



Partnership Handbook

Promoting Decentralization through Partnerships

Commune Councils Overview

On February 3, 2002, Cambodia elected its first decentralized government bodies, the commune councils. There are currently 1,621 communes in Cambodia, with a total of 11,261 elected councilors. Under the Law on the Administration and Management of Communes, a commune council is a body elected to represent the citizens in its commune and to serve their general interests. The commune councils are elected by eligible commune citizens and are directly responsible to them. Depending upon their geographic and demographic profiles, the commune councils consist of between 5 and 11 councilors.

Commune councils are currently active in a number of ways. In addition to fulfilling administrative tasks, they engage in dispute resolution, plan and implement development projects, provide some agency functions for the central and provincial governments, and conduct advocacy. Development activities consist mainly of small scale infrastructure and public goods projects, most notably involving roads and irrigation. Mediation activities address local disputes such as the repayment of individual loans and the location of land markers. On a much smaller scale, commune councils are moving into policy formulation through the enactment of commune orders, known as decca.

Also Available:



Commune Council and Civil Society - Promoting Decentralization Through Partnerships, January 2004

This research report is a detailed companion to the Partnership Handbook. It provides an overview of the current work of and challenges faced by commune councils in Cambodia and the relationships between commune councils and civil society at the local level. The report also examines the skills and resources required by commune councils and provides examples of how development agencies are helping to build commune council capacity and awareness.

Partnership Handbook

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We encourage you to copy part or all of this guide and to share it with others.

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Introduction

Partnerships are an excellent way for commune councils and other organizations to work together to improve their local community. Partnerships can help commune councils increase the range of services they offer, the resources available to them, and improve project participation, coordination, and implementation.

Building sustainable partnerships can often be a challenging process that requires many particular skills and resources. Based on research in Cambodia and internationally proven methods, this handbook offers you a model of eleven steps that can help you to create strong and successful partnerships.

Acknowledgements

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What is a Partnership?

This handbook discusses the benefits of partnerships and how partnerships can be built at the level of the commune. It is designed to be used by commune councils, civil society, and local private sector stakeholders.

There are many different kinds of partnerships. We often form partnerships to achieve something that we could not achieve alone or to achieve better results than what we could achieve alone.

Commune level partnerships are about relationships between a commune council and one or more other groups. These relationships are established in order to achieve common goals.

No matter what kind of partnership we develop, all successful partnerships share some common characteristics:



Learning

Successful partners learn from each other.



Communication

Successful partners communicate with each other honestly and openly.



Support

Successful partners trust each other, respect each other, and support each other.



Commitment

Successful partners have common goals and a shared commitment to achieving those goals.

The Benefits of Partnership

Successful partnerships can deliver significant benefits for the partners and for the people they are trying to help. The benefits of partnerships at the commune level include:

More resources

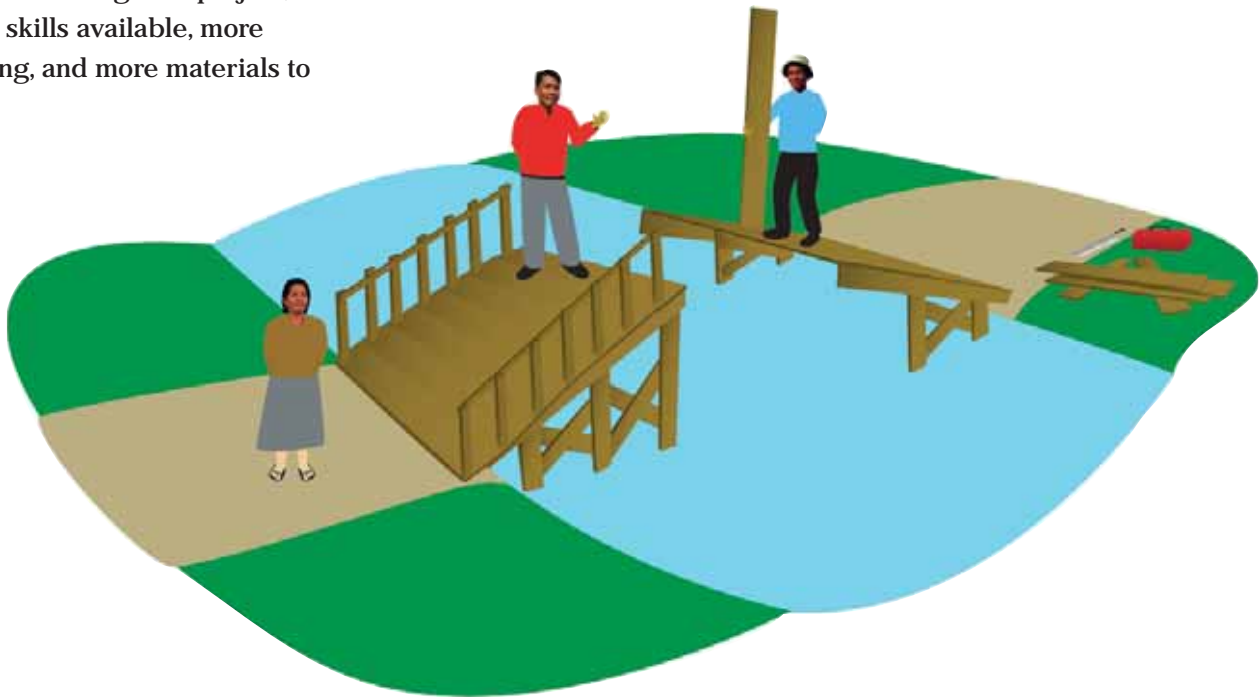
When partners come together, they can combine their resources. This results in more people working on a project, more skills available, more funding, and more materials to use.

More Participation

When commune councils partner with civil society organizations (such as NGOs or other community groups), they achieve better participation by villagers in their projects.

Better Services

By working together, partners can provide a better service than they could provide if they worked alone.



Better Coordination

Sometimes commune councils and other groups or organizations do the same activities at the same time. When the councils and these groups decide to work together in partnership, they can coordinate their activities. This can result in delivering benefits to more people or delivering benefits at a lower cost.

