

Nico Westphal

**POLITICAL DECENTRALISATION AND LOCAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**- FINDINGS ON THE PRO-POOR RESPONSIVENESS IN 5
CAMBODIAN COMMUNES -**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| List of Figures | v |
| List of Acronyms | vi |
| 1 Introduction, Context and Justification | 1 |
| 2 Discussion of the Conceptual Frameworks and Evidence..... | 3 |
| 2.1 The concept of decentralisation..... | 3 |
| 2.2 Political decentralisation | 3 |
| 2.2.1 Preconditions and hindering factors for effective political decentralisation..... | 5 |
| 2.2.2 Political decentralisation and its pro-poor effects..... | 6 |
| 2.2.3 Voice-channels and their relevance for pro-poor policies | 8 |
| 2.3 Local Economic Development | 9 |
| 2.3.1 Political decentralisation & LED – rationale and expected benefits | 10 |
| 2.3.2 Local actors’ diverse roles and power in LED | 11 |
| 2.3.3 The ‘pro-poorness’ of LED | 13 |
| 3 Presentation of Relevant Concepts..... | 14 |
| 3.1 Governance – the underlying concept behind political decentralisation..... | 14 |
| 3.2 Governance and the voice-responsiveness mechanism..... | 16 |
| 3.3 Pro-poor responsiveness | 18 |
| 3.4 Hypotheses..... | 20 |
| 4 Research Design - Methodology and Description of Selected Cases | 22 |
| 4.1 Sources of data and the units of analysis | 22 |
| 4.1.1 Legal opportunities for participation - polity perspective..... | 22 |
| 4.1.2 ‘Voice-responsiveness’-mechanism - politics perspective..... | 22 |
| 4.1.2.1 The poor economic actors | 23 |
| 4.1.2.2 The civil society organisations | 23 |
| 4.1.2.3 The representatives of the local government and adjacent bodies | 24 |
| 4.1.3 Responsiveness - policy perspective | 24 |
| 4.2 Data collection | 24 |
| 4.3 Operationalisation of the theoretical concepts | 26 |
| 4.3.1 The legal opportunities..... | 26 |
| 4.3.2 The voice-responsiveness mechanism | 26 |
| 4.3.2.1 The voice-mechanism | 27 |
| 4.3.2.2 The responsiveness mechanism | 27 |
| 4.4 Study region, cases, sample and sampling methods | 28 |
| 4.4.1 The study region – Battambang Province | 28 |
| 4.4.2 The Cases – the five selected communes and villages | 29 |
| 4.4.3 The units of observation and sampling techniques | 30 |

| | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| 4.5 | Limitations to the study | 31 |
| 5 | Analysis of the decentralisation process and the provisions for participation..... | 32 |
| 5.1 | Introduction to the decentralisation process in Cambodia..... | 32 |
| 5.2 | Objectives of the decentralisation reform in Cambodia..... | 33 |
| 5.3 | Elements of the decentralisation reform and the institutional setting | 34 |
| 5.3.1 | The national level institutional setting | 34 |
| 5.3.2 | At the local level – actors and their roles in decentralisation..... | 34 |
| 5.3.3 | Major functions of the communes - is decision-making power transferred?..... | 35 |
| 5.3.4 | Political decentralisation and citizen participation..... | 37 |
| 5.3.5 | Legal regulations for local development planning..... | 38 |
| 5.4 | Intermediate conclusion and additional insights | 42 |
| 6 | The use of the ‘voice’ channel – findings from the field..... | 45 |
| 6.1 | People’s awareness about the participatory planning process..... | 45 |
| 6.2 | Information flows as a factor for raising awareness..... | 46 |
| 6.3 | Meetings and workshops – the level and the way of participation | 47 |
| 6.4 | What did the participation look like? Assessing the actors’ influence | 49 |
| 6.5 | Going beyond participation – the use of the voice-channel | 51 |
| 6.6 | Intermediate conclusion for Hypothesis 1 | 52 |
| 6.7 | Exploratory investigation – can some underlying traits be identified?..... | 53 |
| 7 | The responsiveness of local economic development policies to the citizen needs..... | 55 |
| 7.1 | People’s dynamism and their needs and priorities for local economic development | 55 |
| 7.1.1 | A general idea of the dynamism in economic thinking | 55 |
| 7.1.2 | A snapshot of the needs and priorities | 55 |
| 7.1.2.1 | At the level of the individuals..... | 55 |
| 7.1.2.2 | At the level of organisations | 57 |
| 7.1.2.3 | At the level of local government and adjacent bodies | 58 |
| 7.2 | The reflected needs – the Commune Development Plans and their content..... | 59 |
| 7.2.1 | The general content of the CDPs | 59 |
| 7.2.2 | The needs and priorities as reflected in the CDPs..... | 61 |
| 7.3 | Analysis of pro-poor responsiveness | 63 |
| 7.3.1 | The overall responsiveness..... | 63 |
| 7.3.2 | Responsiveness in the different study areas | 64 |
| 7.3.3 | Responsiveness with regard to different actor characteristics | 65 |
| 8 | Conclusion and additional remarks..... | 67 |
| 9 | Bibliography | 70 |
| 10 | Annex | 76 |