not evenly distributed across all possible vote choices, called *Vote Clustering*. We first calculate the votes that would be received in each cell if votes were distributed evenly for all six possible choices, and then calculate the average distance from this number for each group.

Finally, to capture the proportion of votes cast for any one solution, the evaluation team created a measure of the maximum vote share received by any one solution across all three problems. This measure is called *Max Solution Vote Share* and should be higher when the groups' votes are clustered on one particular solution.

## **V. Quantitative Data**

### *Survey Data*

A Cambodian research firm, Center for Advanced Study, implemented the survey, hiring and training Cambodian enumerators who conducted face-to-face interviews with respondents. In each village selected for the study, 120 adults were surveyed one week prior to the CD, and the same individuals were contacted again approximately one week after the survey; comparable baseline and outcome data were collected from individuals in six villages that did not receive the CD treatment. As much as possible, the surveys in the paired villages were fielded at about the same time.<sup>16</sup> The relatively short time horizon was

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<sup>16</sup> A precise timeline is available upon request. Flooding disrupted one of the surveys and delayed its implementation. One of the CDs was canceled at the last minute, which meant that the pre-test survey and the deliberative session were held as originally scheduled, and the CD and post-test survey were delayed by three weeks.

used primarily because of concerns about individuals who took the pre-test being relocated for the post-test, particularly during seasons when significant portions of the population travel for agricultural work. However, the short time horizon means that any effects detected after one week could dissipate over longer periods of time.

The survey captain picked a random starting point within each target village, and then enumerators surveyed one adult from each household; the gender of the target respondent in each household was selected by coin flip. If 120 adults were not available in the village selected, the survey continued into the next closest village. All groups of 120 adults are from the same commune. No other stratification occurred within each commune, and the survey is not intended to be representative of the larger Cambodian population nor necessarily representative of the entire population of the village. Many young people work outside of their home villages for significant portions of the year. The population is stratified on gender, and within each gender is representative of the village population that is most likely to be exposed to the CD.

For the CD only analysis, because the randomization took place at the village level, we compare outcomes within six village-pairs by whether the village was treated with the CD event (six treatment villages) or not (six control villages). Although there are several plausible methods for analysis, we have elected to present only one here for ease of interpretation. Because we are primarily interested in individual level change we continue to rely on individual level data but cluster the standard errors at the village level, as the assignment of the CD and the randomization occurred at the village level. All CD analysis should account for the village-pair randomization, and therefore all CD models include village-pair fixed effects. This means that respondents in a treatment village are compared to respondents in the control village in the same district. Results for the CD analysis are presented from the following model:

$$\gamma_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 T_{it} + \beta_2 \gamma_{i(t-1)} + \mu_1 + \dots + \mu_5 + \varepsilon_i$$

Where  $\gamma_{it}$  represents each outcome variable of interest for individual  $i$  at time  $t$ . Time  $t$  indicates the follow up survey, whereas time  $t-1$  indicates the baseline survey.  $T_{it}$  represents the treatment status, and is equal to 1 if individual  $i$  lived in a village that received the CD treatment. The variables  $\mu_1$  through  $\mu_5$  indicate village-pair dummies (with one village-pair serving as the residual category), and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the error term.

Turning to the deliberative session analysis, we use a similar comparison but account for the randomization at the individual level. For all results on the effects of the deliberative sessions, we compare survey responses between those who were invited to the deliberative session with those who were not, within each of the nine villages that received the CD. As noted above, the samples for the CD only and the deliberative session analysis are not the same in this study. The deliberative session analysis includes 9 villages: 6 villages from the CD only analysis, as well as the three additional treatment villages.<sup>17</sup> Whereas the CD randomization took place at the village level, the deliberative session

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<sup>17</sup> As noted above, the original plan was for five villages to be proposed simultaneously in each province, three of which would then be randomly selected to receive treatment. If this method were used, then the analysis could include village and province-level dummies. Under the village-pair procedure actually adopted, survey data from the final three CD villages are, therefore, primarily used for the evaluation of the deliberative sessions in the analysis presented here. It would be possible to use the control village data in the deliberative session analysis if several assumptions were relaxed.

treatment was assigned at the individual level. The control villages are not used in the deliberative session analysis presented here because it is methodologically complicated to combine the two randomizations, one at the village level, and one at the individual level. Within each CD treatment village, we compare survey responses based on whether the individual was *invited* to the deliberative session. Results are presented from the following model:

$$\gamma_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 T_{it} + \beta_2 \gamma_{i(t-1)} + \mu_1 + \dots + \mu_8 + \varepsilon_i$$

Where  $\gamma_{it}$  represents each outcome variable of interest for individual  $i$  at time  $t$ . Time  $t$  indicates the follow up survey, whereas time  $t-1$  indicates the baseline survey.  $T_{it}$  represents treatment status and is equal to 1 if individual  $i$  was invited to attend the deliberative session. The variables  $\mu_1$  through  $\mu_8$  indicate village dummies (with one village serving as the residual category), and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the error term. The central difference between these two models is that the CD analysis compares individuals across village-pairs, and the deliberative session analysis makes comparisons within villages.

The results from the survey presented in Tables 3-10 (below) include four pieces of information: the baseline average in the 12 villages included in the CD only study, the baseline average in the 9 villages included in the deliberative session study, the estimated effect of the CD on survey responses and the estimated effect of the deliberative session on survey responses.

Note that many of the outcome variables are binary, and results for these variables are presented as linear probability models. When the outcome variables are ordinal (including Likert scales), the results are also presented from a linear model (OLS). Results are also available with each option on the scale considered separately as a dummy variable.

### *Survey Attrition and Balance Tests*

In using survey data as the outcome measure for a field experiment, one potential concern is that respondents became more likely to drop out of the survey in the post-test if they were assigned to either of the treatment groups. For the CD analysis, in the six treatment villages, 91 percent of pre-test survey respondents completed the follow-up survey. In the six control villages, 92 percent of respondents completed the follow up survey. For the deliberative session analysis, across the nine villages included, completion of the follow up survey is 92 percent in both the treatment and control conditions. The test shown in Table 2 confirms that the probability of taking the follow-up survey is not determined by assignment to either of the treatment conditions. Assignment to the treatment condition has no statistically significant effect on whether the respondent completed the follow up survey, suggesting that survey attrition is not a problem for the analysis.

In experimental designs, it is also important to test for balance among pre-treatment covariates. Because of the randomization, all pre-treatment measurements are equal in expectation. In testing for balance on pre-treatment covariates, we use the following model, similar to that discussed above:

$$Y_{it-1} = \alpha + \beta_1 T_{it} + \mu_1 + \dots + \mu_5 + \varepsilon_i$$

Where  $Y_{it}$  represents each outcome variable of interest for individual  $i$  at time  $t-1$ . Time  $t$  indicates the follow up survey, whereas time  $t-1$  indicates the baseline survey.  $T_{it}$  represents the treatment status, and is equal to 1 if individual  $i$  lived in a village that

received the CD treatment. The variables  $\mu_1$  through  $\mu_5$  indicate village-pair dummies for the CD analysis and village dummies for the deliberative session analysis, and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the error term. Note that all comparisons are within village-pairs. Figure 4 presents the baseline tests for balance between villages assigned to the treatment of the CD event and villages assigned to the control.

**Table 2: Evaluation of Survey Attrition**

	(1) CD--Was Follow-Up Survey Completed?	(2) Deliberative Session --Was Follow-Up Survey Completed?
<i>Assignment to CD Treatment</i>	0.008 (0.007)	
<i>Assignment to Deliberative Session Treatment</i>		0.002 (0.16)
Constant	0.913 (0.005)	0.916
N	1440	1080
F	8.85	1.33
Prob > F	0.0011	0.22
R-squared	0.0075	0.01
Root MSE	0.2816	0.27

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. In Model 1, coefficients for village-pair dummy variables are not reported, and in Model 2, coefficients for village dummy variables are not reported.

The expectation is that all pre-treatment covariates will be the same across treatment and control comparisons. As shown in Figure 4, many of the demographic variables are balanced (i.e. they are not significantly different) between individuals in villages receiving the CD villages and individuals in control villages. However, respondents in the treatment villages are about two years older, on average, and have lived in the village about two years longer. These differences are not substantively meaningful; it is not clear why individuals who are two years older, or who have lived in the village two years longer, would necessarily respond to the CD differently.

In addition to demographic variables, however, citizens were also asked whether they had ever attended a prior CD meeting, or whether they had ever listened to one of these programs on the radio. Contrary to expectations, citizens in treatment villages were slightly more likely to report having ever attended a CD meeting in the baseline survey, and were much more likely to report having listened to a CD on the radio in the baseline survey. The baseline surveys were conducted about one week before the CD took place, and these results are puzzling and suggest that news of the CD leaked in the treatment villages during the baseline survey.

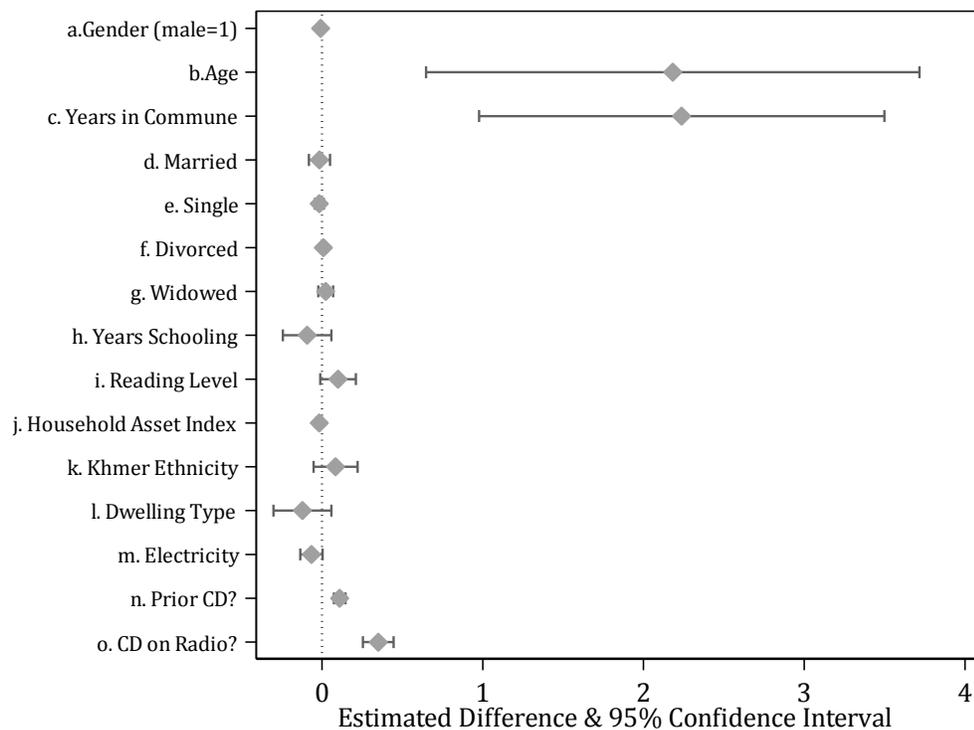
Advertising for the event did not start until after the surveys were completed, however some advance work was conducted by the local NGO partners. There are several possible explanations for this difference in what should be a pre-treatment covariate that is equal between treatment and control. First, the surveys took place over 3-4 days, and each participant was invited to attend the CD at the end of the survey. It is possible that news of

the upcoming CD reached subsequent survey respondents, or that village officials communicated to residents about the upcoming CD event before advertising officially began.

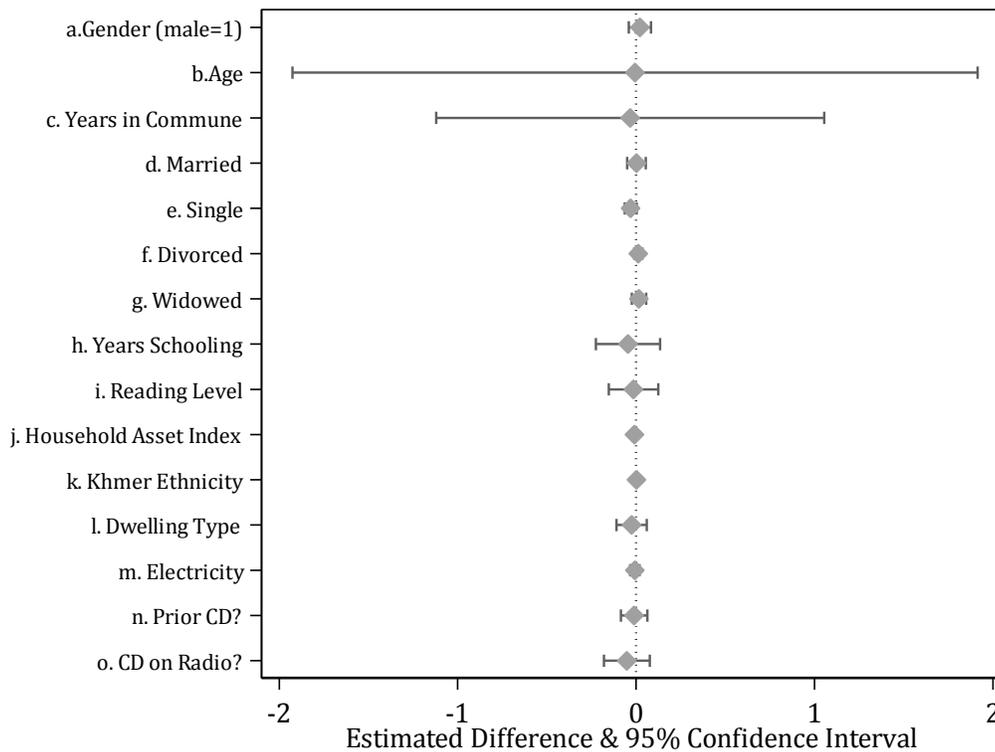
Whatever the explanation for the difference, all analyses have been done including the pre-treatment covariates that are not balanced between treatment and control groups (*age, years in commune, previous CD, and CD radio*) and are available upon request. For simplicity and for reasons of space, we present the models without these variables in this document.

Figure 5 presents the same comparisons for the deliberative session treatment, but using the appropriate within-village comparison for the deliberative session analysis. There are no significant differences between the group assigned to the deliberative session treatment and the group assigned to the deliberative session control group within the CD villages.

**Figure 4: Baseline CD Balance Tests**



**Figure 5: Baseline Balance Tests for Deliberative Session Analysis**



## VI. Quantitative Results: Effects of CD and Deliberative Sessions on Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior

All reported effects are “intent to treat” estimates. This means that all estimates compare the individuals that were randomly assigned to receive the treatment with those who were not. Because not all survey respondents actually attended the CD event, these are likely underestimates of the effect that would have been measured if all survey respondents had attended the CD. Each set of results is presented in a table, with combined indices also presented where appropriate. Across all six treatment villages, about 56 percent reported that they had attended the CD event in the follow-up survey. Zero respondents in the control villages reported having attended the CD event.

Of survey respondents invited to attend the deliberative session, 46 percent reported that they had actually attended the deliberative session. An additional 7 percent of survey respondents who were not invited to the deliberative session also reported having attended. These compliance rates were difficult to predict in advance of the evaluation, and make it less likely that any effects of the deliberative session + CD can be detected in the survey data. The same concerns do not apply to the analysis of the matrix voting data collected during the deliberative sessions.

In analyzing the effects of the CD only and the deliberative session + CD, it is possible to account for compliance issues and the deliberative session spillover (that some “control” individuals attended these sessions). In this report the more conservative estimates are reported, in part because they are more easily explained to a diverse audience, and in part because of time and space constraints. The companion academic

article(s) will consider these issues in greater detail, but the more sophisticated analyses are unlikely to change the core findings.

There are six substantive sections of the survey, all of which were intended to evaluate whether the CD and the deliberative sessions influenced citizen knowledge, attitudes, or political behavior. The six sections are:

- A. Knowledge of the Political Process
- B. Confidence in the Political Process
- C. Familiarity with Politics
- D. Engagement in the Political Process
- E. MNA Responsiveness
- F. Priority Issues (discussed in Section VII)

Exposure to the CD event caused statistically significant changes in the responses to nearly all sections of the survey, consistent with our expectations, with the exception of Confidence in the Political Process. There are some notable differences in how men and women respond to the CD and the deliberative session + CD treatments, all of which are noted in Tables 3-10 and shown in detail in the data appendix. For example, the effect of the CD on several of the political knowledge questions is greater for men, and the effect of the CD is only significant among women for several questions about confidence in the political process.

Several results were unanticipated, including the largely null effects of the CD and the deliberative session on confidence in the political process. Another small but surprising result is that exposure to the CD made respondents 5 percentage points more likely to say they had voted in the last election, even though no election occurred between the pre- and post-test surveys. This may be interpreted as evidence that respondents in the treatment villages were more likely to give their perception of the “right” answer. This phenomenon should be less of an issue on the other sections of the survey. For example, if a citizen responds more accurately to a question about their knowledge of the political process because of social desirability bias, it is still the case that exposure to the CD made them more likely to increase their knowledge about politics, even if the increase could be for the “wrong” reasons. Additionally, misreporting one’s own voting behavior is a common problem in survey data.

Exposure to the CD also made individuals more likely to report belonging to a political party. This is surprising in part because it is not clear that the CD should have had such an effect. Upon reflection, however, it is plausible that local officials from the political parties used the CD as an opportunity to recruit new members, or that citizens felt motivated to join a political party after the CD event.

For each part of the survey, the following sections of this report present the baseline data from the pre-treatment survey, the estimated effect of the CD and the CD plus deliberative session treatment on responses to each question, and information on any gendered or otherwise notable differences. More detailed statistical tables are included in the data appendix to this document.

#### *A. Knowledge of the Political Process*

As shown in Table 3, exposure to the CD caused consistent and statistically significant increases in how citizens responded to questions about their knowledge of the political process. For example, respondents in CD villages became 18 percentage points

more likely to be able to answer the question, “What does a Member of the National Assembly Do?”, and 15 percentage points more likely to say they have a right to talk to their MNAs about their concerns.

To summarize the changes across all knowledge survey questions, two indices were created. The first combines five separate yes/no knowledge questions (KPP1-KPP5), and the second combines the six possible responses to the KPP6 about roles and responsibilities of the National Assembly. Respondents in villages exposed to the CD scored 11 percentage points higher on the Knowledge Index I. To put this change in perspective, an 11 percentage point increase would occur if half of all respondents in CD villages answered one additional knowledge question. On the Knowledge Index II, the CD caused a 6.9 percentage point increase.

There are some differences between men and women in the effects of the CD. The CD caused an average of a 3.6 percentage point increase in the probability that the respondent would give an answer when asked “What does the National Assembly Do?”. This effect is entirely among men, and the CD increases the probability that men will answer this question by 8.3 percentage points. The baseline responses also differ significantly between men and women. The average score on the two knowledge indices for men are 49% and 57%. The average score on the knowledge indices for women are 30% and 46%, indicating that women in villages served by the CD program have, on average, much less baseline political knowledge than men.

Turning to the deliberative session survey results, exposure to the deliberative session did not lead to any statistically significant changes in citizen knowledge of the political process. The (statistically insignificant) point estimates are also small compared with the effects of the CD, which is consistent with a null effect. The one exception is that among women, the deliberative sessions had a 6.6 percentage point increase in the probability that women will say that “giving gifts” is not a responsibility of MNAs. In retrospect, these largely null findings are unsurprising, as the deliberative sessions did not have an explicit educational component.

### *B. Confidence in the Political Process and Options*

In contrast to the knowledge questions in which the effect of the CD was uniformly positive, there is mixed evidence about whether exposure to the CD leads to increased confidence in the political process. Respondents were asked about a series of statements, and responded on a scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. “Don’t Know,” “Can’t Choose” and “Decline to Answer” were coded as indifference, and placed in the middle of the five point scale.<sup>18</sup>

As shown in the CP1 & CP2 Index in Table 4, when asked about agreement or disagreement with various statements about politics, there is not a consistent and statistically significant effect of the CD on confidence in the political process or confidence in political options. The CD treatment is significant for three individual questions: there is an increase of 0.1 points in agreement in with “If I tell my MNAs about issues in my community, they will take action to help solve the problem;” a .16 point increase in

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<sup>18</sup> Results are available upon request with these responses dropped from the analysis, and are largely consistent.

agreement with “It is good for democracy in Cambodia to have opposition parties;” and a 0.09 point increase in agreement with “I can choose who represents me in government.”

There are also several differences in how men and women are influenced by the CD. For example, the results show that the average effect of the CD is to cause a .16 point increase (on a five point scale) in the degree to which respondents agree with the statement that “It is good for democracy in Cambodia to have opposition parties.” However, this effect is only statistically significant among women (+0.23). Exposure to the CD also makes women more likely to agree (+0.11) with the statement “I can choose who represents me in government.”

The average effect of the deliberative session is not statistically significant for any question in this section. However, there are several statistically significant results that are clearer in the analysis by group gender composition. Among men, the deliberative sessions decrease agreement with the statement “None of the MNAs from my province are aware of issues facing the local people” by about a quarter of a point. Among women, the deliberative sessions decrease agreement with the statement “It does not matter how I vote, nothing will change,” also by about a quarter of a point on the five point scale. It is also notable that there are null results of the deliberative session for two of the questions on which the evaluation team anticipated the deliberative sessions to have had a significant effect: “I have a role to play in solving problems in my community” and “I have a role to play in solving problems in my country.” These null results are surprising because the effect of the deliberative session is negative (counter to expectations) and insignificant.

Overall, because these results are not consistent across all questions that deal with confidence in the political process, it is possible that the statistically significant findings are due to chance, so they should be interpreted with greater caution and less certainty.

### *C. Familiarity with Politics*

Questions in this section focused on whether respondents are willing to talk about politics, the frequency with which they talk about politics, and difficulty in talking about politics. Because the possible responses for each question are not on the same scale, we did not create an index for this section. However, for two of the three questions, exposure to the CD led to significant improvements in familiarity with politics. Somewhat surprisingly, neither the CD treatment nor the deliberative session + CD treatment affected whether respondents would have a hard time discussing controversial issues with friends or neighbors.

This null finding would be consistent with respondent awareness that the Cambodian political environment is repressive. Nevertheless, the evaluation team expected a positive and significant effect of the deliberative sessions and potentially also the CD, on the ease of discussing politics with friends or neighbors. Keeping this null finding in mind could be useful in considering future programing decisions.

### *D. Engagement in the Political Process*

This section of the survey included a number of questions about respondent’s self-reported political behavior and their willingness to engage in activities like filing a case in court, signing a petition, or participating in a rally. Overall, there are consistent and significant increases in engagement in the political process caused by the CD. For example, the CD treatment causes a 12 percentage point increase in the probability that a

respondent “would” or “has already” signed a petition, a 9 percentage point increase in willingness to write a letter to a government authority, and a 15 percentage point increase in willingness to attend a political party event.

Exposure to the CD makes citizens more likely to report belonging to a political party (perhaps because parties recruited at CD events) or a self-help group. Respondents are not more likely to join any other groups because of the CD. Respondents were also asked about whether they are willing to engage in a number of “actions people sometimes take as citizens.” When all possible actions are combined into an index, the CD causes a 6.3 percentage point increase in the probability that respondents will say they “already have” or “would” take actions like attending a political party event, signing a petition, or contacting an MNA. Many of these effects of the CD are more pronounced among women.

The deliberative session + CD effects are not statistically significant on average in this section, but there is some evidence that men and women reacted differently (and sometimes oppositely) to the deliberative session. Any differences by gender are referenced in Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8 below.

#### *E. Responsiveness of Members of the National Assembly*

Respondents were also asked to reflect on the degree to which they thought MNAs were responsive to their communities. Note that these questions followed what was likely the first ever visit to each community by an MNA, and almost certainly the first simultaneous visit by MNAs from multiple political parties. Respondents exposed to the CD were much more likely to think that MNAs were communicating with their community, and more likely to name infrastructure or public goods provided by the MNA to the community when asked if their MNAs had done anything for their community recently. It is possible that much of these effects are simply the result of the fact that several MNAs actually did visit the village and met with local leaders during the CD process. The deliberative session + CD treatment has no detectable effects on perceptions of MNA responsiveness, which is consistent with expectations.

### **VII. Quantitative Results: Effects of CD and Deliberative Sessions on Priority Issues**

This section turns to the quantitative results about the effects of participation in a deliberative session on priority issues. We rely exclusively on survey data to examine the effect of the deliberative sessions as a whole on priority issues (question 3). For the effect of the group type and the facilitator gender on priority issues, we rely on the qualitative data from the deliberative sessions.

The evaluation team expected that the deliberative session + CD treatment would have significant effects on what respondents listed as priority issues, in part because engaging in deliberation with members of their community and their elected officials should cause some change in which issues respondents would like their MNA to take action on. For reference, the effects of the CD alone on priority issues for MNAs to take action on are also presented. We did not have specific expectations about which issues would become more popular.

As summarized in Table 10, the CD had several significant effects on which issues were reported as priorities, making some issues less likely to be mentioned in the top three, and some issues much more likely to be mentioned in the top three. Most notably, the lack of infrastructure became 22 percentage points more likely to be mentioned among

respondents exposed to the CD. The deliberative session + CD had no significant effects on priority issues, at least as detected in the survey.

### **VIII. Quantitative Results: Effects of Deliberative Session Group Gender Composition and Facilitator Gender on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behavior**

As introduced above, there are two types of quantitative data relevant to questions 4 and 6. The first type is the survey data, but is limited to the participants who attended the deliberative session who could be matched to the survey, and should be interpreted with greater caution. The second type of data is drawn from the matrix voting that took place within the deliberative sessions, which can be considered a measure of individual behavior as influenced by deliberative session group type or the facilitator. Questions 4 and 6 focus on the effect of group type, facilitator gender, and facilitator bias on knowledge, attitudes and behavior.

Across the survey, there are not consistent and statistically significant effects of group type or facilitator gender, as shown in Table 11. The exceptions, which may be due to chance, are that participants in female groups are more likely than the other two types of groups to report a willingness to vote in the next election, score about 0.47 points higher (five point scale) on the Confidence in the Political Process Index, and experience a 4.7 percentage point increase in one of the three indices that measure Engagement with the Political Process. Compared to male and female groups, mixed groups are 2.8 percentage points less likely to say they will vote in the next election. The final significant finding is that participants in male groups are 6 percentage points more likely to be able to list one or more activities undertaken by their MNA in the past six months.

Turning to the effects of facilitator gender, they are almost all indistinguishable from zero, with the two exceptions being that male facilitators increase scores on the first Knowledge of the Political Process index by 5.4 percent, and slightly decrease scores on the Confidence in the Political Process index. However, the effect is only .05 on a 5 point scale, which is not substantively meaningful. Note that these comparisons are to groups facilitated by females rather than a full control group.

The matrix voting data suggests several differences in voting patterns that are attributable to group type, facilitator gender, and/or specific facilitators. Note that these results make clear that there are some differences in voting patterns based on group type and facilitator, but the precise meaning of these differences is still subject to debate. None of the matrix voting patterns are straightforward measures of “good” or “bad” deliberative processes, but they are suggestive of changes in behavior. The results for all four measures of patterns in the matrix voting data, including *External Solution Vote Share*, *On-Diagonal Voting*, *Vote Clustering*, and *Max Solution Vote Share*, are presented in Table 12 and Table 13.

When compared to the two other group types (mixed gender and all-female), male groups receive higher average scores on all four measures, although the difference is only statistically significant for *External Solution Vote Share*. Male-only groups receive 9.6 percentage points more *External Solution Vote Share* than all other groups, indicating that male-only groups are much more likely to choose external solutions, rather than internal solutions, for problems facing their community. Female groups are 8 percentage points less likely to vote for *External Solutions* (or 8 percentage points more likely to vote for internal

solutions). In terms of the gender composition of the groups, none of the other matrix voting patterns demonstrate statistically significant differences.

There are clearer differences by gender of facilitator. Keep in mind that female facilitators can never be assigned to an all-male group and male facilitators can never be assigned to an all-female group. Therefore, some of the differences attributable to the gender of facilitator may be caused by the group type. Nevertheless, relative to female facilitators, male facilitators are associated with higher scores on all four measures, and these differences are statistically significant for three the four measures. Groups with male facilitators receive 16.1 percentage points more *External Solution Vote Share*, 2.29 more votes on *Vote Clustering*, and 5.5 percentage points greater *Max Solution Vote Share*.

There are also some differences attributable to individual facilitators, as shown in Table 13. For example, compared to all other facilitators, the groups led by Facilitators 1 and 9 are significantly more likely to vote for external solutions, whereas the groups led by Facilitators 1 and 9 are significantly more likely to vote for internal solutions. Facilitator 8 is the only one who is significantly different from the other facilitators on all four matrix voting patterns: her groups are more likely to vote for internal solutions, less likely to vote *On Diagonal*, have less *Vote Clustering* than average, and are less likely to pool on one solution to all problems (*Maximum Solution Proportion*).

## **IX. Discussion of Findings**

Overall, there is clear evidence that the CD influenced citizen knowledge of the political process, self-reported political behavior, perceptions of Members of the National Assembly, and their priority issues in a manner that is consistent with our expectations and evaluation hypotheses (question 1). There is far less evidence from the survey data that the deliberative session + CD treatment had any meaningful effect on citizen knowledge, attitudes or behavior in a manner consistent with our hypotheses (questions 2-3). Part of this could be due to the lower-than-expected compliance with invitations to the deliberative session. It is also clear, in retrospect, that the survey may not have been the ideal instrument to capture changes caused by the deliberative session, in part because these sessions did not involve an explicit civic education component. Finally, there is little evidence that deliberative session group composition or facilitator gender have an effect on citizen knowledge, attitudes and behavior (question 4), but there is some evidence of group composition and facilitator gender affecting the voting patterns of deliberative session groups (questions 6 and 7).

Even if the effects of the deliberative sessions detected with the survey were doubled or even tripled (which would account for the low compliance rate), they are still small for most sections of the survey, and sometimes go in the opposite direction than expected. The deliberative session + CD may be an interesting tool for a number of reasons, but based on the survey data, the deliberative session did not have a detectable effect on citizen knowledge of the political process, attitudes toward democracy, self-reported political behavior, or self-reported priority issues, as detected in the survey data. There is some evidence that group type and facilitator gender influenced behavior within the deliberative sessions, but in the quantitative data alone, it is unclear whether these changes are consistent with the objective of promoting democracy.

Moving forward, it is clear that the levels of knowledge among typical recipients of this program are much lower than anticipated, particularly among women. The survey

suggests that the typical CD participant has very little knowledge about the political process or his/her government. The very high percentage of individuals in the pre-test who do not know the Khmer words for “National Assembly,” or have heard the words but cannot say anything about what the National Assembly does, suggests that holding Members of the National Assembly accountable for their actions may be hamstrung by a lack of knowledge about what MNAs are supposed to be doing at all. The effects of the CD and/or the deliberative sessions might be enhanced by including more explicit civic education into the program.

The one exception to the consistent positive effects of the CD are the largely null results for most questions about confidence in the political process. The fact that the CD had little effect on citizen confidence in the political process was not what we expected when designing this evaluation. The effects on citizens could be sufficiently heterogeneous (both positive and negative) that a consistent average effect cannot be detected. Some of this was apparent in the analysis of CD effect by gender, where it is clear that men and women were affected differently by the CD. The baseline perceptions regarding confidence in the political process are more positive than negative, but still not very high. It is worth debating what it means to try to increase citizen confidence in the political process in an electoral authoritarian regime, like Cambodia, where the process is clearly dominated by and biased in favor of the Cambodian People’s Party. Perhaps increasing political knowledge in Cambodia should be expected to decrease citizen confidence in the political process, but this remains an open question and should be subject to further study.

Although the effects of the CD were largely in line with expectations of the evaluation team (with a few exceptions, as noted), it is not clear that the effects are lasting. The surveys were conducted about a week after the CD event, which is a long time compared to many laboratory or survey experiments. However, it remains unclear whether the one day exposure to the CD created permanent changes in citizens’ knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. It would be interesting (and still feasible from a research design perspective) to return to the 12 villages included in the CD study and conduct a shorter follow-up survey to measure whether the effects of the CD are lasting. Although the survey could not include the same individuals again, such data would allow for examination of any longer-term village-level – rather than individual-level - effects resulting from the CD.

**Table 3: Knowledge of the Political Process, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD/ Delib. Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session + CD	Other Relevant Findings
KPP1: What does the National Assembly do?	Prob. that respondent can answer the question (0/1)	23%/ 24%	<b>Increase of 3.6%</b>	- 2.4% (insig.)	CD Effect only among men (increase of 8.3%)
KPP2: What does a “Member of the National Assembly” do?	Probability that respondent can answer the question (0/1)	35%/37%	<b>Increase of 18%</b>	+2.9% (insig.)	
KPP3: Can you name one or more Members of the National Assembly from your province?	Probability that respondent can answer the question (0/1)	26% /26%	<b>Increase of 9.3%</b>	-2.3% (insig.)	CD effect greater among men (12%) and respondents’ accuracy in identifying an MNA correctly increased by 26%.
KPP4: What are three things you believe your National Assembly Members are supposed to do for you and your community?	Probability that respondent can answer the question (0/1)	68%/83%	<b>Increase of 10%</b>	+2.2 % (insig.)	Responses included “Builds Infrastructure” (58%) and “Helps People” (9%)
KPP5: Do you have the right to talk to your National Assembly Members about your concerns?	Probability of unqualified “yes” (0/1)	55%/ 49%	<b>Increase of 15%</b>	+0.7 % (insig.)	CD Effect greater among men (17%).
Knowledge Index 1 (KPP1-KPP5)	Percent “yes” of KPP1-KPP5 (0-1)	39%/ 41%	<b>Increase of 11%</b>	+ 0.7% (insig.)	
KPP6: Are the following all roles and responsibilities of the National Assembly?	Percent correct of KPP6_1 to KPP6_6 (0-1)	58%/ 57%	<b>Increase of 6.9%</b>	+ 1.1% (insig.)	
Make/ Approve Laws	Probability of “yes”	63%/ 73%	<b>Increase of 8.9%</b>	+ 0.4% (insig.)	
Decide Court Cases (inverted)	Probability of “no”	46%/ 62%	+ 4% (insig.)	+ 0.2% (insig.)	
Represent the people	Probability of “yes”	64%/ 75%	<b>Increase of 8.9%</b>	+ 3.1% (insig.)	
Give gifts (inverted)	Probability of “no”	50%/ 56%	<b>Increase of 9.3%</b>	+ 1.5% (insig.)	Deliberative session effect is 6.6% among women, with no such effect among men.
Enforce Laws	Probability of “yes”	63%/ 71%	<b>Increase of 7.8%</b>	+ 1.7% (insig.)	
Provide Oversight of Gov’t	Probability of “yes”	59%/ 66%	<b>Increase of 8.7%</b>	+ 1.7% (insig.)	

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measures of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  and a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment. The responses to “Decide Court Cases” and “Give Gifts” are inverted so that the anticipated direction of the effect is consistent across all components of the index.

**Table 4: Confidence in the Political Process, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session + CD	Other Relevant Findings
CP1 –CP2: For each statement, tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?					
CP1_1: If I tell my MNAs about issues in my community, they will take action to help solve the problem.	Strongly Disagree\ Somewhat Disagree\ Don't Know\ Somewhat Agree\ Strongly Agree (-2 to 2)	0.92 / 0.81	<b>Increase of 0.10 (borderline sig. p=.102)</b>	+0.06 (insig)	
CP1_2: I have a role to play in solving problems in my community.		0.53/ 0.27	-0.08 (insig)	-0.14 (insig)	
CP1_3: I have a role to play in solving problems in my country.		0.30/ 0.11	+0.02 (insig)	-0.13 (insig)	
CP1_4: None of the MNAs from my province are aware of issues facing the local people.		0.13/ 0.26	+0.014 (insig)	-0.06 (insig)	Among men, the deliberative session has a statistically significant negative effect (-0.27).
CP2_1: It is good for democracy in Cambodia to have opposition parties.		0.62/ 0.66	<b>Increase of 0.16</b>	+0.06 (insig)	CD effect is primarily among women (+0.23)
CP2_2: All the opposition parties do is just 'criticize.'		0.26/ 0.29	-0.04 (insig)	+0.00 (insig)	
CP2_3: I can discuss political issues openly in my community.		0.57/ 0.37	-0.05 (insig)	-0.08 (insig)	
CP2_4: If I disagree with the government, I can vote for another party.		0.80/ 0.85	+0.11 (insig)	+0.07 (insig)	
CP2_5: It does not matter how I vote, nothing will change.		0.31/ 0.39	-0.04 (insig)	-0.07 (insig)	Among women, the deliberative session has a significant negative effect (-0.26).
CP2_6: I can choose who represents me in government.		1.03/ 0.87	<b>Increase of 0.09 (borderline sig. p=.12)</b>	-0.05(insig)	CD effect is significant among women (+0.11).
CP1 and CP2 Index		0.64/ 0.58	+ 0.011 (insig)	+0.01(insig)	

Note: For the CP1 and CP2 Index, all variables are converted to such binary measures such that somewhat and strongly agree are coded as one, and all other responses are zero. CP2\_2 and CP2\_5 were inverted for consistency. This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 5: Familiarity with Politics, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session + CD	Other Relevant Findings
FP1: How interested are you in politics?	I reject politics/Not Interested/Don't know/Somewhat Interested/Very Interested (-2 to 2)	0.65 /0.69	<b>Increase of 0.23</b>	-0.006 (insig)	Exposure to the CD causes a 5.6% increase in the probability that individuals say they are "very interested" in politics and a 8.7% decrease in the probability that individuals say they are "not interested" in politics.
FP2: How often do you talk about politics with other people, such as friends or neighbors?	Don't Know/Never/Rarely/ A few times a month/ A few times a week/ Everyday	1.8/ 1.8	<b>Increase of 0.17</b>	-0.018 (insig)	Exposure to the CD causes an 8.1% decrease in the probability that individuals say they "never" talk about politics and a 5% increase in the probability that individuals say they talk about politics "a few times a month."
FP3: Would you have a hard time discussing controversial issues with your friends or neighbors if you had different political opinions?	Don't Know/ Very hard/ A bit hard/ Not too hard/ Not hard at all	2.4/ 2.4	+ 0.05 (insig.)	-0.090 (insig)	

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as "insig." do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 6: Engagement with the Political Process I, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session +CD	Other Relevant Findings
EPP1: Did you vote in the last national election in 2008?	Probability of “yes”	84%/ 86%	<b>Increase of 5%</b>	+0.4% (insig.)	CD effect surprising because respondents could not have voted between pre- and post-test.
EPP2: Do you intend to vote in the Commune Council election in 2012?	Probability of “yes”	97%/ 97%	<b>Increase of 1.3%</b>	+0.6% (insig.)	CD effect primarily among women, 1.8%.
EPP3: Do you belong to any groups or associations in your neighborhood? (INDEX)	Percent “yes” out of all groups listed	8%/ 7%	1.0% (insig.)	+0.3% (insig.)	
Religious Association	Probability of “yes”	6%/7%	1.8% (insig.)	+0.9% (insig.)	
Cultural Association	Probability of “yes”	2.0%/ 1%	-0.3% (insig.)	+0.5% (insig.)	
NGO	Probability of “yes”	5%/ 5%	0.7% (insig.)	<b>Increase of 2.3%</b>	Deliberative session effect only among men, 4.8%.
Developmental association	Probability of “yes”	6.4%/ 5%	2.1% (insig.)	-0.5% (insig.)	
Farmer’s Association	Probability of “yes”	10%/7%	-1% (insig.)	+0.9% (insig.)	
Fisher’s Association	Probability of “yes”	3%/ 5%	-1.7% (insig.)	<b>Increase of 1.1%</b>	Deliberative session effect significant only among men.
Forest Community Association	Probability of “yes”	12%/ 5%	-3.8% (insig.)	0.1% (insig.)	CD effect significant only for women, 5.2%
Political Party	Probability of “yes”	18%/ 21%	<b>Increase of 6.3%</b>	-2.1% (insig.)	
Self-help group	Probability of “yes”	16.4%/ 19%	<b>Increase of 9.5%</b>	-1.1% (insig.)	The effect of the CD on joining a self-help group was more pronounced for women, 8.3% for men, 10.9% for women
Other	Probability of “yes”	1%/ 1%	0.1% (insig.)	0.2% (insig.)	

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 7: Engagement in the Political Process II, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session + CD	Other Relevant Findings
EPP4: I'm going to list some other actions people sometimes take as citizens. I will mention some of these actions and ask you to please tell me if you have <b>already done it (in the last ten years), would do it, it is not allowed, or would never do it?</b>					
File a case in court	Probability of "I would do it" or "I have already done it." All other responses 0.	37%/ 49%	<b>Increase of 9%</b>	-2% (insig)	Deliberative session effect negative among men (-6.4%), borderline significant, p=.103)
Attend a political party event		50%/ 58%	<b>Increase of 15%</b>	-1.4% (insig)	
Participate in a peaceful demonstration		22%/ 28%	<b>Increase of 4.4%</b>	-2.8% (insig)	
Participate in a strike in the workplace		17%/ 20%	<b>Increase of 2.5%</b>	+3% (insig)	CD effect significant only for women, 6.04%
Sign/thumb-print a petition		50%/ 55%	<b>Increase of 12%</b>	-1.1% (insig)	
Write a letter/complaint to a government authority		34%/ 40%	<b>Increase of 9%</b>	2.6% (insig)	Deliberative session effect among women (6.5%)
Attend a Commune Council meeting		83%/ 86%	<b>Increase of 4%</b>	0.4% (insig)	
Speak at a Commune Council Meeting		50%/ 48%	-2.1% (insig.)	+2% (insig)	
File a Complaint with the Commune Council		35%/ 36%	+4% (insig).	-0.2% (insig)	Deliberative session has a negative effect among men and positive effect among women (difference is statistically significant. Among men, -6.6%, p score =.101, women, 0.0579, p score (.129)
Write a letter or contact a MNA		28%/ 35%	<b>Increase of 11%</b>	-1.5% (insig)	
Visit the National Assembly or the provincial office		34%/43%	<b>Increase of 11%</b>	0.5% (insig)	
Distribute information on political issues.		30%/ 29%	<b>Increase of 8%</b>	1.8% (insig)	
EPP4 INDEX		Percent "I would do it" or "I have already done it."	34%/ 39%	<b>Increase of 6.3%</b>	-0.4% (insig)

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as "insig." do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 8: Engagement in the Political Process III, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session + CD	Other Relevant Findings
EPP5: People sometimes need help to resolve personal, family, or village problems, or problems with government officials and government policies. For the following people and offices please tell me if you <b>have already, would consider, are not allowed, would never, or do not know</b> if you would contact them about these types of problems.					
Village Chief	Probability of “I would do it” or “I have already done it.” All other responses 0.	89%/ 94%	<b>Increase of 6.8%</b>	+0.2% (insig)	
Commune Councilor/ Commune Chief		86%/ 93%	<b>Increase of 9.9%</b>	+0.2% (insig)	
District official/ District Council		68%/ 81%	<b>Increase of 15%</b>	-0.3% (insig)	
Provincial official/ Provincial Council		62%/ 76%	<b>Increase of 13%</b>	+1.0% (insig)	
NGO office		65%/ 80%	<b>Increase of 18%</b>	-0.1% (insig)	
Political Party Office		48%/ 65%	<b>Increase of 19%</b>	+2.2% (insig)	
Commune or District Administrative Police		74%/ 86%	<b>Increase of 9.4%</b>	+1.6% (insig)	
Member of the National Assembly		61%/ 81%	<b>Increase of 22%</b>	-0.9% (insig)	
EPP5 INDEX		69%/ 82%	<b>Increase of 11.4%</b>	-0.2% (insig)	

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 9: Responsiveness of MNAs, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session +CD	Other Relevant Findings
Do your MNAs communicate with your community about what they are doing in parliament?	Probability of “yes”	16%	<b>Increase of 27%</b>	+0.2% (insig)	Respondents were more likely to say “through public meetings and forums” and less likely to say “through local government offices” or “by visiting by home or village.” Other options were unchanged by the CD.
Can you think of any MNAs activities on behalf of your community in the last 6 months?	Probability of “yes”	8.5%	<b>Increase of 15%</b>	1.3% (insig)	When asked an open ended follow-up, the responses that became more likely because of the CD were “building a pagoda, road, health center, or school;” “meeting with commune authorities;” “meeting with village chief;” a “political party meeting,” or “visit my community.”

