

A Research on Good Governance and Poverty Reduction in Cambodia

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Abstract

Cambodia is one of the developing countries in ASEAN. The country is rich in natural resources and has enjoyed steady economic growth during 2004-2014 by applying Rectangular Strategy Phase I (2004), Phase II (2008), and Phase III (2013) with Good Governance (GG) as a core of the strategy. Addressing the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) for Poverty Reduction (PR) in Cambodia has begun since 2002. The poverty rate in Cambodia steadily decreased from 35% in 2004 to 19% in 2012. The research appraised a study on Good Governance and Poverty Reduction in Cambodia by overviews of its Governance and Poverty Situations as the key concepts for discussion to find out the factors impeding GG, causes and characteristics of poverty, and governance reforms. The findings indicate that GG really has a positive influence on PR in Cambodia, still some challenges should be considered to enhance the governance and PR strategy in Cambodia. Actually, the NPRS in 2002 is proved to be unsystematic and ineffective. However, the main reason of the poverty retaining in Cambodia is seen in poor governance in terms of widespread corruption, limited transparency, limited accountability of public policy making, limited control, and limited participation to public. Here GG is considered and demanded to make a significant change in the condition of the poor and near-poor. Obviously, the result of the investigation showed that Cambodia is now on the new ways of governance and PR strategy after a big change shown in the result of the general election in 2013. The research study includes the Cambodia's governance and PR strategy challenges with some recommendations according to the findings.

Keywords: Good Governance, Poverty Reduction, Human Resource Development, Democracy, E-Governance SMARTER, Cambodia

1. Introduction

1.1. Background Information

"The most important lesson I learnt in the World Bank (WB) is that without good governance, we can't promote healthy nation building." "The bottom reason of the poverty in South Asia (SA) is bad governance in public policy and institution."

Dr. Nishimizu Mieko, former Vice-President of the WB for SA (1997-2003)

"Good Governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradication poverty and promoting development"

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, 1998

"The MDGs are still achievable if we act now. This will require inclusive sound governance, increased public investment, economic growth, enhanced productive capacity, and the creation of decent work"

Ban-Ki Moon, UN Secretary General, 2007

Since 2004, Cambodia has been applying the Rectangular Strategy for growth, employment, equity, and efficiency based on GG as a main policy and adopted NPRS in 2002. Coincidentally, that the characteristics of GG are achievable makes it possible to improve Cambodia's bright today by shoring up the foundations for dynamic enterprises, increasing trades, encouraging investment inflows, and promoting tourism which can generate more employments for Cambodian people. As a result, poverty is relatively reduced, and people's well-being is also improved.

Indeed, GG by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) mainly focuses on only four reform areas: (1) judicial and legal reform; (2) public administration reform including decentralization and de-concentration; (3) anti-corruption reform; and (4) reform of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (Cambodia, 2004-2008; 2008-2013; 2013-2018).

Because Cambodia is a developing country, rapid economic growth has created employment opportunities which contributed to the decline in poverty headcount from 35 percent (about 4.7 million people) in 2004 to 30 percent in 2007 and 20% in 2012 (WB and ADB, December 2011). That 23% of Cambodian people were below the international poverty line of \$1.25 per day in 2011 (UNICEF, 2011) caused the government of this country to pay special attention to its own people's problems and to urgently reduce this poverty by prioritizing potential macroeconomic development sectors and GG for national and local levels as sustainable development and PR policies. What can stimulate Cambodia's development is driven by strong exports, private textile-investment,

garment, agriculture, popular tourism, diversification, and a solid macroeconomic position (WB, 2013).

For the expansion of maternal and early-childhood healthcare and primary education programs in rural areas, significant progresses have been made in particular areas with highest maternal mortality rate (the number of deaths per 100,000-life births decreased from 432 in 2000 to 472 in 2005 and 206 in 2010) (UNFPA, 2013) and highest child mortality rate (the under-5 mortality rate decreased from 124 per 1,000-life births in 1998 to 83 in 2006, 43 in 2011, and 42.9 in 2013) (CNN, 2013). For Primary education programs in rural areas, the net primary admission rate increased from 81 in 2001 to 91.9 in 2008 and 96 in 2011 (MoEYS, 2013). Cambodia has also been successful in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment (WB, 2013).

1.2. Purpose of Research

The research exclusively concentrates and studies on Good Governance (GG) and Poverty Reduction (PR) in Cambodia. The significance of the research study has provided some benefits to understand the existing situations of Cambodia's governance and poverty as a background for discussion of the study on GG and PR in Cambodia by identifying the factors which impede the GG in Cambodia, recognizing some causes and characteristics of poverty in Cambodia, and justifying some governance reforms for supporting PR in Cambodia.

The study is conducted in Cambodia and uses primary and secondary data which were collected. Desk review, literature review, and other findings from previous studies are also used as additional dimensions to the analysis and interviews with a population size of 17 respondents who are selected deliberately, among which 2 respondents for each different institution are from the Senate, the National Assembly, the RGC, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Service, and public and private universities and the other 5 Cambodian respondents are those who used to be directors of the institutions. Table of questionnaires is used when interviewing those key informants to be sound.

1.3. Research Methodology

Necessary appraisal consists of reviews of available documents, group and individual interviews, and informal interviews with key informants. In order to get the detailed data and information, the inquiry research methodology will be as following:

(1) The field survey is conducted with the use of a table of questionnaires when interviewing for data collection to find out about the opinions of the informants who are from the Senate, the National Assembly, the Royal Government of Cambodia, the Ministry of Public Service, public and private universities, and Cambodian people (sub-national authorities), focusing on the GG and PR in Cambodia.

(2) The success of this research is significantly based on the in-depth understanding of the phenomena of working environment process. The overall nature of the study is exploration and description. The main advantage of this approach is that it allows more flexibility in the research processes. The approach facilitates clarification of research understanding and evaluation of the research objectives. Determining the research strategy in advance is not easy because it depends on situations, nature of data, data collection, analysis tools, methods, etc. The combination of multiple strategies not only allows researcher to collect data from various resources but also helps to ensure reliability and validity.

(3) The primary data is collected through interviews, observation, and author's own experience. Primary data and secondary data are very important for any type of research. Particularly, primary data is insufficient and difficult to be evaluated and analyzed. Secondary data is collected from multiple sources such as books or book sections, journal articles, newspapers, websites (documents from websites), articles in periodical, and conference proceedings. Audios, films, electronic sources, and professional reports can also be used as sources. Otherwise, the sources can be research documents or papers from either public or private universities.

Data analysis mainly focuses on the descriptive approach most of the time. The research involves in dealing with qualitative research via documentary research and group discussion with some key informants and intellectual people.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Good Governance (GG) is an indeterminate term used in international development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. Governance is "the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented." The keyword GG was created in 1800 and has been increasingly used since 1990 (Google, 2013).

GG is "... among other things participatory, transparent, and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law" (UNDP, 1997).

GG is "... epitomized by predictable, open, and enlightened policy making; a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law" (World Bank 1994).

