The Advocacy and Policy Institute’s

Strategic Plan
2011-2013

Phnom Penh, August 2010
Content

FORWARD
1. The Organisation, its Vision, Mission, Goal and Values ......................................... 1

THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2013
2. Planning and consultation, context and challenges of the strategic plan ................. 2
3. The overarching strategy of the Advocacy and Policy Institute 2011-2013 ............... 2
4. Three strategic priorities .......................................................................................... 3
5. Putting the priorities into action ........................................................................... 7
6. Organizational Supports ....................................................................................... 7
7. Implementation, resources and monitoring and evaluation of ................................... 8
the strategic plan

APPENDICES
Appendix One: API’s main achievements 2008-2010 ...................................................... 9
Appendix Two: the context of this strategic plan ........................................................... 10
Appendix Three: the challenges facing API .................................................................. 12
Appendix Four: details of the consultation and planning processes ......................... 14
Appendix Five: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats ............................ 15
identified during the organisation’s evaluation March-June 2010
Appendix Six: Civil society networks complimenting the work of the ....................... 16
Advocacy and Policy Institute
Appendix Seven: Diagram of the strategic plan .......................................................... 16
Foreword

The Advocacy and Policy Institute is one of the leading advocacy and policy capacity building organisations in Cambodia and is foremost in promoting public access to public information. It has a mission to serve the long term democratic and social development needs of Cambodia through the empowerment of people to interact with their government to protect rights and provide for needs.

This document is an abbreviated version of the organisation’s second three year strategic plan. It is the direct result of the successful implementation of the first strategic plan, 2008-2010, the evaluation which took place in May 2010 and extensive planning and consultation. It provides a framework for the Advocacy and Policy Institute as it continues to make a sustainable contribution to democratic and social development in Cambodia leading towards poverty reduction. It supports the successful implementation of the Government’s National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013 and the Subnational Democratic Development Plan 2010-2013 by establishing and maintaining mutual trust, building capacity and strengthening communication and cooperation among national and subnational Government and the Cambodian Parliament and civil society organisations.

API is confident it will remain a valuable contributor to Cambodian civil society and to the promotion of human rights, democracy and sustainable development with the continued strong commitment of the Board of Directors and staff, together with the enthusiasm and support of partners at subnational and national levels, government institutions, the Cambodian Parliament, civil society organisations and networks and donors. The strategy’s full implementation will, however, depend on the continued provision of appropriate support and resources, a strong commitment from donors, a climate of sharing resources among partners and the political appreciation of support.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the staff and the many people who provided constructive advice and analysis and contributed to the planning and production of this strategic plan, 2011-2013, particularly Ms. Lin Collis, Ms. Katherine De Bruyn, Ms. Praivan Limpanboon, Mr. Tang Sun Hao, Mr. Into Goudsmit, Ms. Cristina Mansfield, Mr. Sjoerd Haagsma, Ms. Emma Leslie, and all the members of the Board of Directors.

We look forward to continuing to work with all our past, present and future colleagues to support the implementation of this strategy, to share its opportunities and challenges and to contribute towards results of the highest standard.

Sinthay Neb
Director, Advocacy and Policy Institute
Phnom Penh, August 2010

Meas Nee, Ph. D
Chairperson, Board of Directors
The Advocacy and Policy Institute's Strategic Plan, 2011-2013

1. The Organisation, its Vision, Mission, Goal and Values

1.1 The Advocacy and Policy Institute

is a Cambodian nonprofit and non-government organisation which registered with the Government’s Ministry of the Interior on 17 July 2007. It is one of Cambodia’s leading advocacy capacity building institutions, as well as heading the campaign for a law on public access to public information and working on building communication between Parliament and the Government and civil society. API is committed to working together with all national and international institutions who share its values to advocate for positive and peaceful social change and seeks to encourage coordination among governments, organisations and peoples.

1.2 The Organisation’s Vision, Mission, Goal and Values

The Vision

The Advocacy and Policy Institute’s vision is for a Cambodian nation that through poverty reduction and the protection of human rights creates a national culture of harmony with sustainable democratic, political, and economic stability.

The Mission

The organisation’s mission is to serve the long term democratic and social development needs of Cambodia through the empowerment of people to interact with their government to protect their rights and provide for their needs.

The Values

1. All Cambodians have the right to participate, mobilise and express themselves in matters that affect their daily lives.
2. All matters should be resolved peacefully and justly according to the principles of our shared humanity.
3. Building capacity, particularly at the community level, is the most sustainable way of building a brighter future for all Cambodians.
4. Engaging with all social sectors ensures that when solutions are reached, they are of greatest benefit to the community.
5. Being transparent, accountable, independent, and non-partisan helps build an organisation that has the respect and confidence of both the Cambodian people and its international supporters.

API is committed to working together with all national and international institutions who share its values to advocate for positive and peaceful social change. API also seeks to encourage coordination among governments, citizens and the private sector.

The Goal

The organisation’s goal is to increase Cambodia’s democratic space by creating more effective advocates and responsive government institutions.

1. See Appendix One for API’s main achievements 2008-2010
2. Planning and consultation, context and challenges of the strategic plan

2.1 Planning and consultation

Planning and consultation

The strategic plan, 2011-2013 identifies overarching directions for API’s work over the next three years. It is the result of many consultations and planning activities. It builds on the activities identified in the first strategic plan (2008-2010) and the findings of the organisation’s external evaluation, July 2010.

2.2 Context

Implementation of the plan will inevitably be effected by the context, positive and negative circumstances, in which it is actioned.

2.3 Challenges

This is a demanding strategy which along with the internal and external context underlying its activities and achievements presents challenges and risks that the organisation must learn to mitigate.

3. An overarching strategy for the Advocacy and Policy Institute, 2011-2013

Overall strategic goal

To contribute to the successful implementation of the Government’s National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013 and the Subnational Democratic Development Plan 2010-2013 by establishing and maintaining mutual trust, building capacity and strengthening communication and cooperation between national and subnational Government, the Cambodian Parliament and civil society organisations leading towards increased and sustainable democratic space to address people’s needs and concerns in the target provinces, districts and communes.

Statement of overall expected results

By 2013, the Advocacy and Policy Institute expects to achieve the following results:

a). Increased capacity in the target Commune and District Councils working for the benefit of local communities and acting as a channel for public information to communities and a means to relay the voice of local communities to Parliament and the Government.

b). The improved capability of the District Councils with offices functioning well to provide sustainable effective public services essentially supporting good governance and supporting Commune Councils to respond to local community needs.

c). Commune Councils and community based organisations in the target communes, Government, Parliament and all sectors of society with more understanding about the concept and value of accessible public information, leading to an increase in the amount of public information available and the promotion of a law on access to information.

d). Civil society organisation networks, with effective advocacy skills and understanding about access to information, working with the Government for the benefit of Cambodia.

e). Parliament and the Government effectively collaborating

1 See Appendix Four: details of the consultation and planning processes.
2 See Appendix Two: the context for this strategic plan.
3 See Appendix Three: details of challenges facing the organisation.
4 See Appendix Seven: Diagram of the strategic plan.
5 The result, in this document, defines as covering the outcome and the impact.
The Advocacy and Policy Institute's Strategic Plan, 2011-2013

nationally and provincially with civil society organisations to promote law implementation and relations and partnerships in general.

4. Three Strategic Priorities

The three strategic priorities focus on meeting the needs of present day Cambodia and leading the way towards an accountable and transparent society while supporting the Government with its subnational reforms. These priorities will be achieved by extending and continuing the core crosscutting activities of the past three years. Actions to carry out the strategic priorities will take place in target provinces and in Phnom Penh.

4.1 Strategic priority one

Working with subnational government: supporting Deconcentration and Decentralisation

Local Democratic Development programme

The Advocacy and Policy Institute supports the Government’s platform/phase I (2010-2013) of the Ten Year National Programme which identifies an institutional result expecting subnational officials to have mastered the basic competencies necessary for de-centralisation and deconcentration reform. Now is the time to consolidate API’s work from the first strategic plan and to continue efforts towards improvements in capacity and mutual collaboration in subnational government at all levels.

Programme objective

Promote transparency and accountability within the decentralisation and deconcentration framework in Cambodia by improving capacity among subnational officials and elected council members in the three target District Councils and strengthening the voice of local organisations and people to participate in local government.

Programme specific objectives

1 Strengthen capacity, transparency and accountability within Cambodia’s subnational government to improve functions, create interaction between councils and collaboration with communities, local civil society and national government.

2 Promote democratic participation and human rights at the community level by improving the capacity of local civil society organisations to become more effective at advocating for their community needs and participating in council activities.