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 10: Priority Issues, Summary of CD and Deliberative Session + CD Results**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Baseline CD / Deliberative Session	Estimated Effect of CD	Estimated Effect of Deliberative Session + CD	Other Relevant Findings
	Of the following issues, which are the top three you would like your Members of the National Assembly to take action on?				
Land Seizure	Probability of being in top three	53%/ 49%	+6.4 (insig.)	+1.9 (insig.)	
Lack of transparency (extortion and corruption)		26%/ 25%	<b>Decrease of 8.3%</b>	-2.5 (insig.)	
Agriculture-related problems		19%/ 17%	+0.3 (insig)	-2.8 (insig.)	Deliberative session negative effect significant for men, -6.4%, p=0.053)
Lack of infrastructure (roads)		40%/ 52%	<b>Increase of 22.3%</b>	+1.7 (insig.)	CD effect stronger for women, 26% for women, 17% for men)
Inability of farmers to pay off debts (high interest rates of local banks)		9%/ 11%	<b>Decrease of 4.2%</b>	-2.5 (insig.)	Deliberative session negative effect significant for women (-3.7%, p=0.095)
High price of commodities (electricity and oil)		42%/ 50%	+0.6 (insig)	-2.1 (insig.)	
Police and local officials discrimination / unfair practices based on party affiliation		11%/ 8%	<b>Decrease of 3.9%</b>	+1 (insig.)	CD effect 2.5% for men, 5% for women
Vietnamese-Cambodia border (influx of Vietnamese workers)		12%/ 13%	-0.3 (insig)	-2.2 (insig.)	
Leaders don't represent citizens		5.4%/ 4%	-1.4 (insig)	0.0 (insig.)	
Illegal logging and fishing		21%/ 20%	+2.4 (insig)	+0.8 (insig.)	
Poor quality of education		6.8%/ 5%	<b>Decrease of 2%</b>	+1.6 (insig.)	CD effect led by men, decrease of 3.9% significant, women 0% change not significant
Political party platforms don't fight poverty		10%/ 10%	<b>Decrease of 1.7%</b>	+1 (insig.)	
Lack of security (youth gangs)		37%/ 32%	<b>Decrease of 10%</b>	+4 (insig.)	CD effect only significant for women -18%. Deliberative session effect significant for men, +8.9%,( p=0.02)

Note: This table summarizes the main results. More detailed results are available in the appendix. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold. The CD baseline measures and analysis are based on 12 villages (six village pairs) and the deliberative session baseline measures and analysis are based on the 9 villages that received the CD treatment.

**Table 11: Group Type and Facilitator Gender Survey Analysis**

Survey Question	Outcome Variable	Effect of Female Group	Effect Male Group	Effect of Mixed Group	Effect of Male Facilitator
Knowledge Index 1	Percent “yes” of KPP1-KPP5 (0-1)	-4.7% (insig.)	+5.2% (insig.)	-0.6% (insig.)	<b>+5.4%</b> <b>(borderline significant)</b>
Knowledge Index 2	Percent correct of KPP6_1 to KPP6_6 (0-1)	+0.0 (insig.)	+2.7% (insig.)	-2.4% (insig.)	+0.6% (insig.)
Confidence in the Political Process Index	Average score on 5 point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree	<b>+0.47</b> <b>(borderline significant)</b>	-0.03 (insig.)	-1.0% (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 0.05</b>
FP1: How interested are you in politics?	I reject politics/Not Interested/Don't know/ Somewhat Interested/Very Interested (-2 to 2)	+0.08 (insig.)	+0.09 (insig.)	-0.08 (insig.)	-1.9% (insig.)
FP2: How often do you talk about politics with other people, such as friends or neighbors?	Don't Know/ Never/ Rarely/ A few times a month/ A few times a week/ Everyday	-0.17 (insig.)	+0.09 (insig.)	0.06 (insig.)	+0.12 (insig.)
FP3: Would you have a hard time discussing controversial issues with your friends or neighbors if you had different political opinions?	Don't Know/ Very hard/ A bit hard/ Not too hard/ Not hard at all	-0.18 (insig.)	-0.03 (insig.)	+0.12 (insig.)	0.04 (insig.)
EPP1: Did you vote in the last national election in 2008?	Probability of “yes”	-0.2% (insig.)	-2.5% (insig.)	+2.3% (insig.)	-2.9% (insig.)
EPP2: Do you intend to vote in the Commune Council election in 2012?	Probability of “yes”	<b>Increase of 2%</b>	+1.3% (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 2.8%</b>	0.4% (insig.)
Engagement with the Political Process Index I (EPP3)	Average probability of “yes” for group membership	-1.3% (insig.)	1.5% (insig.)	-0.3% (insig.)	0.5% (insig.)
Engagement with the Political Process Index II (EPP4)	Probability of “I would do it” or “I have already done it.” All other responses 0.	-0.00 % (insig.)	-0.7% (insig.)	+0.6% (insig.)	-0.4% (insig.)
Engagement with the Political Process Index III (EPP5)	Probability of “I would do it” or “I have already done it.” All other responses 0.	<b>Increase of 4.7%</b>	-1.0% (insig.)	-2.8% (insig.)	-0.8% (insig.)
IMP1: Do your MNAs communicate with your community about what they are doing in parliament?	Probability of “yes”	-1.0% (insig.)	+4.9% (insig.)	-3.4% (insig.)	+2.0 % (insig.)
IMP3: Can you think of any MNAs activities on behalf of your community in the last 6 months?	Probability of “yes”	-2.8% (insig.)	<b>Increase of 6.0%</b>	-2.9% (insig.)	+3.3% (insig.)

Note: There is no true control group in the group type or facilitator gender analyses. Rather, the comparisons are to the other types. The “Female Group” comparisons are the estimated effect of being female in a female group relative to mixed and all male groups. The “Mixed Group” comparisons are the estimated effect of being in a mixed group relative to an all-female or all-male group. The effect of having a male facilitator is compared to having a female facilitator. Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measure of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  in a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold.

**Table 12: Group Type and Facilitator Gender Effects on Matrix Voting**

Characteristic	Male Group (relative to all other group types)	Female Group (relative to all other group types)	Mixed Group (relative to all other group types)	Effect of Male Facilitator (relative to female facilitator)
Effect on <i>External Solution Vote Share</i> (Mean = 64.4%)	<b>Increase of 9.6%</b>	<b>Decrease of 8%</b>	- 1.8% (insig.)	<b>Increase of 16.1%</b>
Effect on <i>On-Diagonal Voting</i> (Mean = 48.6%)	+ 6.7% (insig.)	- 4% (insig.)	- 2.5% (insig.)	+ 5.6% (insig.)
Effect on <i>Vote Clustering</i> (Mean = 6.63 Votes)	+1.46 votes (insig.)	- 1.72 votes (insig)	+1.17 votes (insig)	<b>Increase of 2.29 votes</b>
Effect on <i>Max Solution Vote Share</i> (Mean = 30.3%)	+ 2.6% (insig)	- 4.1% (insig)	+ 1.1% (insig.)	<b>Increase of 5.5%</b>

Note: Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measures of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  and a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold.

**Table 13: Facilitator Bias in Deliberative Session Matrix Voting, Summary of Results**

Characteristic	Facilitator 1 (Male)	Facilitator 2 (Female)	Facilitator 3 (Male)	Facilitator 4 (Male)	Facilitator 5 (Female)	Facilitator 6 (Female)	Facilitator 7 (Female)	Facilitator 8 (Female)	Facilitator 9 (Male)	Facilitator 10 (Male)
<i>Percent of Sample</i>	10.3	9	10.3	10.3	11.5	9	10.3	9	9	11.5
Effect on <i>External Solution Vote Share</i> Mean= 64.4%	<b>Increase of 20%</b>	-2.6% (insig.)	3.2% (insig.)	+ 5.9% (insig.)	- 5.9% (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 12.3%</b>	<b>Decrease of 12.8%</b>	<b>Decrease of 12.6%</b>	<b>Increase of 9.7%</b>	+ 5.4% (insig.)
Effect on <i>On-Diagonal Voting</i> Mean = 48.6%	- 8.4% (insig.)	- 4.6% (insig.)	<b>Increase of 18.6%</b>	<b>Increase of 15.4%</b>	<b>Decrease of 10.1%</b>	+ 8.6% (insig.)	+ 4.6% (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 13.5%</b>	<b>Decrease of 18.7%</b>	+ 5.5% (insig.)
Effect on <i>Vote Clustering</i> Mean = 6.63 Votes	+0.13 votes (insig.)	- .95 votes (insig.)	<b>Increase of 3.76 votes</b>	+ 1.08 votes (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 2.5 votes</b>	+ 1.74 votes (insig.)	- .94 votes (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 3.61 votes</b>	-.24 votes (insig.)	+ 1.31 votes (insig.)
Effect on <i>Maximum Solution Proportion</i> Mean = 30.3%	+ 3% (insig.)	- .02% (insig.)	+ 7.8% (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 3.3%</b>	- 2.6% (insig.)	0.01% (insig.)	<b>Decrease of 5.5 %</b>	<b>Decrease of 4.4%</b>	<b>Increase of 6.9%</b>	+ 1.1 % (insig.)

Note: Results marked as “insig.” do not meet the standard measures of statistical significance of  $p < .1$  and a two-tailed test. Statistically significant results are in bold.

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# ANNEX II to CEPPS NDI Cambodia Impact Evaluation Report

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NDI Cambodia: Qualitative Findings from a  
Random Control Trial

Linda Stern, Director of Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

February 2013



# NDI Cambodia: Qualitative Findings from a Random Control Trial

**National Democratic Institute**

**Linda Stern, Director of Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning**

This is a companion report to the quantitative findings from a field experiment conducted on NDI's Multiparty Constituency Dialogue program in Cambodia from 2011-2012. The report presents the qualitative findings from citizen deliberative sessions held the day before the Constituency Dialogue event.

*Companion  
Report*

February 2013



The findings for the qualitative report were developed by the Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning team (MEL) at the National Democratic Institute. Linda Stern designed the proposed random control trial, program variation and qualitative data collection and analysis protocols in consultation with the Asia team and the Principle Investigator, Susan Hyde. Molly Watts served as research assistance during the data collection process in Cambodia, and later as the quantitative data analyst on the MEL team in DC. Ornanong Maneerattana served as the qualitative data analyst on the MEL team, supporting the management and coding of all qualitative datasets presented in this report.

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## I. Executive Summary

In 2009 NDI had the opportunity to design and implement a random control trial of its long-standing *Multiparty Constituency Dialogue* (CD) program in Cambodia. The CD program was based on a *theory of change* which posits that the creation of new and competitive political space, where citizens can voice their concerns, will inform policy and increase representatives' accountability to their constituents. Along with understanding the effects of CD attendance on citizens attitudes and knowledge, NDI wanted to know what would happen if rural citizens had more time and space before the constituency dialogue to formulate their concerns, deliberate on solutions and build consensus and confidence with their peers on the issues that should be brought to the attention of the MNAs. To that end NDI varied the program so that some citizens would participate only in the CD and others would participate in an additional deliberative session before the CD. NDI used a mixed-methods approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data within the experimental framework.

The field experiment used a survey to test four of the eight hypothesis questions posed in the study, the results of which are covered in the companion report authored by Dr. Susan Hyde. The qualitative findings in this companion report draw on data from the deliberative sessions to address three of the eight hypothesis questions (#3, 5 and 7) posed in the random control trial. It should be noted that the qualitative data under hypothesis question three serve as descriptive data on citizens' priorities and cannot be considered experimental. However, because qualitative data were gathered on all deliberative groups that participated in the program variation, these data do speak to the experimental findings on the effects of gender, group composition and facilitator under hypothesis questions 5 and 7. In this way the qualitative report provides a context for the quantitative findings – particularly for citizen priorities-- lends insight into NDI's program innovation in citizen deliberation; and speaks to the broader program hypothesis and *theory of change* for constituency dialogue programs.

Based on results from 80 deliberative sessions; observational data from nine CD events; and facilitator documentation of both the CDs and deliberative groups, the following offers a summary of findings and their implications:

### *Hypothesis Question #3: How did participation in a deliberative session before the CD impact citizens' priorities?*

1. Priority issues for citizens who participated in the deliberative session before the CD were: *lack of infrastructure, land seizures, corruption, high cost of living, water & sanitation and health clinics*. Many of the same issues were ranked among citizens' top priorities on the baseline survey (e.g., *lack of infrastructure, land seizure, corruption, high cost of living*). However, when asked to deliberate with their peers citizens placed lesser importance on some priorities (e.g., *Vietnamese migration, illegal logging and fishing*); placed more emphasis on other priorities (e.g., *education*); identified new priorities (e.g., *water & sanitation, health clinics* inter alia); and omitted other priorities altogether (e.g., *leaders don't represent citizens; political party platforms don't fight poverty*).
2. The issues identified through the collaborative, matrix-ranking process used during the deliberative sessions revealed the interrelated nature of citizens' problems. The qualitative data illuminated the

way in which these issues impact rural Cambodian's lives, livelihoods, families, communities and the natural environment.

3. Matrix-identified priorities from the deliberative sessions varied slightly by province and commune, but serious corruption cut across communes and took many forms – corruption in service delivery, in distribution of humanitarian aid and in land concessions. Of particular note were those communes where land seizure was an issue. In these deliberative sessions citizens recounted dispossession of rural families by private companies, clear cutting of forests, killing of livestock, chemical pollution of water, and violent retribution and imprisonment for citizens who mobilized in protest – all with the support of local authorities.

*Hypothesis Question #5: How did the gender composition of the deliberative groups differentially impact the priority issues of the participants?*

4. The gender composition of the deliberative sessions influenced how groups prioritized three of the 19 problems identified using a matrix. During deliberation all-male groups tended to place a higher priority on the *lack of infrastructure* and were less likely than all other groups to rank *corruption* as a top priority. Mixed groups were also more likely than any other group types to identify *lack of health clinics* among their top priorities.

*Hypothesis Question #7: Did the gender of the facilitator differentially influence the priority issues of participants?*

5. The gender of the facilitator also caused a difference in the way in which a deliberative group ranked three of the 19 problems identified using a matrix, with male-facilitated groups more likely than female-facilitated groups to vote for *lack of infrastructure*; and *less* likely to vote for *high cost of living* and *access to markets* as a top priority. The gender of the facilitator also influenced how groups voted on solutions to problems. While all groups tended to identify *external* solutions (those that required MNA action) over *internal* solutions (those that required citizen action) groups facilitated by a male tended to identify *external* priorities more often than other groups. Furthermore, when compared to female-facilitated groups, male-facilitated groups tended to vote in consensus, “clustering” their votes for single solutions to individual problems, as well as for their top three priority solutions.

*How did the deliberative group participants behave at the CD?*

6. Most deliberative groups agreed that they would raise their priorities with their MNAs at the CD event the next day. Although only 65% of those citizens were able to attend their CDs, the evaluation team found that on the day of the Constituency Dialogue those citizens who had participated in the deliberative sessions were more active than the citizens who had not participated in a deliberative session. Deliberative session participants raised their hands and spoke at their CD events more than twice as often as citizens who had not participated in a deliberative session. Women who had participated in deliberative sessions spoke at their CDs one and a half times more often their female counterparts; and male participants in deliberative sessions raised their hands and spoke at their CD events two and half times more often than men who had not attended a deliberative session before the CD. These findings cannot be considered experimental since deliberative session participants self-

selected their attendance at the deliberative session and the CD. However, the observational data suggests that participation in the deliberative sessions contributed to differences in citizen engagement at the constituency dialogue the next day.

### **What was the environment at the CD event?**

7. In general there was a healthy balance between opposition and ruling party at all nine CDs and for the most part MNAs respected the a code of conduct to interact civilly at the CD. However, the CD environment varied by commune and mapped with many of the issues identified during the deliberative sessions. Of particular note was the strong police presence at three of the nine CDs, and in many cases their active attempts to intimidate attendees who raised concerns. In all three of these communes corruption was ranked among the deliberative groups' highest matrix priorities and were related to land seize and/or service delivery.

### **Implications of Findings:**

The USAID-sponsored random control trial provided NDI with the opportunity to test a programmatic innovation in its long-standing constituency dialogue program. Together the analysis of the descriptive and causal data provide insights into micro-level democratic processes and the ways in which the context as well as gender inform and influence citizens' deliberations, as well as their subsequent participation in the constituency dialogues. In this way the findings contribute to NDI's understanding of: a) democratic deliberation; and b) the broader program hypothesis and *theory of change* for constituency dialogue programs.

#### ***a) Program Innovation – Citizen Deliberation***

Proponents of deliberative democracy posit that public reasoning and debate not only enhance social cohesion, but create outcomes of better citizens, better decisions and better or more legitimate systems. In contrast to aggregative democracy in which preferences are formed in private and then expressed and added together in public through polling, focus groups and elections, deliberative democracy provides a fair and transparent forum for citizens to identify and solve concrete problems despite their differences. Moreover, experiments in deliberative polling in 15 countries have demonstrated that citizen deliberation enhances citizen knowledge of issues and politics; strengthens their ability to formulate opinions; and stabilizes opinions on issues once they are formulated.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, other experiments<sup>2</sup> in citizen deliberation have demonstrated that deliberative processes can be influenced by gender norms and inequities, while deliberative outcomes can be influenced by moderators of deliberative forums.

Unlike experiments in deliberative polling, this study's survey results did not find that deliberative session participants improved their knowledge of issues, politics or confidence beyond the effect created by participation in the constituency dialogue alone (see companion report). However, the qualitative details from the deliberative sessions did align with the proposition that purposeful peer discussion and

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<sup>1</sup> Fishkin, James S. and Luskin, Robert C. (2005). "Experimenting with a Democratic Ideal: Deliberative Polling and Public Opinion." *Acta Politica*, 2005, 40, (284-298).

<sup>2</sup> Macartan Humphreys, William A. Masters and Martin E. Sandbu (2006). The Role of Leaders in Democratic Deliberations: Results from a Field Experiment in São Tomé and Príncipe. *World Politics*, 58, pp 583-622.

analysis is substantively different than polls and focus groups that measure citizens' opinions of the issues. Rather, the deliberative sessions yielded outcomes that reflected citizen *judgment* of their priorities after careful reflection and discussions of the issues and their solutions. Moreover, the experimental findings demonstrated the importance of creating deliberative space for marginalized groups within the population so that social norms and inequities such as gender do not unduly influence the deliberative process or its outcomes. Lastly, the difference in activity level at the CDs between deliberative session participants and non-participants, although not experimental, underscored the value-added of citizen deliberation before the CD.

These findings have implications for future programming designed to strengthen the demand side of the democracy equation. Future investment in citizen engagement should move beyond simply extracting information from citizens via focus groups and/or opinion polls, to more purposefully investing in citizens' capacity to formulate and press their concerns in the public sphere. While deliberative sessions would enhance the quality and reliability of information on citizens' priorities, they should not be used as a stand-alone intervention or as an appendage to the current program. Given the risks that citizens run in discussing issues like corruption and intimidation, it would not be prudent to simply extract information from citizens through deliberative session of focus groups. Rather the deliberative process should be seen as a foundation for bolstering and supporting citizen voice, agency and empowerment to re-negotiate relationships of power within and outside their communities. Indeed, the deliberative sessions, when structured along gender lines, have an intrinsic value of strengthening the public voice of women and men within their communities. As such, support for citizen deliberation should be considered a starting point for more comprehensive programming for strengthening the demand side of the democracy equation in Cambodia, and not simply to serve the informational needs of MNAs involved in NDI's CD program.

### ***b) Program Hypothesis – Constituency Dialogues***

The broader experimental study was meant to better understand the demand side of the constituency dialogue program's results chain – if constituents better understand their roles and options within the democratic process; and if constituents create pressure on MNAs to address their concerns; then constituents will contribute to more responsive and accountable MNAs. The random control trial demonstrated that participation in the CD did indeed improve constituents' understanding of their roles and option in the democratic process – the first link in the demand side of the program's results chain. However, the experiment did not demonstrate that this new knowledge was linked to citizens putting additional demands on their MNAs to address their concerns – the next link in the results chain. The deliberative sessions were a relatively modest program activity, and the descriptive findings suggest that providing time and space for citizens to discuss and come to consensus on their concerns may contribute to increasing their activity during the CD event. However, these findings were not experimental as participation in the CD event was self-selected and not randomized, and therefore not conclusive. Further data are needed to explore a) whether changes in knowledge and attitudes were sustainable beyond the study's timeline; and b) whether differences in citizen activities at the CD are due to citizen deliberation or some other variable.

In addition, the broader context of the intervention and its variation is important to take into account. While the nine CD events presented a picture of healthy political competition in which ruling and opposition parties adhered to a code of civility, the details from the deliberative sessions documented a

context of corruption, intimidation and sometimes violent retribution for citizens who raised their voices at the local level. The deliberative sessions and the CDs create temporary space for citizens to voice their concerns, but individuals do so in the context of great personal risk. Even when forums are hosted by an international entity such as NDI or USAID, a third of the constituency dialogues in this study had a heavy police presence where observers documented attempts to intimidate the attendees. During the deliberative sessions a number of facilitators also documented veiled intimidation by local officials during the small group sessions. The program's critical assumption that citizens' improved understanding of democracy will lead to increased pressure on MNAs to address their concerns did not hold true in this study.

The CD program is creating increased knowledge, along with temporary space and opportunity for citizens' voices to emerge. However, the broader intervention strategy should be reviewed to identify ways to more systematically strengthen accountability between local or national representatives and their constituents where feasible in the Cambodian context. Although the CD program records and tracks the promises MNAs make to their constituents during the CDs – and some positive outcomes have emerged from this process – the lines of accountability are between the MNAs and NDI, and not between MNAs, local officials and their constituents. While the 'thin edge of the wedge' strategy to creating new political space and increasing accountability is an effective entry point for a *new* program, the strategy is not sustainable and any gains in accountability and voice may be at risk of disappearing at the end of the life of the program. In the long run the public performance of political competition and debate may contribute to a change in public discourse, citizen expectations and socio-political norms. However, against a backdrop of state capture, systemic corruption and intimidation, and no real mechanisms for accountability between citizens and their representatives, or public officials and the judiciary, the improved public dialogue of MNAs and their constituencies may not be contributing to real or lasting change. .

## II. Program Variation – *Citizen Deliberation*

NDI’s long-standing Constituency Dialogue (CD) program is based on a *Theory of Change* which posits that the creation of new and competitive political space, where citizens can voice their concerns, will inform policy and increase accountability between representatives and their constituents.

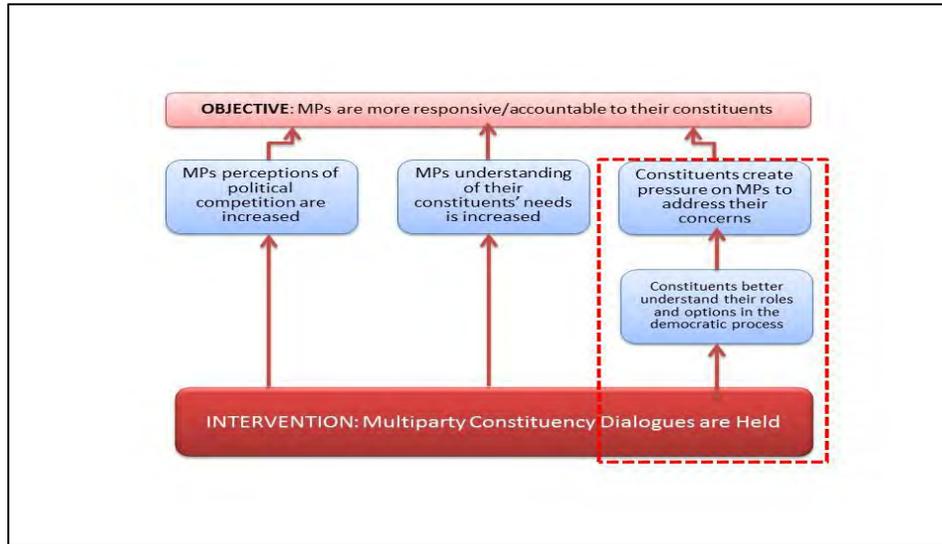


Figure 1: Results Chain for the Multiparty Constituency Dialogue Program

In 2004 NDI designed its multiparty CDs to engage Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and their constituents in dialogue on issues that concern citizens at the local level. By including MNAs from multiple parties, citizens not only have the opportunity to publically voice their concerns to representatives, but to hear the perspectives of different political actors. NDI believed this forum would not only increase citizens’ understanding of the political process, but their understanding of their political options within Cambodia’s emerging democracy. For the MNAs, the multiparty constituency dialogues not only provide a forum for hearing the concerns of their constituents, but also serve to raise MNAs’ awareness of political competition, thus incentivizing greater responsiveness to their constituents’ concerns. Briefly stated, NDI’s *program hypothesis* in Cambodia is:

- IF MNAs’ perceptions of political competition are increased
- AND IF MNAs understanding of constituents’ needs is increased
- AND IF constituents create pressure on MNAs to address their concerns
- THEN MNAs will be more responsive and accountable to their constituents.

Because the program’s overarching objective was to increase the responsiveness and accountability of MNAs, NDI targeted the majority of its program’s inputs and activities at the supply side of the democracy equation – MNAs. However, a critical assumption in NDI’s program hypothesis was that citizens’ attendance at the CD was necessary and sufficient to not only change citizens’ attitudes and increase their knowledge and understanding, but change their behavior – i.e., to pressure MNAs to address their concerns. Although NDI’s post-CD focus groups had shown a shift in attitudes immediately

after the CDs, it was unclear if these attitudes were representative of the broader community; if they were sustained; or if they lead to behavioral change. In addition, NDI's experience in other countries suggested that citizens need smaller discussion forums for deliberating on issues – especially in politically uncertain environments – before change in behavior occurs.

Through this study, NDI wanted to explore the effects of citizens having more time and space -- before the constituency dialogues -- to formulate their concerns, deliberate on solutions, and build consensus and confidence with their peers on the issues that should be brought to the attention of their MNAs. NDI therefore proposed using a field experiment to test an innovation in programming aimed at the demand side of the program's results chain – the citizens. NDI proposed randomizing the introduction of a new, citizen deliberation component to the CD intervention in three multiparty provinces – Kratie, Kampong Cham and Kampong Chhnang.

### **Democratic Deliberation – Theory and Practice**

Democratic deliberation takes place in many forums, is used by diverse democratic actors, with differing levels of accountability and formality. In exploring the characteristic of deliberative democracy David Crocker juxtaposes it with aggregative democracy in which bargaining, political maneuvering, clientalism and agitation are essential processes in political competition, and voting is the primary mechanism for resolving difference. In aggregative democracy “preferences or interests are formed in private and then expressed and added together in public.”<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, deliberative democracy uses public discussion and consensus as a means to resolve difference in the political sphere. Voting is not the primary means for resolving conflict, but serves as the culmination of the deliberative process; a closure device that summarizes the group's discussion and decision making process.<sup>4</sup> According to Crocker, the aim of citizen deliberation is two-fold: to “identify and solve concrete problems or to devise general policies for solving specific problems”; and to “provide a fair way in which free and equal members of a group can overcome their differences and reach agreement about action and policy.”<sup>5</sup>

Proponents of deliberative democracy argue that the resolution of competition through fair and transparent decision-making processes -- despite conflicting values -- promotes and enhances social cohesion<sup>6</sup>. Further, that the process of deliberation has three categories of benefits or effects-- better citizens; better decisions and better or more legitimate systems.<sup>7</sup>

***Better Citizens:*** Participation in public reasoning and debate enhances citizen knowledge of issues and politics; strengthens their ability to formulate opinions; and stabilizes opinions on issues once they are

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<sup>3</sup> Crocker, David A. (2008). *Ethics of Global Development: Agency, Capability, and Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge University Press

<sup>4</sup> Richardson, Henry (2002). *Democratic Autonomy: Public Reasoning About the Ends of Policy*. Oxford University Press

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Ross, Carne (2011). *The Leaderless Revolution: How Ordinary People Can Take Power and Change Politics in the 21st Century*. Simon & Schuster

<sup>7</sup> Hibbing, John and Elizabeth Theiss-Morese (2002). *The Perils of Voice: Political Involvement's Potential to De-legitimate*. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Associations, Boston, MA

formulated.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, inclusive participation in public deliberation promotes the emergence of a public “voice” for more marginalized citizens. In this way the aim of deliberative democracy is not to merely aggregate interest, but to transform socio-political relationships of power by establishing the legitimacy of citizen participation in transparent policy formation and public decision-making.<sup>9</sup>

**Better Decisions:** As a consequence of inclusive deliberation, collective decision-making is achieved with a broader and more diverse array of inputs. Decisions therefore reflect a fuller understanding of the complexities of issues, the contexts in which they occur and their multiple impacts on different members of society. In this way, theorists argue, deliberative democracy helps to mitigate the inequities of race, class and gender and lead to more equitable policy formation.<sup>10</sup>

**Better Systems:** Lastly, deliberative decision-making builds confidence and support for the systems and institutions from which they flow. Transparent and public deliberation and decision-making builds trust, especially where conflict is longstanding.

While many observational studies have been done on citizen deliberation, little experimental or quasi-experimental research has tested the proposed processes and/or outcomes of citizen deliberation outlined above<sup>11</sup>. Notable experiments include Fishkin’s work on deliberative polling -- a rejoinder to public-opinion polling that takes the collective pulse of citizens through surveys and focus groups, but “measure little more than the public’s impressions of sound bites and headlines” that are then filtered through the “persuasion industry that is more Madison Avenue than Madisonian.”<sup>12</sup>

Fishkin and Luskin’s research in over fifteen developed countries has demonstrated the impact of deliberation on citizen opinions.<sup>13</sup> Their experiments begin with a random representative sample of citizens who are polled to establish a baseline of opinions. A smaller number of these citizens are then randomly invited to take part in a weekend intervention in which they are given balanced briefing materials. They are further randomized into smaller deliberative groups. These deliberative groups are exposed to sessions with experts and political leaders, and they then take part in dialogues on the issues with their smaller deliberative groups. After the deliberative sessions the researchers administer an endline survey with the original sample of citizens to compare the change in opinions between those who participated in the deliberative sessions and those that did not. Fishkin’s deliberative experiments attempted to demonstrate the counterfactual -- how citizens’ opinion would have changed had they had the opportunity to become more fully informed and participative in their democracies.

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<sup>8</sup> Fishkin, James S. (1995). *The Voice of the People*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

<sup>9</sup> Young, Iris Marion. (2000) *Inclusion and Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press,

<sup>10</sup> (e.g., Chambers 1996; Fishkin 1995; Gutmann and Thompson 1996; Habermas 1989; 1996; Cohen 1989, 74).

<sup>11</sup> Karpowitz, Christopher F. and Mendelberg, T. (2011) *An Experimental Approach to Citizen Deliberation*, Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science: Cambridge University Press

<sup>12</sup> Fishkin, James S. (2006) *The Nation in a Room: Turning Public Opinion into Policy* Boston Review March/April 2006

<sup>13</sup> Fishkin, James S. and Luskin, Robert C. (2005). “Experimenting with a Democratic Ideal: Deliberative Polling and Public Opinion.” *Acta Politica*, 2005, 40, (284-298).

It is important to point out that the process of deliberation itself can influence the outcomes of citizen priorities. In their field experiment in Sao Tome y Principe Humphreys, Masters and Sandbu<sup>14</sup> demonstrate how participatory decision-making processes are vulnerable to manipulation by political elites. By randomizing discussion leaders in a nation-wide experiment on democratic deliberation, Humphreys et al found a significant leader effect on the oil revenue priorities identified in over a third of the deliberative sessions. Their research points to the importance of ensuring that the design and procedures of deliberative sessions provide an authentic opportunity for democratic dialogue. Indeed, Freire’s seminal work on participation<sup>15</sup> long ago identified the pitfalls of “false dialogue” in which elites attempt to replace authentic deliberation with a consultative process that mimics public discourse, but allows for no real decision making with the poor.

Gender can also influence the outcomes of deliberative processes. In their review of gender and deliberation Karpowitz et al note three important effects of gender composition on the outcomes of deliberative groups. First, they proffer that being in a numerical minority lowers the status of women in a deliberative group. Second, social norms tend to create the perception that women are less competent than men in discussing issues of public concern. Third, women tend to speak less when there are fewer women in deliberative groups.<sup>16</sup> At the same time Paluck’s research in Southern Sudan found that trained moderators had an equalizing effect on deliberative participation, especially as it pertained to women. The presence of a trained moderator helped to ensure that women and men participated equally in small deliberative groups that discussed issues of constitutional change, democracy, corruption and civic engagement. Moreover, all moderator-led deliberative groups had higher outcomes in knowledge and behavior than un-moderated deliberative groups.<sup>17</sup>

Fishkin’s experiments point to the potential positive outcomes of citizen deliberation, while Paluck’s research indicates that effectively trained facilitators may be able to mitigate the potential for a leader effect seen in Sao Tome y Principe. Lastly, Karpowitz et al suggest that attention to the gender of group composition – and the rules for deliberative decision-making -- may mitigate inequalities inherent in a population.

### Deliberative Sessions

Given the research, NDI needed to design a deliberative process that: promoted practical problem-solving; was free and transparent; used voting as the culmination of deliberation; mitigated the potential for facilitator bias; and balanced power inequities at the local level, such as gender. In addition, it had to be a process that was practical for a rural, largely illiterate, working population with little time to engage in deliberation outside of their own households and villages.

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<sup>14</sup> Macartan Humphreys, William A. Masters and Martin E. Sandbu (2006). The Role of Leaders in Democratic Deliberations: Results from a Field Experiment in São Tomé and Príncipe. *World Politics*, 58, pp 583-622.

<sup>15</sup> Freire, Paulo (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Herder and Herder, NY New York

<sup>16</sup> Karpowitz, Christopher F., Mandelberg, T, and Shaker, L. (2012) “Gender Inequality in Deliberative Participation” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 106, No3, August 2012

<sup>17</sup> Paluck, E. (2009). The Impact Of The ‘Let’s Talk’ Civic Education Program: Examination Of Listener Discussion, Attitudes, and Behavior. Evaluation Report for the National Democratic Institute, Southern Sudan.

To achieve this, NDI designed a deliberative intervention inspired by participatory action research (PAR) approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Learning & Action (PLA). Because of its emphasis on collaborative inquiry, analysis and collective action, participatory action research promotes deliberation, generates data, and identifies potential action for changing the conditions under inquiry. For this reason PAR has become a central feature in international aid aimed at sustainable community development, literacy, youth engagement, public health, civic engagement and participatory governance.

### **Matrix Ranking Tool:**

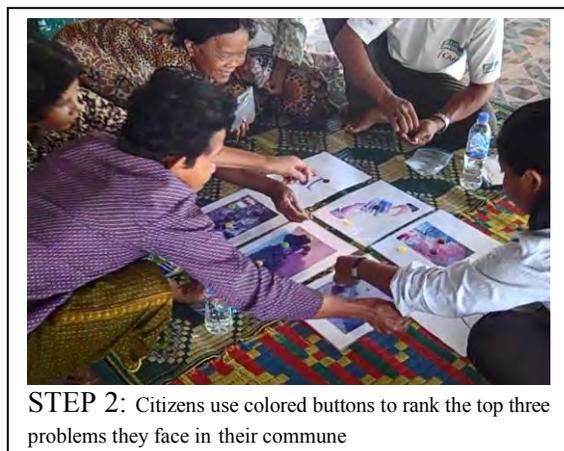
To create deliberative forums for citizens to discuss issues in a fair and transparent manner, NDI trained facilitators to guide small groups of rural citizens through a deliberative process that used a matrix-ranking tool. Part of a suite of participatory action research tools, the matrix helped citizens to: identify and discuss their communities' problems; come to consensus on their top three priority problems; generate internal and external solutions for each of the top three problems; and then vote on the solutions that were most strategic for addressing the problems. The following describes the deliberative sessions held with Cambodian citizens in the rural communes of Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang and Kratie.



STEP 1: The group brainstorms their problems using photos and drawings; the facilitator notes their discussion and descriptions on the back

### **STEP ONE: BRAINSTORM COMMUNITY PROBLEMS**

Participants in the deliberative sessions begin by brainstorming the challenges they face in their communities. The facilitator uses photos and drawings as visual symbols for each problem, recording the groups' discussion and descriptions on the back of the picture. Once the group finishes discussing the problem the facilitator holds up the picture and reads back to the group their descriptions of the problem. She then asks the group if there are any other aspects of the problem that should be recorded before the group moves on to discuss the next problem.



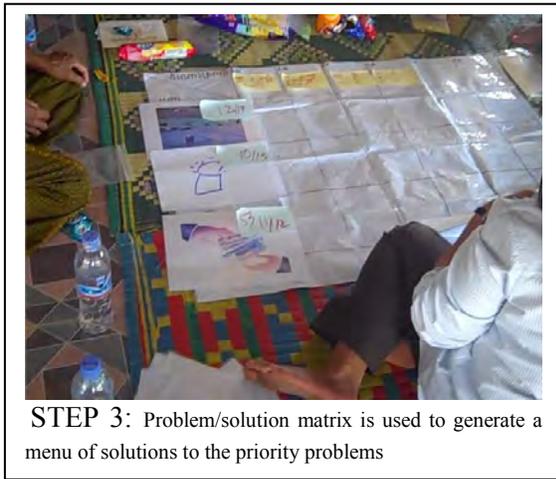
STEP 2: Citizens use colored buttons to rank the top three problems they face in their commune

### **STEP TWO: RANKING THE TOP THREE PROBLEMS**

Once the deliberative group exhausts their list of problems, the facilitator lays out all the problem pictures for the group to review. S/he gives each group member their own unique set of colored voting buttons and explains that each individual will vote on their top three problems, distributing their buttons over three picture problems, according to their importance (weighted voting). To ensure that everyone understands what each individual picture represents, before voting the facilitator reviews each of the

problems by picking up each picture and once again reading the description of the problem to the group. The facilitator then asks the group to vote, distributing their buttons in silence. Once the voting is

complete the group watches as the facilitator counts the votes for each problem and records the number of votes on the picture. She then confirms the top three problems with the group.



### STEP THREE: GENERATE INTERNAL & EXTERNAL SOLUTIONS

Once the group agrees on the top three problems the facilitator places the three problem pictures on the left side of a 5 x 7 matrix. Before attaching a problem to the matrix the facilitator shows the picture to the group, again reading the description of the problem recorded on the back of the picture. The facilitator asks the group to consider each problem one at a time, discussing the causes and consequences of the problem and its possible solutions. The group must come to consensus on two feasible solutions for each problem.

One of the solutions is an internal solution – an action the community can take to address the problem; and the other is an external solution – an action the group would like their MNA to take to address the problem. Once the participants came to consensus on the two solutions, they dictate their ideas to the facilitator who records their solutions on a post-it note, drawing a picture or symbol to represent the group’s solution. The two solutions are placed at the top of the matrix. This process is then repeated with each of the three problems until the top of the matrix has three pairs of internal/external solutions generated in response to the group’s three priority problems.



### STEP FOUR: RANK THE SOLUTIONS FOR ACTION

Once the participants generate all six solutions to their priority problems the facilitator tells the group that they are going to vote on the solutions that are most important for addressing the their priority problems. The facilitator begins by covering up the bottom two problems so that only the first problem is showing. She then asks the participants to consider that single problem in relationship to all six possible solutions. She instructs the group to distribute their buttons across the solutions, weighting their votes accordingly. Before participants vote in silence, the facilitator once

again reviews each of the six solutions, summarizing the group’s discussions. Participants then vote in silence using their unique buttons. After all participants are finished voting they watch as the facilitator tallies the buttons for each cell. Once each problem is reviewed against all solutions, the facilitator sums the votes in the solution columns to identify the top three to four solutions for action.



STEP 5: The facilitator scores the voting transparently and then the group discusses the results

### STEP FIVE: GROUP REFLECTION ON THE MATRIX

Once the group completes the matrix the facilitator reviews the priority problems and solutions and asks the group: Does the matrix accurately represent the problems and desired solutions for citizens in your village? Does the matrix represent issues that group members would raise in the constituency dialogue the next day? Do the solutions reflect actions that citizens or MNAs could take, or both? And Why did the group members think that MNA solutions or citizen solutions received the most votes?



STEP 6: Facilitator records matrix data

### STEP SIX: MATRIX DATA ENUMERATION

Once the deliberative session is complete the facilitator uses a set of forms to record: the descriptions of all problems and solutions discussed; the voting scores for each problem discussed; the vote tallies for each cell of the matrix, along with the column totals. Lastly, the facilitator records the group's answers to the reflection questions, along with any additional comments or reflections from the group.

## Randomization of Deliberative Sessions

Creating a deliberative component to the CD program allowed NDI to vary the intervention so that some individuals would receive:

- a) only the CD as an intervention;
- b) the CD plus a Deliberative Session before the CD; or
- c) no intervention at all.

NDI's assumption was that citizen participation in the small deliberative sessions would increase the likelihood that citizens would shift their attitudes, enhance their knowledge of democratic processes, reorder their priorities and increase their engagement with their MNAs during the CD. In addition, NDI hypothesized that the CD intervention and its deliberative variation would have differential impacts on men and women. In this way NDI used the USAID-sponsored field experiment to answer the following key evaluation questions:

## Evaluation Questions

1. Does exposure to the CD change citizen attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?  
Are men and women affected differently by experience with the CD?
2. Does participation in a deliberative session before the CD change citizen attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?
3. How does participation in the deliberative sessions before the CD differentially impact the participants' priority issues?
4. Does the gender composition of the deliberative sessions differentially impact attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?
5. Does the gender composition of the deliberative group differentially impact the priority issues of participants?
6. Does the gender of the facilitator of the deliberative sessions differentially impact attitudes, knowledge, and reported or observed behavior?
7. Does the gender of the facilitator differentially influence the priority issues of participants?
8. Do individual facilitators differentially impact the priorities of participants?

The following section briefly outlines how the deliberative sessions were randomized and the qualitative data collected within the experiment to answer evaluation questions 3, 5 and 7.

### III. Methodology

In order to understand the effects of citizen deliberation and the variable of gender, NDI randomly assigned treatment participants to deliberative sessions, varying the program intervention and the gender composition of participant groups as follows:

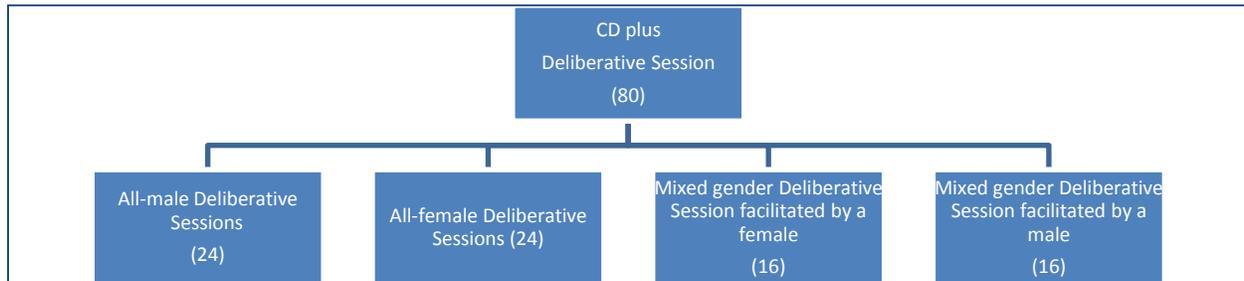


Figure 2: Randomization of Participants to Deliberative Group Types

NDI used a mixed-methods approach in which the structure of random control trial (RCT) was used to systematically collect and analyze qualitative data that would complement and inform the quantitative data collection and analysis from the survey experiment. In this way the matrix ranking process served as both an intervention as well as a means to generate qualitative data.

#### Qualitative Methods:

##### Data Collection:

The evaluation team collected three sets of qualitative data outlined below. These datasets provided details on citizens’ priorities, the CD environment, the behavior of deliberative session participants observed at the CD, and the facilitators’ reflections on their experiences as moderators (who resided in the capital city Phnom Penh) of the deliberative sessions (conducted in rural communities).

1. **Deliberative Sessions:** During and after the deliberative sessions, facilitators recorded the matrix ranking scores of each problem as well as the qualitative data detailing citizens’ discussions. These data included explanations of all the problems citizens discussed in small groups. Facilitators also recorded participants’ internal and external solutions, detailing solutions that required citizen actions (internal) and the solutions that required MNA action (external). In addition, the qualitative data captured citizens’ reflections on their matrix results, such as whether or not the group felt that the results reflected their communities’ priorities, and if the members of the group would raise their concerns at the CD to be held on the following day.
2. **CD Observations:** Facilitators also served as observers at the CD on the following day. There, they recorded information on the CD environment using a Likert scale to rate their perceptions about: *political party presence; police presence and citizen intimidation; MNA behavior; and citizen satisfaction* with the responses of their local and national representatives (see appendix 2). Observers also recorded their qualitative observations under each of the categories. Further, the observers

monitored the behavior of the 3-6 deliberative session participants from their group, recording: *attendance; gender; hand raising; speaking* – and if they spoke – *the issues they raised at the CD*.

3. ***Facilitator Reflections:*** After each deliberative group session and CD, facilitators completed a reflection form that asked them to self-assess the most significant change in their: *ability to facilitate the deliberative sessions; interactions with rural citizens; collaboration with the team of facilitators; understanding of the practice of democracy in Cambodia*. The evaluation team also asked the facilitators to provide any other reflections that they felt were important. After the first round of deliberative group sessions, facilitators were also asked to record a compelling story they heard during the deliberative sessions and/or CD. These qualitative data provided additional details on priorities that participants raised in the deliberative sessions and the issues discussed at the CD.

### **Data Analysis**

The evaluation team managed and analyzed the qualitative data using Nvivo.<sup>18</sup> The team coded all of the qualitative data for recurring themes on citizen priorities, and organized and analyzed the qualitative data at different levels: *province, commune, individual matrix results, and individual facilitators from specific deliberative sessions*. The team utilized the matrix coding to run reports on qualitative priorities by attribute: *group composition (all-female, all-male, and mixed gender), commune and gender of facilitator*. This process allowed the evaluation team to triangulate between the three qualitative datasets, to corroborate qualitative findings, and to compare qualitative findings with the quantitative survey findings.

### **Relevant Hypothesis Questions:**

The qualitative data supplemented the quantitative findings for three of the eight hypothesis questions under study – hypothesis questions 3, 5, and 7. It should be noted that the qualitative data under hypothesis question three serve as descriptive data on priorities and cannot be considered experimental. However, the findings under hypothesis questions 5 and 7 are experimental because qualitative data were gathered on all groups that were randomly assigned as part of the program variation.

#### **Hypothesis Question #3: How did participation in a deliberative session before the CD impact citizens' priorities?**

To contribute to Hypothesis Questions #3 the evaluation team coded the top priorities of each deliberative group. The matrix-identified priorities were then disaggregated by province and commune to better detail the different issues facing citizens at each level. Again, because similar data were not collected for the control group, this qualitative dataset cannot speak to experimental findings under hypothesis question three. However, as descriptive data they are invaluable for understanding citizens' priorities, as well as the context in which NDI's intervention takes place. The evaluation team also compared the matrix-identified priorities with survey-identified priorities to detail the qualitative and substantive differences between the way citizens identified and ranked priorities as individuals responding to a survey, and the way they identified and ranked priorities as a deliberative group using the matrix tool.

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<sup>18</sup> NVivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package designed for social science research that facilitates the management, coding and analysis of qualitative data.

### *Hypothesis Question #5: How did the gender composition of the deliberative groups differentially impact the priority issues of the participants?*

The evaluation team disaggregated matrix-identified priorities by group type (all-female, all-male and mixed groups) to identify differences in priority issues by group composition. A regression analysis was done to determine statistically significant differences in priorities across group types. In addition, the gender-sensitive matrix priorities were also reviewed against matrix measures that gauged voting patterns for solutions. These measures were used to analyze the effect of group type on voting pattern. Because the qualitative data were collected across randomly assigned groups – randomizing the gender composition of the deliberative groups -- they are experimental findings (see appendix 1 for details on the matrix measurements).

### *Hypothesis Question #7: Did the gender of the facilitator differentially influence the priority issues of participants?*

The matrix-identified priorities were also disaggregated by facilitator gender, again using the four measures on matrix voting patterns to determine the effect of facilitator gender on participants' priorities. As with hypothesis question 5, because the qualitative data were collected across randomly assigned groups – randomizing facilitator gender – they are experimental findings.

### *How did the deliberative group participants behave at the CD?*

The attendance and behavior of deliberative session participants were analyzed and compared with the larger population of citizens in attendance at the CD. The results were disaggregated by gender, behavior and participation in a deliberative session.

### *What was the environment at the CD event?*

Likert scales from facilitator observations were graphed and analyzed in the aggregate as well as by each commune in order to document the environment of each CD. These were triangulated with the facilitators' qualitative observations. CD observation data were inventoried along with the matrix-identified priorities at the commune level. The two datasets – CD observation and matrix-identified priorities – were compared in order to identify the patterns of issues across provinces, party presence, police presence, MNA behavior and citizen response to each CD.

### *Analysis of Program Hypothesis*

The evaluation team also reviewed the qualitative data in the context of: a) NDI's larger program hypothesis; and b) the current Cambodian political situation. The following sections present a summary of qualitative findings from the deliberative sessions and the constituency dialogue events, along with the implications of the findings for the study, citizen deliberation and for the CD program design and evaluation.

## IV. Qualitative Findings:

The day before the CD event, NDI held deliberative sessions with a randomly invited group of rural citizens from the same commune. When the citizens arrived NDI randomly assigned some of the citizens to participate in all-male, all-female or mixed-gender groups. The following presents the qualitative findings for: (A) the deliberative sessions; and (B) the constituency dialogue (CD) observations. These findings inform and complement answers to three of the eight hypothesis questions that make up the study design, offering some insight into the behavior of deliberative session participants at the Constituency Dialogue.

### A. Deliberative Sessions

#### Hypothesis Question #3: How did participation in a deliberative session before the CD impact citizens' priorities?

A week before the CD the research team administered a baseline survey to individuals from the surrounding CD village. Survey respondents were given a closed list of priority problems and asked to rank their top three in order of importance. At baseline the research team invited all survey respondents to the CD, but randomly invited some respondents to participate in a deliberative session the day before the CD. During the deliberative sessions participants were asked to discuss their problems with a group of 3-6 of their fellow citizens.

<b>Comparison of Survey &amp; Deliberative Session Priorities</b>		
<b>Rank Order</b>	<b>Baseline Survey Identified Priorities:</b>	<b>Deliberative Session Matrix-Identified Priorities:</b>
	<b>Survey Question:</b> <i>Of the following issues, which are the top three you would like your Members of the National Assembly to take action on?</i>	<b>Deliberative Session Instructions:</b> <i>After brainstorming, rank your top three priorities by distributing buttons on the three most important problems</i>
	<b>% of individual respondents who listed priority as one of their top 3 priorities (997 respondents in CD communes)</b>	<b>% of groups who voted priority as one of their top 3 priorities (79 groups)</b>
1	Lack of infrastructure (roads): 52%	Lack of Infrastructure (roads): 57%
2	High price of commodities (electricity and oil): 50%	Land Seizure: 43%
3	Land Seizure: 48%	Corruption: 32%
4	Lack of security (youth gangs): 32%	Money high cost of living: 27%
5	Lack of transparency (extortion and corruption): 25%	Water & Sanitation: 24%
6	Illegal Logging and Fishing: 20%	Health Clinics: 23%
7	Agriculture-related problems: 17%	Lack of Security (youth gangs): 20%
8	Vietnamese-Cambodia Border (influx of Vietnamese workers): 13%	Education: 14%
9	Inability of Farmers to Pay Off Debts: 11%	Agriculture Related Problems: 13%
10	Political party platforms don't fight poverty: 10%	Illegal Logging and Fishing: 11%
11	Police and local officials discrimination/ unfair practices: 8%	Electricity: 10%
12	Poor quality of education: 5%	Market: 8%
13	Leaders don't represent citizens: 4%	Bridge: 8%
14	--	Consecrated Buildings: 3%
15	--	Poverty: 3%
16	--	Vietnamese Migration: 3%
17	--	Drought: 1%
18	--	Stealing: 1%
19	--	Canal: 1%

**Table 1: Top priorities identified by individual survey respondents vs. deliberative groups**

The comparison of priorities between the baseline survey and the deliberative sessions illustrate the qualitative and substantive difference between how individual preferences are aggregated on a survey and how preferences are aggregated as part of a deliberative group process. While many of the same issues rank among citizens' top three survey-identified priorities (e.g., *lack of infrastructure, land seizure, corruption, high cost of living*), when asked to deliberate with their peers citizens placed lesser importance on some priorities (*Vietnamese migration, illegal logging and fishing*); placed more emphasis on other priorities (e.g., *education*); identified new priorities (e.g., *water & sanitation, health clinics inter alia*); and omitted other priorities altogether (e.g., *leaders don't represent citizens, political party platforms don't fight poverty*).

While it must be said that the survey offered a limited choice of priorities to respondents and no opportunity to add priorities, the deliberative session priorities illustrate how the creation of time and space for citizens to discuss problems yields a more granular perspective on citizens' lives. At the same time a content analysis of the deliberative sessions also revealed the interrelated nature of many of the citizens' priorities, and the ways in which corruption cuts across the issues. The following provides a qualitative review of the top six matrix-identified issues, highlighting where they were most prominent across the provinces and communes.

## **1. Infrastructure**

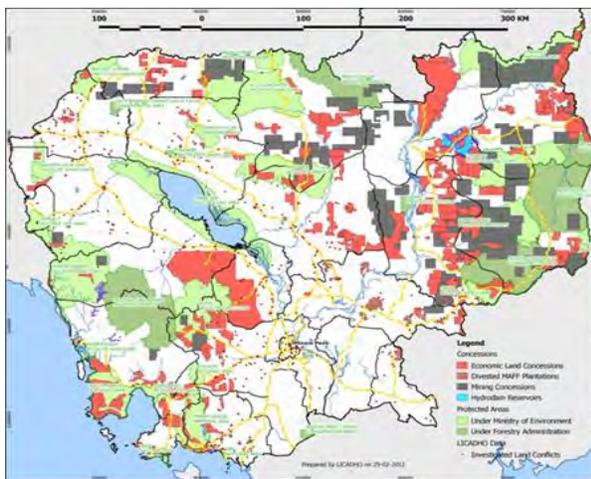
Poor infrastructure is a common concern for communities across rural Cambodia. Not surprisingly, whether identified through a deliberative process or on a survey, infrastructure ranks among citizens' top priorities. During deliberations citizens discussed the web of interrelated issues that affect and are affected by the lack of infrastructure.

During the deliberative sessions citizens complained that local roads were not maintained and their conditions were made worse by large trucks carrying heavy cargo. Citizens reported their produce spoiling before they were able to get it to market. In the dry season, dust kicked-up from unregulated traffic creates health problems for residents living on the sides of these dirt roads. During the wet season the unpaved roads are flooded and bridges are often left unrepaired. The poor road conditions not only make it difficult for residence to travel to market, or students to schools, but also increases the risk that residents will be struck by vehicles.

Deliberative groups also noted that the lack of electricity in many of the communes also serves to further isolate residents, not only cutting them off from information through radio and television, but affecting their children's education. Residents reported their children being forced to study by candlelight or kerosene lamp. The lack of electricity not only makes residents feel unsafe traveling after dark, but when coupled with poor road conditions makes it nearly impossible to reach medical services if their children are struck ill during the night.

## 2. Land Seizure

The confiscation of lands and the forced eviction of residents is a phenomenon affecting both rural and urban Cambodian citizens and is an issue of increasing concern among the international human rights community<sup>19</sup>. Not surprisingly, land seizure was ranked second on both the survey and in the deliberative groups. As part of a shift to a market economy, the Cambodian government established the 1992 Land Law, which reinstated legal private ownership of land along with the government’s right to grant land concessions to support the national economy. The government’s reform agenda was purportedly aimed at food security, sustainable agricultural development and economic growth. However, the lack of clear regulations on government land concessions, unclear procedures for private land registration and the 1994 Law on Investments gave the government unrestrained authority to appropriate lands and forcibly evict residents. Indeed, a 2004 UN report referenced the Land Law of 1992 as “a ‘get rich quick’ manual for the upwardly mobile” in Cambodia.<sup>20</sup> Since 2003 almost 400,000 citizens have been displaced or affected by land seizures.



Cambodian Land Concessions (red) from 1993-2012<sup>21</sup>



Cambodia Provincial Maps

Figure 3: Land Concessions Over Time

The priority of land seizure was largely driven by deliberative group priorities in Kampong Chhnang and Kratie provinces where they were most often ranked among the top three priorities. When comparing maps of Cambodian land concessions with provincial maps we see that both Kampong Chhnang and Kratie provinces are at the center of some of the most dramatic land concession activities in Cambodia.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on The Situation of Human Rights in Cambodia* (12 July 2012) US Department of State, *2011 Country Report on Human Rights Practices*; Amnesty International *Urgent Action Appeal* 17 December 2012; International Crisis Group, *Cambodia: the Elusive Peace Divided* and Human Rights Watch *World Report 2012: Cambodia*.

<sup>20</sup> UNHCHR 2004: Special Representative of Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia. *Land Concessions for Economic Purposes in Cambodia: a human rights perspective*.

<sup>21</sup> *Visualizing Land Concessions Over Time: 1993-2012 Interactive Map*. Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO) [http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/concession\\_timelapse](http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/concession_timelapse)

<sup>22</sup> A 2007 UN Report (*Economic Land Concessions in Cambodia: a human rights perspective*) noted Kampong Chhnang as one of the province where the greatest amount of land has been conceded; and the Sambo district in Kratie province where large tracks of land have been conceded to private companies

In Kampong Chhnang province land seizure was ranked the number one priority for deliberative groups in the Pech Chanvar and Ta Ches communes. In Kratie province, Kon Knher commune deliberative sessions ranked land seizure as their top priority issue, while the Krang Leav commune ranked land seizure as the third priority issue across all deliberative groups. These communes – along with other communes -- discussed the nature of the land seizures, the impact of land seizures on their communities, and the lack of redress for the destruction of their homes and livelihoods.

**Private Companies:** In Kratie the government has made numerous land concessions to private companies who have set about seizing land without regard to the *de facto* or *de jure* ownership of local residents.<sup>23</sup> During the deliberative sessions many citizens complained about various companies encroaching on their lands, leveling their fields, clear cutting the forests and destroying the wildlife. When residents' animals wander onto company lands they are confiscated, and payment is demanded for their return.

*There are Chinese and Indian companies clearing the forests to plant sugar cane, potatoes, or for mining. They are clearing the land near the village. The people say that there are dividing marks on their lands. The companies' compounds are surrounded by a canal and when the people's cattle enter the compounds they fall in and drown. The mining has very serious affects when the water flows into the lake. It contains chemicals that cause the cattle to die and the people to have stomach problems, vomiting and diarrhea. When [the people] make appeals to these companies they do not take responsibility [for their actions], so there is not a solution. (Facilitator Reflection #3, Kon Knher, Kratie)*

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**Land Titles:** Almost all the deliberative groups in Kampong Chhnang discussed the worsening land crisis. In the Krang Leav commune of Kampong Chhnang citizens reported that the local authorities delay the issuance of land titles to local citizens in order to facilitate the confiscation of occupied lands.

*The story I have heard in the [deliberative session] was that the participants said that they are worried about their rice fields -- located in the Patlang village -- because they are in the airport zone. They are worried about the possibility that their rice fields will be seized, especially since they have already been flatted once before. (Facilitator Reflection #1, Krang Leav, Kampong Chhnang)*

*In the discussion group the citizens raised the problem that the authorities had not yet issued certificates of land title to them; and that their lands were reserved for building an airport. Worried, the citizens went twice to register a complaint with the provincial authorities. As a result a high-ranking official came from Phnom Penh to help. Their lands were given back to them on the condition that when [the government] needed the land to build the airport they would take back the land. The airport project is affecting the whole Krang Leav Commune. (Facilitator Reflection #4, Krang Leav, Kampong Chhnang)*

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

The nature of land seizure in rural Cambodia is exacerbated by the isolation of farmers. Not only do their appeals go unheeded, but local authorities are often complicit in the dispossession of whole villages from their lands and livelihoods:

*In the group I facilitated there was a participant who is the victim of land confiscation by [a private company].<sup>24</sup> The conflict has [been] going on for ten years but still there is no proper solution so far. [She] added that, regarding her protests of the company, her mother was sent to prison for one year and eight months. Her sister died in a traffic accident after visiting her mother at the prison. She suspects that her sister's traffic accident was murder, since her mother described her whole story to her sister. Her brother, who refused to leave and built a cottage on the disputed land, has been charged with a crime. He escaped to Thailand, where he remains today. Her husband has also been charged with a crime and was ordered to pay compensation to the company in the amount [of] 10 million Riel. She went on to say that the confiscation by the company totally violates her family's rights as well as those of other citizens [in Ta Ches commune]. On the day of the seizure the company took over the lands without any regard for the fact that she was still in the house recovering from delivering a baby 15 days earlier. **Facilitator Reflection #3, Ta Ches, Kampong Chhnang***

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**Intimidation:** The theme of protest and incarceration ran throughout the discussion on land seizures. In Ta Ches commune (Kampong Chhnang) many deliberative groups discussed their unsuccessful attempts at protesting the land seizures, as well as the international company's use of local authorities to punish them for raising their voices.

*During the discussion on land disputes the group said that they have tried to protest against the confiscation of their lands. However, it is of no use since there isn't anyone around who will be concerned about the dispute, especially not the local authorities. More importantly, the leaders of the protest usually face confinement and the same protests have been taking place for about 10 years. **(Facilitator Reflection #9, Ta Ches, Kampong Chhnang)***

*The management team of Ta Ches commune, Kampong Tralach district, Kompong Chhang province, are from the CPP Party. The threat is that the management team will put a lot of pressure on the village people in the Ta Ches commune [because of] the conflict with the international company. The company did commit violence against the village people and sent six village people to prison in Kompong Chhang for a long time. For example, Mr. [X], has been sent to prison for 4 years and ordered to pay 6 million Riels in order to be released. But he has yet to be released. Through my observation as the facilitator in Group 8, I have seen that land encroachment, violence and confinement in the Tra Ches commune are [all] related to the international*

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<sup>24</sup> The State Department's 2011 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Cambodia has documented the questionable relationship between private international companies and a key Ministers within the government..”

*company. The village people are made to pay for their protests [against the company]. (Facilitator Reflections #8, Ta Ches, Kampong Chhnang)*

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The qualitative data revealed systematic intimidation of local residents. In some cases the deliberative sessions provided a forum for the victims of the land seizures to discuss their concerns with each other, while in other sessions victims expressed fear of discussing the issue at all:

*The process of discussions in my group went smoothly, because the citizen raised existing problems as well as provided encouragement to other members to share their opinions, especially regarding the land grabbing which has taken place [in] Lok Chum Tiev Chea Keng. The company's name is [omitted]. Of the 512 hectares confiscated, 208 hectares of the disputed land belongs to citizen. The citizens say they only sold 204 hectares [to the company]. (Facilitator Reflection #2, Ta Ches, Kampong Chhnang)*

*The threatening to the people who protest about land dispute is a hot topic in the Lor Peang village. That is the reason why the people dare not talk about the land dispute in the group discussion because they afraid the authorities or the company may find out. (Facilitator Reflection #6, Ta Ches, Kampong Chhnang)*

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**Development:** Under the pretext of development, land seizures have increased unabated in the form of government land concessions to national and foreign companies, government agency and/or powerful land prospectors. The ever-looming threat of land concessions not only disrupt people's livelihoods, but dispossess families for generations to come. As one facilitator notes:

*All village people want development in their village but this kind of development only worsens their living conditions. Moreover, people live in fear. [One participant] said that he was threatened many times because he fought back for his freedom and for his land. In Cambodia ... legal owners of the land are being accused of illegally possessing the land .... I always hear people saying "the land is our life. How can we live without our land and house? We would rather die." (Facilitator Reflection #4, Sangkat Orussey, Kratie)*

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Isolation and lack of legal recourse place an already vulnerable population at risk of predation by more powerful land speculators who are able to dispossess citizens with impunity across rural Cambodia. Data from the deliberative sessions echoed former Special Representative Michael Kirby's 1996 report to the UN Commission on Human Rights. As noted in that report, "the complaints of villages concerning non-consultation, the use of armed guards, the presentation for signature of an unexplained contract, the shooting of cows which wander onto concession areas and the feared endangerment of village survival and security of traditional sites of grave, pasture and farming land," and these complaints have not only continued, but are met with increasingly violent measures that violate civil, political and human rights.

### 3. Corruption

Deliberative groups ranked corruption as third on their list of priority issues, reporting that corruption cuts across all aspects of rural citizens' lives – infrastructure, land, humanitarian aid and service delivery. While land seizure provides the most dramatic examples of systemic corruption, the deliberative sessions detailed the myriad forms of corruption that plague the daily lives of rural Cambodian citizens.

**Corruption & Land:** In Sangkat Orussey, Kratie there has been a similar history of government land seizures, but with increasingly violent tactics to hold the dispossessed residents in check.

*Citizen's lands were confiscated and granted to a foreign company, a Vietnamese company. Moreover, they used violence, such as gun fire, to stop people from protesting. According to the deliberative session participants law enforcement officials were involved in corruption. [The participants want] the media to widely broadcast all this information to the public. (Facilitator Reflection #7, SanKat Orussey, Kratie)*

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The deliberative group's concerns were not unfounded. Those who attempt to protest or investigate irregularities have been threatened, arrested and/or killed.<sup>25</sup>

**Corruption & Infrastructure:** Many of the deliberative groups also discussed the influence of party partisanship in delivering public goods such as road repairs. As one facilitator notes:

*The group members said that one part of the road in the Srer Sdoav village is smooth and good for travelling. This part is in where the village chief's supporters are living. The other part of the road is damaged. The village chief does not restore this part of the road because his supporters' houses are not located on this side of the road. (Facilitator Refleciton #5, Santgat Orussey, Kratie)*

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**Corruption & Humanitarian Aid:** In Kampong Cham a number of deliberative groups reported partisanship in the distribution of humanitarian aid to flood victims:

*Some of the victims did not receive the aid while some victims received three times the aid. Moreover, some people who are not the victims of the flood also received the aid while the real victims didn't receive anything because of bias and partisanship. (Kampong Reab Commune, Kampong Cham Province).*

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Citizens reported local officials using humanitarian aid to coerce flood victims -- recording their names and identification numbers and extracting a promise to vote for their party in exchange for emergency assistance.

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<sup>25</sup> Human Rights Watch November 2012 News Release. *Hun Sen Government Intensifying Abuses, Moving Toward One-Party State.*

**Corruption & Service Delivery:** Public services are not equally accessible to all citizens. In Kratie, deliberative groups described how petty corruption, as well as partisanship, exclude the poorest citizens from the most needed services.

*During deliberative session group members were talking about the discrimination and inequality between rich and poor people. This is their concern. They said that there are many forms of discrimination [that take place]. Poverty cards: some people who have average living condition and can support their families still receive poverty cards. In contrast, very poor people do not receive the card. [The group said] it is because of partisanship. Education: teachers teach their students less during normal school hours. This is because they want to earn money from teaching students extra-time [outside of class]. For poor students who have no money, they can only stand outside the classroom watching the lecture. Health Care: Medics do not take care of poor patients because they think that poor patients have no money. But they are very friendly with rich patients. (Facilitator Reflection #6, Sangkat Orussey, Kratie)*

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#### **4. High Cost of Living**

The high cost of living was ranked most prominently in the Pech Chanvar commune (Kampong Chhnang province) but, like corruption, cut across all provinces. In Pech Chanvar and Thmar Andeuk deliberative groups contrasted their falling incomes against the rising price of market goods; creating a situation in which they are unable to purchase basic goods to meet their families' needs. In Ta Ches deliberative groups contrasted their rising unemployment with the high price of gasoline, limiting their ability to run farm machinery, water pumps or to travel or work using a motor taxi. In Krang Leav, residents emphasized the lack of land for farming, even for subsistence farming. Many residents have been forced to migrate to the city or to other countries in search of employment. In Kon Knher deliberative groups cited the high cost of living and its impact on the quality of available goods. With the increasing difficulty to make a small profit, market vendors survive by incorrectly weighing rice and other staple; selling goods past their expiration data, diluting gasoline, or selling imitation goods. Across the nine communes deliberative groups noted increasingly harsh living conditions, especially for the elderly, the orphans and the poorest members of their communities. Despite the increasing hardships, public benefits are also increasingly scarce, forcing many families to relocate or perish.

#### **5. Health Clinics**

Although not prominent in the survey results, lack of health clinics emerged as a priority issue in eight out of nine communes where the deliberative sessions were held. It was ranked most highly in all the communes in Kratie (Kon Knher, Thmar Andeuk, and Sangkat Orussey) and one commune in Kampong Cham (Ta Prok). In Ta Prok, Kg Cham citizens noted that there was no health clinic or pharmacy in the village and that the lack of infrastructure made it difficult for residents to travel when they needed medical attention. With no clinic or pharmacy, residents are forced to buy drugs from informal suppliers and often do not know what drugs they actually receive. In Thmar Andeuk, Kratie session participants also complained that the Health Center in Kan Tout commune was too far away and difficult to reach, especially when it floods. One participant recounted that his pregnant wife had died because she was not able to reach the hospital in time.

Even when citizens can reach the health centers, service is often poor. The participants noted that the staff ignore or blame the patients for their problems. Furthermore the health care center is inadequately equipped, and medics often diagnose patients without a proper examination of their problems. As one facilitator recorded:

*Lack of a health center makes our lives more difficult. When we are sick, we have to go to the provincial hospital, which is located far from the village. We have to spend more time. It is especially difficult for pregnant women. They have to deliver their babies in a private clinic, which is more expensive. [At the provincial hospital] they demand money for filling out documents and use rude words. We cannot send our children to the communal health center even though they may be seriously ill. We have to send them to private clinics [and] private medical services are much more expensive than the services from public hospitals (Facilitator notes #9, Thmar Andaeuk).*

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## 6. Water & Sanitation

Water & sanitation – also not found in the survey results -- was ranked as a high priority in the deliberative sessions. This was especially true in Kampong Cham, where recent flooding has exacerbated the unmaintained infrastructure. This has affected citizens' access to clean drinking water and damaged the irrigation of their rice paddies, particularly in Kampong Reab:

*During the deliberative session my group members raised the issue of their living conditions in the village. During the rainy season their village is flooded. The road is flooded and cuts them off, making it difficult for them to travel. During the dry season, people don't have enough water to drink. They have to buy water (2000 riels per jar). Farming activities are badly affected due to the lack of water. Their living conditions are becoming worse and worse. (Facilitator reflections, Kampong Reab, Kampong Cham Province)*

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People reported a lack of clean water for both themselves and their animals, forcing them to use shallow wells containing unclean water. This has caused serious health problems for community members and their children.

### **Hypothesis Question #5: How did the gender composition of the deliberative groups differentially impact the priority issues of the participants?**

To understand how gender might impact deliberation and priority ranking, the evaluation team randomly assigned citizens to deliberative groups that differed in gender composition. The evaluation team then analyzed how the different groups prioritized their problems and voted on solutions.

**Priority Problems:** When the evaluation team disaggregated the top nine matrix-identified priorities by gender – comparing the top three priority problems of all-male groups, all-female groups and mixed groups -- they found some statistically significant differences in how the groups ranked their priorities. For example, all-male groups were 32% more likely to than any other group type to rank *lack of infrastructure* among their top three priority issues, with all-female groups being 37% *less* likely to rank

infrastructure among their top three priorities. All-male groups were also 22% *less* likely than all other group types to identify *corruption* as a top priority. Lastly, while *lack of health clinics* appeared with equal frequency on all-male and all-female matrices, mixed groups were 14% more likely to rank health clinics as a priority problem.

**Priority Solutions:** During the deliberative sessions participants were asked to generate two kinds of solutions for each of their top three priority problems – an *internal* solution around which communities could take action; and an *external* solution that would require action from their MNA. The deliberative groups then voted on the solutions, identifying the top three solutions that received the most votes.

All deliberative groups tended to vote more frequently for *external* solutions to their priority problems. However, all-male groups tended to vote slightly more often for external solutions than did all-female and mixed groups. All-female groups cast an average 60 percent of their votes for external solutions. All-male groups cast an average 71 percent of their votes for external solutions. Mixed-groups with female facilitators cast an average of 53 percent of votes for external solutions, while mixed-groups with male facilitators cast 74 percent of their votes for external solutions.

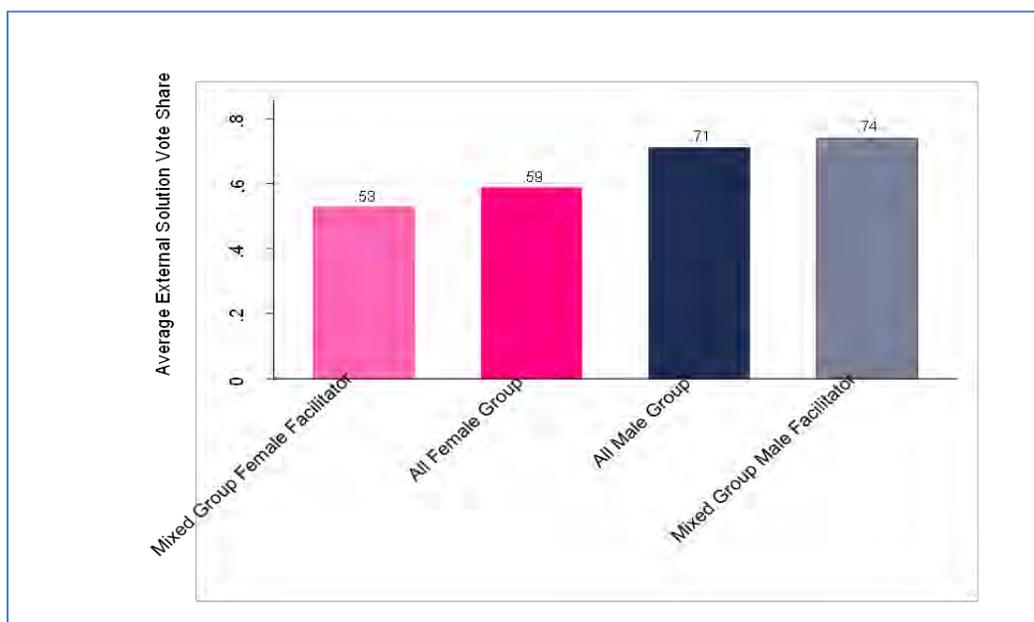


Figure 4: Effect of group composition and facilitator gender on solution ranking

In answer to Hypothesis Questions #5, the gender composition of the deliberative groups did impact how a group ranked its priority problems and the kinds of solutions it identified to address those problems. Further content analysis of the qualitative data by group type may provide more insight into why all-male groups gave stronger preference to *lack of infrastructure* or de-emphasized *corruption* in comparison to other group types. On the other hand, the propensity of mixed-groups to prioritize the *need for health clinics* may be a function of both males and females being in general agreement on this need in their communes, as reflected in the priority of *health clinics* in both gender-homogenous groups. In the post-

deliberation reflections all groups noted that most of their priority problems required some kind of *external* support. However, the data indicate that participation in all male-groups makes preference for *external* solutions a more a more likely outcome of deliberation.

### **Hypothesis Question #7: Did the gender of the facilitator differentially influence the priority issues of participants?**

Not only did the gender composition of the group influence deliberative outcomes, but so too did the gender of the *facilitator*. Male-facilitated groups were 37 percent more likely than female-facilitated groups to identify *lack of infrastructure* among their top three priorities. Male-facilitated groups were also 24 percent *less* likely than female-facilitated groups to identify the *high cost of living* among their top three priority problems. Similarly, male-facilitated groups were also 10 percent *less* likely than female-facilitated groups to identify *access to markets* among their top three priority problems.

When voting for solutions, male-facilitators tended to increase the deliberative group's vote for *external* solutions more than any other group type. In addition, when voting for solutions to specific problems groups facilitated by a male tended to "cluster" their votes. That is, when compared to female-facilitated groups, male-facilitated groups on average allocated 2.29 more of their votes for any single solution. Similarly, when compared to female facilitated groups, male-facilitated groups on average allocated 5.5 more of their votes for the group's top three solutions. In short, in answer to Hypothesis Question # 7, the gender of the facilitator did differentially influence three of the 19 matrix-identified problems, along with the type of solutions for which a deliberative group voted (see Appendix 1).

### **Summary of Deliberative Sessions Findings:**

- **Priority Concerns:** While the descriptive data on priorities could not answer causal questions on the relationship between participation in deliberative sessions and priorities, they do provide critical qualitative and substantive details on how small groups of citizens – if given the opportunity – deliberate, debate and come to consensus on priority problems and solutions. A comparison between baseline survey priorities and matrix-identified priorities highlighted many similarities in priority problems, but also revealed: a shift in rank order of priorities; additional priorities not identified on the survey; and the omission of other priorities listed on the survey. In short, the descriptive data from the deliberative process presented a more granular, close-to-the ground understanding of rural citizens' problems that may have been partially captured with an open-ended survey question. That said, a content analysis of the deliberative discussions of priorities also highlighted the interconnected nature of participants' priorities and their impacts on the daily lives of citizens, families, communities and the natural environment. Themes of corruption were heavily featured in the qualitative data, along with intimidation and the systematic dispossession of the rural poor from their lands and livelihoods. Indeed, corruption cut across many of the priority issues.
- **Gender & Priority Problems:** The data show that the gender composition of the deliberative groups did influence the way in which a group ranked some priority problems using a matrix. During deliberation all-male groups tended to place a higher priority on *lack of infrastructure*, but were *less* likely to rank *corruption* as a top priority, as compared to all other group types. Mixed-groups were more likely than any other group type to identify *lack of health clinics* among their top priorities. This may reflect a general consensus of both genders on the need for health clinics, as indicated by

the equal frequency with which all-female and all-male groups also ranked health clinics a priority. The gender of the facilitator also influenced some of the priority issues. Groups facilitated by males were less likely than groups facilitated by females to identify the *high cost of living* or *access to markets* among their top three priority problems. Across all nineteen matrix-identified priorities, five priorities demonstrated a gender bias due to group composition or facilitator gender -- approximately 26% of all priorities.

- ***Gender & Priority Solutions:*** As with priorities, the data also demonstrated that the gender of the facilitator had an impact on how participants in deliberative sessions voted for solutions. While all groups tended to vote for external solutions to their priority problems, all-male groups and groups facilitated by a male tended to vote more often for *external* solutions than any other group type. Furthermore, when compared to female-facilitated groups, male-facilitated groups tended to “cluster” their votes for single solutions to individual problems as well as for their top three priority solutions.

Together the descriptive and causal data analysis provides insight into micro-level democratic processes and the ways in which the context as well as gender inform and influence citizen deliberation. The content analysis of citizen deliberation demonstrated the interconnected nature of the problems facing rural Cambodians, detailing the ways in which corruption plagues many aspects of citizens’ lives. The statistical analysis of matrix priorities and matrix voting patterns speak to the causal relationship between deliberative group composition, facilitator gender and deliberative outcomes. The data clearly demonstrate that the gender composition of a deliberative group influences ranking preferences, while the gender of the facilitator influences how strongly certain solutions are preferred over other.

Moreover, the qualitative data not only provide a context for citizens priorities, but insight into the factors that may enable or inhibit citizens in exercising their voices within newly emerging political space such as the Constituency Dialogues. The following section details the environment in which the CDs took place and the behavior of the deliberative group participants. Environment and behavior are then set against the backdrop of the priority concerns identified in each of the nine communes the day before the CD event.

## B. Constituency Dialogues

The day after local citizens participated in their small deliberative sessions their commune hosted a CD event. NDI's underlying assumption for the deliberative sessions was that if citizens were given some additional time and space to discuss their concerns and come to consensus on their priority issues they might gain additional clarity and confidence to more fully engage their representatives at the constituency dialogue the next day. This section presents the qualitative data in answer to three questions:

- What was the behavior of deliberative session participants on the day of the CD?
- What was the environment at the CD event?
- What were the deliberative group priorities in each commune where the CD was held?

### What Was the Behavior of Deliberative Session Participants at the CD?

After the completion of the matrix-ranking exercise the facilitator asked the group to reflect on: the accuracy of the matrix; which kinds of solutions received the most votes and why; and if they would raise their priority issues during the CD event the following day. Facilitators recorded that majority of the deliberative groups (78 of 80) agreed that the priorities accurately represented their problems and desired solutions for citizens in their villages. Seventy-nine of the eighty groups agreed that someone in their group would raise some of their matrix-identified concerns at the constituency dialogue the next day. During the constituency dialogues deliberative session facilitators acted as observers and monitored and recorded the behavior of their deliberative group members in attendance at the CD, recording their gender, hand-raising to speak; and speaking at the CD.

Attendees That Raised Concerns at the CD		
Gender	% of CD event attendees (excluding deliberative session participants)	% of Deliberative session participants in attendance at CD
Male	2.73% (65 of 2384)	6.90% (8 of 116)
Female	1.32 % (24 of 1820)	1.96% (2 of 102)
Both	2.12 % (89 of 4204)	4.56 % (10 of 218)

**Table 2: CD vs. Deliberative Session Participant Behavior at the CD Event (disaggregated by gender)**

Although participants in almost all deliberative sessions agreed the day before that they would raise their concerns at the CD event the next day, only 65.7% of those citizens were able to attend their CD events the following day. Of those deliberative session participants who attended the CD, 46% were female and a little more than half were males (53%). However, when the evaluation team compared the observed behavior of deliberative session participants at the CD with those citizens who had not participated in the deliberative sessions, they found some interesting trends. Deliberative session participants raised their hands and spoke at their CD events more than twice as often as citizens at the CD who had not participated in a deliberative session. When the data were disaggregated by gender the evaluation team found that women who had participated in deliberative sessions spoke at their CDs one and a half times more often than female attendees who had not participated in a deliberative session. Most dramatically, male participants in deliberative sessions raised their hands and spoke at their CD events two and half times more often than their male counterparts who attended the CD but had not attended a deliberative session. It should be noted that these findings cannot be considered experimental since deliberative

session participants self-selected their attendance at the deliberative sessions and CD, and it is possible that some individuals who were invited to participate in the deliberative session but did not were also in attendance at the CD. It is also possible that some individuals who attended the deliberative session and the CD were not among the group randomly invited to attend the deliberative session. However, the differences across categories suggest that participation in the deliberative sessions contributed to differences in citizen engagement at the constituency dialogue.