GG promotes equity, participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law in an effective, efficient, and enduring way. In putting these principles into practice, we can see the holding of free, fair, and frequent elections, representative legislatures that make laws and provide oversight, and an independent judiciary to interpret those laws. The greatest threats to GG come from corruption, violence, and poverty, all of which undermine transparency, security, participation, and fundamental freedoms (UN, 2013).

GG is a term which becomes a part of the vernacular of a large range of development institutions and other actors within the international arena. What it means exactly, however, has not been so well established (UNU, 2012).

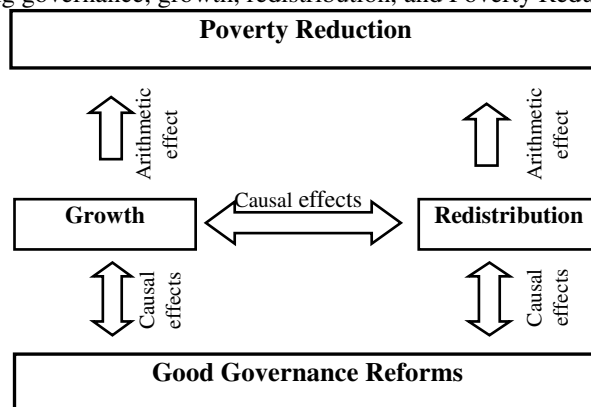
GG relates to political and institutional processes and outcomes which are deemed necessary to achieve the goals of social development. It has been said that GG is the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, and guarantee the realization of human rights in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption depending on the rule of law (UN, United Nation Human Rights, 1996).

For the governance, the inter-linking of the four Pillars (Accountability, Transparency, Predictability, and Participation) is considered to be the cycle processes of GG. It means if the governance sectors, institutions, or groups accompany with answerable, reasonable, and logical qualities in response to people depending on rules, laws, and regulations, people will find it easy, understandable, reliable, timely, and relevant. This affects the internal and external participation which is a mechanism of accountability and transparency. Effective accountability refers to people's consciousness of what their responsibility, daily activities, and benefits are, resulting in transparent institutions and participation from the citizens. Transparency is vital to good predictability. In brief, the effects of accountability, transparency, and clear predictability of an institution can strongly contribute to greater participation.

2.2. Linking Governance, Growth, Redistribution, and Poverty Reduction

According to Mush H. Khan (2008), a wide range of contradictory causal relationships has been suggested between growth and redistribution. The causal relationships relevant to particular countries are nevertheless important because higher growth may require either policy to slow down or reverse improvements in distribution or policy to improve the income distribution. The causal relationships between distribution and growth relevant to a particular country have significant implications for PR. For instance, if improvements in distribution have a negative impact on growth, an excessive focus on redistribution may have negative growth effects that could more than offset against the positive redistribution effects for PR. The causality between growth and redistribution can also run in both directions. Growth may, in turn, have causal effects on distribution either positively or negatively, and again, there are obvious implications for PR. Finally, both growth and distribution are likely to be responsive to policy, and these policies can be judged in terms of their impacts on growth and redistribution. In turn, both growth and income distribution can determine the effectiveness of specific policies because the political feasibility of implementing particular policies may depend on the environment of growth and distribution.

Figure 1: Causal links among governance, growth, redistribution, and Poverty Reduction



(Source from Mush H. Khan: 2009)

2.3. The Good Governance as Market-enhancing Governance

According to Mush H. Khan 2009, keeping these fundamental questions about the relationships between growth, distribution, and poverty in mind, we can look at the important policy area of governance reforms to see how these reforms may affect poverty. With the examination of this by looking at the possible effects of governance reforms on growth and distribution, much of the emphasis of GG reforms has focused on the possible effects of these reforms on growth. The anomalous nature of GG on growth has been examined elsewhere (Khan 2007). Here, the possible effects of GG reforms on poverty are focused through potential effects on distribution. But

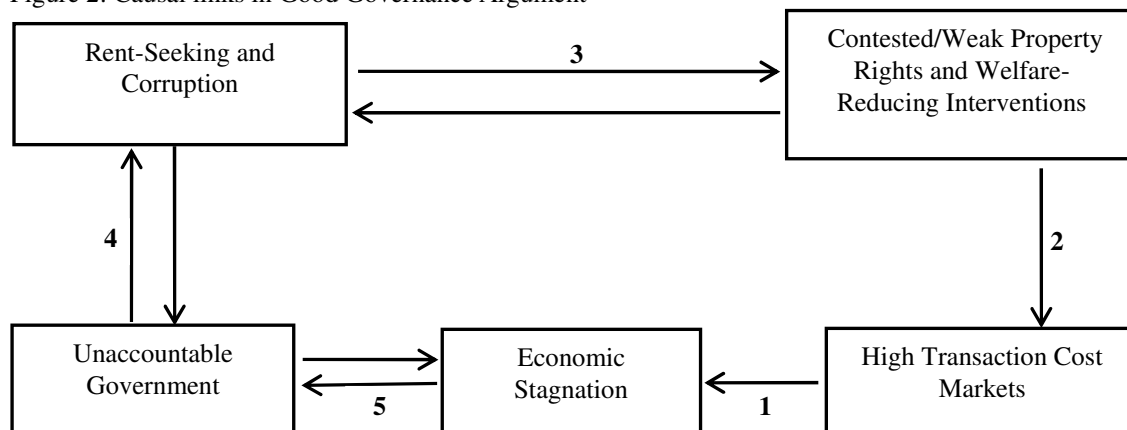
first, to what GG reforms refer needs to be briefly described.

Governance reforms refer to strengthening state capabilities to enforce institutional rules that are important for economic and social development. The dominant “GG” paradigm identifies a series of capabilities that, it argues, are *necessary* governance capabilities for a market-friendly state. These include, in particular, the capabilities to protect stable property rights, to enforce the rule of law, to effectively implement anti-corruption policies, and to achieve government accountability. Many of these capabilities are much wanted as they help to achieve desirable conditions. Surprisingly in the GG framework, these capabilities are not just *desirable for achieving some of the goals of development*, but they are also identified as *preconditions for development* because they ensure market efficiency and less market failures (Khan 2007).

According to Khan’s conclusions (2009), a core proposition ensures that efficient markets are achievable in developing countries, and they will drive development. The inefficiency of markets in developing countries is the source of market failures that constrain development. These inefficiencies are due to high transaction costs in developing country markets, which are, in turn, due to poorly protected property rights and welfare-reducing interventions.

Because of corruption and rent-seeking, unstable property rights and welfare-reducing interventions persist (some individuals and groups benefit from these instabilities and interventions). And finally, fighting against rent-seeking and corruption continues incessantly because of weak accountability and poor democracy, allowing a minority to gain financial benefits from the majority. The links in the argument are summarized in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Causal links in Good Governance Argument



(Source from Mush H. Khan: 2009)

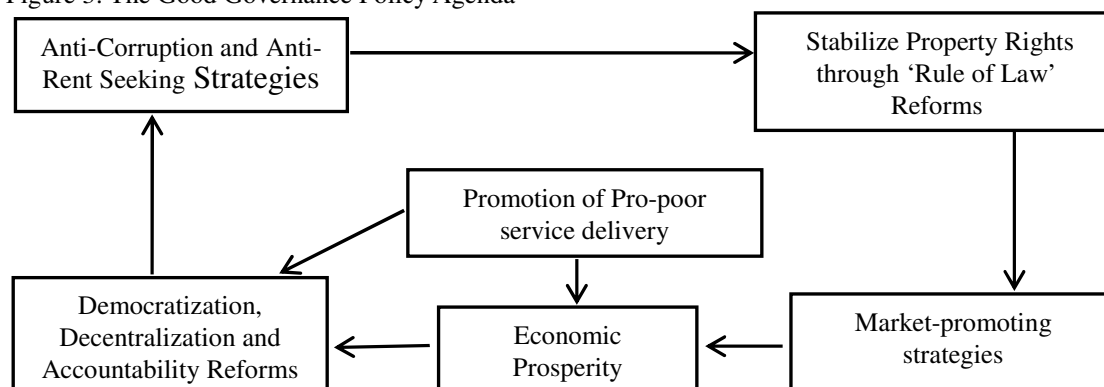
2.4. The Good Governance Policy Agenda

According to Mush H. Khan 2009, all countries have to achieve capabilities for protecting property rights and contracts using the rule of law. These required capabilities for fighting corruption and rent-seeking, in turn, have to be bolstered by reforms which promote democratization, decentralization, and accountability.

The final component often added to the package by development agencies is the promotion of Pro-poor service delivery as a way of mobilizing the poor who are the majority or close to the majority in poor countries. If this group can be mobilized to hold the country to account by ensuring that the country has delivered the service to them, then the accountability essential in this framework can be kick-started.

The importance of Pro-poor service delivery in this governance approach is therefore not simply the direct effect on reducing poverty, but primarily the establishment of the virtuous cycle of governance which, in theory, would sustain market-led growth.

Figure 3: The Good Governance Policy Agenda



(Source from Mush H. Khan: 2009)

2.5. Bad Governance as Opposed to Good Governance

When talking about the concept of “good” or “sound” governance, we have to bear in mind that each of its positive qualities has an evil twin that represents “bad” or “poor” governance (Oksana Popovych 2008,). On its turn, bad governance is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within the societies (UNDP, 2006).

Brinkerhoff (2002) asserted that when governance systems break down or are destroyed, the door is opened to instability, oppression, conflict, and unchecked political and economic opportunism. In combination with geopolitical and ethno political forces, as well as economic decline, poor governance is often combined with ethnic conflict, civil war, food shortages, waves of refugees, and cessation of normal economic activities (Brinkerhoff, D. and Goldsmith, A., 2005).

Madelin, Ratchford, and Jorgensen (2001) stressed that bad governance jeopardizes social development efforts. Moreover, it reduces the growth of poverty reduction progresses (access to basic social services is not broad enough). In some countries, access to productive resources such as training, education, land, capital, and credit needs to be greatly improved (Madelin et al., 2001).

According to Grindle (2004), this has happened to some countries fighting against poverty including developing countries and the poorest ones. Grindle (2004) stated as the following: the public institutions in these countries are weak and vulnerable; the decision-making processes are constricted by the presence of international actors with multifarious priorities; their public organizations lack in resources and are usually badly managed; and the civil servants are generally meagerly trained and motivated. Frequently, the legitimacy of those countries’ public authorities is questionable; their civil societies are disfranchised and weakly developed to effectively participate in politics (Grindle, 2004). When GG is propagated as a necessary constituent for reducing widespread poverty, these questions are compounded. In such contexts, getting GG as a route toward PR can overwhelm the commitment of even the most energetic reformers (Grindle, 2004).

2.6. Poverty and Poverty Reduction Aspects

One billion children are living in poverty (1 in 2 children in the world). 640 millions are living without adequate shelter, 400 million have no access to safe water, and 270 million have no access to health services. 10.6 million died in 2003 before they reached the age of 5 (or roughly 29,000 children per day) (Shah, 2013). As clearly seen, *Poverty* is the hottest issue for developing countries, especially the low-income ones. Therefore, it must be solved as soon as possible through peaceful political stability, political reform, public administration and services reform, and equal law enforcement to promote economic growth, employment, equity, social responsibility, and fair distribution of social benefits to poor people and to decrease inflation, gap between rich and poor, and gender inequity through GG mentioned above.

Poverty refers the state of being poor, lack of something, or poor quality, but in this context it refers to poor people (AS Hornby , Michael Asfby, 2000). Poverty is poor people who have very low income which is not enough for consumption, putting them below the poverty line (WB, Poverty, 2002). Poverty is defined relatively to the standards of living in a society at a specific time. People will be considered as in poverty when they do not have a sufficient income for their basic needs and when these circumstances exclude them from taking part in some preferable daily-life activities in that society (BBC, 2013).

Poverty Reduction Concepts: Poverty Reduction (PR) leads to Pro-poor growth. PR relies on promoted economic growth focusing on both its pace and pattern to benefit poor people (OECD, 2013). Environmental threats disproportionately affect the poor people in Asia and the Pacific, and climate change is making the situation worse. Air and water pollution, desertification, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, and exposure to

hazardous materials affect the poor more than other factors do, leaving them vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters. Promoting inclusive Pro-poor growth can be a case of PR. ABD has set up a strategy called ADB's enhanced PR strategy. The Strategy is made up of three pillars: Pro-poor sustainable economic growth, inclusive social development, and GG, which also includes the cross-cutting priorities of environmental sustainability, gender equity, private sector development, and regional cooperation. Depending on the partner countries' strategic priorities and ADB's comparative advantages, all sectors contribute to reducing income, social, and environment-caused poverty (ADB, 2013).

2.7. The Good Governance and Poverty Reduction Concepts

Good governance is significantly related to Pro-poor growth (at least in term of PR), and thus it should not be ignored. GG is also needed to ensure that the growth achieved does indeed benefit the poor. It is, however, even more related to investments in the continuous buildings of institutional capacity to make sure that weaknesses in terms of the implementation and enforcement of GG policies do not compromise the achievement of Pro-poor objectives (Diphofa, 2011). GG in all its constitutive elements is necessary for PR (Onyejekwe, May 2004). GG can simply mean the effectiveness with which a government performs its work and promotes the enforcement of law and order, revenue collection, allocation of resources to meet specific demands of nation, provision of infrastructure, and promotion of human rights. Although democracy enhances GG, the latter is not necessarily equivalent to the former. Democratic regimes, which are much more open to public scrutiny and periodic tests of legitimacy through elections, tend to be more amenable to GG. Yet the mere holding of multi-party elections should not be taken as proof of the existence of good democratic governance. While multi-party elections may be symptomatic of the reduction of the more overt repressive character of the authoritarian state, processes of political exclusion, discrimination, corruption, and mismanagement of public resources may hide inside as horrendous as they could be in authoritarian states. Elections, by themselves, are not enough. A democratic political culture involves deeper participation at local levels, less concentration of political power at the center, institutionalization of the rule of law, and respect for human rights including social rights. Under GG, a national PR plan would involve not only policy papers setting out what government intends to do about poverty, but more how the system of government is to be structured so as to enhance participation, accountability, citizenship rights (both political and economic), and political inclusion. Generally, lack of GG is easily open to corruption and abuse of human rights which can simply make people become poorer (Nyong'O, 2001).

