



Rural development

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The challenge

People living in rural parts of developing and emerging economies are particularly affected by poverty and hunger. They lack employment opportunities and access to public services, while frequently also being excluded from political participation. Over-use of natural resources is widespread, and many rural areas are also particularly affected by the impacts of climate change. Political crises and conflicts constitute additional challenges.

Around the world, states face the challenge of creating sustainable prospects for development in rural areas. The development potential of rural areas varies due to a range of natural, economic, cultural and political factors. What they often have in common, however, is a lack of policy frameworks that promote development, and insufficient institutional capacity to plan, coordinate or implement corresponding strategies.

Our approach

Rural development approaches provide many possibilities for adequately addressing the challenges in a manner that fits each respective situation. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH can bring to bear its expertise and process competency in this area across the entire policy cycle: from assessing the problem to feeding lessons learned into policy-making processes. Based on participatory assessments, we identify the potential of rural regions and the interests of participating actors.

We develop the capacity of individuals and institutions through training activities as well as technical and organisational advisory support. Our objective is to empower individuals and institutions so that they are able to develop rural development strategies. In addition, we enable actors to derive activities from the strategies they have developed and to implement them at local level in a goal-oriented manner.

Our services

We provide field-tested services and instruments to support rural development.

Improving policy frameworks and the institutional environment. We advise decision-makers on the participatory preparation of sustainable rural development strategies. We support the transparent establishment of local bodies for the cross-sectoral implementation of these strategies. In addition, we promote analytical, planning and management capacities within these bodies.

More efficient coordination processes across local, regional and national levels. We moderate dialogues with political authorities to achieve civic participation (bottom-up), transfer of resources and budgets to local level (top-down), and to ensure coherence between the national policy framework and regionally-specific support methods. Within the context of EU convergence processes, for example, we support adaptation for the EU-compliant design and implementation of rural development policies within the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Using horizontal cooperation and networking. We support the identification of cooperation opportunities and formats at local, regional and national level between political, private sector and civil society actors, and promote synergies among them.

Developing rural economies. With participation from the private sector, we provide advisory support to public structures on implementing rural economic development activities – from strengthening the agricultural and food industry to diversifying income opportunities outside the agricultural sector.

Sustainable natural resource management. We advise government bodies and public authorities on sustainable use approaches to forest, land, water and pasture management.



Providing services and infrastructure. Together with public, private and civil society actors, we develop plans for the provision of public services (health, education). We support the adaptation of information and communications systems, insurance and financial services to meet the needs of people living in rural areas.

The benefits

With support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, you can develop and implement sustainable solutions for economically, socially and environmentally balanced rural development. You will benefit from our many years of experience supporting change processes in rural areas – to create employment opportunities, improve service provision, and achieve effective participation in policy-making processes. The globally proven technical and methodological expertise of GIZ is available to you in the form of advisory products that are adapted to the regional context and specific target group. GIZ has contact to leading political, economic, research and civil society actors involved in rural development.

An example from the field

Since the turn of the century, Cambodia has enjoyed impressive rates of economic growth. The economic performance of rural regions, however, remains at a very low level. The objective of the ‘Regional Economic Development –

Siem Reap Province’ project is to integrate the rural population into profitable economic cycles and to distribute the benefits of growth more equably, both socially and regionally. GIZ provides advisory support on the implementation of economic development measures as well as the training of public and private sector actors in regional areas.

So far, every sixth household in all 11 rural districts of Siem Reap Province has benefited from these measures. 123 new producer groups represent the interests of their members vis-à-vis policymakers and their customers. Today high quality seeds and fertilisers are available in the rural areas. Intermediaries and processing facilities provide advisory services, market information and financing. Enhanced rice cultivation methods increased crop yields by 220 per cent on average. In total, more than 15,000 households were able to increase their annual incomes by nearly 25 per cent. Since 2008, the poverty rate in the 11 districts dropped from 31 to 22 per cent among rural households. Approaches developed over the course of the project’s advisory support are now being used across the country.

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