

FILE



*MANUAL FOR
CIVIC AND VOTER
EDUCATION TRAINERS*

សៀវភៅ សំរាប់
អ្នកបង្រៀនការអប់រំ
ពលរដ្ឋ និង អ្នកបោះឆ្នោត

◆ MANUAL FOR

CIVIC AND VOTER

EDUCATION TRAINERS

◆ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *Manual for Civic and Voter Education Trainers* and the accompanying *Trainers' Supplement* were assembled with the assistance of several persons involved in civic education and election monitoring in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) appreciates the help of the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (COFFEL) and the Committee for Free and Fair Elections (COMFREL), who provided us with their valuable insights and the benefit of their experiences.

NDI also gratefully acknowledges the National Endowment for Democracy, which funded this program.

Principal NDI Contributors:

Elise P. Schoux
Peter M. Manikas
Sophie D. Richardson

This document is part of NDI's assistance to civic education and election monitoring by nonpartisan citizen organizations in transitional democracies.

◆ TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction to the Manual.....	1
	Trainer Preparation.....	5
	Code of Conduct for Trainers.....	9
	Focus Group Findings.....	12
II.	Module One: Training Session Introduction.....	15
	Introduction.....	16
	Agenda.....	18
III.	Module Two: What is Democracy?.....	20
	Exercise: Picturing Democracy.....	21
	Information Presentation: What is Democracy?.....	22
	Information Presentation: Characteristics of Democracy.....	23
	Exercise: Advantages of Democracy.....	25
	Information Presentation: Democracy in Cambodia.....	26
IV.	Module Three: Voter Education.....	29
	Information Presentation: What is an Election?.....	30
	Information Presentation: Why Vote?.....	31
	Exercise: Fundamentals of Elections.....	32
	Information Presentation: What are the Rights of Voters?.....	36
	Exercise: What Can You Do to Enhance Free and Fair Elections?.....	37
	Evaluation.....	39
V.	Trainers' Supplement to the Manual.....	41
	Section One: Purpose of the Supplement.....	42
	Section Two: A History of Elections in Cambodia.....	42
	Section Three: Democracy and Pluralism.....	43
	Section Four: International Law.....	51
	Section Five: Voter Education.....	52

◆ INTRODUCTION TO THE MANUAL

This manual is part of a set of materials on civic and voter education developed by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) with the assistance of Cambodian non-governmental organizations. These materials are intended to be used by trainers in non-governmental organizations to conduct courses for Cambodians on civic and voter education.

Purpose of the training

The purpose of the training course is to provide civic and voter education for Cambodian citizens as they prepare to participate in the upcoming communal and national elections. The manual provides information on democracy, citizens's rights, voting and elections.

It is critical that trainers present the material in a neutral, nonpartisan manner and not demonstrate favoritism toward any particular political party or candidate. The ideas discussed in this manual are basic principles of democracy.

Primary goals of the training

As a result of the civic and voter education training, Cambodian citizens should be able to:

- ▶ discuss the roles and obligations of citizens in a democracy;
- ▶ understand why voting is important;
- ▶ understand the election process and general voting procedures; and
- ▶ be motivated to make informed and independent choices in selecting their preferred candidates or parties.

NDI is a non-profit, non-governmental organization from the United States that works with civic organizations, political parties, legislatures and other institutions. Established in 1983, NDI has worked in more than 60 countries. NDI's mission is to promote, maintain and strengthen democratic institutions in new and emerging democracies.

Description of materials

The training materials are designed to be easy to use. They are written so that the trainer will have a step-by-step guide for leading civic and voter education sessions through interactive discussions and instructional exercises. In addition to this manual, you will find posters, handouts, evaluation forms and other materials in this package.

◆ TRAINER PREPARATION

Preparing the Training Session

The training session should be informal and should not require complicated arrangements. It is, however, important to make some plans and arrangements before holding your training session. The sooner you plan and organize your training session, the easier it will be to manage. If arrangements are left to the last minute, there is a greater risk that things will go wrong.

Step 1: Planning the training session

The first step is to plan the session. The checklist below will assist you in thinking through the logistics and details that you may need to arrange.

A checklist for planning

1. Have information about the participants
___ How will you select people to attend the training session?

___ How will you invite people to the training session?

___ How many people will you have in each session? You will want to decide how many people you feel comfortable training in each session. If you have too many people it will be difficult to cover all the material.

___ What do participants know about democracy, elections and voting?

___ Are the participants illiterate?

___ How will you keep participants informed of any changes in plans or arrangements? When you have finished making arrangements for the training session, you could post the time, the topics and other basic information on a poster in a central location or outside the training location.

Helpful Hint: Be sure to visit the village where the training will take place several days before the session. Ask the village chief and others about where the session should be held, and how to inform people about the training.

2. Location of the training session

___ Do you need to get permission from the village chief or other officials to hold the training session?

___ Where will the training session(s) be held? Possible locations include a school, a wat or the home of a village chief.

___ What facilities are available? For example, is there electricity? Are there tables and chairs? Is the facility well-lighted and ventilated? Will everyone be able to hear you?

3. Security of the training session

Did you check with the police to make sure the area you will be in is safe?

Do you need a police escort to or from the training session?

Do you need special security arrangements? For example, should security guards be present during the training session?

If you or the participants do not feel safe, cancel the training session.

If security problems arise during the session, contact your monitoring organization and police or military officials as soon as possible. The most important thing is to protect the participants and yourself from harm. If you believe that the military or police will be the source of a security problem, cancel the training program.

4. Transportation to and from the training session

Do you need to arrange transportation for the participants of your training session?

Does everyone know what the arrangements are? You might want to post this with the other information in a central location or outside the training location.

5. Providing food/drinks

Will you provide water, coffee, tea, biscuits?

Step 2: Organize the timing and agenda for the training session

Decide the date and convenient times in which the training could be given. You should consider the daily activities of your participants and find a time

and a day that will be most convenient for them. You should choose a time at which your participants will be receptive to the training and best able to concentrate on the information presented. This civic and voter education course is designed to fill three hours.

Step 3: Organize your materials

Make sure that you have everything you need before the training session starts. What you will need:

- This training manual
- The *Supplement for Civic and Voter Education Trainers*
- Posters
- Information pamphlets or handouts
- Large sheets of newsprint or flipcharts
- Marking pens
- Any visual aids, such as ballot boxes or sample ballots

Step 4: Prepare yourself

The manual is written to lead the trainer step-by-step through interactive discussions and instructional exercises. Since adults learn best by doing, there are no long lectures.

- Begin your preparation by reading through this manual and supplemental materials such as the *Supplement for Civic and Voter Education Trainers*.
- Then think about the people you will be training. Ask yourself about them and their circumstances. Some things to consider are:
 - Are the participants knowledgeable about democracy, elections, voting and politics in Cambodia? If they are knowledgeable, you should make a special effort to get them to share their knowledge with the group.
 - Are they literate? If not, you might have to rely less on writing on a flipchart or on sharing leaflets and other handouts.

- What type of work do most of them do? You might want to use examples that relate to their daily experience. If they are farmers, for example, you can explain that democracy is a process that enables them to vote for officials who will improve irrigation or help them bring their crops to market.
- Do they participate in political activities now? You should be aware of any attempt by members of a political party to influence the session.
- Did they participate in the 1993 UNTAC elections? If so, they might be able to share their experiences - what worked and what did not in getting people to participate in the election.

Think of how the materials can be used most effectively with the group of participants you are training.

- Make notes to yourself about specific examples you will use or points you want to emphasize during the training. As stated above, use examples that will have meaning to your participants. Respect the knowledge and experience of your participants and try to incorporate this into the training.
- If possible, use a colored highlighting marker to identify the questions you will ask during the session. Mark the suggested answers in another color of the highlighting marker. This will make it easier for you to refer to them in the manual during the training session.
- Calculate the amount of time the session will require and prepare an agenda for the training session using the guide in the next section.
- If this is your first training session, practice delivering each portion of the course.

◆ CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRAINERS

Remember that many of the people you will be training have very little understanding of the concepts of voting and democracy. Here are some

things to remember when working with them.

1. Carry out your tasks impartially and in a non-partisan manner, independent of your personal political opinion.

Example: If someone asks you a question about a specific party or candidate, try to answer in a way that applies to all parties or candidates. For example, someone might say, "I am concerned because members of Party X are intimidating voters in my district." Explain to the participants that you can vote for whoever you want and no party can tell you that you must vote for a certain party or candidate. Your vote is secret. No one will know how you actually voted.

2. Be friendly, polite, courteous and patient.

Example: If people seem to want to argue, try to turn the conversation back to the material you are discussing. Do not get into arguments with people, lose your temper or insist on your own opinion.

3. Be punctual. Set the training session for a reasonable time and observe carefully the dates and times allocated for activities.

Example: If you are holding the session in a village, it may be difficult to hold the session in the evening, but you do not want to interrupt their work day. Before you schedule the session, be sure to ask people in the village what time is most convenient for them.

4. Be prepared. It is important that you perform your tasks well.

Example: You must be sure you attend all train-the-trainers sessions and read all materials to make sure that you are familiar with election procedures and rules. Ask questions about anything you do not fully understand.

5. Actively involve everyone in the training session. Do not allow any one person or small group of persons to dominate the discussion.

Example: If one person is talking too much, thank the person for his or her thoughts, but explain that you and the participants would like to hear a variety of opinions. Try to get each member of the group to participate.

6. Have respect for age and tradition, as well as those from different ethnic groups. Respect the knowledge and experiences of the participants and try to draw on the collective wisdom of the group.

7. Speak clearly and loudly so that everyone can understand and hear you.

Example: Ask the people in the back of the room if they can hear and understand you. If not, you may need to speak more loudly, stand in a different place or rearrange the chairs in the room.

8. Remember that you are rendering a service to your fellow Cambodian citizens. Be helpful to everyone who requires your assistance.

9. Use your initiative to solve problems that may arise in the course of conducting your training. You should also be flexible. Adapt the training session to meet the needs of the participants.

Example: If most participants want to spend more than the allotted time talking about a particular issue, try to accommodate them. You can spend less time on another agenda item. Be sure most participants agree to this.

10. Be accountable and responsible. Keep a record of all participants and evaluations.

Example: If people have questions you cannot answer, find out the correct response and follow up. If you are using any equipment that does not belong to you, take care of it and make sure it is returned to its rightful owner. Be sure to provide contact information for yourself and your organization.

◆ FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

In April 1996, NDI conducted 10 focus groups in Cambodia in an effort to gain deeper understanding of the Cambodian people's perceptions of elections and democracy. Groups were organized to gain the thoughts of men, women, urban dwellers, rural workers and educated Cambodians. The focus group findings provide insights into Cambodians' views on voting and democracy and toward changes in their lives since the 1993 elections. The most significant findings are listed below and should be useful as you lead participants through the training sessions.

➤ *There is a tendency to equate peace and a better standard of living with democracy.* While there was a general sense that democracy required respect for the law, participants uniformly saw democracy primarily as a means to peace and a better standard of living. Some examples were given:

- “The effect democracy will have on my family is that we will not have war in our country or among our people.”
- “A democratic society means that the country is free and peaceful. There is no war.”
- “When we talk about a free country, we mean that people have the right to go anywhere to earn a living. We should have the right to travel and earn a living.”

What you should do: When you talk about the importance of democracy and voting, you should remember that people equate peace with the ability to earn a living. Emphasize that people cannot take this for granted. Cambodian citizens have a responsibility to maintain democracy and must do their part in terms of voting and participating in the process to make sure that elections are free and fair. Regular participation helps ensure peaceful resolution of political conflicts, and this promotes stability.

➤ *Confidence in Khmer institutions is low.* There appears to be little confidence

in major institutions such as the political elite, the political parties, the military, the judicial system, the police, and the media. It was felt that few political leaders spoke to or for the people and that government was responsive only to itself or to powerful interests. Only Khmer NGOs - which were not seen as very influential - were generally thought to be free from self-interest and not dominated by political leaders.

What you should do: Since you are working as part of an NGO coalition, you start with a certain amount of credibility with the participants of the training course. You should take the opportunity to emphasize your impartiality. You should also emphasize the importance of peaceful non-governmental action to create change in Cambodian society. Democracies need institutions that are autonomous - or free from government control - so that citizens have a way to voice their grievances to government officials. NGOs can act as the citizens' collective voice in telling government what citizens like or do not like. By having strong civil society institutions, such as NGOs, labor unions and religious organizations, there can be the beginning of a balance of power in Cambodia.

In addition, an election gives citizens the opportunity to tell their elected officials that they have not served the public well. When people in a democracy lack confidence in their leaders, they can vote them out of office.

► *Participants have a top-down view of democracy.* Average Cambodians feel they have a limited role to play in their democracy. Rather than viewing themselves as major players with rights and responsibilities, they believe that the responsibility to bring about positive change and build democracy lies with their leaders and with the international community.

What you should do: You should emphasize that democratic government is "of the people and for the people." This means that the people - like the people attending the training session - are the source of power in a

democratic society. Citizens must become educated about the law and their rights, and they should exercise these rights. They must act to change things. Even though leaders and the international community may help, the sometimes do not know what the people really want or need. Citizens must set the priorities for their government. If government does not act to solve the problems that most citizens think are important, then the people can replace the government in the next election.

◆MODULE ONE:
TRAINING SESSION
INTRODUCTION

◆ INTRODUCTION

Getting Started

___ minutes

Make sure the participants are comfortable and can hear you. Introduce yourself by stating:

1. Your name
2. Your organization
3. The purpose of your organization and how it will participate in the election
4. Your reason for wanting to lead this course on voter education.