Faster Project Completion

When partners work together to achieve a common goal, they are able to complete their projects faster than if they completed them alone.

Commune Council Partners

A commune council's choice of partners depends on its goals and its needs. Some potential partners include:



Commune Councils

Sometimes one commune might lack sufficient resources to implement an activity by itself. However, the activity might be possible if two or more communes work jointly. Other commune councils are a highly valuable resource for new ideas and lessons learned.



Government Agencies

Cooperation and communication with the district, provincial, and national levels of government are vital to the work of all commune councils.



Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Both local and international NGOs have many years of experience working with communities to achieve their goals. Some NGOs work in one area, such as health, education, or human rights, while others work in many areas.



Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

CBOs can include pig banks, cow banks, rice banks, community forestry groups, water user groups, and self-help groups. Their members come from villages in the commune and they play an important part in the local community.



Monks and Pagoda Associations

The pagoda plays a central role in all villages. It remains a very respected institution in Cambodian life and has widespread support.

Traditional Leaders

The traditional leaders of the community (such as Achar) have great influence over community decision making. These leaders are ideal partners where community support or mobilization is necessary.



Businesses or Business groups

Businesses are a very significant part of the local community. They often employ local people and contribute to the local economy.



Youth Associations

More than 40% of Cambodia's population is younger than 15, so issues affecting youth are very important. Youth associations are an excellent forum to mobilize the participation of younger members of the community.



Women's Groups

Women are poorly represented at all levels of government in Cambodia, yet their role in society is significant and their voice is vital. Women's groups enable commune councils to encourage and support women's involvement in local initiatives.



Workers' Organizations

Workers' groups such as local chapters of unions or associations of farmers, market vendors, motodop drivers, rubber workers, etc., can provide useful information and help with community support education.



Partnership Activities

Commune councils can work together with partners on many different types of activities:

Development Activities

A key activity undertaken by commune councils are development projects funded through the Commune/Sangkat Fund. Development projects can include building new infrastructure (roads, irrigation, power, etc.), training (eg. improving farming techniques, protecting the environment) and maintenance (eg. repairing roads).

Partners can play a large number of roles in development projects by providing technical advice and assistance in: project needs identification, planning, funding, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.



Policy

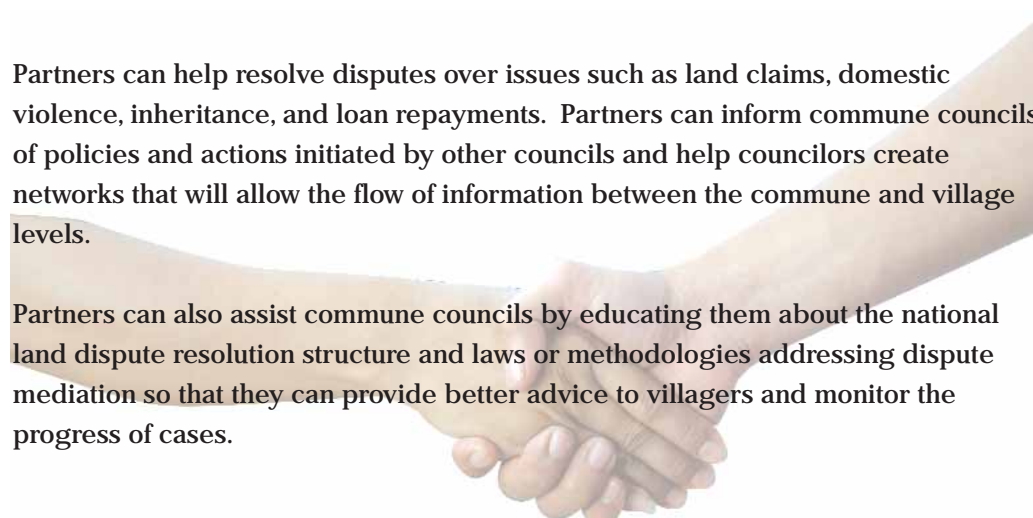
Partners can assist commune councils enact decca (commune orders) by helping to draft the content, develop solutions to problems, providing education in Cambodian law, and drafting content. Other commune councils can also provide examples of and information about deccas that they have passed.



Mediation

Partners can help resolve disputes over issues such as land claims, domestic violence, inheritance, and loan repayments. Partners can inform commune councils of policies and actions initiated by other councils and help councilors create networks that will allow the flow of information between the commune and village levels.

Partners can also assist commune councils by educating them about the national land dispute resolution structure and laws or methodologies addressing dispute mediation so that they can provide better advice to villagers and monitor the progress of cases.



Advocacy is a series of actions designed to persuade and influence those who hold governmental, political, and economic power so that they will adopt and implement public policy in ways that benefit those with less political power and fewer economic resources.

Advocacy

Common issues where commune councils conduct advocacy work include: dealing with corruption, land disputes, forestry management, illegal fishing practices, market sanitation, control over roads, and rising violence among youth.

Partners can help commune councils by providing advocacy skills, training or support. This support may include helping collect information and document problems that educate the public and present arguments on the need for action to higher authorities. Partners can also assist councils to organize public meetings and forums that contribute toward raising awareness and building public pressure around an issue.

Private sector partners can help commune councils deliver public services such as electricity, water, and waste disposal. Partners can also provide models and examples of successful public service projects or the initial materials required to establish a new service.

Public Services

Building Partnerships

A successful partnership results when proper planning has taken place. Planning addresses all of the factors that might affect the partnership.

Building successful partnerships involves a series of activities. Some of these activities must take place before you approach a potential partner. Others involve working together with your partner. In this section, we explore the steps that you can take to build a successful partnership:

Step 11: Evaluate



Step 1: Why a Partnership?

The commune council's first step must be to discuss why it is interested in a partnership.

In thinking about why a commune council is interested in a partnership, councilors must consider many issues:

- Do we want a partnership because we lack resources?
- Do we want a partnership because we want to increase public participation?
- Do we want a partnership because we lack skills?
- Will the partnership benefit the local community?
- Are there any alternatives to a partnership?
- What are the advantages of a partnership?
- What are the disadvantages of a partnership?
- What will be the consequences if the partnership is not successful?