### What Was the Environment at Constituency Dialogue Event?

In addition to the behavior of their deliberative group participants, the deliberative session facilitators observed and recorded the environment of the CDs. The observers used a Likert scale and qualitative descriptions to record their perceptions and observations of the general environment of the CD, recording: *political party presence; police presence; MNA behavior; and general audience satisfaction* (see Appendix 2). The following summarizes the qualitative findings from these observations, first presenting the general environment across all nine CDs and then detailing the specific contexts for each CD. The latter presentation highlights the issues that citizens in each commune face, providing some insights into the challenges of citizens in raising their voices at some of these CD forums.

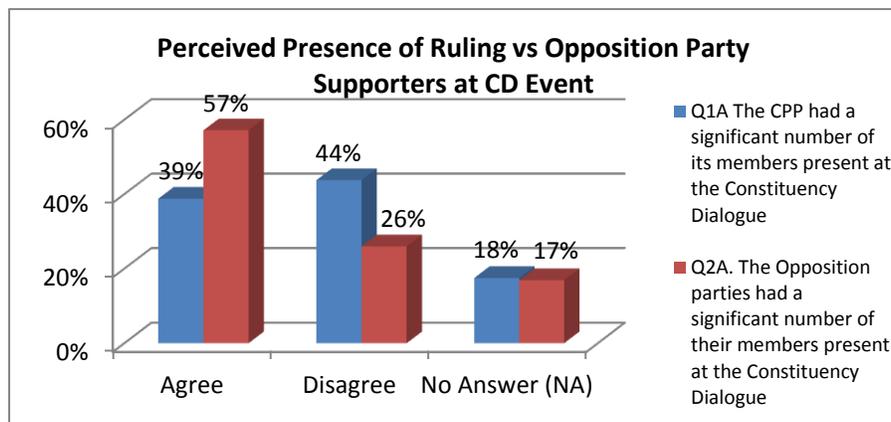


Figure 5: Observer perceptions of party support across all nine CD events

**Party Presence at the CD Events:** Facilitator observations indicated that the ruling party did not have an overwhelmingly strong presence of its members at the CD events. In fact, the observers tended to report a slightly higher presence of opposition party members at most of the CD events. In Kampong Cham province, the observers reported a roughly equal presence of the opposition and ruling party members in the Ta Prok commune CD and a slightly stronger presence of opposition party members in the Chaom Ta Mau and Kampong Reap commune CDs. In Kratie province, while it was unclear which party had a stronger presence in the Sangkat Orussey commune, the observers reported a roughly equal presence of opposition and ruling party members at CDs held in the Kon Knher and Thmar Andaeuk communes. In Kampong Chhnang province, observers reported a slightly higher presence of opposition party members at the Pech Chanvar and Ta Ches commune CDs, and again approximately equal presence of both opposition and ruling parties at Krang Leav commune CD.

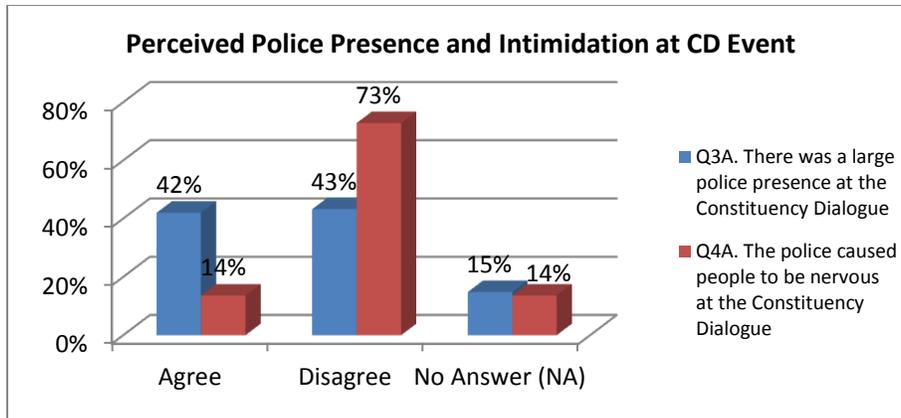


Figure 6: Observer perceptions of police presence and intimidation across all nine CD events

**Police Presence at the CD Events:** In most communes, observers agreed that police presence was not particularly strong at the CD events. In seven of the nine communes, the observers did not report that citizens attending the CDs were intimidated by the police. However, in two communes – both in Kratie province – observers did agree that there was a strong police presence at both the Kon Knher and Thmar Andaeuk commune CDs. Further, at the Kon Kmher CD, some observers reported that people felt intimidated by the strong police presence, while in Thmar Andaeuk, observers seemed to be split on whether or not CD participants were intimidated by the strong police presence.

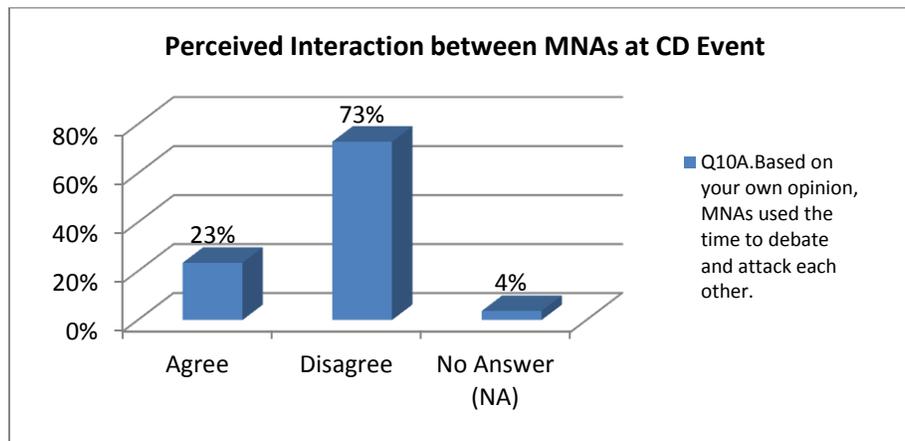


Figure 7: Observer perceptions of interaction between MNAs at CD events

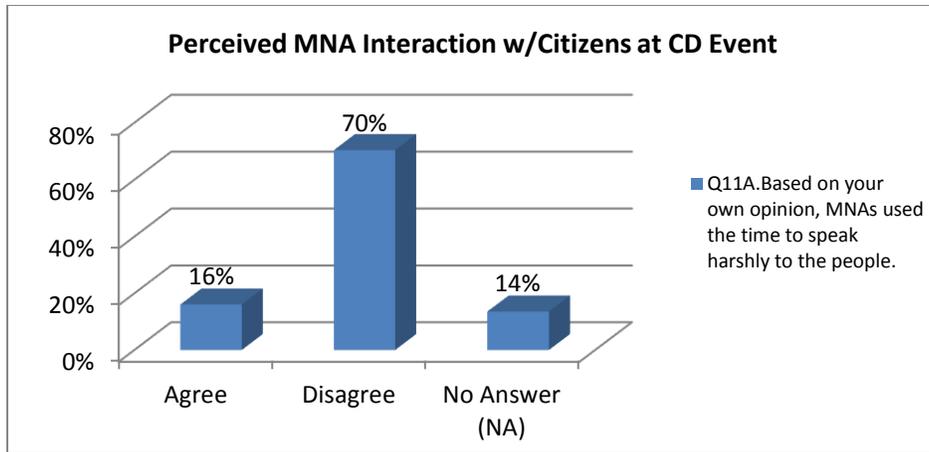


Figure 8: Observer perceptions of MNA interaction with citizens across all nine CD events

**MNA Behavior at the CD Events:** Almost all of the observers agreed that the MNAs attempted to respond to the concerns raised by their constituencies at the CD. The observers agreed that during most of the CDs the MNAs did not use their time to attack and/or debate with each other. However, observers were slightly divided on MNAs' interaction with each other in Ta Prok, Kampong Cham and Pech Chanvar, Kampong Chhnang. Observers at both CDs also reported that CPP MNAs spoke harshly to the CD attendees.

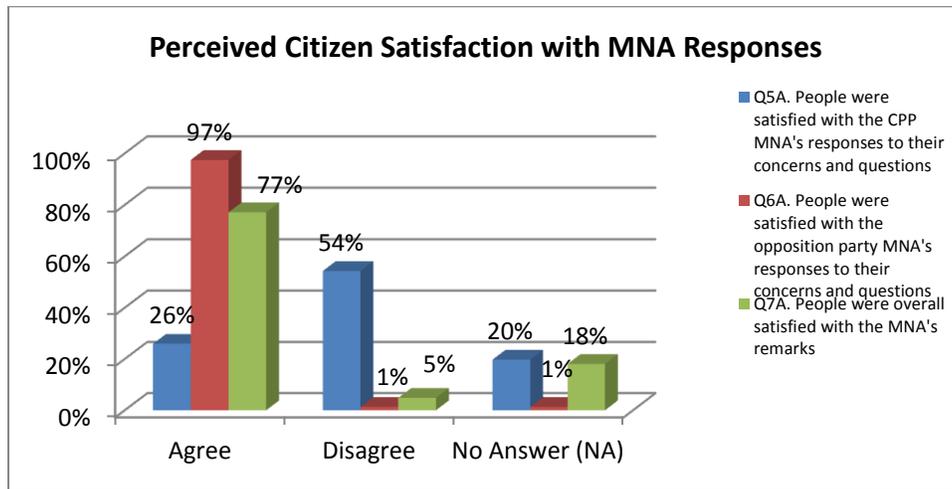


Figure 9: Observer perceptions of citizen satisfaction of MNA's responses across all nine CD events

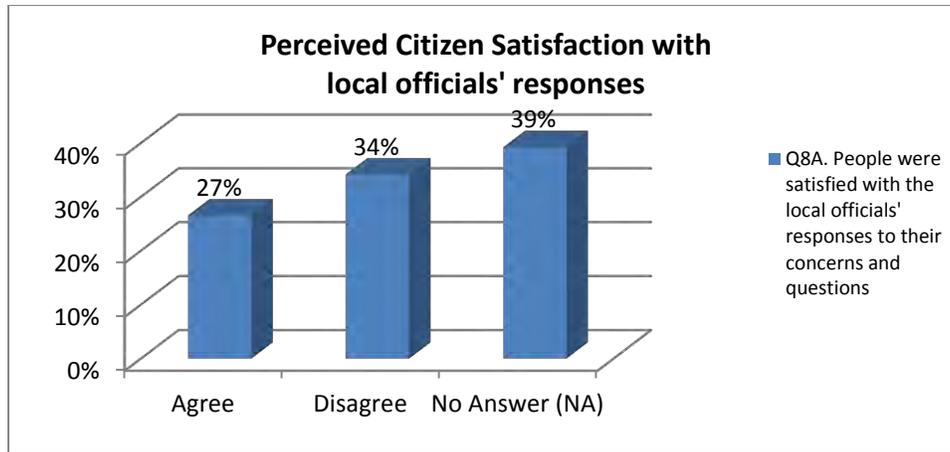


Figure 10: Observer perceptions citizen satisfaction with local officials' responses across all nine CD events

**Citizen Satisfaction with Representatives' Responses:** The observers largely agreed that constituents were generally satisfied with the MNAs' response at all nine CD events. When asked to decipher the attendees' satisfaction with the responses of MNAs from ruling and opposition parties, observers consistently agreed that citizens were satisfied with MNA responses from opposition parties; however, observers disagreed that citizens were satisfied with MNA responses from the ruling party. In eight communes, observers were either split—as in Ta Prok, Thman Andaeuk and Krang Leav—or disagreed—as in Chaom Ta Mau, Pech Chavar, Ta Ches, Kampong Reab, and Sangkat Oressy—that citizens were satisfied with MNA responses from the CPP party. In only one commune, Kon Knher, Kratie, did facilitators agree that citizens seemed satisfied with MNA responses from the ruling party, the CPP (see Figure 12).

When asked to assess citizen satisfaction with the responses of their local officials, observers were less decisive. In three communes (Chaom Ta Mau, Thman Andaeuk and Krang Leav) observers disagreed that citizens were satisfied with their local officials responses; in three communes (Ta Prok, Ta Ches and Sangkat Oressy), observers agreed that citizens were satisfied with the responses of their local officials; and in three communes (Kon Knher, Pech Chavar, and Konpong Reab) observers were split or unclear if citizens were satisfied with the responses of their local officials (see Figure 13).

**What Were the Deliberative Group Priorities in Each Commune?**

Kampong Cham Province Matrix-Identified Priorities		
Chaom Ta Mau	Ta Prok	Kampong Reab
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Infrastructure
Markets	Health clinics	Water & Sanitation
Youth gangs	Education	Agriculture
	Agriculture	Electricity

Table 3: Deliberative Group Priorities by Province and Commune

Like other provinces in the study, the people in the Kampong Cham province complained of a poor infrastructure that impedes the production and marketing of their agricultural products. This threat to

their livelihoods has been exacerbated by severe flooding. Although humanitarian aid was greatly needed by citizens in the province, the deliberative group participants reported that aid delivery was intercepted by partisan local officials who meted out aid in exchange for political support.

**Chaom Ta Mau:** This CD was characterized by a slightly higher presence of opposition party members, and a modest police presence that did not particularly intimidate the attendees. Observers agreed that MNAs generally responded to citizens' concerns, did not waste time attacking or debating with their opponents, nor did they speak harshly to the citizens. Observers disagreed that citizens were satisfied with the responses from the ruling party MNAs or their local officials. However, observers did agree that citizens were satisfied with the responses from opposition parties MNAs. A facilitator observed that:

*There was a considerable number of opposition party members [in the audience] because whenever the opposition parties MNA made any remark on the concerns raised by the voters, the [remarks] were most welcomed and greeted with applause. (Chaom Ta Mau Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 30 July 2011)*

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**Chaom Ta Mau Matrix-identified Priorities:** Infrastructure, markets, youth drug gangs

**Ta Prok:** Observers noted an equal presence of ruling and opposition party supporters and some police presence, which did not lead to intimidation of attendees. They agreed that the MNAs generally responded to citizen concerns and questions, but some observers noted that some MNAs did spend time debating and/or attacking each other. The observers were also split on MNAs responses to the people, noting that some people were spoken to harshly by the MNAs. Observers were split on whether or not citizens were satisfied with the responses of MNAs from the ruling party, but agreed that citizens were satisfied with the responses from the opposition party, as well as their local officials.

Facilitators reported the above characteristics as follows:

*During the CD, participants were very active in asking questions as well as raising their concerns to the MNAs. Female participants raised more questions than male participants. Participants also wondered why the CPP MNAs made responses which are not in accordance to their questions regarding irrigation systems. Some other participants said that the MNAs did not directly respond to the questions. (Ta Prok Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 26 November 2011)*

*In the first stage, CPP MNAs used some harsh words toward the people who questioned them about the government's policy regarding forest land concessions, mining and taxes, etc. (Ta Prok Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 26 November 2011)*

*Citizens were angry with Her Excellency Chem Savai because she wasted time and didn't respond directly to the problems raised. (Ta Prok Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 26 November 2011)*

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*I think that MNAs used some of the time to debate and attack each other. However, they mostly attacked each other on issues such as the national budgets, liability and foreign loan. (Ta Prok Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 26 November 2011)*

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***Ta Prok Matrix-Identified Priorities:*** Infrastructure, Health Clinics, Education, Agriculture

***Kompong Reab:*** Observers reported a stronger presence of opposition supporters than CPP supporters at the CD. Most observers disagreed that there was a strong police presence and did not think the citizens were intimidated. They observed that the MNAs attempted to respond to citizens' questions and concerns; did not spend time attacking or debating the other MNAs; nor did they harangue or speak harshly to the attendees. While they felt citizens were generally satisfied with MNA responses, they disagreed that they were satisfied with the ruling party's responses. They did agree that the citizens were satisfied with the opposition parties' responses, but were unable to decipher if citizens were satisfied with the responses of their local officials.

*The MNAs responded directly to the concerns raised [by the citizens] but their responses didn't really address what the people needed. (Kampong Reab Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 14 January 2012)*

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During the deliberative group sessions in Kompong Reab citizens consistently discussed the partisanship and corruption of their local official in distributing humanitarian aid after a recent flood. One of the facilitator noted the fear that one citizen expressed in raising his concerns at the CD:

*Even in the case of humanitarian aid for flood victims in the Kampong Reab commune, some rich people received 4-5 times the amount of aid, while the poor never got anything. Although people had asked the local official to stop discriminating against people, the local official didn't listen. [They complained that] humanitarian aid for flood victims never reached the poor people. The [local officials] only distributed the aid to their party members or relatives. My group member did not dare to raise his concerns to the MNAs [at the CD]. He asked the facilitator to write a letter to inform the MNAs about his concerns. Local officials listed the names and ID card numbers of people and they only offered people aid in exchange for the promise that the people would vote for the CPP. This is a secret activity, and it also violates the rights of voters. None of MNAs had visited the people [of Kampong Reap] for a very long time. People never knew their names or faces. MNAs come only when it is time for the election campaign. If there were no NDI event, those MNAs would not come to see people. (Kampong Reab Commune, Kampong Cham Province on 14 January 2012)*

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***Kampong Reab Matrix-Identified Priorities:*** Infrastructure, water & sanitation, agriculture, electricity

Kratie Province Matrix-Identified Priorities		
Kon Knher	Thmar Andaeuk	Sangkat Orussey
Land seizure	Infrastructure	Corruption
Infrastructure	Health clinics	Infrastructure
Health clinics	Corruption	Health clinics
Corruption	Poverty	Water & Sanitation

**Table 4: Deliberative Group Priorities by Province and Commune**

Citizens in the province of Kratie not only suffer the challenges of a weak infrastructure, but they also face serious problems of land seizure and corruption. In the deliberative sessions citizens spoke of government confiscation of their lands for both public and private use, with little to no compensation. Facilitators recorded a particularly strong police presence in Kon Knher and Thmar Andaeuk communes. In Sangkat Orussey, CD facilitators recorded a modest turnout of either opposition or ruling party supporters. However, observers did note that citizens were courageous in voicing their concerns.

**Kon Knher:** Observers approximated an equal number of CPP and opposition party members at the CD event. Almost all of the facilitators recorded a strong police presence at the CD. Some of the observers agreed that the police presence intimidated attendees. Nevertheless, they also agreed that the MNAs responded to citizens' questions and concerns; refrained from attacking and debating the other MNAs; and did not speak harshly to the attendees. The observers agreed that citizens were generally satisfied with MNA responses – both from the CPP and opposition parties; but, they were unclear if citizens were satisfied with the responses of their local officials.

The following facilitators' observations described the strong police presence and the effect on participants at the Kon Knher CD event:

*The presence of police officials in the constituency dialogue was remarkable. [There were] about 10 of them. The police officials spread out everywhere -- at the entrance to the forum, in the middle, in front, and behind the forum. They were also mobile around the forum. (Kon Knher Commune, Kratie Province on 6 August 2011)*

*The police officers walked around the forum when the MNAs were making their opening remarks. They also had a voice recording device at the forum. The police officers took turns observing the situation. And when the people raised any concern for discussion, the police stood up and looked at their faces. (Kon Knher Commune, Kratie Province on 6 August 2011)*

*There were about ten police officers at the program. They spread around the forum, some at the entrance, some at the sides, and three or four of them sat in the front row of the forum. I saw the police officers had papers and pens, and it looked like they were noting things down. (Kon Knher Commune, Kratie Province on 6 August 2011)*

*There were many police officials wearing stripes which affected some people in expressing their opinions and made them afraid. The police officials were from the*

*province, district, and station in different levels. (Kon Knher Commune, Kratie Province on 6 August 2011)*

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***Kon Knher Matrix-identified Issues:*** Land seizure, Infrastructure, health clinics, corruption

***Thmar Andaeuk:*** Observers noted that there was approximately equal presence of CPP and opposition party supporters at the CD. However, they agreed to strongly-agreed that there was a heavy police presence at the event. The observers were split on whether or not the police presence intimidated the attendees. They agreed that the MNAs generally tried to respond to citizen questions and concerns, but a number of observers noted that the MNAs spent time attacking and debating each other. Nevertheless, they did not agree that the MNAs spoke harshly to the people in attendance. While observers agreed that the citizens were generally satisfied with the MNAs, they were split on citizen satisfaction with MNA responses from the ruling party. They generally agreed, however, that attendees were satisfied with the responses of the MNAs from the opposition parties, but disagreed that they were satisfied with the responses of their local officials. Observers provided details on the heavy police presence at the Thmar Andaeuk CD event:

*There were too many police officers such as security police, criminal police, military police, and a soldier. In total, there are 17. (Thmar Andaeuk Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*There were many police officers presented at the forum of NDI. People felt nervous about speaking and raising their concerns because of the presence of local officials. (Thmar Andaeuk Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*I noticed that all police officers and local officials sat together with the people. Sometimes, the local officials stared and laughed at people who raised concerns and the opposition party MNAs who made comments [in response] to the people. (Thmar Andaeuk Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*The most interesting thing about the CD Program was too [heavy] a presence of local authorities. There were about.....people. If they came as protector, it would be good. However, it was otherwise. They accompanied the members of National Assembly from the ruling party and were political tools for the ruling party... They sat with participants at the rear, and when the people talked about their problems and concerns, those authorities stared at them unhappily. Through this action, village people worried about their safety. In addition, those authorities laughed at villagers and whispered among themselves while the Members of the National Assembly from opposition parties made a welcome speech to villagers. (Thmar Andaeuk Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

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***Thmar Andaeuk Matrix-Identified Issues:*** Infrastructure, health clinics, corruption, poverty

**Sangkat Orussey:** Observers did not report a significant presence of either opposition or ruling party supporters at the CD. They also did not report a heavy police presence, nor did they indicate that the attendees were intimidated by the police. They noted the behavior of the MNAs as responsive to questions and civil in refraining from attacking or debating their opponents. Neither did the MNAs harangue the attendees. Similar to the observations at other CDs, observers felt citizens were generally satisfied with MNA responses, but disagreed that they were satisfied with the ruling party's responses. They did agree that the citizens were satisfied with the opposition parties' responses, as well as the responses of their local officials. Observers noted the modest presence of the CPP party at the Sangkat Orussey CD event as well as the courage of participants who raised their voices:

*It is hard to observe [the presence of ruling or opposition party supporters] because there is a small amount of participants at the CD. (Sangkat Orussey Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*The CPP did not have a significant number of its members present at the CD. (Sangkat Orussey Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*On the day of the CD, one participant from Srer Kreng village, Sandan commune, Sombo district, Kratie province said that his land was confiscated to use for university construction. He was sent to live in forest land. This forest land belongs to other person. He said there is no compensation for his previous land, which is a productive land. (Facilitator reflection #5, Sangkat Orussey Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*During the CD event, people are courageous in raising their ideas. One participant mentioned that some criminals dressed in police or military uniform. However, the police officers do not dare arrest those criminals because they are afraid that those offenders might have some powerful person behind them. At the end of the event, local officials raised some solutions and asked people to have faith in them while they are trying to solve the problems. They asked people to be patient; that they needs time to develop our country. (Facilitator Reflection. Sangkat Orussey Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*CPP MNA did not get support from people because he avoided responding directly to the concerns raised. He spoke unclearly because he is old. He always repeated his words. (Sangkat Orussey Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

*People were satisfied with opposition parties MNA's responses because MNA made direct responses. [The opposition] MNA said that the government must pay proper compensation to the land owners. Land owners -- 25 families -- did not receive proper compensation after their lands were confiscated for a university construction project (200 hectares). (Sangkat Orussey Commune, Kratie Province on 19 November 2011)*

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**Sangkat Orussey Matrix-Identified Issues:** Corruption, Infrastructure, health clinics, water and sanitation

Kampong Chhnang Province Matrix-Identified Priorities		
Pech Chanvar	Ta Ches	Krang Leav
Land seizure	Land seizure	Land seizure
Infrastructure	Corruption	Infrastructure
Money/cost of living	Infrastructure	Land
Youth gangs & drugs		

**Table 5: Deliberative Group Priorities by Province and Commune**

In Kampong Chhnang, citizens' farms are located in the midst of intensive land seizure activities. Deliberative groups across all three communes ranked land seizure and corruption among their top priorities. In Kran Leav commune, where citizens ranked corruption as their number one priority, facilitators recorded a strong police presence. Citizens in Krang Leav discussed farmers and families being pushed off their lands by land concessions made to the Pheapimex Company<sup>26</sup> and for the building of an airport.