For example, say:

“I am [your name] of [your coalition]. [Your coalition] is interested in helping Cambodians prepare for the upcoming elections by providing civic and voter education. [Your coalition] wants to conduct this training course because it wants all Cambodians to understand what democracy means and to vote in the upcoming elections.”

Introduce any special guests (such as local officials) or resource people who may be attending the course. Be sure to explain why they are present.

Then explain the training course by saying:

1. An organization in the United States, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), with the help of several Cambodian NGOs, has developed a course on civic and voter education.

2. This training course is being made available to human rights and election-related organizations in Cambodia.

3. My organization [your coalition] is sharing this course with you because we want to help all Cambodians to understand more about voting, the upcoming elections and our rights as Cambodian citizens.

Primary goals of the training

Explain the primary goals of the training by saying:

As a result of the civic and voter education training, Cambodian citizens should be able to:

- ▶ Understand the roles and obligations of citizens in a democracy. For example, the participants should leave the training with a better understanding of their constitutional rights and how to put those rights to use on a daily basis.
- ▶ Understand why voting is important. Participants should know by the end of the session that voting is an important part of democracy, a means by which political differences can be settled peacefully.
- ▶ Understand the election process and voting procedures. For instance, the participants should understand that they have a right to vote, that their vote is secret and they can vote for whomever they want.
- ▶ Make informed and independent choices in selecting their preferred candidates or parties. For example, the participants should leave the training session wanting to know more about the candidates' and parties' positions on particular issues. They should also know that their ballots are secret.

Agenda

Point to the large poster paper on which you have written out the agenda (shown on next page). Read through the agenda and briefly explain each activity that will occur during the course.

Time	Duration	Activity
_____	_____	Module One - Training Session Introduction
_____	_____	Module One - Participant Introductions
_____	_____	Module Two - Exercise: Picturing Democracy
_____	_____	Module Two - Information Presentation: What is Democracy?
_____	_____	Module Two - Information Presentation: Characteristics of Democracy
_____	_____	Module Two - Exercise: Advantages of Democracy
_____	_____	Module Two - Information Presentation: Democracy in Cambodia
_____	_____	Module Three - Information Presentation: What is an Election?
_____	_____	Module Three - Exercise: Fundamentals of Elections
_____	_____	Module Three - Information Presentation: What are the Rights of Voters?
_____	_____	Module Three - Exercise: What Can You Do to Enhance Free and Fair Elections?
_____	_____	Conclusion and Session Evaluation

Note: Think about your participants, their level of understanding and the most important sections of the material to present to them. If you run short of time, you may need to drop certain exercises that are not as crucial to your training session.

General Procedures

Direct the participants' attention to a large sheet of paper on which you have written the points that follow. Read through each point and explain the procedure for the session by saying:

- All participants are encouraged to share their opinions in the sessions.
- All participants should feel free to speak up and ask questions at any point in the session.
- All participants should respect the rights of others to speak and express their opinions.
- No one participant should dominate the discussion.

Participant introductions

Explain that now each participant will take a moment to introduce his or herself. This should not take up much time.

Helpful Hint: If a person clearly does not want to introduce him or herself, do not make him feel uncomfortable. Simply move on to the next person.

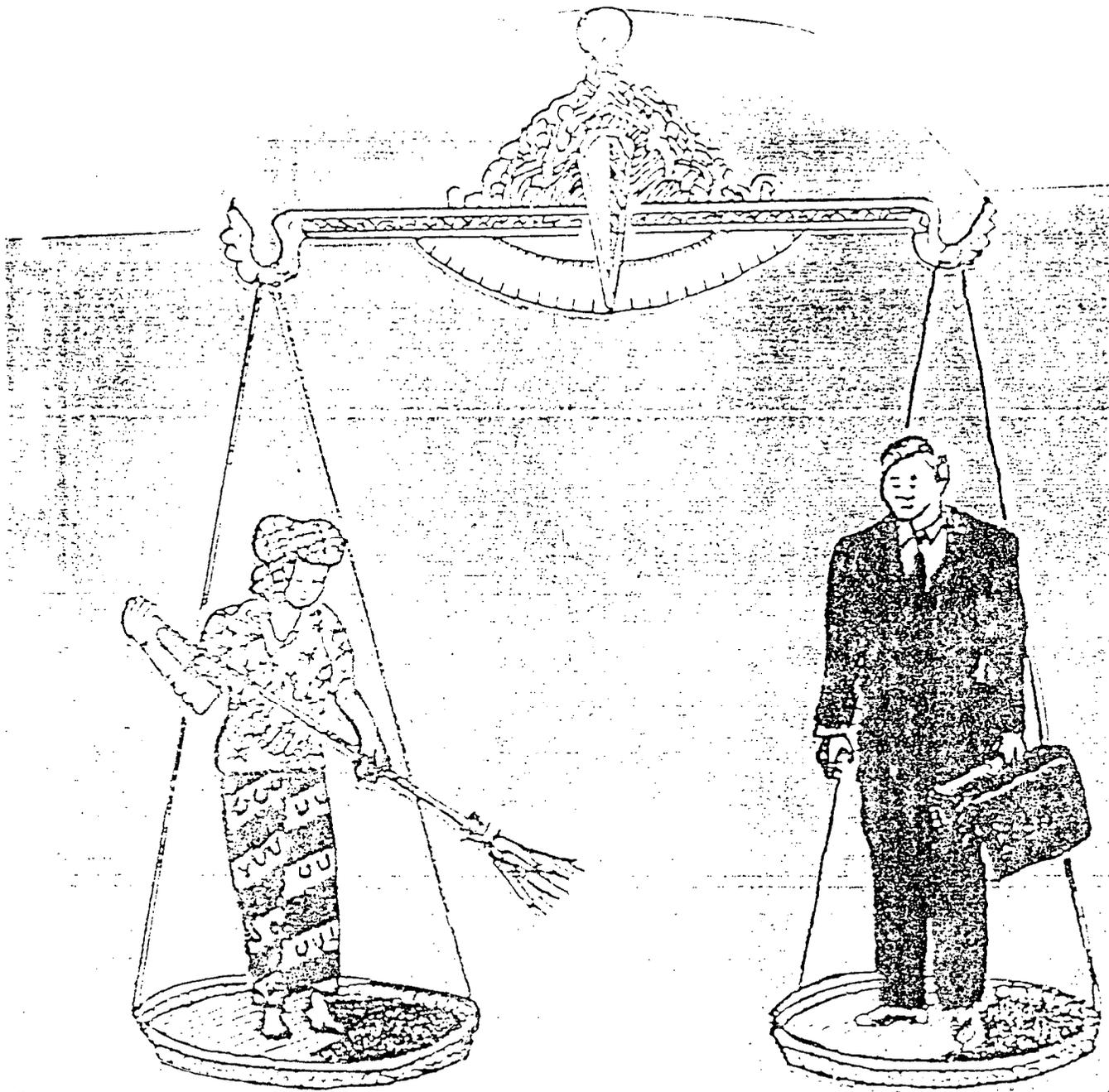
Ask each person to briefly state:

- his or her name,
- where he or she is from, and
- why he or she has chosen to participate in the training session.

