Implementation of the **S**ocial **A**ccountability **F**ramework

Citizen voices for better essential services

What is ISAF?

Social accountability can be defined as an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which it is ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability (World Bank).
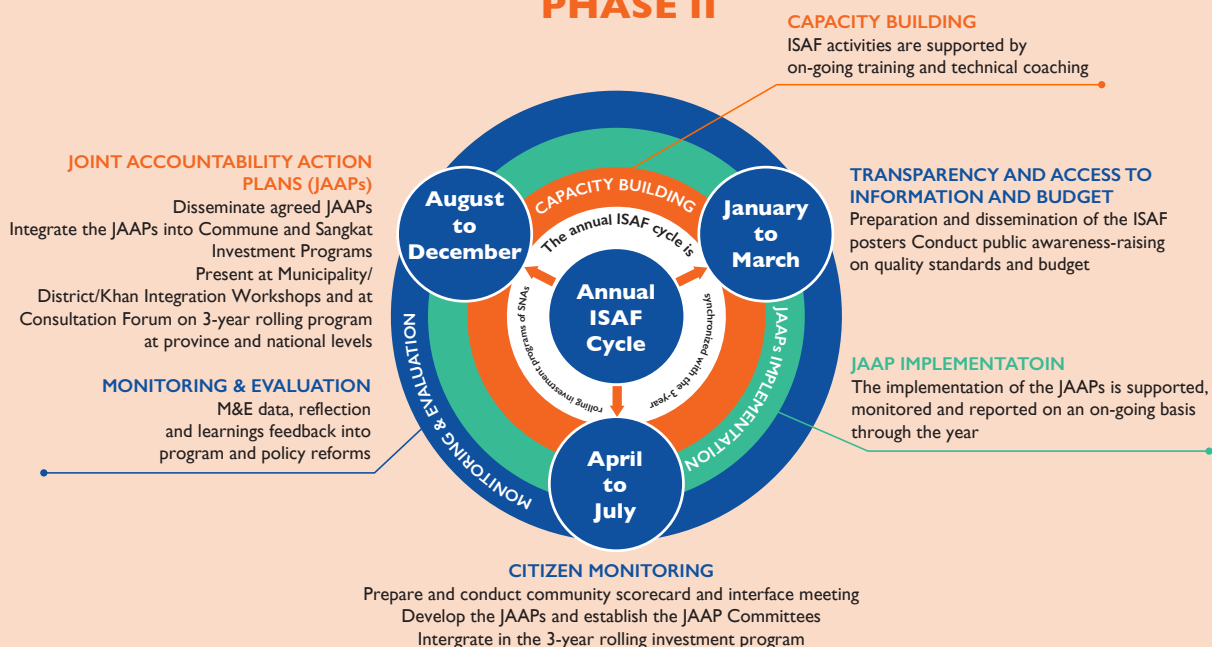
Social accountability is the cornerstone of good governance – and this kind of engagement enables civil society to engage with policy makers and service providers to bring about greater accountability for and responsiveness to citizens' needs (Global Partnership for Social Accountability).

The Implementation of the Social Accountability Framework (ISAF) in Cambodia aims to improve local service delivery through enhanced accountability. Through ISAF, citizens are informed about the services they are entitled to receive, dialogue with sub-national authorities are fostered and joint actions to address issues are identified and implemented. ISAF originated from the National Programme for Sub-National Democratic Development (SNDD) of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in Cambodia. Under the leadership of the Royal Government of Cambodia, donors, international organizations and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) joined forces behind this project. World Vision (WV) participated in the design of ISAF in 2014 and was one of the first CSOs to pilot it in six districts in 2015.

How does it work?

First, citizens receive information on the national standards that local services are supposed to meet and on the budgets of local service providers

Citizens and service providers monitor the quality of services available locally to identify potential issues with the quality of theses services

Citizens, service providers and local authorities agree on a Joint Accountability Action Plan (JAAP), prioritizing a short list of actions to address the issues identified

The implementation of the JAAP is monitored by a committee including citizen, service provider and local authority representatives

DETAILED ANNUAL CYCLE OF ISAF PHASE II

CAPACITY BUILDING
ISAF activities are supported by on-going training and technical coaching

JOINT ACCOUNTABILITY ACTION PLANS (JAAPs)
Disseminate agreed JAAPs
Integrate the JAAPs into Commune and Sangkat Investment Programs
Present at Municipality/District/Khan Integration Workshops and at Consultation Forum on 3-year rolling program at province and national levels

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND BUDGET
Preparation and dissemination of the ISAF posters Conduct public awareness-raising on quality standards and budget

MONITORING & EVALUATION
M&E data, reflection and learnings feedback into program and policy reforms

JAAP IMPLEMENTATOIN
The implementation of the JAAPs is supported, monitored and reported on an on-going basis through the year

CAPACITY BUILDING

August to December

January to March

The annual ISAF cycle is synchronized with the 3-year rolling investment programs of SNAs

Annual ISAF Cycle

April to July

MONITORING & EVALUATION

JAAP IMPLEMENTATION

CITIZEN MONITORING
Prepare and conduct community scorecard and interface meeting
Develop the JAAPs and establish the JAAP Committees
Intergrate in the 3-year rolling investment program

The Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) lead the process at the local level. A majority of these volunteers are young women, often under 30 years old. At the beginning of the annual cycle, they are trained on the ISAF process and facilitation of community dialogues. They will then engage local authorities to secure their support for the ISAF process. This process will start with the mobilization of citizens to ensure their participation at every step of the process (information, monitoring of services and dialogues).

World Vision's role (and the role of local implementing partners) in ISAF is to ensure a quality implementation of the process by developing the capacities of the Community Accountability Facilitators and coaching them, by monitoring progress and by ensuring that the process meet the best quality standards at all times.

ISAF Phase I (2015 – 2018)

During Phase I, ISAF was successfully implemented in 827 communes across the country (almost 60% of the total number of communes). By the end of Phase I, the full ISAF process had been implemented in relation to the services provided by 757 commune administrations, 1404 primary schools and 605 health centres over a 2 or 3-year period of time depending on the districts. A total of 3,700 volunteers and 7,200 local officials were trained. More than 550,000 people were informed on the services they are entitled to receive and 270,000 people were involved in the monitoring of the quality of the services received at the local level. In all communes and every year, Joint Accountability Action Plans were adopted. After one year, around 60 % of the actions set out in the JAAPs had been implemented. Through the implementation of these actions, ISAF Phase I led to enhanced mutual understanding and improved communication between citizens and local authorities as well as improved services for all citizens.

During the ISAF process, users and service providers discussed the key issues that they believe were affecting the quality of the services in their communes. In 2020, World Vision consolidated their feedback[1] and identified that a number of key issues are frequently at the top of the list of concerns of the citizens wherever they live in Cambodia (see table below).

Top 5 issues raised by users and service providers during ISAF Phase I

Sectors	Issues most often identified by citizens	Proportion of facilities affected (according to users and services providers)
Administrative Services	Respect of working hours, punctuality and respect of rules by staff	**69%**
	Public posting and dissemination of information	**66%**
	Staff behaviour, friendliness and politeness	**60%**
	Openness to the views of citizens and responsiveness to their concerns	**48%**
	Condition of the commune hall (building)	**35%**
Primary schools	Functioning and gender-segregated toilets	**61%**
	Respect of working hours, punctuality and respect of rules by staff	**57%**
	Hygiene, sanitation and environment of the school	**57%**
	Adequate number of textbooks per student	**51%**
	Condition of the school building	**42%**
Health centres	Staff behaviour, friendliness and politeness	**79%**
	Adequate availability of essential medicines	**61%**
	Adequate number of staff during working hours	**55%**
	Availability of 24 hour emergency health services	**54%**
	Respect of working hour, punctuality and respect of rules by staff	**51%**

Mrs Soeur Soeurk, 35, Community, Thmey Kandal Village, Phum Thmey Commune "Every morning, the staff at my health centre start to work punctually. More than five staff are always on standby with friendly faces to provide health services, such as check-ups, consultations or to distribute medicine. Local people, including my family, are happy with the services at the health centre because the staff are performing better than ever before."

[1] As part of this research, World Vision reviewed the opinions expressed by 180,000 people during thousands of scorecard meetings conducted all over the country over 3 years (2016 - 2018).

World Vision's Achievements During Phase I

Following the piloting of the methodology in 2015, World Vision supported the implementation of ISAF in 222 communes in 24 districts in five provinces from 2016 to 2018 thanks to a grant from the World Bank and the Japan Social Development Fund, with the support of World Vision Australia. Through this project, World Vision contributed to improve the quality of the delivery of essential public services – health centres, primary schools and administrative services at the communes – used by 1.8 million people.

More than 250,000 people were informed on the quality of services that they have a right to receive from health centres, primary schools and communes

Almost 150,000 citizens and more than 16,000 service providers evaluate the quality of services received to identify the key issues affecting the delivery of health care, education and administrative services at the local level

Each year of the project, JAAPs were developed in consensus between community members, service providers and local authorities for all communes, health centres and primary schools covered by the project

In these JAAPs, 5,700 actions were identified to address the key issues identified by citizens and local authorities and improve the delivery of quality services for communities

Around 10,000 government officials and 7,500 citizens took part in the development of these Joint Accountability Action Plans

The implementation of the JAAPs was monitored by committees created in all communes with representatives from local authorities, citizens and service providers

84% of the actions from the JAAPs had been implemented 12 months after their adoption

Around 1,8 million people are now accessing improved services

World Vision's Innovation

- During ISAF Phase I, World Vision innovated and introduced new approaches to ensure a stronger participation of young people, men and ID Poor card holders.

- In 220 communes, World Vision also implemented and funded the piloting of a more cost-effective and sustainable ISAF process, giving a bigger role to community volunteers in the leadership of the project at district and provincial levels. This approach is now been scaled up for the Phase II of ISAF.

- In 2020, World Vision also consolidated the feedback provided by citizens during the monitoring of the quality of the services offered by thousands of primary schools and health centers over 3 years (2016-2018). The review of this feedback allowed to identify nationwide patterns and shows that the ISAF data can help to inform the development of national policies, plans or budgets to better respond to the concerns of citizens.

ISAF Phase II (2019 – 2024)

In 2018, a 5 year Implementation Plan for ISAF Phase II (2019 - 2023) was developed and launched through a consultative process with the Royal Government of Cambodia, development partners and civil society. ISAF Phase II still focuses on improving the performance of public service providers through improved transparency, strengthened citizen engagement and responsive action. But it also introduces some important innovations:

- Expansion of ISAF to all rural communes and 50% of urban areas (and adaptation of ISAF methodologies for urban settings)
- Extension of ISAF to district administrations and other selected services (such as water or land management)
- Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to reach a larger number of citizens
- Measures to increase the implementation of the Joint Accountability Action Plans
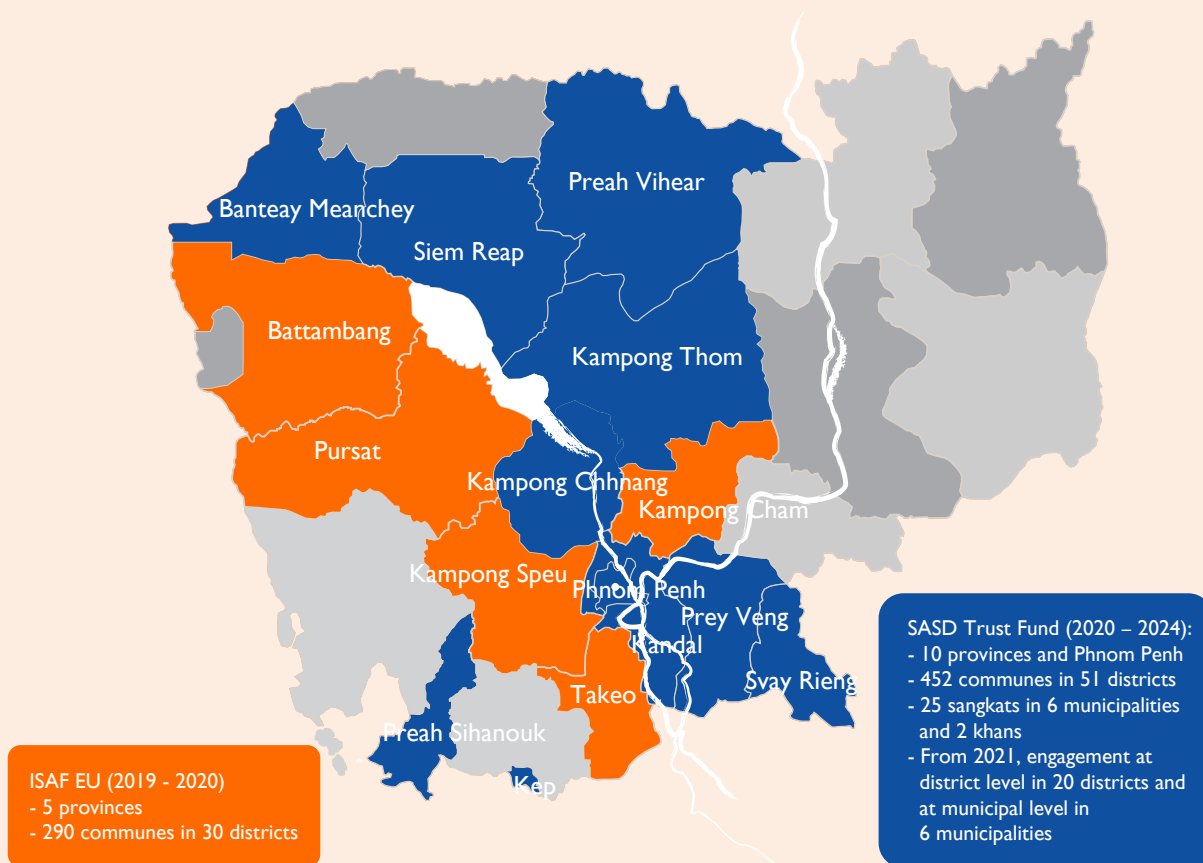- Institutionalization and enhanced sustainability of ISAF processes

World Vision started to support the implementation of ISAF Phase II in 2019 through a grant of the European Union (EU). Working with 13 local implementing partners, World Vision supports ISAF in 292 communes in 30 districts in five provinces. To scale up these efforts and ensure a stronger coordination between all stakeholders, a Social Accountability and Service Delivery Trust Fund (SASD-TF) was created in 2019 by the World Bank with the support of multiple institutional donors (especially the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) World Vision was then selected as Demand Side Coordination Agency and awarded a grant to support, directly or through local implementing partners, the mobilization and participation of citizens in ISAF Phase II. World Vision will lead and coordinate all activities for the demand side (citizens). This involves the development of the technical guidance, capacity building and management of local implementing partners, direct implementation of ISAF when possible, management and monitoring of the project, learning, innovation and reporting. The initial target area covers 370 health centres and more than 2000 primary schools in 477 communes and sangkats in 59 districts and municipalities in 10 provinces and Phnom Penh. These services are used by more than 4,100,000 people. The project will run from March 2020 to March 2024. The target area will be extended as additional funds are made available by new or existing donors.

