OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

After long periods of conflict following the Cambodian civil war and the Khmer Rouge regime, Cambodia has developed significantly. The country has sustained a yearly economic growth rate of more than 7% (Human Development Report, 2020) and poverty has declined from 50% in 2004 to 13.5% in 2014. However, the need for good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights is still present.

Cambodia is one of the countries in the world most vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather conditions such as massive floods and droughts. With many Cambodians relying on agricultural production for their livelihoods, addressing extreme weather conditions and ensuring access to natural resources are critical to communities, particularly the most vulnerable.

Most recently, the impact of COVID-19 has been devastating to the country where unemployment has soared to nearly 20% and the economy registered negative growth of -3.1% in 2020 (Cambodia Economic Outlook, World Bank, 2021).

WHAT WE DO?

DCA prioritises actions that reach the most vulnerable and marginalised communities, with particular emphasis on the rural poor. Initially, DCA’s operations in Cambodia supported the reconstruction efforts and resettlement of refugees during and after the country’s devastating, decades-long civil war. In 1997 an office was established in Phnom Penh for the purpose of working directly with local partners on key issues facing the country, which reflect the three main pillars of DCA’s work in Cambodia today:

Saving lives:
Cambodia is ranked among one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and natural disasters, and its effects on people’s livelihood and survival, particularly the poorest. DCA works in coordination with local governments to build communities’ resilience and preparedness in dealing with climate change.

Fighting inequality:
Since its emergence from decades of genocide more than 20 years ago, Cambodia has had to rebuild on principles of good governance and respect for basic rights. DCA works to strengthen civil society, spreading awareness of rights and promoting accountability. We promote the rights of those most marginalized, including LGBTQI, the poorest, and fight for gender equality and the fair treatment of all.

Building resilient communities:
DCA promotes sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers and support increased agricultural production and income through introducing innovative drought resistant agricultural technologies and agroecology, making them more resilient to climate change and improving their access to the market value chain.

FACTS:
- DCA has been operating in Cambodia since 1979 and in 1997 DCA established a country office in Phnom Penh
- Beneficiaries: 120,521 people were reached in 2020
- Turnover 2020: More than 3,295,000 EUR
- Projects: In 2020 DCA implemented 29 projects in Cambodia through nationwide advocacy work
- Partners: DCA has 5 partner agreements and 19 cooperation agreements as of 2020

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HOW AND WHERE WE WORK:
DCA works together with 18 local partners to implement projects in all of Cambodia’s 24 provinces and in the capital city of Phnom Penh.

Empowering vulnerable Cambodians:
Following decades of genocide and civil war in Cambodia, the country is struggling to rebuild on principles of accountability and social protection. DCA focuses on empowering vulnerable Cambodians to demand for improved public service, transparent and sustainable natural resource management, and gender equality.

In 2019, key achievements included:
• 38,800 people were empowered to conduct advocacy initiatives in their communities
• 222 local governing decision considered the needs and priorities of women, youth, and people with disabilities
• A 15% increase in women’s participation and leadership in non-political roles in target communities

Climate change and disaster risk reduction:
In the context of Cambodia’s exposure to natural disasters and vulnerability to climate change, DCA is focusing on enhanced disaster risk reduction and working with local stakeholders to mitigate the consequences of natural disasters. DCA promotes sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers and low-income families, helping them to improve, diversify and increase their agricultural production and income generation through innovative drought-resistant farming techniques. We utilize agricultural cooperatives to open up markets to farmers, equipping them with the skills to move up the value chain, and we partner with responsible businesses to promote innovation and best practices in sustainable development.

In 2019, key achievements included:
• 5,475 households reported increased income from agriculture yields
• 6,978 farmers were trained on climate-smart agriculture practices and improved techniques
• 4 Farmer Field Schools were established to increase farmers’ knowledge of agroecology

DCA is grateful for the support from our donors: