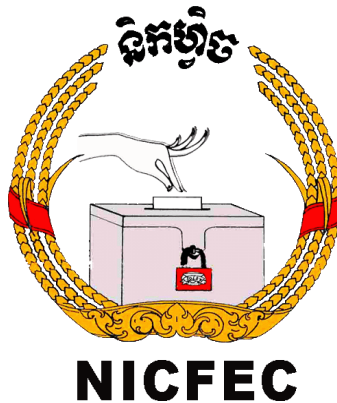


គណៈកម្មាធិការអព្យាក្រឹត និងយុត្តិធម៌ ដើម្បីការបោះឆ្នោតដោយសេរី និងត្រឹមត្រូវនៅកម្ពុជា

NEUTRAL AND IMPARTIAL COMMITTEE FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTION IN CAMBODIA

“Training of Grassroots Electoral Stakeholders”

FINAL REPORT



PRODUCED BY NICFEC

25th August 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I- INTRODUCTION	3
II- ACTIVITIES	3
III- LESSONS LEARNT	6
IV- COMMENTS	9

ACRONYMS

CEC	- Commune Election Commission
MOI	- Ministry of Interior
NEC	- National Election Committee
NICFEC	- Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia
PEC	- Provincial Election Commission
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme

On

Training of Grassroots Electoral Stakeholders for the 2008 National Assembly Election

I. INTRODUCTION

NICFEC was contracted by UNDP Cambodia and chose to conduct the training of Grassroots Electoral Stakeholders for the 2008 National Assembly Election. During the 2007 Commune Councilor Election, it was widely observed that many commune councilors and village chiefs did not display neutrality and impartiality, owing to their low level of knowledge of Cambodian electoral law and their party affiliation. It was widely witnessed numerous instances of vote-buying, intimidations, and frauds. Commune or village chiefs used their positions to influence people's choice. Sometimes they used violence to the people with different political opinions and also they didn't provide to the wider electorate clear information related to election date, polling station location etc. Through these lessons learnt, NICFEC found out that these people, (Communes and Villages Chiefs), work closely with the population in their communities so if they have weaknesses, confusion or lack of understanding of election law this would affect the integrity of the process leading to the 2008 National Assembly Election. There was a need to provide clear and consistent information to grassroots electoral stakeholders with regard to the electoral process and law. Thanks to the financial and technical support from UNDP, NICFEC started the "Training of grassroots electoral stakeholders " project that targets 20000 beneficiaries and whose objectives are as follows:

- To promote a better electoral process;
- To strengthen the capacity of grassroots electoral stakeholders;
- To reduce cases of intimidation violence, and irregularities;
- To provide voter education.

II. ACTIVITIES

Since the project started, NICFEC always worked in close collaboration with the UNDP in developing a training manual and discussing the problems encountered in the process. Points discussed included the following: project timeline, content and key messages of the training manual, methodology and activities involved in the training process, identification and selection of trainers, productions and distribution of training manuals, drafting of evaluation form, trainer report, pre and post test for monitoring and evaluation purposes. A database was also developed to process and analyze evaluation forms.

After completing six drafts of the training manual, copies were sent to the UNDP consultant as well as to the National Election Committee (NEC) and to the Ministry of the Interior (MOI). Their comments have been taken into consideration and the draft has been revised accordingly. During this same period, NICFEC has also prepared the schedule for the 405 training sessions determined in collaboration with the UNDP to cover 1621 communes in 24 provinces/towns. NICFEC has also worked with other NGOs to come up with the criteria for the selection and recruitment of trainers from 24 provinces/towns. According to the chosen criteria, 65 trainers were selected out of an initial pool of 300 candidates including 16 female trainers and 4 reserves.

On the 28th of May, 2008, a meeting was held at the NICFEC office in Phnom Penh, attended by the provincial networks of 24 provinces/towns. During this occasion, the executive director of NICFEC introduced the scope of the training project, provided additional logistic details, delegated responsibilities

to the provincial coordinators, and distributed training kits and permission letters from MOI and NEC to each of them, to be attached to district and commune permission letters for conducting the training at the grassroots levels.

