

Term of reference for the Mid-Term Review of National Program on Sub-National Democratic Development Phase 2 (Mid-Term Review of NP-II)

1. Introduction

The National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD) is an inter-ministerial committee that serves as a governing body for the Royal Government in coordinating and managing the design and implementation of Decentralization and Deconcentration Reform Programs, which is also called Sub-National Democratic Development Reform Programs.

NCDD Secretariat serves as the governance body for NCDD, responsible for coordinating, managing daily task related to the preparation and implementation of National Programs on Sub-National Democratic Development as a long-term roadmap for the implementation of the Decentralization and Deconcentration Reform, as well as the Organic Laws which include the Law on the Administrative Management of Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans and the Organic laws on the Administrative Management of Communes/Sangkats.

Up to date, the NCDD has led and coordinated with relevant ministries and sub-national administrations (SNAs) to successfully complete the implementation of the First 10-Years National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development (NP-I) in the end of 2020. Currently NCDD is leading and coordinating the implementation of the Second 10-Years National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development, which to be implemented from 2021 to 2030. The year of 2025 is the fifth year of implementation of NP-II.

In 2024, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project “Strengthening Transparency and Accountability in Local Governance through Citizen Participation” funded from the Government of Japan and UNDP funding, the NCDD conducted a final evaluation of the NP-I and the results of this evaluation will be used as baseline for the evaluation of the NP-II.

The NP-II aims at **“Promote democratic development with inclusive, equitable and justice through modernization of sub-national governance, improved process and quality of service delivery and contribute to elimination of poverty and improved quality of life for all citizens”**.

To ensure the achievement of this goal, the NP-II has set a specific objective: **“Structures and systems of sub-national governance are modern, autonomous, effective, transparent and accountable in providing public services and local**

development responding to priority needs of the people in their jurisdiction. Each type of SNA has adequate power and capacity to carry out their functions under the oversight of their councils to strengthen accountability to the citizens”.

In order to ensure the achievement of the above goal and objective, the NP-II has outlined five key strategic components for implementation as follows:

Component 1: Reform Leadership and Coordination. Focus on continuous strengthen leadership and coordination mechanisms of D&D reforms at national and sub-national levels to promote ownership and responsibilities of ministries, institutions, and SNAs in the implementation of the D&D reform program in an effective and efficient manner.

Component 2: SNA Structures and Systems: Focus on continue to review and adjust the functions, structures, management systems, resources, and authorities of SNAs to suit the characteristics of metropolitan, urban administrations, and rural administrations by promoting the use of information technology systems to enhance the efficiency of management, public service delivery, and public communication, as well as to ensure a response to the rapid evolution of economic activities, urbanization, information technology, the trend of population migration to urban areas, the increasing demand for social services, and the need to reduce risks caused by natural disasters, climate change, and global crises.

Component 3: Human Resources Management and Development; Focus on continuous the improvement and strengthening the implementing of the power and responsibility of SNAs in recruit, manage, and deploy their staff based on their workload and financial flexibility and ensure that each SNA will hire staff with professional qualifications and skills appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. SNA staff will benefit from the systematic, progressive, and professional skills development activities and support.

Component 4: Fiscal Decentralization and SNA Planning and Budgeting Systems: Focus on continuing to provide SNAs with predictable and appropriate budget resources, as well as the ability to allocate those resources flexibly for use in implementing functions and priority tasks to respond to the needs of the people as defined in the development plans and investment programs of each SNA in a timely and highly effective manner.

Component 5: Service Delivery and Local Development Component: Focusing on continuous modernization of mechanisms and procedure of public service

delivery, local development, and public communication of sub-national administration to improve service public service delivery and local development respond to the needs of the citizens within the jurisdiction of each sub-national administration in an effective, transparent, accountable, social equitable and Inclusiveness manner.

In addition to the five components above, NP-II will also focus the following cross-cutting issues:

Gender Equality, Social Equity, and Inclusiveness Mainstreaming: Focus on strengthening SNAs in recruiting and managing staff, planning and using resources, and administer public service delivery and foster local development without discrimination based on religion, gender, disability, ethnicity, and respond to vulnerable groups in an inclusive and equitable manner.

Climate Change Vulnerability, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Serious Infectious Diseases. Focus on strengthening the capacity of sub-national administrations to study, evaluate, and develop managing plan to effectively respond to vulnerabilities from climate change, disasters and serious infectious, aim to support the welfare of the citizens and sustainable development in their communities.