Make sure that each person has the opportunity to speak.

When the participant introductions are complete, tell the participants that the next module will explain the concept and principles of democracy. Be sure to ask if they have any questions before you begin the next module.

◆MODULE TWO:
WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?



◆ WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

I. Exercise: Picturing Democracy

___ minutes

Show the participants the drawing of a scale with a woman on one side and a man on the other. Ask participants what they see in the picture.

Help the participants to bring out elements such as:

- the figure on the left is a woman and poor
- the figure on the right is a man and wealthy
- the man has a briefcase and may work in an office
- the woman is wearing traditional clothes and is doing menial work
- the scale on which they are standing is level

You might want to ask the participants the following:

- Which of these figures looks more prosperous?
- Which of these figures looks more powerful? Why?
- What does the scale represent?
- Does the picture imply that one figure is better than the other?

The participants should observe that the picture shows important values that sustain democratic culture. Some of these values are:

1. Governing decisions are made by majority rule, but minority viewpoints are respected and protected. This means, for example, that your party may have the smallest number of seats in the National Assembly, but it still has the right to participate in governing the country.
2. Democracies guarantee the rights of all citizens, not just the most powerful or numerous. Farmers, government workers, old men, young women, khum chiefs, members of the National Assembly - all these citizens have the same rights.

3. **Tolerance** of people who express views different from your own, such as members of other political parties. You are all Cambodian citizens, and you all have the same right to have views and the same right to express those views.

4. **Respect** for people of different ethnic groups or religions, such as Vietnamese or Chams. Cambodian citizens come from many different backgrounds, but they are all entitled to the same rights.

II. Information Presentation: What is Democracy?

___ minutes

Introduce the subject with general comments about what is often meant by democracy by making the following points:

- ▶ Democracy is a form of government in which people choose their governmental leaders and hold them **accountable** for how they govern.
- ▶ When people do not like how they are being governed, they can elect new leaders.

Accountability means that government officials must explain or justify their actions to the public's satisfaction.

Ask the participants to volunteer definitions or descriptions of a **democratic government**. If you have a flipchart or blackboard write down their comments.

Refer to specific suggestions given by the participants and ask for general comments from the group. Try to lead them into a common definition that is correct or as close to correct as possible. If participants name countries

they think of as democracies, try to get them to explain why they have that view.

Inform the participants that there are many definitions of democracy, but a common one is that the "majority rules." This means that government is supposed to act according to the wishes of most citizens.

Helpful Hint: At the back of this manual, you will find the *Trainers' Supplement*, which contains more information about democratic government. You should read Section Three in preparation for your presentation of Module Two.

III. Information Presentation: Characteristics of Democracy

___ minutes

Explain to the participants that while the structure and practice of democracy may vary greatly from country to country, most democracies share common characteristics such as:

1. High-level officials are elected to office in **regularly scheduled elections**.
2. The law is applied by an **independent judiciary**, and public officials must obey the law just as would ordinary citizens.
3. Almost all adults have the right to vote by **secret ballot** (exceptions might include mentally incapacitated persons or those serving prison sentences).
4. Almost all citizens have the **right to run for political office** (exceptions might include age restrictions and residency requirements).
5. Citizens have the right to publish newspapers and

disseminate information through media, and they have a right to receive information from a wide variety of sources.

6. Citizens have a right to form **political parties** and other independent organizations, associations and interest groups.

7. Citizens have a right to criticize government leaders without fear of being punished.

Be sure to give the participants time to ask questions and discuss the ideas you have just presented.

Explain that in a democracy, people have many rights, yet they also have obligations and responsibilities.

Ask participants: **What responsibilities do citizens have in a democracy?** Record their answers on a flipchart. Try to build a consensus among the group for a short list of responsibilities.

Cambodia's Constitution identifies several duties of the nation's citizens. See Section Three of the *Trainers' Supplement*.

Then suggest that:

- ▶ Citizens have an obligation to **participate** in their government. Voting is only one way citizens participate in their government.
- ▶ Citizens must also educate themselves on the issues confronting government, so that they can **cast informed votes**.
- ▶ Citizens in a democracy must also be tolerant of those who hold opposing views, and they must be willing to **cooperate** to reach decisions which are acceptable to most people.

Helpful Hint: As you lead this section, remember the focus group comments that show how Cambodians feel about democracy.

Ask the participants to identify other responsibilities they have as citizens. Write these down on a flipchart and summarize them at the end of this exercise.

IV. Exercise: Advantages of Democracy

___ minutes

Tell the participants to take a minute to think about the discussion you have just had about democracy. Ask each person to think of one or two advantages of democracy. They should be ready to share these ideas with the group.

Have the group volunteer their ideas. Try to get each person to say something. Record the ideas on a flipchart.

After all the ideas are presented, lead a discussion of them. Try to get a consensus among the group for a short list of advantages.

Some ideas you might want to contribute are:

- ▶ Guarantee of rights and freedom
- ▶ Education of people for understanding their public affairs
- ▶ Peaceful changes in government

Helpful Hint: Remember the focus group findings. People equate democracy with peace and a better standard of living. Explain that democracy is a process for resolving conflicts peacefully. For example, elections allow people to choose leaders without fighting each other.

Democracy also allows people to vote for candidates who will improve their daily lives. For instance, people can vote for candidates who support building schools in their village or improving health care. When an official has not responded to peoples' needs, they can vote for someone else.

V. Information Presentation: Democracy in Cambodia

— minutes

Explain that since 1993, Cambodia has been putting elements of democracy into practice. Examples of these elements are:

- **Multiple parties:** In democracies, people have the right to form political parties and compete for public office. During Cambodia's last election, which was conducted by UNTAC to elect the Constituent Assembly, there were 20 parties engaged in the election.
- **Free and fair elections:** Free and fair elections are one of the fundamental functions of any representative democracy. Therefore, free and fair elections mean all people (citizens) must be able to vote without any coercion or pressure for the candidate or party of their choice. The way the elections are conducted must be fair. For example, all parties and candidates must have the opportunity to try to convince people to vote for them.