It is also important to talk with members of the local community about why the commune council wants to establish a partnership and explain what benefits or challenges there may be.



Step 2: Type of Partnership

The next important step is to decide what type of partnership the commune council needs. There are several ways that a commune council can work with a partner:



Coordination

Coordination occurs when commune councils and their partners work individually but coordinate their activities to make sure there is no duplication. When a commune council coordinates its activities with a partner that has similar goals, it can share resources, make better use of limited resources, and deliver better outcomes to the local community.



Consultation

This type of partnership is about asking questions, listening and learning from people inside or outside the commune. It occurs when the commune council is seeking information, expertise, skills, knowledge, experience, opinions, and ideas. Partners can be very helpful in assisting commune councils to make good decisions that benefit the local community.



Collaboration

A collaborative partnership occurs when commune council and their partners take action together in order to achieve stated common goals. To be successful, it requires the partners to work closely together and engage in consultation and coordination. It is also the type of partnership that can bring the most rewards.

Step 3: Select a Partner

Selecting a partner should be a transparent process that involves all members of the council and other groups who are interested in the project.

Before the council approaches a potential partner, it should understand its own needs and if the partner can help in fulfilling these needs. The council should think about:



Who are the possible partners?

It is a good idea to make a list of all the potential partners. Sometimes there will be only one organization on the list. Other times, there will be many.

What are the characteristics of the possible partners?

- What is their experience and knowledge?
- Where are they located?
- When are they available to work?
- Do they understand local issues?
- Have they done similar projects before?
- How much will it cost to work with them?

What are the benefits of working with these partners?

The benefits of a partnership with an NGO will be different from the benefits of a partnership with a local association.





Step 4: Select a Team

After the commune council has selected a partner, it should choose who will work on the partnership. Not all councilors need to work on the partnership. A small team can be selected to work on the partnership. This team can then report to the rest of the council.

It is very important that the right people are chosen. Members of the partnership team should have:



CASE STUDY: Partnerships with NGOs

Partnerships between commune councils and NGOs can be used to share ideas and expertise and establish new development projects. In Rum Cheik Commune in Banteay Srey District, Siem Reap, the commune council established a road/credit project two years ago. The idea for the project came after the commune chief and village chief saw a similar German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) project in Kampong Thom in 2000 on a visit sponsored by the NGO CONCERN. The GTZ savings program collected contributions for road maintenance and used the remaining money to start a credit program. After a trial run, the program in Rum Cheik Commune now serves about 20 families. Families are asked to contribute 200 Riel each month or 1,200 Riel per year. By late 2003, the village had collected 400,000 Riel and used 60,000 Riel for road repair. With accumulating interest, the fund is now up to 560,000 Riel. Interest is 10% and the credit is made available to the poorest families.

Step 5: Share Expectations

Now it is time to begin building the partnership. This is the first step where you begin to make decisions with your partner.

The first activity involves meeting with your partner to propose a relationship. When both parties agree, you can begin to share expectations about the partnership. This is very important. You must understand what it is you hope to gain from the partnership. What do you expect?

You must also be willing to listen to what your partner expects. By sharing your views at this point, you can identify the expectations you share with your partner.





Step 6: Agree on Principles

The next step is to agree on the principles that will guide your partnership. This involves identifying the common rules for the partnership. Some of the principles you should consider include:

- Respecting your partner at all times
- Being honest
- Compromising where it is necessary
- Being open to accepting different ideas and opinions
- Being participatory.

For example, this can mean that when you agree to meet at a certain time on a particular day, then you make sure you follow that agreement. It also means that you are prepared for meetings or other activities you have organized with your partner.

CASE STUDY: Human Rights Committee

Partnerships between commune Councils and NGOs can improve the skills of councilors and reduce their workload. Commune councils in Banteay Meanchey and Oddor Meanchey, in partnership with a local NGO, Buddhism For Development (BFD), have established sub-committees within the commune council structure to address human rights violations and disputes. Each sub-committee is made up of one councilor and prominent members of the community, such as a monk, religious layperson, teacher or learned villager. Each committee usually has five to six members who meet monthly or more if needed. Volunteer staff from the NGO trained the sub-committee and worked with them to provide public education on human rights, domestic violence, and health education.

This type of partnership allows sub-committees to gather information about problems and solve most of the disputes that occur in their communes by themselves. In Thmar Phouk Commune, the new sub-committee structure has decreased the need for external assistance and reduced the councilors' workload. Councilors are only asked to assist with cases that the committee cannot solve by themselves. Of 16 cases brought to the Thmar Phouk committee in 2003, 11 related to land disputes, 1 case of attempted rape, 2 domestic violence disputes, and 2 cases of disputed inheritance. All cases, except for three of the land disputes, were resolved locally.

Step 7: Set Goals

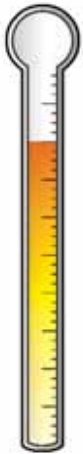
Setting the goals for the partnership is one of the most important partnership activities. This is where you agree with your partner about what the partnership will achieve.

When you start talking with your partner about partnership goals, you may find that they are too broad or are too ambitious. Before you finally agree with your partner about goals, you should make sure the goals are specific and can be achieved.

Examples of goals for a partnership are:

- Conducting participatory village needs assessments for future commune council activities
- Sharing information about commune development projects and programs
- Collaborating on particular development projects or programs
- Building the capacity of commune councilors
- Widely distributing commune council information and decisions
- Organizing and increasing participation at public forums
- Addressing important social and public order issues in the commune
- Ensuring participation of women and minority groups in commune activities
- Improving the transparency and accountability of commune council activities
- Monitoring council performance in a way which leads to improvements in the work of the council
- Monitoring private sector commune council contracts and infrastructure projects





Step 8: Plan for Action

Once the partners agree about what they want to do, the next step is to decide how they are going to do it.

The action plan should be a document that is developed together. It should show your partnership goals, how those goals will be achieved, when they will be achieved and who will achieve them. The Action Plan should have:

Clearly stated goals

A list of the activities required to achieve the goals

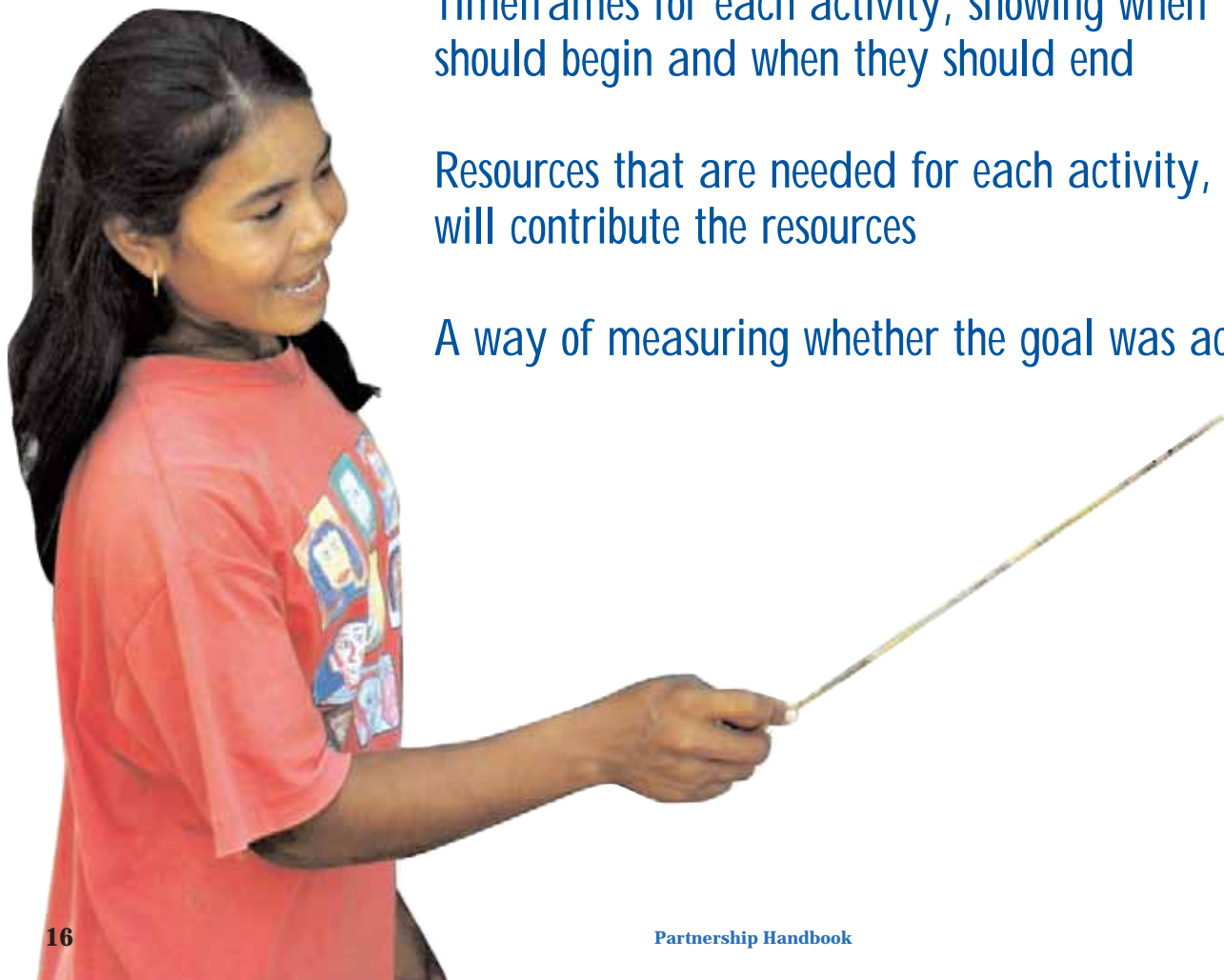
Persons responsible for achieving and leading each activity

The steps to be taken for each activity

Timeframes for each activity, showing when they should begin and when they should end

Resources that are needed for each activity, and who will contribute the resources

A way of measuring whether the goal was achieved



Sample Action Plan

COMMUNE: Tbong Krapeu Commune, Kampong Thom province

DATE: August 1, 2004

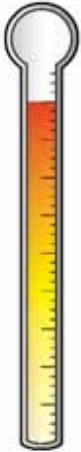
PEOPLE OR ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED: All commune council members, Mr. Frank Williams (GTZ), Ms. Keang Lannang (CONCERN), and Mrs. Laura Tinley (OXFAM)

GOAL

To increase women's participation in local decision-making.

Activities	People or Organizations Responsible	Process	Timeframe	Resources	Measuring Achievement
Establish a Commune Committee for Women and Children under the commune council	Mr. Yim Samoeun Second deputy chief Ms. Thavy Sam Ath CBO Member Mr. Frank Williams GTZ	Discuss at next council meeting Recruit possible members	1 Month	Minimal resources needed but commune council will provide location	Was the committee created in one month?
Commune councilors visit women's organizations to address participation issues	Mr. Keang Sengky, Commune chief Mr. Yim Samoeun, Second deputy chief	Identify women's organizations that have participation issues Explore ideas to increase membership and participation	Next 6 months	Transportation costs paid for by the commune council	Number of meetings with women's organizations in the next 6 months
Civil society organizations (NGOs) address participation issues	Mr. Frank Williams GTZ Ms. Keang Lannang CONCERN Mrs. Laura Tinley OXFAM	With commune council, identify women's organizations that have participation issues With commune council, explore ideas to increase membership and participation.	August 2005	Paid for by NGOs	Number of Commune Committee for Women and Children meetings Number of Committee meetings with Commune Council

There is another example of an Action Plan on page 30 and a blank form on page 31 for your use.



Step 9: Mobilize Resources

The final step which must be taken before you take action is to mobilize resources. Once you have finished your action plan, you will know what resources are needed to achieve your goals.

The resources required for the partnership will depend on the type of partnership and on the activities you plan with your partner. Sometimes financial resources or materials will be required. Other times, an activity may require only time and effort, or the donation of resources, or the voluntary involvement of members of the local community.

It is very important that you discuss resource requirements with your partner before you take action. You should understand very clearly what resources you will contribute to the partnership and what resources your partner will contribute. By discussing resources and reaching agreement about resource contributions, you can avoid conflict and misunderstandings later. Resources required for different activities include:



Time to work on the project



Effort to complete activities



Materials necessary for activities (such as bricks for building a new classroom)



Transport for people and materials



Administration costs such as stationery, photocopying, printing



Meals and accommodation especially when your activities involve people travelling a long distance from their homes



Money for resources that cannot be donated

Step 10: Take Action



After agreeing with your partner about your partnership goals and how they will be achieved, you are ready to take action.

This is where you follow your action plan to achieve your goals.

Stay committed

Commit to your action plan. Don't start and then stop.

Stay focused

Keep everyone focused on their roles and responsibilities in the partnership. Don't get distracted.



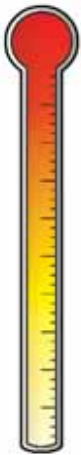
Don't ignore conflicts

Disagreements occur in even the strongest partnerships. It is very important that when there is any disagreement or conflict between partners that it is discussed and resolved. If you ignore problems, they will become bigger and more difficult to manage.

Communicate

From the time you begin, you should communicate frequently with your partner. Strong communication will help resolve problems and reinforce your commitment to the partnership.

Step 11: Evaluate



Monitoring

Every activity in a partnership should be monitored and evaluated. By doing so, you can learn what has been done well, and where you need to improve. These lessons are then helpful in planning and implementing future partnerships.

Gathering information to measure the success of your activities is called "monitoring". The information you need to gather should be included in your action plan (see the "Measuring Achievement" column on page 17). When you monitor regularly you can tell if your activities are helping you achieve your goal. Monitoring helps makes the council accountable to what it said it would achieve.

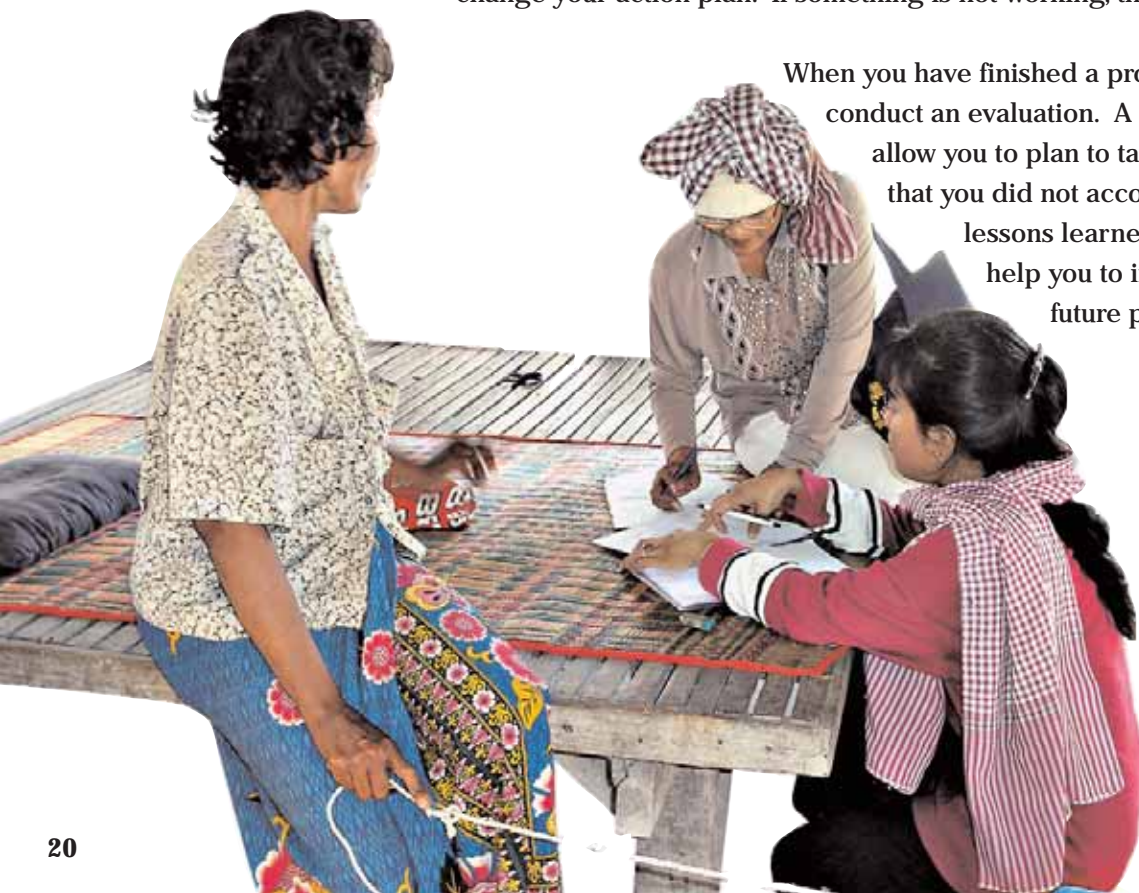
If you are implementing a program which aims to increase the participation of women in local government, then you might monitor the number of women who attend commune council meetings. If your partnership is concerned with illegal fishing, then you might monitor the number of arrests, or the illegal fishing equipment seized, or whether local community members are attending and participating in the meetings you have planned to discuss the problem.

Evaluation

At different times during your partnership you should analyze the information you have gathered during the monitoring process. This is called evaluation. Evaluations help you learn about what you have done well and where you need to improve. You should think about how well you have used your resources and what you have accomplished.

You should evaluate your activities during a partnership to decide if you need to change your action plan. If something is not working, then you should change it.

When you have finished a project, you should also conduct an evaluation. A final evaluation will also allow you to plan to take further action if you feel that you did not accomplish your goals. The lessons learned in this evaluation will then help you to improve future projects and future partnerships.



