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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

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**TOOLKIT**

# Preventing domestic violence

A step by step guide and toolkit  
for district councils.

# Introduction

Violence against women is a big challenge worldwide – and Cambodia is no exception to it. A joint survey of four UN organisations from 2013 interviewing 2000 men revealed that as many as 1 out of 5 have committed or attempted to commit violence against women. Based on the needs of their communities, some districts in Myanmar have decided to take action and do their best to prevent domestic violence and improve their support to victims.

This step by step guide and toolkit has been written for district councillors and district committee members who have already identified that domestic violence is a problem their constituents face and who want to take action to help them.

To implement these activities, the district will need to cooperate with different line departments because it touches upon cross-cutting topics. This is what is meant by coordinated service delivery. If you want to learn more about how Rotonak Mondol District, in Battambang province, approached coordinated service delivery, you can have a look at the video thru this link: <https://youtu.be/gNn8JmxYJc0>

The steps presented here, as well as the tools provided, are based on experiences of the first phase of the European Union Decentralisation and Administrative Reform (EU DAR) project. This project aims at supporting sub-national councils, their administrations and line offices in partner districts and municipalities to deliver public services - and to do so in a more harmonized, responsive and accountable manner.

This toolkit provides a step by step guide to implementing domestic violence prevention activities at district level. It will include tested tools and approaches from partner districts in Kandal province and share their good practices and lessons learnt. Some tools and approaches have been adapted for districts who wish to draw from their district funds to implement this activity. This means that expenses have been lowered and tools have been adapted to work without external facilitation.

This toolkit is part of a toolkit series that can be found on the NCDD-S website. These are the other toolkits in the series:

- Food and drink hygiene in schools;
- Solid waste management;
- OWSO/ Ombudsman awareness raising;
- Handwashing in primary schools.

## What is coordinated service delivery?

For the EU DAR project, coordinated service delivery refers to line offices, administration and the board of governors working together to provide social and administrative services to citizens.

The term “coordinated service delivery” has a similar meaning as joined-up services, interagency collaboration, cross-agency work and multi-agency partnerships.



Figure 1 – Public awareness raising by mobile loudspeaker in Kien Svay district



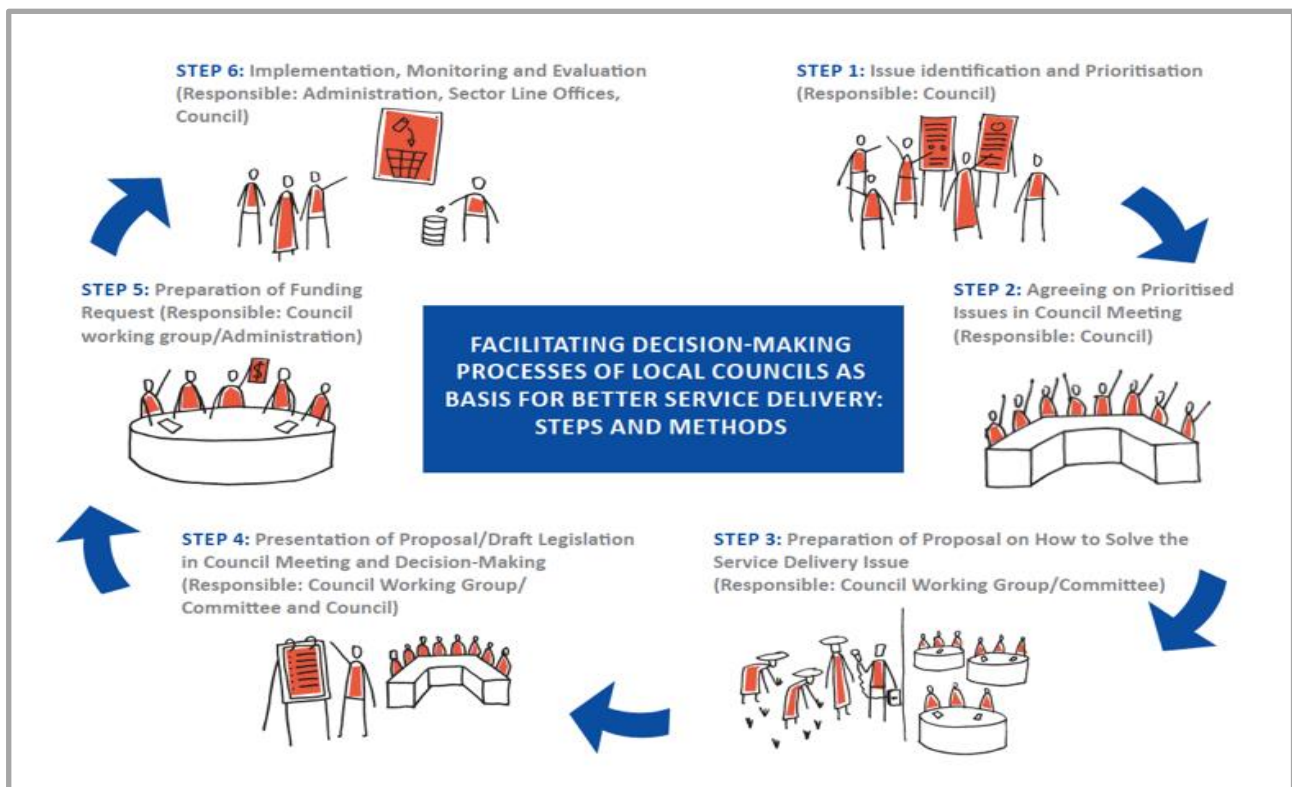
# Proposed process for implementing permissive function

This is a graphic that shows the individual steps we recommend implementing the council's permissive function in a way that is participatory with regards to citizens and coordinated with line departments.

It is based on the so-called facilitated approach that the EU DAR project developed and uses in cooperation with its partner districts. For more information and tools on the facilitated approach please consult the Facilitated Approach Toolkit (annex 1).

The document you have in front of you right now - the sector toolkit - does not cover all sub-steps of the facilitated approach since it is supposed to be implementable without external support.

In the following chapters, each of these steps will be explained in more detail and practical tools will be shared.



## 1. Issue identification and prioritization: Consulting citizens about their needs

The very first step of this process is consulting citizens about their needs. This is essential for the success of democratic decentralization. Needs and wishes should be identified in a bottom-up approach to truly bring government closer to the citizens. It also improves the effectiveness of use of public funds. This can be done in direct ways (e.g. public forums) or in indirect ways (e.g. through WCCC committees, commune and Sangkat forums).

This toolkit assumes that you have already completed consulting with the public and that domestic violence came up as one of the most pressing issues citizens have identified. Now you want to take action. If so, step 2 will show you how to get started with this process.

If you have the feeling that action is needed but you have not yet consulted with citizens, you can look at the minutes of commune and sangkat public forums, consult with WCCC and the facilitation committee or agree with other council members to go out and speak to the people about their needs. Once this is done, all needs collected should be listed and sorted according to level of priority. The facilitated approach toolkit (annex 1) contains links to some tools that can help you prioritize citizens needs once collected.

## 2. Agree on prioritized issue in council meeting: Formal approval for further investigation and forming a working group

Once you, as a council member or chairperson, have identified an issue you want the district council to take action on, you will need to formally reach an agreement on it in the next district council meeting. You can use an ordinary or extraordinary meeting for this purpose. It is sufficient to ask the district administrator for the format to put it on the agenda of the next council meeting. More information on the procedure to follow can be found in the technical document on council meetings (annex 2). Although not formally necessary, it is helpful for relationships to discuss the proposal beforehand with the council chairperson and district governor and get their support.

During the council meeting, you can bring forward that domestic violence should be a priority issue due to citizen requests and ask the council to set up a working group to further explore the problem and inform possible council solutions. Once the council has approved the topic and decided to take action, the council can ask the district governor to set up a working group on this behalf.



Figure 2 – Working group members discussing with women from the community about domestic violence

In EU DAR partner districts, the following actors participated in the working group:

- District Chair of WCCC (female),
- District councillors,
- Female Deputy Governor,
- Chief of Women Affair Office,
- Chief of Education Office,
- Chief of Operation District Office,
- Chief of District Police.

If possible, also try to have a mix of women and men in the working group. As we wish to speak to both men and women as part of the activities, it is important to also have both men's and women's opinions and views included in the survey as well as activity design and implementation.

#### Lessons learnt from EU DAR partner districts

- It is better to have a smaller rather than bigger working group at the beginning of the process (we recommend less than 10 people). When the working group is big, it is more difficult to plan and implement the survey and write the activity proposal efficiently. The working group can then be enlarged in step 6.
- It is important that the members of the working group are those enthusiastic about the topic and are not only present because they are pressured or feel otherwise obliged to attend it. They will also need to be available regularly during approx. three months in which the activity is prepared. Experience has shown that pressured participants will not come to meetings regularly and slow down the process for the whole working group.
- It may be helpful to review the working group membership before entering step 6: The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activity. This is an opportunity to exchange less active members and also to enlarge the working group if there are more people/ departments needed to implement the activity.
- Prior to formally proposing the topic in a formal council meeting, it is recommended to consult first with the council chairperson and the governor to ensure a smooth process.

## 3. Preparation of proposal on how to solve the priority issue

### 3.1 Further investigate the problem through a study with the working group

After all the relevant departments and other stakeholders are identified, have a first meeting with the working group. You or the agreed-on chairperson of the working group can begin by explaining the purpose of the working group to its new members and you agree jointly on next steps. The following are some things you could begin to discuss and take decisions on.

In EU DAR partner districts, a joint objective for the activity was agreed so that it is clear to all working group members what they are working towards. You can find the examples from EU DAR partner districts in the project proposals in annex 3.

Once you have agreed on what you want to achieve, we recommend you study the issue further and collect more information on the situation in your district. So, the next step would be to do a field study to see the extent of the problem. For small problems, you may be able to proceed without further studying the topic. For instance, this could be the case if The CCWC or the WCCC have collected sufficient information through their everyday work. For more complex issues or when you don't yet have a good understanding of the situation, it is useful to do a study and investigate the issue further. For instance, a study could help you understand exactly what domestic violence victims are facing to determine what support they may need.

Annex 4 contains some examples of studies implemented in EU DAR partner districts. We recommend you limit yourselves to 5 - 7 questions. This should give you sufficient information to design an informed activity, but still keep the data analysis feasible. For the prevention of domestic violence activities, since this is a very sensitive topic, we recommend you to mainly speak with the Commune Female Focal Persons. They provide the main counselling support to victims. Other intermediaries (health centre, CCWC, etc.) have a backup function and should therefore also be consulted in the study. Speaking directly with citizens can stigmatize them further in their communities or increase their trauma. It is important to avoid these approaches to not further harm the victims.

We recommend you conduct the study in form of focus group discussions, where knowledgeable members of the respective commune come together to identify concerned households and discuss potential sources of the domestic violence. In EU DAR districts, alcohol dependency has been named as a key factor.

After conducting the focus group discussions, every working group member should go through their notes and write down things they have noticed. Here are some potential questions you could think about: What seem to be the sources of the violence (job loss, alcoholism, illegal drug abuse, psychological problems, no control of anger on the side of the perpetrator, etc)? How many victims are concerned and in what way (verbal violence/ physical violence)? What available resources are there to help them when in need? How many of the victims have a place to go when they need to temporarily or permanently need to leave their homes to not be hurt?

#### Lessons learnt from EU DAR partner districts

- In terms of study methodology, we recommend you conduct the study in form of focus group discussions, where knowledgeable members of the respective commune come together to identify concerned households and discuss potential sources of the domestic violence.
- To avoid doing more harm to the victims, we recommend you to avoid speaking directly with victims during the survey. Speaking directly with victims, especially in a larger group and with people they are unfamiliar with can stigmatize them further in their communities or increase their trauma. If you feel you really need to speak to the victims, please do so through a person they know well. In EU DAR partner districts, this could have been the CCWC women's focal person for example.
- For communication between the working group members, it is a good idea to establish a telegram group. It also allows you to share photos and documents between members.

### 3.2 Design the activity according to study results

This step will usually happen over a series of 2-3 meetings. Often, in the first meeting, the working group will discuss the survey results and participants will agree on main points of the activity. The second meeting should be in a smaller group and will focus on the drafting of the proposal, sustainability plan and budget. And the third meeting is to discuss, amend and jointly finalize the proposal.

#### Discuss survey results

After conducting the survey, meet again with the working group members. We recommend you go around the table and each person can share what they have noticed from the working group discussion as well as recommendations they have identified.

#### Design the activity based on objective and survey results

Then, discuss what this means for your activity on domestic violence?

You could, for example, discuss the following questions:

- Whom to target? For example, should you train the victims in self-defense, train the perpetrators in anger management, train the potential support institutions how to better respond to victims in need?
- Who can be a resource person? – You may have found people in the community who already play a formal or informal support function for victims and their families.
- Do victims have the knowledge about support options available to them? Do they have the financial means and social network to temporarily or permanently leave their home if they need to?

#### Draft a proposal for the council

Once the working group has decided what it wants to do, you may want to do write it down in a concept note and develop a budget for the activities. The concept note should give information on the objective of the activity, the different activities contained in it tackling the problems identified in the survey and also include a budget and sustainability plan. These can be in the same document or in separate documents.

The following is a list of activities that EU DAR partner districts have supported and that you can get inspired from for your own activity design:

- Trainings to the working group and CCWC/WCCC on how to further improve their support to domestic violence victims;
- Trainings to perpetrators on anger management and self-control;
- Publishing and distribution of a brochure with important support numbers (health centre, police, women focal person at the commune, etc);
- Awareness raising campaign to disseminate messages regarding the value that Cambodian society places on women to increase the standing of women in the community and condemn violence against them via mobile loudspeaker.

In annex 3, you can find some examples on proposals developed in EU DAR partner districts.

**Example: How EU DAR partners have used the survey information to inform their activities**

- EU DAR partners have used survey information to identify households affected by domestic violence. They used this information to identify known perpetrators for a training in anger management and self-control.
- The survey information was also used by the CCWC and the women's focal point at the commune level to discretely engage with the victims and inform them about institutions that they can turn to in case of verbal and physical abuse.
- The survey showed that the CCWC and other working group members felt insecure about how to best support domestic violence victims. This led to a training for the working group itself on how to best engage with domestic violence victims and how to best offer support when needed.

**Calculating the budget**

Once you have selected the activities, you want to carry out, you will need to develop a budget and sustainability plan as well. In annex 5 you can find a budget template EU DAR partner districts used.

When developing the activity, think also about how it will be maintained in the future. If there are future costs for maintenance, think about and agree who will pay for them. If these costs are too high, go back and re-think the activities, maybe opting for a lower-cost solution.

**Preparing a sustainability plan**

Who will do what follow up activity and who is responsible for maintaining the communication materials, should be captured in a sustainability plan. It should be as detailed as possible so there are no questions later who is responsible for which task.

## 4. Presentation of proposal in council meeting and decision-making

Once you have developed a proposal, budget and sustainability plan, you are ready to submit it to the council for decision making.

This is a short step but an important one. In this step, the working group can select some representatives to explain their proposal to the council. You will need to explain why the district should use part of its limited District/Municipal fund on this activity and how it can benefit the people.

Hopefully, the council will approve the proposal. If not, listen to their reservations and ideas and meet back in the working group to revise the proposal. One of the biggest concerns they may bring up is the cost of the activity. If the costs are too high, discuss in the working group if/how you can revise the proposal to be less costly.