Helpful Hint: You should avoid letting the discussion turn toward the advantages and disadvantages of a specific political party or political figure in Cambodia. Emphasize that people must make their own decisions about which party and candidates are best.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia guarantees a democratic form of government. These are some of the rights that are protected in Cambodia's Constitution:

- ◆ Cambodian citizens are entitled to the freedom of expression, freedom of press, freedom of publication, and freedom of assembly... [Chapter 3(41)]
- ◆ Cambodian citizens shall have the right to form associations and political parties. This right shall be defined by law... [Chapter 3(42)]
- ◆ Every Cambodian citizen shall respect the Constitution and abide by the law... [Chapter 3(49)]
- ◆ The Kingdom of Cambodia shall advocate multiparty liberal democracy. The Cambodian citizens shall be the master of their country's destiny. All powers shall belong to the citizens... [Chapter 4(51)]
- ◆ The judicial power shall be an independent power. The judicial power shall guarantee and uphold impartiality and protect the rights and freedom of the citizens... [Chapter 9(109)] The king shall guarantee the independence of the judicial power... [Chapter 9(113)]
- ◆ The revision or amendment of the Constitution may not be effected if they affect the multiparty liberal democratic system and the constitutional monarchism... [Chapter 13(134)]
- ◆ The Kingdom of Cambodia shall recognize and respect human rights

as defined in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and all treaties and conventions concerning human rights... [Chapter 3(31)]

- ◆ Cambodia is a kingdom in which the king abides by the Constitution and multiparty liberal democracy... [Chapter 1(1)]

The *Trainers' Supplement* includes more details on Cambodia's Constitution in Section Three. The rights guaranteed in the Constitution must be enforced if they are to have real meaning to citizens. Ask participants if they believe that these rights are being enforced now.

Be sure to give the participants time to ask questions and discuss the ideas you have just presented. Ask how they see evidence of some of these ideas in daily life.

Conclusion

Conclude the module by saying that voting is one way for citizens to exercise their democratic rights. The next module will provide information about the specific details of voting.

◆ MODULE THREE:
VOTER EDUCATION

◆ VOTER EDUCATION

I. Information Presentation: What is an Election?

___ minutes

Ask the participants to answer the question: **what is an election?** Write down their comments on a flipchart or blackboard. Point out any similarities in the responses. **Remember: this is your chance to learn the level of understanding the participants have about elections.**

Helpful Hint: At the back of this manual, you will find the *Trainers' Supplement*. It contains more information and examples about voter education. You should read Section V in preparation for Module Three.

Explain that:

In democratic countries, people exercise their right to vote regularly in free and fair elections.

- ▶ All people (citizens) are free to vote for the person or party of their choice without intimidation, bribery, violence or force.
- ▶ The way the elections are carried out must also be fair in that everyone must be able to vote.
- ▶ There must be a "level playing field," meaning that the parties or candidates must be able to fairly compete for voters' support.

Ask the participants to state what they think a "free and fair" election is. Try to write these on the flipchart or blackboard.

Helpful Hint: See Section V in the *Trainers' Supplement* for more information on "free and fair" elections.

II. Information Presentation: Why Vote?

___ minutes

Ask participants for their responses to the question: why vote? Record their responses on a flipchart, and point out the similarities and differences in the responses. Summarize the group's response.

Helpful Hint: As you lead this section, remember the focus group comments that show how Cambodians feel about voting. Most people had positive memories of voting, but they did not feel that their votes would really make a difference in their lives.

Explain that:

Voting is the process by which eligible individuals peacefully express their political preferences.

- By voting, citizens assume control over their lives and what happens to their communities.
- Voting ensures that all citizens have the opportunity to elect candidates who share their interests and top concerns. Voting also gives citizens the opportunity to remove representatives they do not like from office.
- Voting is a peaceful way of determining who will wield political power.
- Voting demonstrates citizens' commitment to the democratic process, and sends a signal to others that they understand and want to exercise their rights.

Helpful Hint: Remind the group of the definition of democracy that was discussed in Module Two. *Democracy is a form of government in which people choose their governmental leaders and hold them accountable for how they govern.*

III. Exercise: Fundamentals of Elections

___ minutes

Show the participants the drawing of people voting. Ask the participants to identify various elements in the picture. Help the participants by asking what they see:

- ▶ What kind of people are shown - rich, poor, men, women, urban, rural?
- ▶ Do they see a ballot being placed in a box?
- ▶ Does the picture look peaceful or frightening?

Using the comments by the participants and pointing to specific items in the drawing, tell participants that the picture shows important fundamentals of voting such as:

Who can vote?

Explain to the participants that Cambodia's Constitution gives the right to vote to:

- ▶ Cambodian citizens, both men and women, who are at least 18 years of age; and
- ▶ People meeting these requirements who have registered to vote.

Only Khmer citizens will be allowed to vote in the elections. Cambodia's Nationality Law identifies the ways a person can become a citizen. These

include:

- Persons who were born inside or outside Cambodia become a citizen if their mother or father is a Khmer citizen.
- Persons who were born in Cambodia of foreign parents who were living legally in Cambodia.
- Persons who married a Khmer citizen and live together for three years.
- Foreigners may apply for citizenship to the Kingdom of Cambodia. The procedure for doing this is stated in detail in the Nationality Law.

Make sure they understand the points you have made before proceeding to the next idea.

What is the purpose of registration?

- ▶ Registration is a process to record the names of everyone who qualifies to vote.
- ▶ It stops people from voting more than once. It also prevents people who are not Cambodian citizens from voting.

Helpful Hint: Explain that an election law has not yet been adopted, and that important information about registration and voting procedures is not available yet. Tell the participants you will try to get them more information after the election law is passed.

When you register, you will probably be given a registration card. If so, you will use this card on election day to prove your identity.

Since an election law has not been adopted, you cannot yet inform the participants how and where they can register. Tell them that you will get them this information when it is available.

Voting procedures

Since an election law has not been adopted, we do not know what exact procedures will be used for voting. In 1993, during the UNTAC supervised election:

- ▶ voters marked a ballot paper which contained the names of the parties and the individual candidates for each party;
- ▶ election officials placed a mark on the voters' fingers to indicate that the person had voted - this prevented people from voting more than once; and
- ▶ people who lost their voter registration cards could still vote. They were given a "tendered ballot."

The participants may have questions about whether symbols will be used to represent the parties, or whether candidates will be listed by party or individually. This information is not available because the election law has not been passed.

Why is your vote secret?

- ▶ A secret vote means that only you know who or what party you have voted for in the polling place. You do not have to tell anyone how you voted - not a police officer, soldier, government official, or family member.
- ▶ The right to vote in secret exists to ensure you that you are free to vote for the party of your choice, without fear of intimidation or force.

How is secrecy protected?

- ▶ No one can see how you voted.

- ▶ Voting usually takes place in a booth, behind a curtain or partition (or behind a curtain at a voting machine), so that the voter is concealed from the sight of election officials.

Ask participants if they have any questions about their vote being secret. Participants may ask about discussing their votes with their family members. Explain to them that they can talk about it if they want to, but that they do not have to tell anyone how they voted. Make sure they understand the points you have made before proceeding to the next section.

Election monitors and others who may be present on election day

In addition to the election officials, other people may also be present at the voting station on election day. These people include:

- ▶ **Party monitors.** These are representatives from the political parties who watch the voting on election day. They usually have the responsibility of reporting problems or irregularities that they see to election officials.
- ▶ **Non-partisan domestic observers.** These are representatives from Cambodian organizations - like human rights NGOs - who observe the election and report their findings to their organizations. They sometimes also report their findings to election officials. Domestic observers are ordinary citizens who have been specially trained to observe the election. They must be neutral and not act in favor of any party or candidate.
- ▶ **International observers.** There may also be teams of observers from other countries at the voting station. These observers are also neutral and are invited to observe the election by the Cambodian government. They often issue a statement or a report on the election after the voting takes place.

All of these observers help to ensure that the election is free and fair. If you see problems on election day - or in the weeks and days before the election -

you should inform a domestic monitoring organization like [your coalition].

News reporters may also be present on election day. They are there to observe and report on election day activities.

IV. Information Presentation: What are the Rights of Voters?

___ minutes

Tell the participants they have rights as voters. Most democracies grant the following basic voting rights to their citizens:

- ▶ Voters have the right to vote in secret.
- ▶ Voters have the right to vote for the party of their choice, without fear of intimidation or violence.
- ▶ Voters have the right to regular free and fair elections.
- ▶ Voters have the right to vote once per election.
- ▶ Voters must have access to all the parties' views and positions so that they can make informed choices. The mass media - radio, newspapers, television and magazines - should allow each party space and time to present their positions.

The 1993 UNTAC Elections: On May 23-25, 1993, Cambodia held its first democratic election. The Khmer people elected 120 people to represent them in the Constituent Assembly (which became the National Assembly after the constitution was adopted). Over 4.7 million people were registered to vote in the UNTAC elections. Approximately 90% of these people exercised their right to vote.

It is very important that you emphasize these following points:

- ▶ You have a right to vote.
- ▶ Your vote is secret.

- **No one can tell you how to vote. You can vote for whomever you want.**

Some abuses of the election system occurred in the 1993 election. These included:

- Some voters had their political party membership cards taken away from them. They were given membership cards in another party that they did not want to belong to.

Remember: even if someone takes away your membership card in Party X, you can still vote for Party X. If you have a membership in Party Y, you do not have to vote for Party Y.

- Some people were intimidated or threatened with violence because of the party they supported.

Remember: if someone threatens you and tells you to vote for Party X, you do not have to vote for Party X even if you tell them you will. Your vote is secret and you can vote for anyone or any party you choose. If you are threatened, you should consider reporting this to the police, election officials or human rights groups that are monitoring the election.

Answer any questions participants may have about their rights as voters. You might want to take the opportunity to discuss some specific instances that you or participants know of that are violations of the rights just explained. Make sure the participants understand these issues before moving on to the next section.

V. **Exercise: What Can You Do to Enhance Free and Fair Elections?**
___ minutes

Ask participants to break into small groups of 3 or 4 people. Ask them to discuss the question: what can you do to enhance free and fair elections? Each group should be prepared to share its ideas with the large group.

Ask each group to present its ideas. Record them on a flipchart. Have participants refrain from discussing the ideas until all groups have had a chance to report. Once all groups have talked about their ideas, ask the group as a whole to comment on the ideas.

You might want to suggest such ideas as:

1. Volunteer to help administer the poll.
2. Volunteer to act as a domestic observer.
3. Report wrongdoing - violence, intimidation, ballot box stuffing, bribery - to election observer groups, human rights organizations or police/government authorities.
4. Encourage your family and neighbors to register and vote.
5. Offer assistance to others so that they can vote.

Conclude the discussion by encouraging the participants to do what they can to help ensure a free and fair election.

◆ CONCLUSION

___ minutes

Conclude the training session by encouraging everyone to register and vote in the upcoming elections. Remind them that it is their right and responsibility to vote and to assist in seeing that Cambodia has free and fair elections.

◆ Evaluation

It is important to evaluate your workshops. You need to be sure that the people you are training are understanding the content of your sessions. By getting feedback from participants, you can improve your next training sessions.

An evaluation form appears below. Prepare a copy of the evaluation form for each participant. If participants are illiterate, you should read each question and answer choices aloud. Keep track of the evaluations.

Civic and Voter Education Training Session

Please complete and return this form to the trainer. Thank you for your responses.

Question 1:

Please rate the overall quality of the workshop.
Very Good ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor ___

Question 2:

How useful was the information presented to you?
Very Useful ___ Useful ___ Not Useful ___

Question 3:

Which session or topic did you find most useful? (Circle one)

Picturing Democracy	What is Democracy?
Characteristics of Democracy	Advantages of Democracy
Democracy in Cambodia	What is an Election? Why Vote?
Fundamentals of Elections	What are the Rights of Voters?
What Can You Do to Enhance Free and Fair Elections?	

Question 4:

What information was not covered that you would have liked to know about?

Question 5:

Was the material presented clearly? (Circle one) Yes No

Was the trainer knowledgeable? (Circle one) Yes No

Please rate the overall quality of the trainer.

Very Good ___ Good ___ Fair ___ Poor ___

Question 6:

Would you recommend this training session to anyone?

(Circle one) Yes No

Why? _____

Question 7:

As a result of this training session, do you feel better prepared to vote in the upcoming commune and national elections? (Circle one)

Yes No

◆ TRAINERS' SUPPLEMENT
TO THE MANUAL FOR
CIVIC AND VOTER
EDUCATION TRAINERS

I. THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUPPLEMENT

This Supplement accompanies the Manual For Civic and Voter Education Trainers. It contains background information that should help you explain the importance of elections in a democratic country. It also provides additional and more detailed information on the key concepts -- such as democracy and elections -- that are used in this Manual.

You should review the Supplement prior to the training session so that you will come prepared to talk about different parts of the Manual as the need arises. For example, if the participants seem to be having a difficult time understanding a word or a concept, you might use examples from this Manual to illustrate a point. The Supplement can also be used during the session to help you answer questions asked by the participants.

II. A HISTORY OF ELECTIONS IN CAMBODIA

Five elections have been held in Cambodia to choose members of the nation's national legislature (now called Parliament). These elections were held in 1946, 1947, 1955, 1972 and 1993. In the elections before 1993, voters and candidates were often intimidated and political parties opposed to the government were not allowed to fairly compete. The elections held in 1993 were the first elections in the nation's history to be considered "free and fair."

In 1956 a law providing for local and provincial elections was adopted. This law permitted elections for provincial governors and for officials at the Khum (commune) level.

The 1993 election was conducted by the United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia (UNTAC). UNTAC was established as part of the Paris Peace Accord of 1991 and the Comprehensive Settlement Agreement for Cambodia. This agreement resulted in an end to the war that had lasted

over 20 years and in the formation of a democratic government.

The UN developed the laws and procedures that were used in the 1993 elections. Almost 1.7 billion US dollars were spent on the election, primarily to ensure that the voting would be peaceful. To conduct the election, the UN deployed 1,500 civilians, 16,000 military personnel and 3,600 police officers. In addition, over 50,000 Cambodians helped the UN prepare for the elections.

Approximately 90% of all registered voters participated in the 1993 elections. Twenty political parties contested for seats in the nation's Parliament. The voting took place on a provincial basis under a system of proportional representation and party lists (for example, if a party received 10% of the votes in a province, it received 10% of the seats from that province). When the election was over, four parties divided the 120 seats in Parliament. FUNCINPEC won 58 seats, the CPP (Cambodian Peoples Party) won 51 seats, the BLDP (Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party) won 10, and MOLINAKA received one seat.

III. DEMOCRACY AND PLURALISM [See Module 2 Of The Training Manual]

Article I of The Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia states that:

Cambodia is a Kingdom with a King who shall rule according to the principle of **liberal democracy and pluralism** [emphasis added].

A. Democracy

“Democracy” is a Greek word that comes from the words “ demos,” or people, and “kratos,” which means “rule.” Democracy, then, means “the people rule.”

In a democracy, citizens elect their governmental leaders. Government policies, therefore, reflect the beliefs, values and wishes of a majority of the people;

and

Citizens are able to participate in the governmental decisions that affect their lives.

In ancient Greece, democracy was applied in small city-states like Athens. Because these city-states were small, citizens could gather at one meeting place and make decisions together about how they would be governed. Now, most nations are too large for this type of direct democracy. Therefore, new processes and institutions have been established to permit citizens to participate in their government. For instance, instead of citizens all meeting at once to make decisions, we elect representatives to carry out our wishes. This is what Cambodians did in 1993 when the elected representatives of the Constituent Assembly (who became members of Parliament after the Constitution was adopted on 21 September 1993). We also form organizations to help us tell government officials what we want. The existence of these organizations, that act as our voice and represent our interests, is called "pluralism."

B. Pluralism

Pluralism means that many organizations may exist and function independent of governmental control. Citizens can create organizations that allow them to join together with other people who share a common interest or goal. By acting collectively through these organizations, citizens can be more powerful than they would be acting alone.

These organizations, for instance, can be based on family membership or religion. They also include political parties and trade unions, as well as groups that represent teachers, farmers and business firms. These organizations have come to play an important role in modern democratic

countries.

C. Democracy and the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia

Cambodia's Constitution provides for a "multiparty liberal democracy." Article 51 of the Constitution emphasizes the rule of the people by stating that "[t]he Cambodian citizens shall be the master of their own destiny. All powers shall belong to the citizens...". The following are some important constitutional provisions that help ensure a democratic form of government:

Sovereignty

.... The Constitution states that "Cambodia is a Kingdom in which the king abides by the Constitution and multiparty liberal democracy. The Kingdom of Cambodia is an independent, sovereign, peaceful, permanently neutral and nonaligned state." [Art. 1]

The King

.... Under the Constitution, the "king reigns but does not wield power." [Art. 7]

.... The king is selected by the Throne Council, which is comprised of: the chairman of the Parliament, the prime minister, the supreme patriarchs of the Mohanikay and Thoammayutikanikay sects and the first and second vice chairmen of Parliament. [Art. 13]

.... The king is the supreme commander of the Khmer Royal Armed Forces, which are commanded by a commander in chief. The king's powers include the right to commute sentences and grant pardons. He also "signs royal acts to promulgate the constitution and laws already passed by the Parliament

and shall sign royal decrees at the request of the Cabinet.” [ARTs. 23, 27 and 28]

Citizens' Rights and Duties

Human Rights

.... The Constitution recognizes human rights defined in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and all treaties and conventions concerning human rights, women's rights and children's rights. [Art. 31]

.... Cambodian citizens shall be equal before the law. [Art. 31]

Duties

.... Individuals cannot exercise their rights in a way that affects the rights and freedoms of others. [Art. 31]

.... Every Cambodian citizen shall respect the Constitution and abide by the law. Every citizen has an obligation to contribute to national construction and defense. [Art 49]

....Cambodian citizens shall respect the principles of national sovereignty and multiparty liberal democracy. They shall also respect public properties and lawful private properties. [Art. 50]

Political Rights

.... Cambodian citizens cannot be deprived of their nationality or exiled.[Art. 33]

.... Capital punishment is prohibited. [Art. 32]

.... Cambodian men and women have a right to vote and run for political office. [Art.34]

.... Cambodians of either sex have the right to actively participate in the political, economic, social and cultural activities of the country. [Art. 35]

Rights in the Workplace

.... Citizens have the right to choose professions in conformity with their capacity and the demands of society. [Art. 36]

.... Persons of either sex have a right to equal pay for equal work. [Art. 36]

.... Citizens have a right to set up trade unions and to strike and demonstrate peacefully. [Art. 37]

Due Process of Law

.... The Constitution prohibits bodily assaults on any person, and protects the life, honor and dignity of persons. [Art 38]

.... The arrest, detention and imprisonment of a person must only be carried out according to law. [Art. 38]

.... Torture is prohibited, and confessions obtained through mental or physical coercion may not be used as evidence of guilt. [Art. 38]

.... Persons accused of crimes are presumed innocent and have a right to defend themselves in court. [Art. 38]

.... Citizens can sue the government for illegal acts of the state and its personnel. [Art. 39]

Privacy and freedom from unlawful searches

.... A citizen's premises are inviolable, and secrecy of correspondences in the forms of letters, telegrams, facsimile, telex and telephones shall be guaranteed. [Art. 40]

.... Searches of premises, materials, objects and persons must be carried out according to law. [Art. 40]

Freedom of travel

.... Citizens are free to travel and to take up residence in foreign countries or return therefrom. [Art. 40]

Freedom of expression and religion

.... Citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of publication and freedom of assembly. No person may use these rights to the detriment of another person's honor, the good customs of society, public order and national security. [Art. 41]

.... Cambodian citizens have the right to form associations and political parties. [Art. 42]

.... The state guarantees freedom of belief and religious practices on the condition that they do not affect other beliefs or religions and public law and order. Buddhism is the state religion. [Art. 43]

The Parliament

.... Parliament has at least 120 members who are elected “freely, equally and directly through secret ballots.” [Art 76]

.... The term of Parliament is 5 years. “[I]n a time of war or under other special circumstances when the election cannot be held, the Parliament may declare the extension of its term by one year at a time at the recommendation of the king. This extension requires at least a two-thirds vote of all members of Parliament.” [Art. 78]

.... Members of parliament enjoy parliamentary immunity. They can be arrested, detained and imprisoned only with the consent of Parliament, or the Standing Committee if Parliament is recessed, except in the case of fragrant criminal offenses. [Art. 80]

.... Parliament holds two sessions annually which last for three months each. [Art.83]