The training approval processes:

- NICFEC finalized the training manual in cooperation with UNDP. The final version of the manual was sent to NEC for approval. Minor changes to the manual occurred following NEC's review;
- NICFEC and UNDP shared the manual and the training plan with the MOI for having its approval to the project;
- NICFEC and UNDP requested the appointment of a MOI liaison officer to facilitate the project's implementation at the field level. MOI also forwarded an approval letter to all provincial authorities, informing them about the up coming training.

The training of trainers:

NICFEC conducted the training of trainers in two sessions. The first session was conducted from 29-30 of May 2008, with the participation of 35 trainers. The second session was conducted from 02-03 of June 2008, with the participation of 30 trainers. After the training was done, NICFEC found that all the trainers actively joined and respected the training rules with high commitment. Trainers were involved in group and brainstorming activities to further review and discuss curriculum contents. They had a chance to run simulations and practice over the lesson plan. Trainers were also briefed on the use of the various administration and monitoring/ evaluation forms.

On 04 June 2008, all the trainers headed back to the provinces/towns where they were deployed to train the grassroots stakeholders.

The grassroots stakeholders' training:

The grassroots stakeholders' training was conducted from 5 to 24 June 2008. In each two days training sessions, the curriculum covered roles and responsibilities of the various groups of stakeholders involved and the wider electoral process. Every two sessions of the training, all the trainers sent participants' evaluations, pre-tests, post-tests results and trainers' reports to NICFEC. Those reports showed that there were 405 sessions and 20109 participants attended in 24 provinces/towns.

Beside the monitoring and evaluation tools previously mentioned, NICFEC also sent monitoring teams from Phnom Penh to observe the training in the provinces. The monitoring teams observed the training, interviewed trainers and trainees about the training environment and the training contents (acceptable or unacceptable), checked about the quality of training materials (easy to understand or not), asked trainees about trainers performance and how clear and accurate their explanations were. Both during monitoring field trips and throughout the whole training, NICFEC provided feedback and comments to some trainers that were less experienced than others or were having doubts about any specific issue.

During and after the trainings, NICFEC observed that, the trainees attended the training in the planned numbers, also they respected the rules of the training, they had interactive brain storming discussions and improved their understanding of the electoral process by comparing the results of pre and post test shown on page 5. Trainees showed great interest in the project. They reported they never had such comprehensive training. In some cases, participants also contacted NICFEC office in Phnom Penh to get additional clarifications on technical electoral matters.

Here is the list number of participants of trainings from 5-24 June 2008.

No	Provinces	Sessions	Commune	Village	PP Reps	Women Reps	Police	Monks	Total
1	Banteay Meanchey	18	64	647	149	18	29	21	928
2	Battambang	22	91	740	171	22	22	22	1068
3	Kampong Cham	50	193	1799	391	53	57	54	2547
4	Kampong Chhnaing	16	69	573	131	18	18	18	827
5	Kampong Speu	29	73	1250	188	18	22	19	1570
6	Kampong Thom	21	81	743	168	21	21	21	1055
7	Kampot	21	92	499	175	23	30	30	849
8	Kandal	32	149	1123	271	44	39	36	1662
9	Koh Kong	5	18	95	38	4	3	2	160
10	Kratie	9	46	243	78	10	10	10	397
11	Mondulkiri	4	21	90	40	5	5	5	166
12	Phnom Penh	21	76	706	180	21	32	30	1045
13	Preah Vihear	10	55	228	85	11	16	13	408
14	Prey Veng	33	131	1178	285	33	38	33	1698
15	Pursat	14	52	517	112	14	14	14	723
16	Rattnakiri	8	42	219	72	6	8	4	351
17	Siem Reab	25	100	897	200	25	25	25	1272
18	Preah Sihanouk	5	22	105	42	6	7	5	187
19	Stung Treng	6	34	152	72	9	14	9	290
20	Svay Rieng	20	75	644	170	25	35	30	979
21	Takeo	26	100	1116	175	22	22	22	1457
22	Keb	1	5	16	8	1	1	1	32
23	Pailin	2	8	84	16	2	2	2	114
24	Oddar Meanchey	7	20	258	35	4	3	4	324
TOTAL		405	1617	13922	3252	415	473	430	20109

Some training sessions hosted less participants than expected due to bad weather conditions and the remoteness of some training locations. In a few cases village chiefs and commune officers could not join the training because they were engaged with the distribution of voter information notices. On the other hand, some training sessions saw a higher participation as trainees number of participants (20109) exceeded the planned one (19961).