Conclusion

Partnerships are very important for local government success and local development. Cambodia's commune councils do not have the resources or the skills to do everything alone. By forming partnerships with other groups and organizations, commune councils can access more resources, improve their services, achieve good governance, better coordinate their activities, and complete their projects faster.

CASE STUDY: Partnerships with Government

Partnerships between commune councils and government agencies can be used to solve problems and improve public services. For example, the poor management of markets often causes sanitation problems. Many councils and NGOs currently lack the ability to deal with problems that involve district authorities and local markets that are controlled by district level officials. Councils are often not sure what their rights are and are still fearful of challenging higher authorities. After the elections in February 2002, the councilors in Thmar Phouk Commune, Banteay Meanchey successfully lobbied district authorities to receive income from local markets. The district now sends 50% of the income generated by local markets - about 70,000 Riel a month (US\$17.50) - to the council. These funds are used to establish a waste disposal program and transport village chiefs to monthly commune council meetings.

Case Study: Illegal Fishing

O'Tapong Commune: Creation of a fisheries decca

Illegal fishing has been a problem in O'Tapong Commune (Pursat) since 2001. Illegal fishing usually occurs during the dry season from February to April resulting in the release of fewer fish during the rainy season when the ponds overflow into the rice fields. In 2002, the villagers in O'Tapong started to put pressure on the commune council to combat this illegal practice, resulting in the creation of a decca on illegal fishing practices.



Illegal fishing equipment being burnt

Pre-June 2002

Villagers provided information to the police about fishing violations prompting the police to confiscate and burn illegal equipment. Violations by commune residents decreased, but illegal fishing by people living outside the commune continued. Other communes eventually chose to take action with short-lived success and external violators resumed illegal fishing despite the confiscation of their equipment. Commune residents voiced their complaints, wondering why they were forced to stop fishing illegally while others were allowed to continue.

June 2002

The council drafted a commune order (decca) on illegal fishing practices and made it public in the villages, resulting in a temporary decrease in the number of illegal fishing cases.

July to August 2002

An action plan to reduce illegal fishing was collaboratively developed by the police and the commune council. The plan was based upon the draft decca written by the commune council. First, a four-member committee with three commune council members and one vice chief of police was formed. The committee conducted a house-to-house survey and asked residents to deposit illegal equipment with the commune office and then to agree, in writing, to stop fishing illegally. Forty-one pieces of illegal equipment were voluntarily turned in. Police also confiscated even more pieces from fishermen. From late June 2002 to the end of August 2002 only 50 cases of illegal fishing were reported.

Late 2002

In late 2002, the commune councils began the Local Planning Processes and they asked the police to assume temporary responsibility for monitoring illegal fishing. Violations from outside of the commune increased again, as the police started to overlook violations for a fee. There were an estimated 100 violations in the

commune from January to March 2003, mostly caused by people from nearby communes. Few violators from outside communes were caught.

November 2002

In response to increasing complaints from villagers, an O'Tapong commune councilor raised the problem of fishing violations at the Provincial Development Forum, a bimonthly meeting of NGOs and district officials.

In response to the commune councilor's request for assistance in developing more effective problem solving strategies, the commune council met with the NGO CONCERN Cambodia to discuss potential solutions and collect data on fisheries violations.



Fishermen charged with illegal fishing provide their thumbprints to demonstrate their commitment to stop the practice

May 2003

The discussion on illegal fishing activities in O'Tapong continued during the next Provincial Development Forum with the O'Tapong commune council, describing:

- The illegal fishing situation
- The perpetrators of illegal fishing, including those who provided illegal fishing equipment
- An estimated number of illegal equipment
- Problems encountered by commune councils in solving the problem

The meeting ended with nine points of recommended actions.

August 2003

The commune council worked with CONCERN to bring together 66 stakeholders from the district near the Tonle Sap. Stakeholders invited to the public forum included: fish traders, producers of illegal equipment, fishermen, village chiefs, commune councilors, councilors and police from the five nearby affected communes, district military police, district police, district military, district Governor, NGOs, the Department of Fisheries, and the Department of Environment. The objectives of the forum were to:

- Examine the impact of illegal fishing
- Identify the causes and potential solutions
- Develop action plans

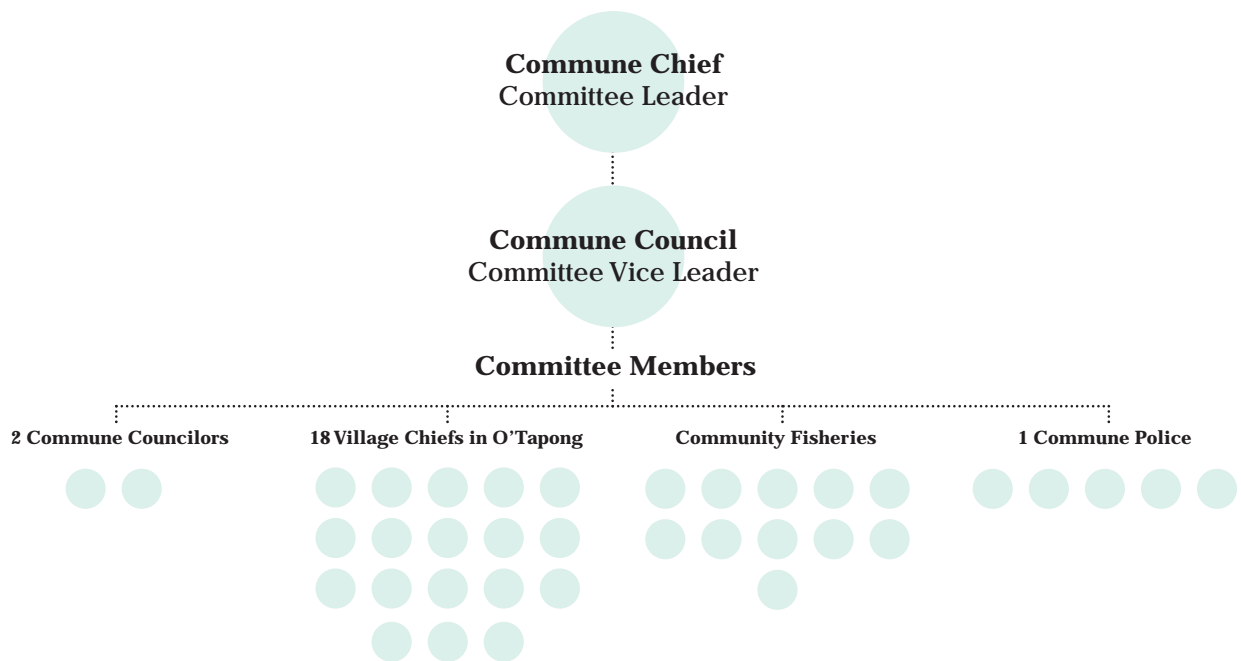
October 2003

The illegal fisheries decca was finalized. CONCERN reported on the public forum to the Provincial Development Forum and distributed forum minutes to all five councils.

Follow Up

Commune councils signed the decca and widely disseminated it to relevant governmental organizations, villages, commune councils, and participating communes who began to take action. O'Tapong commune also established the "Committee for Controlling Illegal Fishing Activities" with a membership of commune councilors, village chiefs, commune police, and community fisheries.

Committee for Controlling Illegal Fishing Activities



Due to this action by O'Tapong the neighboring commune Boeung Bat Kandal confiscated illegal equipment and the Meteuk commune apprehended violators. Meteuk commune hosted a forum and requested that illegal equipment be turned over, and fishermen handed in 40 pieces. Sdok Klouk village elected a Community Fisheries Committee of 11 members to be guided by a to-be-developed Statute for Community Fisheries to:

- Patrol in the Community Fisheries area
- Report any information concerning illegal fishing in its area to commune councils
- Follow the Community Fisheries statute

Lessons Learned

The O'Tapong commune council's efforts in dealing with the problem of illegal fishing gained support from a partner organization, which assisted the council in its strategy to eliminate illegal fishing in the commune. The result of the combined effort between the commune council and its partner organization was the burning of illegal fishing equipment and a commitment by villagers to discontinue the practice.

Example of Decca on Illegal Fishing

O'Tapong Commune
Pursat Province
No: 02

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation Religion King

Decca
On
Illegal Fishing

This decca makes five main points:

- Specification of what is considered illegal equipment;
- Identification of protected areas;
- Emphasis that to solve the issue it is necessary to have collaboration with relevant authorities and villagers;
- Specification of the council's authority to issue fines which will be collected and deposited in the commune fund;
- Specification of what evidence will be taken into consideration, e.g. an oxcart that carries illegal equipment

Checklist

Use this checklist to assist in planning and evaluating your partnerships.

Planning

This checklist provides you with a summary of the 11 steps outlined in this handbook. Following the 11 steps will help you build a strong partnership foundation.

Evaluating

This checklist also helps you to understand whether you have followed the necessary steps to build a successful partnership. Use it to see what you have done and what you still need to do in building your partnerships.

Partnership Checklist

Partnership Building Steps

YES NO

Have you discussed why you need a partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you reached agreement about why you need a partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you discussed what type of partnership is needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you reached agreement about what type of partnership is needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made a list of possible partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you selected the best potential partner from that list?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you selected a team to work on your partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the members of your team the most appropriate people for the partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you met with your partner to share expectations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you met with your partner to set the ground rules for your partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you worked with your partner to set partnership goals that you and your partner agreed to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you worked with your partner to create an action plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you documented your action plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan clearly state your partnership goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan list your activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan list the people responsible for different activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan outline the steps to be taken for each activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan set time frames for your activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan list required resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the action plan outline what needs to be monitored to measure your success?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you frequently communicate with your partner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you regularly monitor partnership activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you meet with your partner to discuss the monitoring and to evaluate the partnership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you conducted a final evaluation of the partnership activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Glossary

Action Plan

A document which defines a goal and describes what activities will be taken to achieve it. The action plan provides details of resources needed to achieve the goal, the time frame, and the indicators to measure its success.

Civil Society

The voluntary associations, organizations, movements, and networks that are not government agencies or from the private sector are called civil society.

Evaluation

Evaluation occurs when we analyze the information we have gathered during the monitoring process. Evaluations help us learn about what we have done well, and where we need to improve.

Monitoring

Gathering information to measure the success of activities. It is the term used to describe the activities carried out to keep a close watch over a project.

Participation

Participation is about informing, consulting, and involving members of the public in the decision-making process.

Partnership

Commune level partnerships are about relationships between a commune council and one or more other groups.

Resources

Ayres, David. *Decentralization: A Review of Literature.* **Commune Council Support Project, Phnom Penh, 2001.**

Reviews the decentralization literature, with specific reference to Cambodia, and the establishment of commune councils.

Biddulph, R. *Decentralization and Commune Council Reforms: Immediate Opportunities for Cambodian NGOs.* **Oxfam Great Britain, Phnom Penh, 2000.**

Begins to put NGO options for involvement in decentralization reforms in perspective.

Flam, Shelley. *Perspectives for Partnership: Workshop Handbook, January 27-29, 2003.* **CIDSE, Phnom Penh, 2003.**

This workshop provided much of the impetus for current partnership efforts. The handbook highlights many key issues.

Mansfield, Christina and MacLeod, Kurt. *Commune Councils and Civil Society: Promoting Decentralization through Partnerships.* **PACT, Phnom Penh, 2004.**

Discusses important issues in local governance and provides details about the current activities of NGOs working on decentralization issues.

Ojendal J., Biddulph R., Wallgren, Pia, and Sedara, K. *Understanding Decentralization in Cambodia: A Research Framework to Support the Processes of Devolution and Deconcentration in Cambodia.* **CDRI, Phnom Penh, 2002.**

A detailed outline of planned decentralization research activities, which will further illuminate partnership issues and opportunities.

Sample Action Plan

COMMUNE: Tbong Krapeu Commune, Kampong Thom province

DATE: August 1, 2004

PEOPLE OR ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED: All commune council members, Mr. Frank Williams (GTZ), Ms. Keang Lannang (CONCERN), and Mrs. Laura Tinley (OXFAM)

GOAL

To build a commune rice mill.

Activities	People or Organizations Responsible	Process	Time frame	Resources	Measuring Achievement
Organize a meeting among the council, civil society organizations and interested commune residents.	Mr. Yim Samoeun, Second deputy chief Ms. Thavy Sam Ath, commune resident Mr. Frank Williams, GTZ	Council to schedule and publicize a meeting to discuss the rice mill. Council and GTZ to actively seek and invite commune residents to attend.	One Month	Minimal resources needed but commune council will provide location. GTZ will pay for its own administration costs.	Number of meetings Number of invitations Number of people who attend
Schedule commune council meetings to address and resolve key issues	Mr. Keang Sengky, Commune chief Mr. Yim Samoeun, Second deputy chief	Schedule council meetings to address important issues. Meeting agendas must include time for commune residents to ask questions and provide input.	Next two months	Minimal resources needed but commune council will provide location.	Number of meetings Number of invitations Number of people who attend
Mobilize financial resources	Mr. Yim Samoeun, Second deputy chief Mr. Frank Williams, GTZ Ms. Keang Lannang, CONCERN Mrs. Laura Tinley, OXFAM	Council and partner organization work together to find financial resources. All records to be publicly available.	Next two months	Each organization responsible for their own costs.	Amount of money collected
Collect bids Select a contractor and suppliers	Mr. Keang Sengky, Commune chief Ms. Keang Lannang, CONCERN	Schedule council meeting to review bids. Meeting agenda to include time for people to offer input. Copies of all bids to be provided to partner organizations.	1 month after financial resources are determined	Costs funded by the council.	Bid chosen Rice mill construction begins

Action Plan Form

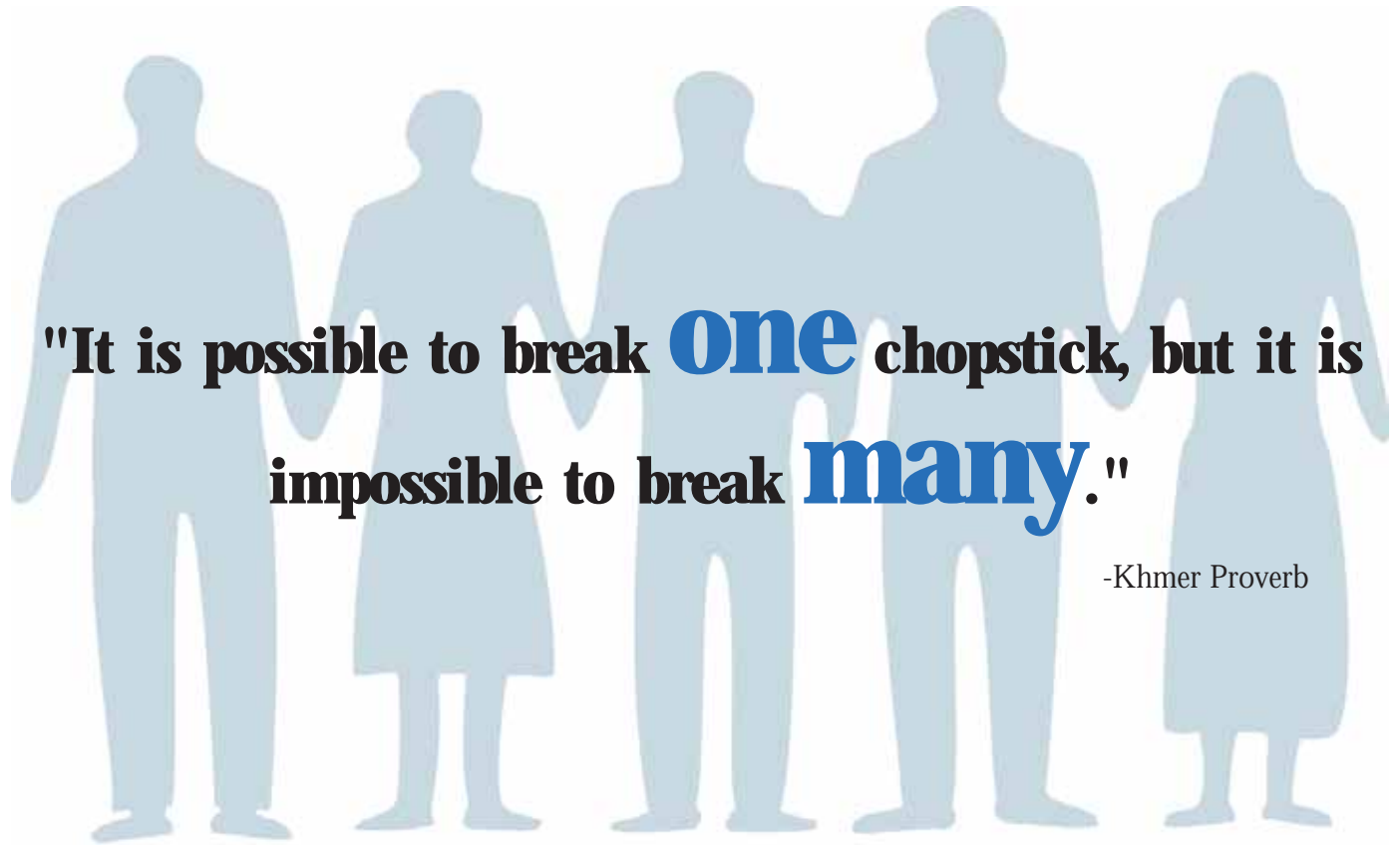
COMMUNE:

DATE:

PEOPLE OR ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED:

GOAL

Activities	People or Organizations Responsible	Process	Time frame	Resources	Measuring Achievement



"It is possible to break **one** chopstick, but it is impossible to break **many**."

-Khmer Proverb



Additional copies of this document are available at:

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