**Lessons learnt from EU DAR partner districts**

- It has proven successful to maintain dialogue with both the council chairperson as well as the district governor throughout the development process. This will ensure a smooth cooperation after the council approves your proposal.
- The person presenting the proposal should be chosen by his/her ability to present the results of the survey and the recommendations, rather than by formal roles in the working group.
- The council chairperson needs to be prepared to encourage discussions within the council meeting on this topic. It is good to ensure he/she is prepared to encourage discussions and a decision on this matter.



## 5. Preparation of funding request to withdraw DM funds

This step is equally short as the last one. The council administration will need to prepare your request to withdraw funds from your District/ Municipal fund (DM fund) and send it to the provincial treasury and Provincial Department of Economics and Finance for approval. According to the National Ministry of Economics and Finance, requests to reallocate DM funds to react to citizen needs, can be made by simple letter throughout the budget year.

Once the funds have been released, you are finally ready for implementation!

## 6. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

### 6.1 Implementing the activity

Congratulations if you have reached this point, you have already done most of the administrative work to prepare your activity to prevent domestic violence! The rest will be more rewarding because you can see an immediate reaction from the citizens.

In the case of domestic violence prevention, you will likely need to find an expert from the provincial department for women's affairs who can help with developing training materials and conducting the training. Via the district governor, you can request support from this line office. Annex 6 contains some examples of training and communication materials developed by our partner districts.



Figure 3 – Working group members educating the public on different forms of domestic violence and support options for victims



### Lessons learnt from EU DAR partner districts

- For trainings with perpetrators, it is important how the message is passed to them to ensure their buy-in. They are more likely to attend if the training title has a more diplomatic name, and they don't immediately feel this will stigmatize them and label them as perpetrators to the community. It's also important how the message is delivered to them. They are in no way forced to participate in this training and should be made aware of this clearly. The focus of the conversation should be that this can help them, and their families, have a better life without violent conflict. Although only half of the men invited attended the training, those who did enjoyed the training and found it useful.
- Poverty is a factor that can increase frustrations in the home and thus domestic violence. A lack of access to finance also leaves women with no other option than remaining with their abusive partner. This may lead the working group to consider funding livelihood activities for victims – most often for women, since they are the main group of victims. If this is decided, it's important to extend these livelihood activities to women in the whole community – not only the victims.

## 6.2 Reflection meeting

When the activity is implemented, the last step is a reflection meeting within the working group. This will give you an opportunity to reflect on the whole process and also to celebrate your achievements.

First, we recommend you take some time to go through your achievements and celebrate the success. Ask yourselves the following questions:

- What benefit, did you, as an individual and organization, get from this project implementation?
- What was the biggest achievement you made for the citizens? What are you most proud of?
- Think about making an announcement about these achievements in the newspaper, the district information board or on social media so that citizens also notice that the district has completed this activity successfully on their behalf.

Afterwards, take time to reflect on things you would prefer to do differently next time and how you will make your project achievements sustainable. Ask yourselves:

- What were challenges and concerns during project implementation?

- After the project will end, what is your activity plan to ensure that the achievements of the project will last for a long time? We recommend you make a sustainability plan and assign tasks to specific people and organizations.

## 6.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

This very last step consists of writing a report to the council about the results of the activity and further steps. It will summarize the main discussion points from your reflection meeting and should be presented to the district council in its next ordinary meeting. Examples of reports can be found in annex 7.

In case you have done a study in the beginning to investigate the problems more deeply (see part 3.1 of this document), you can also conduct an evaluation of your activity. This would consist of you doing the same interviews again – in the same areas, with the same questions – and seeing if the situation has improved. The results of such an evaluation will help to decide on possible next steps, for instance refresher trainings, a change of approach in similar activities in the future, etc.

We would recommend for you to wait 2-3 months prior to doing such an evaluation study, since this will give you a more adequate picture of what knowledge was retained, and which new habits were continued.



Figure 4 – Working group members in S'Ang during working group presentations on their understanding of basic counselling skills.

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Sitz der Gesellschaft  
Bonn und Eschborn

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The program is co-funded by the European Union and German  
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development  
(BMZ). The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility  
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