2.8. Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance

According to USAID, in 2011 Arab Spring powerfully reminded the world that, "*Democratic governance and human rights are critical components of sustainable development and lasting peace.*" Some countries weak in government effectiveness, rule of law, and corruption control have a higher chance of 30% to 45% risk of civil war and especially risk of extreme criminal violence than other developing countries. A country cannot be truly democratic until its citizens have the opportunity to choose their representatives through elections which are free and fair. The rule of law is an essential element of democracy in a democratic country. A democratic political culture requires a vibrant civil-society sector and an independent media to ensure that citizens are well informed about the performance and actions of government institutions and officials, and that citizens have the means to freely influence public policies. The process of governing is most legitimate when it incorporates democratic principles such as pluralism, accountability, transparency, people involvement in decision-making, and representation. People will lose confidence in a government that is unable to deliver basic services to them (USAID, 2014).

2.9. E-Governance

E-Governance, meaning "Electronic Governance", is using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) at various levels of the government and the public as well as private sectors and beyond, for purpose of enhancing governance (Okot-Uma 2000; Bedi, Singh and Srivastava, 2001; Holmes, 2001; Palvia, Shailendra C.Jain; Sushil S. Sharma, 2006). E-Governance also involves new styles of leadership, new ways of debating and making decision on policy and investment, new ways of taking people's comments into consideration, and new ways of organizing and delivering information and services by using ICTs. This can improve information, encourage citizens' participation in decision-making processes, and make the government more accountable, transparent, and effective (UNESCO, 2011). E-Governance is an application of governance which is an important key to GG in Cambodia for national to local level of governance. Moreover, E-Governance is a key to good governance, while the GG is also a high potential key to alleviate poverty for Cambodian people (Vannak, 2014). Nowadays, for Cambodia in the time of modern high technology of globalization, E-Governance is a key to good governance, and the GG is the most important sector for poverty reduction of the Royal Government of Cambodia Strategy (Vanna, 2014). Finally, E-Governance or "Electronic Governance" is the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to the processes of government functioning in order to

bring about Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent, Effective, and Reinforcing (SMARTER) governance. So that E-Governance it can be called E-Governance SMARTER and its short form is E-G (SMARTER).

3. Cambodia's Governance and Poverty

3.1. The Cambodia's Good Governance Concepts

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has treated GG as a core of the Rectangular Strategy, which can achieve social justice and sustainable and equitable socio-economic development. In order to further strengthen GG, the RGC has firmly implemented key reform programs including: (1) the fight against corruption; (2) legal and judicial reform; (3) public administration reform; and (4) reform of armed forces. The ultimate objective of the reforms, as well as that of other reform programs including public financial management reform, land reform, and forestry and fisheries reform, is to strengthen the capacity, efficiency, and quality of public services to raise public confidence in government and respond to the needs and aspirations of the people and business community (Cambodia, 2004-2008; 2008-2013; 2013-2018).

Otherwise the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) are partnerships to seek for increasing adherence to a set of international norms linked to GG: transparency, reduced corruption, and respect for human rights (Derick W.Brinkerhoff and Jenifer M. Brinkerhoff, 2011).

3.2. Cambodia's National Poverty Reduction Strategy

The RGC is committed to reducing poverty and inequality and improving the quality of life of the vast majority of Cambodia's rapidly growing population so that all Cambodians can enjoy the benefits of economic growth and participate in the development process. These are some prioritized poverty reduction actions of RGC: maintaining macroeconomic stability, improving rural livelihoods, expanding job opportunities, improving capabilities, strengthening institutions and improving governance, reducing vulnerability and strengthening social inclusion, promoting gender equity, prioritizing focus on population, public resource requirements and management, and monitoring and evaluation.

3.3. Cambodia Historical Governance Background

From 1953 to 1993, Cambodia had changed the transitions of political, legal, and economic systems for six times. All the changes were made with revolutions and supported from the neighboring countries, Thailand and Vietnam, and the other countries including China, Soviet Union, and the United States of America.

Pre-1953: French Protectorate

In 1863, Cambodia was a French protectorate. In October 1887, the French proclaimed the Union Indochinese, or Indochina Union, comprising Cambodia and the three constituents. At that time, the political system in Cambodia was under French control, and political power was held by the French. Economics was also under colonial rule, and legal system was based on French civil code and judiciary. In 1941, Norodom's successor, Norodom Sihanouke, was the king of Cambodia at the age of 16. The king, along with his Cambodian people, tried his best and gained back the country's independence from France on November 9, 1953 (Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Hammerquist, 1987).

1953 -1970: (1st) Kingdom of Cambodia

Cambodia National Independence Day is on November 9, 1953. Cambodia was governed by a monarchy with two parliaments, the National Assembly and the Popular Assembly elected by general elections. The first constitution was amended in 1957 and became the second constitution of Cambodia after gaining independence from France, but the power emanated from the king. The constitution of Cambodia at that time guaranteed Cambodian people a number of basic rights such as freedom of speech, right to vote, and equal right to stand as a candidate in elections to parliament. The new government emphasized that power transfer be completely legal and constitutional, and it received recognition from most foreign governments. The Vietnamese Communist invasion of Cambodia began in early April, 1970 (Security, 2012).

1970-1975: Khmer Republic

General Lon Nol launched a successful coup d'état supported by the US in the morning of March 18, 1970 while Prince Sihanouke had a trip to Moscow on his state mission. Then General Lon Nol set up Khmer Republic, and a new constitution was promulgated to stipulate a multi-party political system and democracy as principles. The parliament included the National Assembly (NA) and the Senate. On April 1, 1975, President Lon Nol resigned and left the country. All Cambodian people were executed soon after Khmer Rouge (KR) units took over Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975 (World, 2000).

1975-1979: Democratic Kampuchea

In Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975, Khmer Rouge (KR) expelled Khmer Republic led by Lon Nol and supported by the USA. Pol Pot established Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime. All of the urban dwellers were

forced to move to rural areas and worked in farming, dam building, and irrigation systems by force. By 1962, Pol Pot had become the leader of the Cambodian Communist Party (CCP) and was forced to flee into the jungle to escape due to the wrath of Prince Norodom Sihanouke, the king of Cambodia. In the jungle, Pol Pot formed an armed resistance movement known as Khmer Rouge (Red Cambodians) and waged a guerrilla war against Prince Sihanouke's government. Only for 20 days, 8 months, and 3 years of rule by the KR led by Pol Pot, Cambodia rational systems such as social norms, customs, communities, and families were destroyed through the pursuit of collectivism, and 1.7 million people were killed and starved to death. The fall of Pol Pot on January 7, 1979 lead Cambodia to the "The Year that Cambodian people restarted from Zero" (View, 2012).

1979-1989: People's Republic of Kampuchea

On January 7, 1979 was the fall of Pol Pot regime, and it was the day of a new regime, People's Republic of Kampuchea established in Cambodia. The Pol Pot regime collapsed when Vietnamese troops and Cambodian resistance forces crossed into Cambodia and drove Pol Pot and his subordinates from power. On December 25, 1978, Vietnam launched a full-scale invasion of Cambodia, seeking to end Khmer Rouge border attacks. At that time Pol Pot was deposed, but the KR was still recognized by the UN as the legal government of Cambodia.

In Phnom Penh, Vietnamese established a regime named the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) and appointed Mr. Heng Samrin to lead the PRK as head of state and president of parliament. His regime was effectively controlled by the communist party, and other Khmer communists who formed the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP), like Chan Sy and Hun Sen, were prominent from the start. The communist party, People's Revolutionary Party of Cambodia, was changed to Cambodian's People Party on May 1, 1989.

In 1986, Hanoi claimed to have begun withdrawing part of its occupation forces. These withdrawals continued over the next 2 years, although actual numbers were difficult to verify. Vietnam's proposal to withdraw its remaining occupation forces in 1989-1990 -the result of ongoing international pressure- forced the PRK to begin economic and constitutional reforms in an attempt to ensure future political dominance. In April 1989, Hanoi and Phnom Penh announced that final withdrawal would take place by the end of September 1989 (View, People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), 2012).

1989-1993: State of Cambodia

On April 29-30, 1989, the NA of the PRK presided by H.E. Hun Sen held an extraordinary meeting in order to make some, at first, largely cosmetic constitutional changes. The name of "People's Republic of Kampuchea" was officially changed to State of Cambodia (SoC) - Cambodia's economy, a set of laws on "Personal Ownership" and "Free Market Orientation" was passed as well. In mid-1991, the government of the SoC signed an agreement that recognized Prince Norodom Sihanouke as head of state, President of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia (SNC). The Paris Peace Agreements (PPA) on October 23, 1991 was signed to give the United Nations authority to sponsor free and fair elections scheduled on 23-28 May 1993 (View K. K., 2012).

1993 -Present: (2nd) Kingdom of Cambodia

Cambodia has taken Pluralism, Freedom, and Democracy as a national slogan for leading the country after PPA. According to the result of general election in 1993 by UN, only 2 parties were considered as "strong" parties; the first one was National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia Party (FUNCINPEC) winning 58 seats out of 120 seats, and the other was Cambodian People's Party (CPP) winning 51 seats. At that time Cambodia had co-prime ministers, Prince Ranariddh from FUNCINPEC as the first prime minister and Samdech Hun Sen from CPP as the second. Some ministries also had co-ministers, but the government administration remained largely populated by bureaucrats who were under the power of Hun Sen regime (Wikipedia, 2013).

3.4. Governance Structure of the Public Sectors

The Legislative Committee

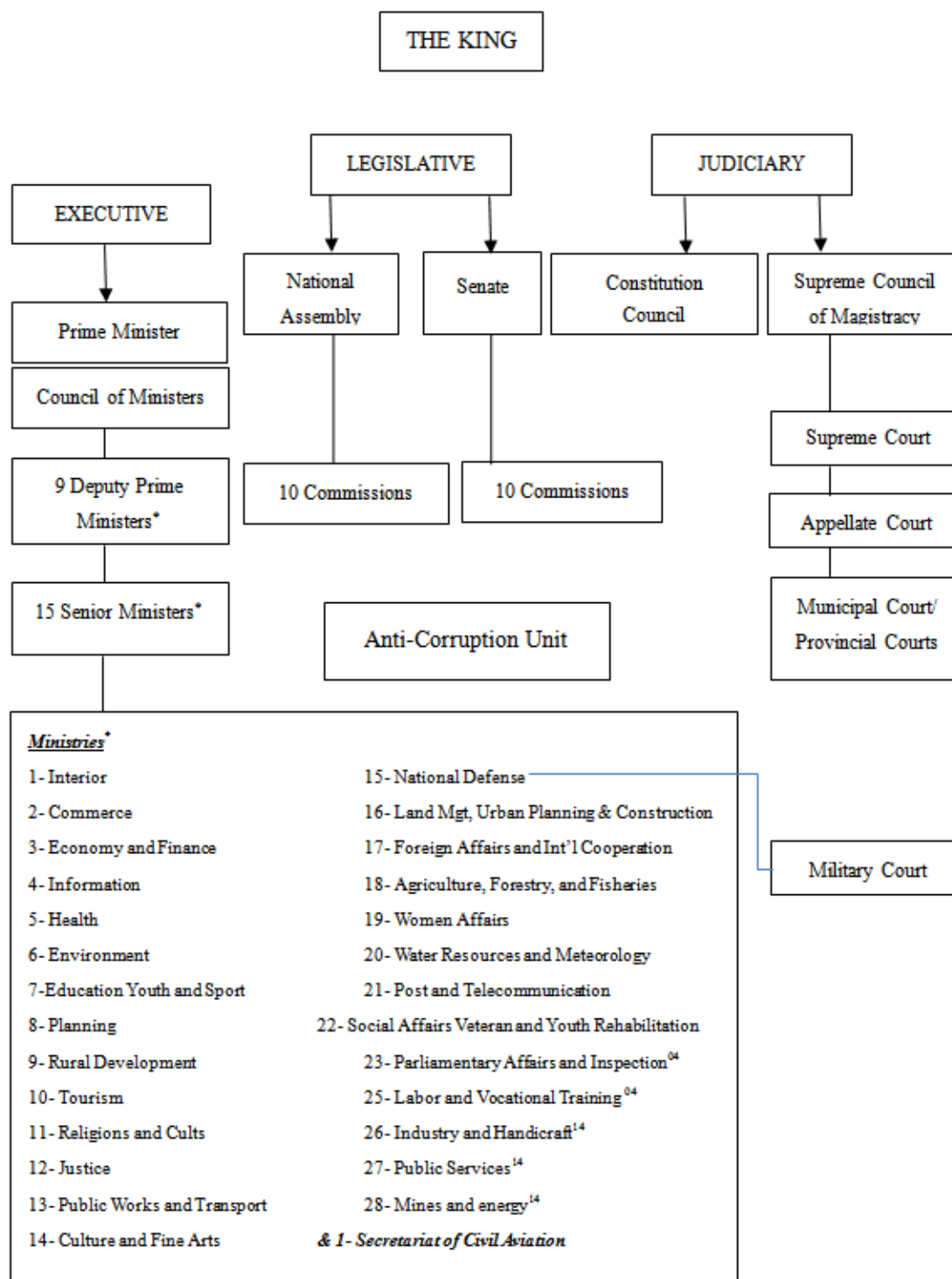
There are two parliaments which hold Legislative power. The most powerful one is the National Assembly (NA) which was established in 1993. The NA currently consists of 123 elected members who can serve for a five-year term. All members are chosen through general election in which any Cambodian at the age of 18 and above is permitted to vote. The other is the Senate which was established in 1998. The Senate consists of 61 members among which 2 members are appointed by the King, other 2 members are chosen by the NA through votes, and the rests are selected through uncommon election. The senate has the power to recommend amendments to legislation passed by the NA; moreover, it can reject any law approved by the NA (Cambodia T. N., 2014).