Programme expected results

The overarching outcome expected from strategic priority one only applies to the three target districts in which the Advocacy and Policy Institute works. It is expected that the capability of the District Councils will improve and their offices efficiently and effectively function to provide sustainable public services essentially supporting good governance and enabling their Commune Councils to respond to local community needs.

1 Increased understanding about the roles and responsibilities of subnational government, particularly District Councils, within national government, civil society and local communities.

2 Improved District Council responsiveness to the needs of community people and Commune Councils.

3 Increased support for access to and disclosure of public information in District Councils.

4 Improved transparency and accountability in subnational government, particularly District Councils.

5 Increased public participation in subnational government.

The main programme actions/activities

1. Improving capacity in District Councils

1.1 Improve the capacity of subnational government and civil society organisations through training and publications to boost understanding of District Council roles.

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7 Target provinces: Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Speu, Beantey Meanchey and Kratie.
8 National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development, 2010-2019, p.20
9 The result, in this document, defines as covering the outcome and the impact.
and responsibilities, advocacy, public access to public information, information disclosure and the relevant legislation needed to fulfill District Council duties.


1.3 Organise annual District/ provincial forums on specific issues of concern.

2. Providing support and encouragement

2.1 Strengthen partnerships through activities involving subnational government, community people and local civil society organisations.

2.2 Provide resources and support to enable the three District Councils to undertake their roles and responsibilities and to be more answerable to the public.

3. Producing tools and publications

3.1 Produce easily accessible tools and publications about subnational government to raise awareness and understanding among subnational government and communities.

3.2 Collect practical social accountability tools and use them to identify effective methods/tools for API so that the organisation can monitor the effectiveness of its activities with subnational government.

4.2 Strategic priority two

Promoting access to public information: increasing understanding and creating a culture of public information disclosure.

Access to Information Programme

Increasing understanding and creating a culture of public information disclosure to civil society organisations and national and subnational government contributing towards improved transparency, accountability and good governance and increased public participation in decisions which affect lives. The Government has given a commitment to furthering the campaign for a Cambodian access to information law and is concerned to put in place accountability mechanisms within the Deconcentration and Decentralisation framework. One of the Government’s four lines of accountability specifically concerns accountability to people and includes increasing people’s access to information.

Programme objective

Promote access to information and support the legislative process leading to an access to information law and developing a culture of information disclosure by assisting the Government’s initial steps towards a culture of maximum disclosure of public information and creating an ethos of access to and disclosure of public information in the target communes.

Programme specific objectives

1. Promote public access to public information by encouraging open dialogue, increasing disclosure and the distribution of commune information in the eight target communes.

2. Increase support for the access to information campaign through strengthening networks to mobilise, support and build the capacity of civil society organisations, the media and the private sector.

3. Coordinate and support the production of an access to information policy framework leading towards making and passing an access to information law.

Programme expected results

The overarching result from the actions for strategic priority two is for Commune Councils and community based organisations in the target communes, Government, Parliament and all sectors of society to have more understanding about the concept and value of accessible public information leading to an increase in the amount of public information available and the promotion of a law on access to information.

1 A growing understanding and demand for public access to public information from national and subnational government institutions, the private sector, trade unions, the media and community people.

2 Increased Commune Council capacity and confidence to promote information disclosure, especially on natural resources and to request information from District Councils in order to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities.

3 Improved Commune Council information management systems facilitating increased public access, sharing and disclosure of public information leading to increased public participation in Council activities.

4. More civil society networks with knowledge about access to information supporting for an access to information

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National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development, 2010-2019, p.16

The National Strategic Development Plan Update, p.20
5. Increased public dialogue on access to information by government officials, the Cambodian Parliament, UN agencies, civil society organisations and donors so that Government and Parliament have heightened awareness and understanding about access to information and make efforts to support the passage of an access to information law.

The main programme actions/activities

1. Improving capacity and supporting Commune Councils

1.1 Work with target Commune Councils to organise commune planning and access to information workshops.

1.2 Provide training on advocacy, commune mandates, information management and relevant legislation to improve the skills needed by Commune Councillors and council staff.

1.3 Provide resources and technical support to Commune Councils to establish and implement effective information management systems so that they begin to regularly disclose public information and provide official information in a way that is intellectually accessible to the public.

2. Providing commune public hearings

2.1 Support and organise commune public hearings (forums) about information disclosure on issues relating to community livelihoods, local good governance, natural resource management and legislation on issues of concern.