The average score of pre-test for 20109 trainees in 405 sessions from 5 to 24 June 2008 was 12.79 out of 15 being the highest score as:

- 8042 trainees received 14 scores
- 7211 trainees received 13 scores
- 3404 trainees received 11 scores
- 997 trainees received 10 scores
- 455 trainees received 8 scores

The average score of post-test for 20109 trainees in 405 sessions from 5 to 24 June 2008 was 14.34 out of 15 being the highest score as:

- 9574 trainees received 15 scores
- 8337 trainees received 14 scores
- 2009 trainees received 13 scores

- 189 trainees received 11 scores

The evaluation was also conducted in these 405 training sessions. The results of the evaluation are scored out of 10.

No	Questions	Average score (by participants)
Content		
2.1	Did the Training meet the expectations?	8.82
2.2	How do you assess the overall duration of the Training related to the topics addressed?	8.74
2.3	Do you consider the Training useful for your activities?	9.22
Implementation		
3.1	How do you assess the overall level of the teaching?	8.96
3.2	How do you assess the training methodology?	8.98
3.3	How do you assess the reference materials provided?	8.82
3.4	What is your overall assessment of the Training?	9.06
Trainers		
4.1	The explanations were clear	9.03
	The interest of the class has been stimulated	8.97
	The facilitator was willing to answer all your questions	9.04
Logistic		
5.1	Courtesy	8.98
	Efficiency	9.03
5.2	How do you evaluate the training venue?	8.91
5.3	How do you evaluate the practical information received?	8.50

Given the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms put in place, NICFEC believes that this was a successful project. All planned training sessions were carried out and participating trainees both citizens, communes and villages chiefs really appreciated and enjoyed the course and they wished to join some other similar trainings run by NICFEC. In this project NICFEC itself had carefully selected 65 trainers among 300 who applied for the positions as trainers, and carefully trained the 65 trainers and sent them to the target areas as planned making it easy for the grassroots stakeholders to join the training and gain full benefit. As initially planned, NICFEC concluded the training before the beginning of the electoral campaign (26 June) so to avoid any overlapping of activities during the busy one-month long campaign.

III. LESSONS LEARNT

Due to the delay with the finalization of the manual, and with the approval time needed by local authorities the time and location of some training sessions had to be changed. In the early stage of manual development, the NICFEC project manager in charge of this task resigned unexpectedly. As a result, NICFEC faced some delay with this activity until the NICFEC Executive-Director took over. Through these lessons learned, NICFEC realized that in case of similar projects in the future more time and qualified human resources should be allocated to properly plan and run such activities.

In some remote locations, the identification of proper training venues proved to be difficult, as no adequate space was available. In these cases an assessment of other facilities' availability could minimize the problem.

Find below the training sessions whose timeline had to reschedule in Kandal, Kampong Chhnaing, and Koh Kong, Prey Veng and Rotanakiri provinces.

PROVINC	DISTRICT	COMMUNE	COMMENT
Kampong Chhnaing	Kampong Tralach	Chhouk Sar	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 21-22 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Kampong Chhnaing	Kampong Chhnaing	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 23-24 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Boribo	Ponley	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 08-09 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
Koh Kong	Smach Meanchey	Smach Meanchey	- The training date was moved from 08-09 June to 07-08 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Mundul Seima and Koh Kong	Trapaing Rong	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 16-17 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
Kandal	Sa Ang	Koh Khsach Tonlea	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 10-11 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
		Svay Rolum	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 12-13 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Kandal Stung	Siem Reap	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 09-10 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
		Spean Thmor	- The training date was moved from 11-12 June to 23-24 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Kien Svay	Phoum Thom	- The training date was moved from 11-12 June to 10-11 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Ang Snuol	Bek Chan	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 23-24 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Rotanakiri	Oyadav	Lum Choir
Andaung Meas		Malic	- The training date was moved from 14-15 June to 12-13 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.