The **NP-II** will be implemented in two phases: the implementation of the first five-year implementation plan cover a period of five years from 2021 to 2025 (IP5-I) and the second five-year implementation plan which will cover the next five years from 2026-2030 (IP5-II).

At the moment, the NCDD has been coordinating with relevant ministries and institutions at the national and SNAs in the implementation of the IP5-I. Year 2025 is the fifth year of the implementation of the NP-II.

The IP5-I outlined the expected outcomes and priority activities to be developed and implemented for each component of NP-II, along with key indicators to be achieved annually. Implementation of IP5-I is carried out through annual work plans and budget. In this context, based on the expected outcomes, priority activities and indicators set out in IP5-I, the NCDD leads, coordinates with relevant ministries and institutions at both the national and sub-national administrations to prepare and implement these each annual work plans and budget, called the “**NCDD Annual Work Plan and Budget**”.

Overall, each NCDD Annual Plans specifies the expected outcome for each component, outlines priority activities, designates the responsible institutions for the

implementation these priority activities, and identifies the indicators to measure the achievement of each expected outcome.

As part of the NP-II management framework, a Mid-Term Review of NP-II is required to be conducted in the fifth year of the NP-II, which will take place in the year, 2025.

With the support from project “**Strengthening Transparency and Accountability in Local Governance through Civic Engagement Project**” under co-funding of the Government of Japan and UNDP, the NCDDDS will conduct a mid-term review of the NP-II in early 2025. This review will be carried out by an individual consultant to be selected and contracted by the NCDDDS in accordance with the principles and procedures in force.

2. Objective

The objective of this NP-II mid-term review is review and assess progress focused on the structure and governance system, human resource development in SNAs, the transfer of functions to SNAs, and the performance of SNAs compared to the expected results set out in each component of the IP5-I, as well as identify key challenges and risks, and make recommendations for addressing those challenges and mitigating those risks.

The results of this NP-II mid-term review will be used for the designing of the IP5-2 and serve as a baseline for the end-of-program evaluation of the NP-II.

3. Scope of work

In line with these objectives, the consultant contracted by the NCDDDS will conduct NP-II’s Mid-Term review to recover 6 Capitals/Province, 12 District Municipality and Khan, 24 Commune/Sangkat, and a number of relevant national ministries with involvement of at least 1,500 participants in total.

In this NP-II mid-term review, the consultant contracted by the NCDDDS shall undertake key important tasks. These include defining the methodology, developing questionnaires, collecting data, analyzing data, drafting preliminary reports on key findings, conducting consultative workshops, and preparing of a report on the results of the mid-term review, which shall include recommendations for the design and improving the effectiveness of the implementation of the IP5-II as well.

Simultaneously, the mid-term review must clearly identify the progress ,key outcomes and key challenges associated with the implementation of each components outlined in IP5-I, including: (1) Leadership and coordination of reform work (2) Structure and management system of sub-national administration (3)

Management and development of human resources (4) Financial decentralization and planning and budgeting system of sub-national administration (5) Public service delivery and local development.

The consultant must carry out these tasks under coordination of the NCDDS, and shall consult with the Consultation Working Group of the STA Project as well

4. Methodology

The main methodology to be used in the NP-II mid-term review may include:

- A review of policy documents, laws, regulations, reports and other documents related to the implementation of IP5-I (desk review)
- Collecting essential information related to the implementation of IP5-I, including the collection of existing data from secondary data system and obtaining information and data through meeting, discussion, and interviews with relevant informants at both national and sub-national levels (primary data).
- The development of the questionnaires should focus on the collection of information regarding the progress and challenges associated with the implementation of each component of IP5-I. Separate questionnaires will be prepared for each group of informants, including individual opinion questionnaire and group discussion questionnaire. Questionnaires for each group of informants will contain approximately 10-15 questions addressing the progress, challenges, and implementation of IP5-I.
- Data entry and analysis of collected data, utilizing both statistical analysis and prescriptive/qualitative analysis. This process will adhere to unbiased principles and based on criteria, as well as clear evidence.
- Discussions and consultations on the findings and results of the analysis through the conducting the meetings or workshops with stakeholders at both national and sub-national levels, which are attended by at least 50 relevant stakeholders.