The Executive

In Cambodia, executive power directs civil administration and armed forces. In the fifth legislative term, the Council of Ministers is the government of Cambodia, 2013-2018. There are 28 line ministers which are under the Council of Ministers. Cambodia has one capital city, Phnom Penh, and the other 24 provinces governors of which are pointed by the premier. The capital city is divided into districts, communes, villages, and groups, and each province is further divided into municipal/districts, Sangkats/communes, villages, and groups. The RGC

resolutely commits itself to preserving and defending the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Cambodia, implementing a policy of national reconciliation to ensure national unity, and protecting the good mores and custom of the nation. The RGC defends legality and ensures public order and security. The RGC gives priority to the improvement of the living conditions and welfare of citizens (MoI, 2014).

Diagram 1: Cambodia's Governance Structure



Source: The Royal Government of Cambodia (fifth term 2013-2018)

*The number is updated 2014; Mgt = Management; Int'l = International; 04 = 2004; 14 = 2014

The Judiciary

The constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia in 2004, in Chapter 11 “New” with article 128 “New” related to article 109 “Old,” said that the judicial power is an independent power. The Judicial power is the guarantor of impartiality and the protector of the citizens’ rights and liberties. The Judicial power covers all litigations including administrative litigation. This power is entrusted to the Supreme Court (SC) and to the Jurisdictions of the various categories and at all the degrees. Justice is rendered in the name of Khmer people in accordance with the legal procedures and the laws in force. Only the judges are vested with the judicial function. No organ of the Legislative Power or of the Executive Power can exercise any judicial power. Only the public prosecution has the right to take public action. The King is the Guarantor of the independence of the Judiciary. The Supreme Council of Magistracy (SCM) assists the King in this task. The Magistrates are irremovable (Council, April 2008).

4. Findings

4.1. The Barriers of the Good Governance in Cambodia

According to the group discussion the following several points are the important sectors which impede GG of Cambodia such as: Limited power of legislative and judiciary, limited governance of the RGC, limited public administration (public service delivery), Limited E-Government development index, and limited NPM. Low HDI, widespread corruption, limited law enforcement, low salary scale for the civil servants, insufficient funds for decentralization and de-concentration, and other causes and political situation effects also contribute to GG’s considerable concerns.

Causes of Poverty in Cambodia

In Cambodia’s history, the country has never had a long-lasting peace and stability. Most of the country’s leaders and kings in the past tried to seize power from each other for generations for kingliness, and much of the country’s land is very flat which is at risk from climate changes. The effects of the previous civil war in the three decades (1970-1998) resulted in limited life-skills, insufficient basic education service and health service, a lack of economic planning dealing with poverty, and some other risks causing poverty (Group discussion 2014).

4.2. Some Indicators of Cambodia Development

Table 1: Key Development Indicators of Cambodia’s neighboring Countries

| Indicators | Years | Cambodia | Laos PDR | Myanmar | Thailand | Vietnam |
|------------------------------------|-------|----------|----------|--------------|----------|---------|
| HDI Rank | 2014 | 136 | 139 | 150 | 89 | 121 |
| Human Development Index | 2013 | 0.543 | 0.569 | 0.524 | 0.722 | 0.638 |
| Education Index | 2007 | 0.704 | 0.682 | 0.787 | 0.888 | 0.810 |
| Population in (million) | 2013 | 15.14 | 6.77 | 53.26 | 67.01 | 89.71 |
| GDP in (Billion) | 2013 | 15.25 | 11.14 | 53.14 (2012) | 387.25 | 171.39 |
| GDP per Capita | 2012 | 1,000 | 1,400 | 804 | 5,480 | 1,600 |
| Incidence of Poverty | 2011 | 19.8 | 27.6 | 26 | 7.75 | 10.7 |
| Land Area Covered Forest (percent) | 2012 | 56.5 | 67.9 | 48.2 | 37.2 | 45 |
| Gender Related Development Index | 2008 | 0.594 | 0.593 | NA | 0.779 | 0.732 |
| Life Expectancy at Birth | 2012 | 63.6 | 67.8 | 65.7 | 74.3 | 75.4 |
| Life Expectancy Total (M&F)Years | 2012 | 65.1 | 67.9 | 65.2 | 74 | 75.2 |

Source: from UNDP (2014)

Cambodia GDP Growth Rate

Cambodia has enjoyed GDP growth every year from 2004 to 2014 of 8% in average per year. In 2010, Cambodia’s GDP fell dramatically by the influence of 2008 world financial crisis. Cambodia’s GDP per capita grew steadily from approximately 422.6 USD in 2004 to 709.18 USD in 2014 (Economy, 2014).

Direct Foreign Investment (FDI) of Net inflows

According to the data from the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) and the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), 2003 net inflow of FDI was 84 million USD. Since 2004, it has rapidly increased from 131 million USD in 2004 to 139 in 2005, 483 in 2006, 867 in 2007, 815 in 2008, 539 in 2009, 783 in 2010, 902 in 2011, 1.600 in 2012, and to 2.300 million USD in 2013. In this case, China is the first, South Korea is second, and Malaysia is the third as foreign investors in Cambodia (Economy, 2014).

Cambodia Unemployment Rate (2000-2013)

Depending on the WB 2014, it is shown that Cambodia unemployment rate has rapidly decreased from 2.5% in 2000 to 1.7% in 2001, 1.8% in 2002, 1.9% in 2003, 1.9% in 2004, 1.7% in 2005, 1.8% in 2006, 1.7% in 2007, 1.7% in 2008, 1.9% in 2009, 1.6% in 2010, 1.5% in 2011, 1.5% in 2012, and 1.4% in 2014 (Economy, 2014).

Cambodia Headcount Poverty Rate, 2004-2012

According to the WB 2014, it is shown that the poverty headcount rate plummeted quickly from 53.2 % in 2004 to 23.9% in 2009 and then dropped gradually from 23.9% in 2009 to 18.6% in 2012 (Economy, 2014).

Cambodia Governance and Political System Development (2000-2013)

Table 2: Cambodia Governance & Political System Development (2000-2013)

| Year | RoLi | GEi | CoC | RQi | Vai | PSi | Cpi | PRi | CLi | WPP |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 2000 | -0.99 | -0.85 | -0.85 | -0.15 | -0.83 | -0.87 | NA | 6 | 6 | 7.4 |
| 2001 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | 6 | 5 | 7.4 |
| 2002 | -1.1 | -0.84 | -0.99 | -0.31 | -0.78 | -0.8 | NA | 6 | 5 | 7.4 |
| 2003 | -1.22 | -0.88 | -0.94 | -0.46 | -0.96 | -0.7 | NA | 6 | 5 | 9.8 |
| 2004 | -1.25 | -0.88 | -1.02 | -0.5 | -0.89 | -0.43 | NA | 6 | 5 | 9.8 |
| 2005 | -1.19 | -0.97 | -1.18 | -0.49 | -1.01 | -0.42 | 23 | 6 | 5 | 9.8 |
| 2006 | -1.19 | -0.96 | -1.23 | -0.59 | -0.93 | -0.38 | 21 | 6 | 5 | 9.8 |
| 2007 | -1.08 | -0.86 | -1.09 | -0.47 | -0.93 | -0.41 | 20 | 6 | 5 | 19.5 |
| 2008 | -1.11 | -0.95 | -1.2 | -0.44 | -0.97 | -0.34 | 18 | 6 | 5 | 16.3 |
| 2009 | -1.09 | -0.91 | -1.16 | -0.47 | -0.91 | -0.59 | 20 | 6 | 5 | 21.1 |
| 2010 | -1.09 | -0.92 | -1.23 | -0.46 | -0.93 | -0.54 | 21 | 6 | 5 | 21.1 |
| 2011 | -1.02 | -0.85 | -1.22 | -0.57 | -0.91 | -0.33 | 21 | 6 | 5 | 20.3 |
| 2012 | -0.97 | -0.83 | -1.04 | -0.35 | -0.96 | -0.14 | 22 | 6 | 5 | 20.3 |
| 2013 | -0.99 | -0.92 | -1.01 | -0.35 | -0.98 | -0.16 | 20 | 6 | 5 | 20.3 |

Note :
RoLi Rule of law index (-2.5 weak; 2.5 strong)
GEi Government effectiveness index (-2.5 weak; 2.5 strong)
CoC Control of corruption (-2.5 weak; 2.5 strong)
RQi Regulatory quality index (-2.5 weak; 2.5 strong)
Vai Voice and accountability index (-2.5 weak; 2.5 strong)
PSi Political stability index (-2.5 weak; 2.5 strong)
Cpi Corruption Perceptions Index 100 = no corruption
PRi Political rights index 7 (weak) - 1 (strong)
CLi Civil liberties index 7 (weak) - 1 (strong)
WPP Women in parliament percent

(Data Source: The Global Economic Indicators 2014)

http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/indicators_data_export.php

Comparing between Some Key Governance, and Political System Indicators of Cambodia's Neighboring Countries with those of Cambodia.

Table 3: Comparing some Key Governance and Political System Indicators of Cambodia's Neighboring Countries with those of Cambodia by Overall.

| Indicators (AV) | From | To | Cambodia | Laos PDR | Myanmar | Thailand | Vietnam | Remarks |
|---|------|------|---------------|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Rule of Law | 1996 | 2011 | -1.12 | -0.99 | -1.51 | 0.11 | -0.43 | (-2.5w;2.5S) |
| Regulatory Quality | 1996 | 2011 | -0.39 | -1.22 | -2.12 | 0.26 | -0.60 | (-2.5w;2.5S) |
| Corruption perceptions Transparency International | 2005 | 2012 | 20.75 | 22.75 | 15.44 (04-12) | 34.55 (04-12) | 26.58 (01-12) | 0-10 low Corruption |
| Women in Parliament | 2005 | 2012 | 12.49 (97-12) | 22.75 | 4.6 (10-12) | 9.51 (90-12) | 25.85 (96-12) | % of women |
| Government Effectiveness | 1996 | 2011 | -0.89 | -0.92 | -1.45 | 0.26 | -0.32 | (-2.5w;2.5S) |
| Voice and Accountability | 1996 | 2011 | -0.91 | -1.52 | -2.08 | -0.12 | -1.43 | (-2.5w;2.5S) |
| Political Rights | 1996 | 2012 | 6.05 | 7 | 6.64 | 3.47 | 7 | (7 W; 1 S) |
| Control of Corruption | 1996 | 2011 | -1.08 | -1.04 | -1.52 | -0.25 | -0.59 | (-2.5w;2.5S) |
| Political Stability | 1996 | 2011 | -0.66 | -0.3 | -1.25 | -0.53 | 0.25 (96-11) | (-2.5w;2.5S) |
| Civil Liberties | 1996 | 2012 | 5.29 | 5.72 | 6.82 | 3 | 5.76 | (7 W; 1 S) |

Source: The Global Economic Indicators 2013. Note: (10-12) = 2010 to 2012; (97-12) = 1997 to 2012; (01-12) = 2001 to 2012

W= Weak; S= Strong; (-2.5W; 2.5S) = -2.5WaeK to 2.5 Strong); AV = Average Value of Points

http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Cambodia/Economic_growth

4.3. Current Development of Governance Reforms in Cambodia

The RGC calls for political encouragement for the nation's reforms. Those reforms are key factors to promote economic development in Cambodia, thereby improving Cambodian standards of living and pursuing GG such as Judicial and Legal Reform, Public Administration Reform, Anti-Corruption Reform, Armed Forces Reform, especially Demobilization, Public Financial Management Reform, Land Reform, and Fisheries Reform (Cambodia T. R., 2004-2008; 2008-2013; 2013-2018).

The RGC during 2004-2013 had reformed the fisheries for two times as a big event. 76.50% of lakes and rivers equal to 953.740 hectares in total were provided to Cambodian people to fish abiding by the law of fishery in order to promote the standard of living and to keep fishery resources safe (CNC, 2013).

5. Analysis

5.1. Descriptive Analysis

The results of the research showed that GG agenda is the most powerful stimulus dealing with Cambodian poverty conditions as well as PR. What we noticed is that Cambodia in 2004 had a significant change by applying Rectangular Strategy which GG is the core of the strategy. There is evidence that the Cambodian have enjoyed a steady increase of 8% in average of GDP annually from 2004 to 2014, that the poverty and vulnerability decreased from 6.9 million in 2004 to 3.0 million in 2011, and that the number of near poor Cambodian people increased nearly twice from 4.6 million in 2004 to 8.1 million in 2011(WB, 2014). Particular documents are examined for the finding of key concepts and their meanings of the linking GG and PR.

The meanings which are:

Participation: Relating to PR strategy, it refers to the participation in decision-making processes, policy development and implementation for government and local government, and other participations from citizens, civil society organizations, and private sectors.

Accountability: Concerning with PR strategy, it refers to (1) *Accountability of public official:* the dissemination of basic data on performances of the government and local government including publication of the accounts for activities, necessary trainings for servile servants, development and improvement of codes of conduct, etc.; (2) *Mechanisms of oversight by citizens, civil society organizations, and media:* clearly-defined civil service rules and regulations which make government employees obligatory to give factual information to people, community organizations, and media; (3) *Actions to establish independent and adequately-funded judicial system:* building of judicial independence by developing and upgrading of legal rules which regulate the power of courts, building of judicial reform and judicial institutions, and necessary trainings for judicial and independent judiciary; (4) *Anti-corruption efforts:* dealing with the factors below:

Corruption publicity: supporting mass media and journalists to provide wide publicity of corruption information and statistics and corruption cases

Legal education and assistance about law: making known of the negative impacts of corruption and rights for/of people to all stakeholders.

People oversights: creating mechanisms for fining and sentencing people who are found guilty of any kinds of corruption.

Moral practices: making heroes of "clean" politicians, officials, and traders for the society.

Annual reporting: reporting the results regarding corruption cases and types of punishment to the public.

Corruption tackling in education: building strict system of entrance exams and other procedures for *higher education* and taking teachers' own corruption into consideration for *education for all*, especially primary schools.

Actions towards corruption: taking responsibility for prosecutions and convictions of the high-ranking officials and all former officials engaged in corruption.

Transparency: Relating to PR strategy, it talks about the promotion of the access to information for people, civil society organizations, and media regarding performance of public administrative management and use of regulation, expense, and other powers along with clear rules of public disclosure of information defined. Other programs provide support for free and independent media by accessing to information technologies (using web 2.0 and modern application of technologies) and wide publicity in hard copy and electronic soft of both public authorities' and private sectors' media in terms of policy-making, activities, and performances.

5.2. Group Discussion: (Some Respondents, Colleagues, and Scholars).

From the account of discussion, it is found that GG is the most powerful sector which influenced PR in Cambodia. Even though the RGC have applied the rectangular strategy Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III, with which GG is the core of the strategy, trying hard to reform the Cambodia governance including public administration reform, legal and judicial reform, Cambodian armed forces reform, and fighting corruption for the purpose of reducing poverty in Cambodia, Cambodian people and the country's leaders are not satisfied with the results yet. This is because Cambodia's GG is still limited as there are some barriers interfering with GG's

progress such as public ethics, private ethics, planning, policy, and strategy. The problems should be reconsidered carefully, and GG should be prioritized as the basis and catalysis for achieving the goals. Moreover, the leaders and leading Cambodian youth should re-check the structure of management of the government as well as the local government and have the main powers which are from legislative body, government body, and judicial body clearly separated with consensus. As plainly seen today, the power of legislative and judiciary is still limited. The other important points to be considered are limited provision of public services to people, limited E-government development index, limited E-G (SMARTER), limited new public management, low human resource development index, widespread corruption and limited law enforcement, low salary scale for civil servants as well as private sectors (especially garment sector), insufficient funds for decentralization and de-concentration as well as LG. Also, the results of monitoring and evaluation of public sectors management in Cambodia are poor, so all of those who are leading the country are to call for governance and NPRS reforms immediately and so are the stakeholders. Some necessary related points are democracy and social media which are influencing GG in Cambodia. To sum up, all leaders, leading civil societies, and leading youth should try to be a good model for their subordinate cadre and their next generation to pursue the Cambodian people's dream for the perfect Cambodia in the near future.

6. Recommendations and Conclusion

6.1. Recommendations

As a matter of fact, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) is predetermined for the period until 2015, but now poverty still persists in Cambodia. There is a need for developing a new strategy/program for Cambodian PR. It is suggested that to include GG into the new strategy, international practical experiences, as well as scientific workings out should be used and adjusted for Cambodian context. For this matter, the royal academicians, leading scientists, and experts as well as leading communities and leading Cambodian youth organizations should be involved in the process of elaboration of the new strategy. Alternatively, the authorities can announce a contest for draft projects/programs developed by civil society organizations and, especially, encourage leading youth community organizations to this activity. This gives a chance for leading Cambodian young people to determine their future themselves as well as the future of their country. Another suggestion can be to develop a draft law on GG in Cambodia which will ensure the government authorities' commitment to the principles and precepts of GG. Likewise, commitment to GG needs to be underlined by self-imposed restrictions in a suitable legislation enacted for the purpose. However, thorough scientific elaboration should be done according to particular Cambodian contexts and cases of poverty during elaboration. The involvement of previously mentioned actors will provide a guarantee of avoidance of simple policy rhetoric and ensure a comprehensive elaboration and bringing in specific measures and policy prescriptions. Evidently, no one country has made the transition from communism to democracy and market economy society without ups and downs. However, GG should be positioned as a norm of social, economic, and political life in the one country, especially in the public policy-making and the implementing of public administration of the country. Afterwards, most Cambodian people want to see their country with peace, stability, development with green environment, urbanization, modernization, and best society qualities in terms of liberty, multi-party policy, democracy, freedom of speech, social safety net, education with quality, people's welfare, low poverty rate, and less corruption, etc.

6.2. Conclusion

The research begins with the discussion on the terms of Governance and GG by analyzing the attributes and benefits of GG along with some discussions on bad governance, too. Next it briefly describes Cambodia GG concepts and PR aspects for a discussion, then provides Cambodia historical governance background from pre-1953 to the present day, and discusses governance structure of public sectors. After that, the research includes the barriers of GG and poverty situations in Cambodia by discussing some kinds of Cambodia GG's hurdles and causes and characteristics of poverty in Cambodia. Moreover, a study is conducted for an observation of demanding of GG for LG and providing of some indicators of Cambodia governance and development from 2004 to 2014.

Last but not least, the research mentions some international organizations on PR by concerning GG as the key part of the strategy in order to achieve PR of poor and near poor people in the world. From the account of analysis, it is shown that the GG significantly affects PR, still many developing countries have faced some barriers when activating GG - some are the same as Cambodia's and others are different. Indeed, along with GG effectiveness, some weaknesses or failures of political issues, rule of law, democracy, international human-rights standards, governance structure, human development index, policy, judicial and legal system, public administration, public service providers, E-government, new public management, decentralization, de-concentration, accountability, transparency, predictability, participation, corruption, law enforcement of the governance should be taken into consideration. Then that the government is to call for political encouragement

for the nation's reforms, that GG is to be set up into NPRS, and that Cambodian youth are prioritized to take part in all reforms are the best ways to achieve GG for Cambodian people.

Generally, strengthening the roles of GG, civil society organizations, and private sectors in the development processes depends on institutional reforms so to be clear that PR receives a better management, reasonable strategies, well-connected political issues, and social order as well as economy sector.

Economically, the economic growth is most needed for increasing the Pro-poor.

Politically, in a democratic country all the reforms are necessary with the participations from everyone ranging from groups to national level.

Strategically, GG is the core of the strategy which promotes Pro-poor growth and poverty intervention by economic prosperity, democratization, decentralization, accountability, reducing corruption, transparency, and good redistributions for people. What we have mentioned above are the key factors of GG for improving Cambodian people's standards of living.

Scientifically, pursuing GG by the reforms cannot be achieved overnight. Great confidence, political courage, and wisdom are needed, along with more forceful measures to push forward with the country's reforms, and patience, share of time, and consideration are required to urge further researches into the feasibility of Cambodia's reforms of policies and strategies.

All in all, strong willingness from all of us is vital to the future of our own country as everything results from our own deeds.

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