	Banlung	Yak Laum	- The training date was moved from 17-18 June to 14-15 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Seun Vai	Vireakchey	- The training date was moved from 20-21 June to 17-18 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Lum Phat	Chey Udom	- The training date was moved from 23-24 June to 20-21 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.
	Kon Mom	Trapaing Chres	- The training date was moved from 05-06 June to 23-24 June because of lack of permission letter from local authority.

Find below the training sessions whose location had to be changed

Province	District	Commune	Comment
Banteay Meanchey	Serey Sophoan	Kompong Svay	- Changed training location of Kompong Svay to O Ambel
	Thmor Pouk	Phoum Thmey	- Changed training location of Phoum Thmey to Thmor Pouk
	Svay Chek	Ta Pho and Ta Ben	- Changed training location of Ta Pho and Ta Ben to Svay Chek Pagoda
Battambang	Thmor Koul	Ta Poug	- Changed training location of Ta Poug to Kok Khmum
Phnom Penh	Mean Chey	Chak Angre Leu and Chba Ampov.2	- Changed to The meeting room of Mean Chey District
	Russei Keo	Chraing Chamreh.1, Svay Pak and Prek Leap	- Changed to The meeting room of Russei Keo District
	Chamcar Mon	Tonle Basac, Olympic and Boeng Trabek	- Changed to The meeting room of Chamcar Mon District
	Prampi Makara	O Russey.1 and Boeng Pralit	- Changed to The meeting room of Prampi Makara District
Prey Veng	Peam Ro	Ban Lech Prasat	- Changed training location of Ban Lech Prasat to Prek Ksay Ko

		Peam Mean Chey	- Changed training location of Peam Mean Chey to Peam Ro
	Kampong Leav	Cheung Tuek	- Changed some communes to train in Cheung Tuek as Ta Ko, Kampong Leav and Baray
		Prek An Teah	- Changed training location of Prek An Teah to Po Rieng. And there are three more commune to participate there as Prek Kan Laong, Prek Chrey and Prek An Teah.

IV. COMMENTS

In the first training session on 5-6 June, NICFEC called all NICFEC provincial and district coordinators to ask for feedback and received the information that there were a lot of participants and they were very interested with the training project. During the training, there were a lot of questions for the trainers, especially from political party agents. The participants appreciated that the NICFEC trainers could explain in a clear and easy manner. Beside the positive feedback from NICFEC provincial coordinators, evaluation documents by trainees had been closely monitored during and after the training.

From the first to the final sessions, NICFEC regularly received feedbacks from most of the trainees highlighting that the training was very important for all grassroots stakeholders. They said they never received similar training before. They also requested to NICFEC to have other training because they rarely participated and rarely got the knowledge they need. Village chiefs especially, reported in various occasions that they will try to put in practice the knowledge they gained through the training.

On June 27, 2008, **Mr. Ok Sereysopheak** (political analyst), NICFEC and UNDP representatives met with **3 trainers** from NICFEC to debrief and collect feedback about the just concluded training initiative.

The Trainers highlighted the following:

- The grassroots stakeholders were happy and welcomed NICFEC trainers;
- The local authorities actively cooperated with giving the permission for conducting the training,
- Participants shared that they never got such a training before;
- The commune, village chiefs, military polices, polices and monks really appreciated the course and they promised, they will not use intimidation or violence to their people in the communities. They added that they will share what learned during the training with their communities to support the democratic process and transparency.

A closing ceremony was organized on 02 July 2008 at Raffles Hotel Le Royal to mark the successful completion of the project. 90 participants (UNDP, NICFEC, NEC, Donors, representatives of trainees and national and international media) attended the event and the four main speakers from UNDP, NICFEC, NEC and MoI praised the positive outcome of the initiative and successful cooperation among project partners.