5. Sample selection

NP-II mid-term review shall cover 6 Capitals/Provinces, 12 Districts Municipalities Khans and 24 Communes/Sangkats and relevant national ministries and institutions with a total of at least 1,500 participants, of which at least 50% of the informants are women. The defining and selecting of informant group includes:

Relevant National informants:

- ✓ D&D Working Groups of 7 ministries (Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Civil Service; Ministry of Planning; Ministry of Women's Affairs Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; Ministry of Health...)
- ✓ Representatives from 5 Development Partners and relevant 5 NGOs,

Relevant Sub-national informants:

- ✓ The 6 Capital/Provincial administrations should focus on representing urban areas, rural areas with diverse characteristics and metropolitan areas. The composition of the informant group may include: councils, board of governors, management, and officials working in various units of the Capital/Provincial administration and the horizontal departments of the relevant ministries and institutions and the Advisory Committee for Women and Children's Affairs.
- ✓ A total of 12 municipal, district and khan administrations to be selected: 1 municipal administration and 1 district in each of the 6 target capitals and provinces. The composition of the information team may include members from the council, board of governors, leaders and staff from various relevant units, as well as the Advisory Committee on Women and Children's Affairs.
- ✓ 2 Commune/Sangkat administrations to be selected from each target municipality and district. The composition of the informant group may include: Commune/Sangkat councils, Clerks, Commune Committee for Women and Children, Commune/Sangkat Planning and Budgeting Working Groups, and local community representatives.

6. Key tasks to be Prepared and Implemented

The following are the key tasks that the consultant must prepare and implement during the NP-II mid-term review process, under coordination of NCDDS:

- Preparation of an inception report that outlines the objectives, processes, methodologies, tools, action plans, and timeline and report format on the result of MP-II mid tear review.
- Development of questionnaires in consultation with the NCDDS and STA Project Consultation Working Group.
- Collect relevant information and data through research on reports and related documents; as well as through meetings, discussions and interviews with designated informant groups at both the national and sub-national levels.
- Entry and analysis of collected data and information
- Preparation of a draft preliminary report highlighting key findings

- Conducting a consultative workshop on the draft report of key findings, engaging with a total of at least 50 participants from ministries, national, sub-national institutions and other stakeholders.
- Preparation of final report on the results of the mid-term review of the **NP-II** based on comments and input from the consultative workshop, including an executive summary that briefly describes the methodology, findings, and recommendations for the designing of the IP-5-II. The final report on the results of the Mid-Term Review of the **NP-II** must be prepared in Khmer and English in the format outlined in the appendix.

The Consultant shall prepare and implement these essential tasks under coordination of the NCDDS, engage in discussion with the Consultation Working Group of the STA Project and obtain approval from the NCDDS.

7. Deliverable output

The consultant selected and contracted by the NCDDS must ensure the following key results are achieved:

No	Deliverable	Timeframe	others
1	Inception report	2 weeks after signing of contract (Mar, 2025)	To be in Khmer and English (Review by UNDP, working Group of STA and approval of Consultative working group of STA project.
2	Report on the progress of the mid-term review (preparation of questionnaires and data collection)	5 weeks after approval on inception report (Mar-April, 2025)	To be in Khmer and English (Review by UNDP, working Group of STA and approval of Consultative working group of STA project.
3	Draft report on key findings	2 weeks after data collection (May 2025)	To be in Khmer and English (Review by UNDP, working Group of STA and approval of Consultative working group of STA project.
4	Consultation workshop on the Findings.	2 weeks after completion of draft finding report (May 2025)	To be in Khmer and English (Review by UNDP, working Group of STA and approval of Consultative working group of STA project.

5	Final Report on the results of the Mid-Term Review	2 weeks after consultation workshop (May-June 2025)	To be in Khmer and English (Review by UNDP, working Group of STA and approval of Consultative working group of STA project.
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8. The selection of consultant

The consultant that will be selected for the NP-II mid-term review shall have the following qualifications and work experience:

- Planning and M&E or Legal & Governance or Institutional Development Expert.
- Master Degree in Law or Public Policy or Public Administration or Economics or International Relations or Human Resource Management and Development
- At least 10 years of working experience related to monitoring and evaluation, policy, laws and regulations formulation, institutional management, program and project management and related to local governance reform.

9. Time Frame

The consultant selected and contracted with the NCDDDS shall complete the mid-term review of the NP-II within 3.5 months from the date of signing the contract with NCDDDS. The final report on the results of the NP-II mid-term review shall be submitted to the NCDDDS in **June 2025**.