Mr. Thai Veasna, School Principle, Kork Srok village, Sreah Rang commune, Mongkul borey district, Banteay Meanchey Province. "My school had lots of problems before the Social Accountability Framework was introduced in 2016. The teachers and I joined the score card meetings facilitated by the CAFs and we took part in the development a Joint Accountability Action Plan to improve the quality of my school. This included enforcing teachers' mandatory working hours through a daily attendance list. The School Support Committee and I requested the support of a partner NGO to build separate toilets for male and female students, as well as mobilize the community to contribute to the renovation of the school yard. Now 90% of children in the village attend school."

Where is World Vision supporting ISAF Phase II?

- 89 districts and municipalities
- 767 communes and sangkats
- Over 7,000,000 beneficiaries
- Around 600 health centres
- More than 2650 primary schools
- More than 4200 Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) leading the process

Map labels: Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Preah Vihear, Battambang, Pursat, Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu, Phnom Penh, Prey Veng, Kandal, Svay Rieng, Takeo, Preah Sihanouk, Kep

SASD Trust Fund (2020 – 2024):
- 10 provinces and Phnom Penh
- 452 communes in 51 districts
- 25 sangkats in 6 municipalities and 2 khans
- From 2021, engagement at district level in 20 districts and at municipal level in 6 municipalities

ISAF EU (2019 - 2020)
- 5 provinces
- 290 communes in 30 districts

Blue : ISAF implementation area funded by the Social Accountability and Service Delivery Trust Fund managed by the World Bank with the support of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and World Vision

Orange: ISAF implementation area funded by the European Union and World Vision Germany (2019 – 2020)*

Social Accountability at World Vision

World Vision International implements social accountability programmes in 48 countries across the world, improving services for millions of people through local dialogues. Our main global model for social accountability, Citizen Voice and Action, employs targeted civic education, participatory community services scorecards and social audits of services, in a very similar methodology to the ISAF one. CVA has been rigorously tested in an Oxford University-led randomised control trial and other studies. World Vision started to implement it in Cambodia in 2011. In 2020, all projects still using this model transitioned to ISAF.

World Vision also uses another model in Cambodia: Social Accountability for Child Protection (SA4CP). It aims to empower citizens to take responsibility for child protection, local governments to deliver on their mandates and, ultimately, ensure that children are safe. Piloted for the first time in 2015, it has since then been scaled up to 24 districts. In 2019, the process led to the adoption of action plans in 25 communes/sangkats improving the performance of the Commune Councils for Women and Children (CCWCs).

* World Vision is working with donors and partners to ensure that ISAF continues to be implemented in these provinces beyond the end of 2020 until full sustainability and institutionalization are reached.

Our Supporters

Our Partners

From volunteer to elected leader: Itinerary of a young women who cares about her community

Generating improvements in basic services across the country

Chanthorn, 26, Community Accountability Facilitator in Phnum Srok district, Banteay Meanchey province, used to be unhappy with the services at her local health centre. Most people in her commune were uncomfortable engaging with commune administration services, the health centre or school for information or assistance. The common perception was that the people who worked in those positions had power and were unapproachable, making it difficult for people to get the help they needed.

After being trained by World Vision, Chanthorn volunteered to be a Community Accountability Facilitator (CAF) in her commune. She directly facilitated many activities to empower citizens on their rights, on the basic standards that local services are supposed to meet and on the budgets and performance of local service providers.

"The role of CAFs in the community is not only to inform people about their rights, it is also to empower them to engage more with service providers. And the service providers themselves recognize this is needed. Some of them have changed and have become friendlier with CAFs and the people they serve. Our work continues to move forward but there is much more that still need to be done to help our people" says Chanthorn.

In appreciation of her two-years of volunteer work, Chanthorn was recognized by her commune members as a community activist. Because of her commitment, she was encouraged to be a commune election candidate and was elected as commune councillor, taking lead of the Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWC).

World Vision

World Vision is a Christian relief, development
and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and
communities to overcome poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all
people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

Since the early 1980s World Vision has implemented a diverse range
of relief and development programmes to benefit vulnerable children in Cambodia.
In 2020 we employ over 600 staff that work in nine provinces and the capital city, Phnom Penh,
reaching 1.7 million children.

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