**Pech Chanvar:** The observers noted a weaker presence of CPP supporters and a stronger presence of opposition party supporters at the CD. Observers did not detect any significant police presence and did not feel that the attendees were intimidated. Observers agreed or were uncertain if MNAs responded to citizens' questions during the CD. However, some observers noted that some of the MNAs spent time attacking and debating the others. The observers were also split on whether or not the MNAs spoke harshly to the people. While the observers agreed the people were generally satisfied with the MNAs responsiveness to questions, they disagreed that the people were satisfied with the ruling party's responses. Conversely, observers agreed that the people were satisfied the opposition parties' responses, but were split on citizens' satisfaction with the responses of their local officials.

The following facilitators' observations describe the environment of the Pech Chanvar commune CD and the way in which MNAs spoke harshly to CD participants:

*I found that there were few CPP members present because when the CPP MNA made an opening remark there was little sound of applause. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

*The opposition party had a significant number of its members present at the constituency dialogue. In the beginning, there were only three or four members but after the program [had been going for] about an hour, some ten other member of the opposition party participated. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

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<sup>26</sup> A 2007 UN Report notes that the Kampong Chhnang is one of the two provinces where the greatest amount of land has been conceded. Land concessions to the Pheapimex Company spans both provinces and amounts to 315,025 hectares (*Economic Land Concessions in Cambodia: A Human Rights Perspective*).

*CPP MNAs just said that what a participant said was not true --the participant had accused the CPP [of something]. The other 3 parties' MNAs did not speak harshly to people. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

*The CPP MNA used the time for responding to the people's concerns by speaking threateningly and blaming the people for not knowing the laws or the policies, while the Sam Rangsy party MNA used the time to respond to all the people's questions and requests. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

*When H.E. Kim Sophearin made his responses, the majority of people paid the most attention and listened. The participants showed their satisfaction by nodding their heads to his responses and when he finished his responses, almost all the people gave strong applause. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

*I think that the MNAs used the time to discuss and seek the root causes of the problems in order to find the solutions but there was also some verbal attack on the party's policies. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

*When the opposition party MNA answered to the problems as well as giving solutions, he addressed the real problems as well as the problems in Pech Chanvar commune; then those problems were gradually reduced to some extent. Also he stated clearly the methods to solve all the people's problems in the community with strong determination and confidence. (Pech Chanvar Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 13 August 2011)*

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***Pech Chanvar Matrix-Identified Issues:*** Land seizure, infrastructure, cost of living, youth drug gangs

***Ta Ches:*** Similar to Pech Chanvar, observers perceived a slightly higher presence of opposition party members at the CD. Most of the observers disagreed that there was a significant police presence at the CD and did not observe intimidation of the citizenry. Observers reported that the MNAs were generally responsive to questions; that they did not attack or debate each other; and they did not harangue the audience. The observers noted a general satisfaction with the MNA's, but disagreed that citizens were satisfied with CPP responses. They did agree that citizens were satisfied with the responses of the opposition MNAs as well as those of their local officials.

Facilitators shared the following observations about the Ta Ches Commune CD event:

*There are not many CPP members presented at the CD. They didn't show off their power. Their participation is normal. (Ta Ches Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 17 November 2011)*

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*We can notice that there are many opposition parties members present at the CD as we can see through the satisfaction made to the solutions raised [offered]. (Ta Ches Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 17 November 2011)*

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***Ta Ches Matrix-Identified Issues:*** Land seizure, corruption, Infrastructure

***Krang Leav:*** Observers estimated a roughly equal presence of opposition and ruling party supporters at the CD. However, observers were divided on the strength of the police presence, but they did not perceive that citizens felt intimidated by the presence of the police. They agreed that the MNAs generally attempted to respond to citizen questions, did not waste time debating and attacking each other or the members of the audience. Observers agreed that attendees were generally satisfied with the MNAs responses, especially the opposition party MNAs. However, observers were split on citizen satisfaction with the MNAs from the ruling party: roughly half agreed that citizens were satisfied and the other half disagreed that citizens were satisfied with CPP responses. Observers largely disagreed that citizens were satisfied with the responses of their local officials. Facilitators observed the following CPP MNA responses to the people's questions at the Krang Leav commune CD event:

*There were [a] few CPP members attending the constituency dialogue and people showed their support by giving applause and listening attentively to the issues Her Excellency raised and [how she] addressed the people's concerns. (Krang Leav, Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 10 March 2012)*

*MNAs responded directly to the concerns raised, but the CPP MNA's mostly responded based on the law and the local official's solutions. (Krang Leav, Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 10 March 2012)*

*People were not satisfied with the CPP MNA's responses because the responses were based on the local officials. The MNA didn't focus on the questions raised by voters. (Krang Leav, Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 10 March 2012)*

*When responding to the questions raised, CPP MNA did not show how to solve the problems. MNA only [repeated] what he/she heard from other village people. MNAs did not have a proper solution regarding the concession of lands granted to the Peapimex company. People were unhappy and said that 'if so, we should not demand our land back. Let's give all of the lands to the company'. (Krang Leav, Commune, Kampong Chhnang Province on 10 March 2012)*

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***Krang Leav Matrix-Identified Issues:*** Corruption, Infrastructure, Land Seizures

### **Summary of Findings for Deliberative Session Participant Engagement at CDs**

- ***Behavior of Deliberative Session Participants at CD:*** Deliberative session participants were more active at the CD than other attendees, raising their hands and speaking at their CD events more than twice as often as citizens at the CD who had not participated in a deliberative session. Women who had participated in deliberative sessions spoke at their CDs one and a half times more often than

female attendees who had not participated in a deliberative session. Most dramatically, male participants in deliberative sessions raised their hands and spoke at their CD events two and half times more often than their male counterparts who attended the CD but had not attended a deliberative session.

- *The Constituency Dialogue Environment*: Opposition support seemed to be healthy at almost all nine CD events. At most of the events MNAs behaved civilly with each other and their constituents. However, there was also a significant police presence at a third of the CDs and in some cases police seemed to be actively attempting to intimidate citizens. In two out of nine CD events, MNAs attacked each other and harangued their constituents. In only one commune Observers reported citizen satisfaction with the ruling party's responses to citizens' concerns. In a third of the communes citizens seemed satisfied with the responses of their local officials; in a third observers were split on their satisfaction with local officials' responses; and in a third observers were unable to decipher citizen satisfaction with the responses of local officials.
- *Constituency Dialogue & Priority Concerns*: Although the CD environment was often civil, the CDs took place against a backdrop of corruption and intimidation that was not always apparent during the public CD event. In two CD events— Pech Chanvar, Kratie and Ta Ches, Kampong Chhnang – where observers reported a healthy opposition party presence, deliberative session participants ranked land seizure at the top of the communes' concerns, and described intimidation by local authorities. Indeed, the deliberative sessions discussed land seizure activities most intensively in the Ta Ches commune. In the three communes where there was a heavy police presence, deliberative groups ranked corruption highly on their matrix priorities. Although observers perceived general citizen satisfaction with the public performance of the MNAs, and some satisfaction with local officials, in the majority of the communes deliberative groups listed corruption among their top priorities: corruption in aid and infrastructure (Kampong Reab); corruption and land seizures (Pech Chanvar, Ta Ches, and Krang Leav); and corruption in service delivery (Thmar Andaek and Sangkat Orussey).

## V. Discussion of Findings

NDI sought to examine the effect of rural citizens having more time and space before the constituency dialogue to formulate their concerns, deliberate on solutions and build consensus and confidence with their peers on the issues that should be brought to the attention of the MNAs. The qualitative findings contributed to answering three of the hypothesis questions relevant to deliberation in the random control trial. The qualitative data on citizen priorities (hypothesis question #3), while not experimental, provided important contextual details on the problems Cambodian citizens face. The qualitative data contributed experimental evidence relevant to hypothesis questions #5 and 7, providing insight into the influence of gender on deliberative processes and outcomes. Further, the observational data from the CDs helped to identify differences in behavior between those citizens who had participated in deliberative sessions and those who did not. These qualitative findings: a) lend insight into NDI's programmatic innovation in citizen deliberation; and b) speak to the broader program hypothesis and *theory of change* for constituency dialogue programs.

### a. Testing a Variation in the CD Program –*Deliberative Sessions*

Proponents of deliberative democracy posit that public reasoning and debate not only enhance social cohesion, but create outcomes of better citizens, better decisions and better or more legitimate systems. In contrast to aggregative democracy in which preferences are formed in private and then expressed and added together in public through polling, focus groups and elections, deliberative democracy provides a fair and transparent forum for citizens to identify and solve concrete problems despite their differences. Moreover, experiments in deliberative polling in 15 countries have demonstrated that citizen deliberation enhances citizen knowledge of issues and politics; strengthens their ability to formulate opinions; and stabilizes opinions on issues once they are formulated. At the same time, other experiments in citizen deliberation have demonstrated that deliberative processes can be influenced by gender norms and inequities, while deliberative outcomes can be influenced by moderators of deliberative forums.

***Deliberation and Citizen Priorities:*** Unlike Fishkin's experiments in deliberative polling, the study's survey results did not find that deliberative session participants improved their knowledge of issues, politics or confidence beyond the effects created by their participation in the constituency dialogue program alone (see quantitative findings in *Evaluation Report: The Constituency Dialogue Program in Cambodia*). However, the qualitative differences between baseline survey- and matrix-identified priorities; the shift in rank order of priorities; and the emergence of new priorities underscore the substantive differences between citizens' collective deliberation on an issue and individual survey responses. Thus the qualitative findings align with Fishkin's proposition that purposeful peer discussion and analysis reflects citizen *judgment* and not mere opinion, and therefore yield outcomes that are substantively different from opinion polls or focus groups. Furthermore, the details on sensitive issues such as land seizure and corruption indicate citizens' increased confidence and willingness to discuss such matters with a small group of peers. Moreover, the deliberative process provides better and richer information on citizens' *analysis* of their problems, the multiple impacts and their prospective solutions, making the outcomes of deliberative sessions more relevant to specific programmatic needs than aggregated opinion polls or one-off focus groups before the CD.

These findings on the deliberative sessions have implications for future programming designed to strengthen the demand side of the democracy equation. Future investment in citizen engagement should move beyond simply extracting information from citizens via focus groups and/or opinion polls, to more purposefully investing in citizens' capacity to formulate and press their concerns in the public sphere. While deliberative sessions would enhance the quality and reliability of information on citizens' priorities, they should not be used as a stand-alone intervention or as an appendage to the current program. Given the risks that citizens run in discussing issues like corruption and intimidation, it would not be prudent to simply extract information from citizens through deliberative session of focus groups. Rather the deliberative process should be seen as a foundation for bolstering and supporting citizen voice, agency and empowerment to re-negotiate relationships of power within and outside their communities. Indeed, the deliberative sessions, when structured along gender lines, have an intrinsic value of strengthening the public voice of women and men within their communities. As such, support for citizen deliberation should be considered a starting point for more comprehensive programming for strengthening the demand side of the democracy equation in Cambodia, and not simply to serve the informational needs of MNAs involved in NDI's CD program.

***Gender and Deliberation:*** When the study's survey results were disaggregated by gender the random control trial did detect some differential shifts in priority problems caused by the deliberative sessions. Similarly, the deliberative data in this report demonstrate that the gender composition of the deliberative groups themselves influenced the way in which groups ranked their priority problems and voted on priority solutions. This affirms Karpowski's view that women's minority status in a group, along with gender norms tend to thwart the emergence of women's public voices. In rural Cambodia where women are not free to participate in public forums without their small children, engaging with a small group of women and a woman facilitator creates an enabling environment where childcare responsibilities may be momentarily shared or at least understood by other women in the deliberative group. When given the opportunity to participate in an enabling environment women do engage in the deliberative process and their outcomes are their own – free from the potential for stronger male voices or social norms to obscure them.

The influence of gender on deliberative processes and outcomes speaks to the importance of providing a fair process through which more marginalized citizens may collaboratively analyze their situation with peers on equal footing. This is true for other variables such as age, ethnicity, and/or economic status of deliberative participants. In this case, providing an all-female forum and/or a female facilitator temporarily removed some of the inherent gender inequities that rural women face in Cambodia. Similarly, all-male groups helped to distinguish the priorities of men within the communities. In this way the gendered priorities identified in the deliberative sessions have the potential to inform more gender-sensitive policies and budgets at the local and national levels, creating the potential for representatives to make better policy decisions.

***Deliberative Session Participants' Engagement at CD:*** Despite their enthusiasm the day before, not all deliberative session members were able to participate in their CDs the following day. However the behavioral observations of deliberative session participants suggest that those that did attend were motivated to bring their matrix-identified priorities to the attention of their MNAs. Within the mixed gender context of the CDs women generally participated less than men. However, both male and female

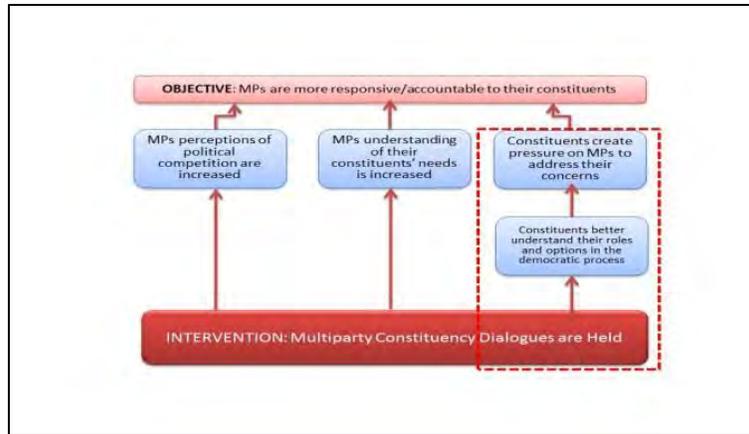
deliberative session participants were more active in raising their concerns at the CD than were their counterparts at the CD. While not experimental, this speaks to the notion that the opportunity for deliberation makes for better citizens who not only understand their options within a democracy, but actively exercise their rights and responsibilities. That said, the survey measurements taken after the CD did not indicate that deliberative session participants increased their confidence in the political process. Rather, like their counterparts who only participated in the CD, deliberative session participants had mixed outcomes in confidence and comfort in discussing politics publically. Clues to what might be perceived as skepticism of the political process in Cambodia were found in the qualitative data from the deliberative sessions and the observational data from the CDs, both of which illuminated the mediator factors of corruption and intimidation.

***The Constituency Dialogue Environment:*** The balance between opposition and ruling parties, along with the general adherence of MNAs to the code of conduct, presented a picture of healthy political competition in which MNAs publically and civilly addressed citizens' concerns. However, the qualitative data revealed that many of the CDs took place against a backdrop of corruption and intimidation that was not always apparent during the public event. When viewed against the qualitative descriptions of land seizure, corruption and complicity of local officials, the heavy police presence at a third of the CDs becomes more ominous. Indeed, a number of observers documented the thinly veiled attempts of police to intimidate attendees who publically raised their concerns at the CD. The day before their CDs, deliberative session participants had recounted stories of land grabbing, killing of animals, leveling of rice paddies, poisoning of water sources, dispossession of farmers and rural flight to escape retaliatory prosecution and imprisonment.

Data from the deliberative sessions and the CD observations underscore the importance of understanding the local context in which a program takes place, especially for democracy and governance interventions. Unlike Fishkin's experiments which were conducted in largely stable democracies, Cambodia is a fragile democracy afflicted with systemic corruption and repression of free speech. While the deliberative sessions – and indeed the CDs themselves – demonstrate that a fair and transparent process is needed to bring citizens' concerns to the fore, within a context where the state has allied itself with private enterprise to capture public institutions and resources for private gain, citizens who raise their concerns do so at great personal risk. Given this environment at the local level, it becomes clear that public reasoning and debate, while necessary, is not sufficient for pressuring MNAs to address citizens' concerns.

## **b. Program Hypothesis – Constituency Dialogue Program**

Returning to the program hypothesis of the CD program itself, the broader experimental study was meant to better understand the demand side of the program's results chain – constituents create pressure on MPs to address concerns, thereby contributing to more responsive and accountable MNAs.



**Figure 11: Program Hypothesis for NDI's *Multiparty Constituency Dialogue* program in Cambodia**

The survey data from the random control trial demonstrated that participation in the CD did indeed improve constituents' understanding of their roles and options in the democratic process – the first link in the results chain. However, the experiment did not demonstrate that this new knowledge and shift in attitudes was linked to citizens putting additional demands on their MNAs to address their concerns – the next link in the results chain.

The deliberative sessions were a relatively modest program activity and the descriptive findings suggest that providing time and space for citizens to discuss and come to consensus on their concerns may contribute to increasing their activity during the CD event. However, these findings were not experimental -- as participation in the CD event was self-selected and not randomized – and therefore not conclusive. Further data are needed to explore: a) whether changes in knowledge and attitudes are sustainable beyond the study's timeline; and b) whether differences in citizen activities at the CD are due to citizen deliberation or some other variable.

In addition, the broader context of the intervention and its variation is important to take into account. While the nine CD events presented a picture of healthy political competition in which ruling and opposition parties adhered to a code of civility, the details from the deliberative sessions documented a context of corruption, intimidation and sometimes violent retribution for citizens who raised their voices at the local level. The deliberative sessions and the CDs may create temporary space for citizens to voice their concerns, but individuals do so at great personal risk. Even when forums are hosted by an international entity such as NDI or USAID, a third of the constituency dialogues in this study had a heavy police presence where observers documented the attempts of the police to intimidate the attendees. During the deliberative sessions a number of facilitators also documented veiled intimidation by local officials during the small group sessions. The program's critical assumption that citizens improved understanding of democracy will lead to increased pressure on MNAs did not seem to hold true in the study.

The CD program is creating increased knowledge, along with temporary space and opportunity for citizens' voices to emerge. However the broader intervention strategy should be reviewed to identify more systematic ways to strengthen accountability between citizens and their local and/or national representatives where feasible in the Cambodian context. Although the CD program records and tracks

the promises of MNAs to their constituents during the CDs – and some positive outcomes have emerged from this process – the lines of accountability are between the MNAs and NDI and not between MNAs, local officials and their constituents. While the ‘thin edge of the wedge’ strategy to creating new political space and increased accountability is an effective entry point for a new program, the strategy is not sustainable and temporary gains in accountability and voice may be at risk of disappearing at the end of the life of the program. In the long run the public performance of political competition and debate may contribute to a change in public discourse, citizen expectations and socio-political norms. However, against a backdrop of state capture, systemic corruption and intimidation, and no real mechanisms for accountability between citizens and their representatives, or public officials and the judiciary, the improved public dialogue of the MNAs and their constituencies may not be contributing to real or lasting change.

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