The Royal Government

.... The cabinet is the Royal Government of Cambodia. It consists of the prime minister who is assisted by deputy prime ministers with state ministers, ministers and state secretaries. [Art. 99]

.... Members of the Royal Government are collectively responsible to parliament for the overall policies of the Royal Government. [Art.102]

The Judicial Power

.... The judiciary is independent from other branches of government. “The judicial power shall guarantee and uphold impartiality and protect the rights and freedoms of citizens.” [Art. 109]

.... The king, assisted by the Supreme Council of the Magistracy, guarantees the independence of the judiciary [Art. 113]

.... Judges may not be removed from duty but the Supreme Council of the Magistracy may take disciplinary action against offending judges. [Art. 114]

.... The Supreme Council of the Magistracy shall make suggestions to the king on the appointment of judges and prosecutors accredited to all courts [Art. 115]

.... The organization of the judicial branch of government is defined in separate laws. [Art. 116]

The Constitutional Council

.... The Constitutional Council's competence is to safeguard the respect for the Constitution and to interpret the Constitution and laws passed by Parliament. The Council also has the right to examine and settle disputes relating to the election of members of Parliament.

.... The Council consists of nine members. One-third of them are replaced every three years. Three members are appointed by the king; three are elected by the Parliament; and three others are appointed by the Supreme Council of the Magistracy. [Art. 118]

.... The king, the prime minister, the chairman of Parliament or one-tenth of the members of Parliament can forward bills to the Council for examination before the bills have been promulgated. [Art. 121]

.... Parliament's internal regulations and various organizational laws must be forwarded to the Council before their promulgation. [Art. 121]

.... After a law has been promulgated, the king, the prime minister, the

chairman of Parliament, one tenth of the members of Parliament or the court may ask the Council to examine the constitutionality of the law. [Art. 122]

.... Citizens may appeal the constitutionality of laws through their representatives in Parliament or through the chairman of Parliament, as stipulated in the above paragraph.[Art. 122]

IV. INTERNATIONAL LAW

Cambodian citizens also have rights regarding voting and participating in the political process under International law. Cambodia's Constitution specifically recognizes these rights. Article 31 of the Constitution states:

The Kingdom of Cambodia shall recognize and respect human rights as defined in the United Nations Charter, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all treaties and conventions concerning human rights, women's rights and children's rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in Article 21 that:

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights explains in Article 25 that:

Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity . . .

- (1) to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
- (2) to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors; and
- (3) to have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country.

V. VOTER EDUCATION [See Module 3 Of The Training Manual]

By the time elections are held, it will have been more than four years since the last elections. It is common in most countries that people stop talking about politics between elections. For most of the Cambodians you will be talking to, it has been several years since they have discussed election-related issues. The purpose of this voter education program is to help people understand the election process and their role in it. This program can help inform people of any changes in the election system, motivate them to become informed about the candidates and issues involved, help ensure that voters have confidence in the elections, and encourage them to participate.

Election laws for communal and parliamentary elections have not yet been adopted. When these laws are passed they will contain important information about when the elections will be held and the precise procedures used in voting. We do not know what type of electoral system there will be -- for example, majoritarian or one based on a system of proportional representation -- or what the exact procedures will be on election day. This Supplement and the Training Manual will have to be updated after these new laws are passed. However, there is still important information you can provide, even before these laws are passed, about the right to vote, the secrecy of the ballot and the importance of participating in the political process.

The following provides some general background information on elections

that you should keep in mind as you discuss Module 3 of the Training Manual.

A. Electoral Systems

An electoral system covers a broad range of matters, such as the composition of the electoral commission, the registration of voters, and the administration of the voting on election day (for example, what kind of ballots are used, whether international and domestic observers can be present at the polling station, and how votes will be counted). One of the most important issues is selecting the system that will be used to determine the winner of the election. For instance, do candidates win when they receive a majority of the votes cast (more than 50%), or can there be more than one winner in each constituency (voting district) because seats are allocated on a proportional basis? The Following briefly describes three ways in which election systems are organized.

- Plurality System

Under a plurality system, only one person or party would be elected in each election district. This system is sometimes called a "winner takes all" system, or a "first past the post" system, because there is only one winner -- the candidate who receives more votes than any other candidate. For instance, if there are three candidates in the election, the person who receives the largest number of votes wins even if a majority of the voters favor the other two candidates. This is the system used in the United States and in several other English speaking countries.

- Majority System

As in the plurality system, only one person is elected in each district. Unlike the plurality system, however, the winner must receive a majority (at least 50% plus one vote) of the votes cast. This might require two rounds of

voting. If, for instance no candidate receives a majority of all the votes, a second election is held in which the candidates who received the most votes compete with each other (for example, the two top candidates in the first election). This is the system used in France, and variations of this system are used in several Eastern European countries.

- Proportional System

The 1993 elections in Cambodia were held under a proportional system. This means that more than one candidate is elected from each district. The number of seats a party wins is based on the percentage of the total votes it receives. For example, in the nation's largest district, Kompong Cham, 18 representatives were elected. In the upcoming national elections, if a party received two-thirds of all the votes, that party would be awarded 12 seats. If another party received one-third of the votes, it would get six seats.

There are many variations of the three systems discussed above. Germany, for example, has a mixed system in which some members of the legislature, called the Bundestag, are elected under a proportional system and others under a plurality system. There is no "right" system, each has advantages and disadvantages.

B. Voter Registration

This is a process for identifying eligible voters and preventing ineligible voters from voting. The process also prevents people from voting more than once or from voting at the wrong location.

Eligibility is determined by the nation's constitution and by the election law. Article 4 of Cambodia's constitution, for instance, says that:

"Cambodian citizens of either sex shall have the right to vote and run for election."

“Cambodian citizens of either sex of at least 18 years of age shall have the right to vote.”

Eligibility will also be affected by the Nationality Law, which is discussed in the Training Manual. An electoral law further defining eligibility has not yet been passed. Such a law might, for example, state the requirements for Cambodian citizenship. It would also address questions such as whether and how Cambodians living abroad could vote.

◆ What is a “free and fair election”?

Organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union have identified standards for free and fair elections. Some basic questions that should be asked to determine if an election was free and fair are:

- ▶ Were the election laws fair to all parties and candidates?
- ▶ Were all adults allowed to register?
- ▶ Were the political parties allowed to campaign, raise money and hold meetings free from intimidation and violence?
- ▶ Did all the parties have access to government owned news media?
- ▶ Were government resources misused to favor certain candidates or a particular party or parties?
- ▶ Were voters able to get to the polls on election day and cast their ballots in secret and without fear of violence?
- ▶ Did voters have information about all the candidates and were they informed about the voting process?
- ▶ Was the election process transparent? Did citizens have information about how election officials were selected, and were international and domestic observers permitted to watch every aspect of the process, such as counting the ballots?