3. Encouraging and supporting networking

3.1 Administer, coordinate and support the Access to Information Working Group to become stronger, more active and effective. The meetings will include opportunities for improving knowledge about access to information and advocacy campaign skills.

3.2 Work with and support the Access to Information Working Group members, to work on and lead the media campaign (radio and television) on access to information, produce position papers and establish an access to information website which is regularly maintained.

3.3 Encourage networking with the issue based NGO networks at the local and national level, the media and private sector to increase understanding and demand for a law on access to public information.

3.4 Provide training on access to information and relevant best practice to government institutions, the private sector, the Working Group, issue based networks and the media.

4. Promoting the practice of access to and disclosure of public information

4.1 Support the Access to Information Law Campaign by coordinating the Access to Information Working Group and the Civil Society Lobby Group to work together.

4.2 Work with UN agencies and other interested institutions to support the MONASRI and the Cambodian Parliament to work on access to information.

4.3 In collaboration with the Ministry of National Assembly Senate Relations and Inspection organise a two day national access to information workshop in Phnom Penh for NGOs and the government officials to discuss the Access to Information Law framework.

4.4 Organise a workshop with Members of Parliament, Government officials, academics, donors and representatives from the international community on the importance of adopting and implementing an Access to Information Law and fostering information disclosure.

5. Providing tools and publications

5.1 Research and assess current access to information and information disclosure practice within government institutions in Cambodia and the legal frameworks and best practice of other governments in South East Asia (ASEAN neighbours).

5.2 Produce and print information education and communication materials in Khmer in collaboration with the Access to Information Working Group and Commune Councils and increase the number of easily accessible tools and publications raising awareness and understanding about access to and disclosure of information.

4.3 Strategic priority three

Supporting civil society for change: enabling civil society to respond to specific issues and policy.

Support Civil Society Organization Programme


12 Particularly the Committee for Free and Fair Elections, Equal Access, the Voice of Democracy and the Women’s Media Centre.

13 Civil society includes civil society organisations, the media, trade unions and the private sector.
potential to be key government partners and the Government is making active efforts to involve and associate with all sections of civil society. Emerging issue based civil society networks require support to play their crucial role in building good governance in Cambodia and space is needed for communication between Government and Parliament and civil society. The Advocacy and Policy Institute will continue to provide support by encouraging coordination between the Government and Parliament and civil society organisation networks, donors, media, trade unions and the private sector.

Programme objective

Enhance the capacity of civil society to engage and establish mutual trust in a partnership environment with the Government, the Cambodian Parliament, the Government’s Development partners and donors and support civil society networks to collaborate to improve democratic space, good governance and human rights in Cambodia.

Programme specific objectives

1. Assist civil society networks, including community based organisation networks, to increase their knowledge and skills of advocacy, access to information and public policy.

2. Support partnerships among Parliament, the Government, the Government’s Development Partners and civil society to support good governance, promote democratic laws, make progress toward democracy and strengthen Deconcentration and Decentralisation in Cambodia.

3. Establish democratic space for the active engagement of civil society networks with the Government and Parliament.

Programme expected results

The main expected result from strategic priority three is for civil society organisation networks, with effective advocacy skills and understanding about access to information, working with the Government and Parliament for the benefit of Cambodia.

1. Strengthened civil society and community based organisation networks proficient in advocacy and lobbying skills, effectively responding to advocacy issues and collaborating with Parliament and the Government, particularly concerning the draft NGO law.

2. Increased number of easily accessible tools and publications raising awareness and understanding about advocacy, lobbying, access to public information and subnational council responsibilities.

3. Increased number of civil society networks supporting the Government to make, pass and implement laws.

4. Increased democratic space facilitating collaboration among civil society networks, the Government and Parliament and the Government’s Development Partners.

5. Increased income from training activities.

The main programme actions/activities

1. Improving capacity of the networks

1.1 Identify the needs of civil society, including community based organisation networks to improve their knowledge and skills, particularly on advocacy, access to information and public policy.

1.2 Organise training courses on advocacy, public policy, access to information and deconcentration and decentralisation to improve the capacity of civil society and community based organisation issue based networks.

2. Encouraging and supporting networking

2.1 Participate and/or lead civil society and community based organisation issue base networks by sharing advocacy experiences and access to information to boost the networks to achieve their goals and objectives.

2.2 Support and strengthen civil society networks to effectively communicate with Parliament and the Government and the Government’s Development Partners.

2.3 Establish democratic space (forums/workshops) to allow communication to happen to share concerns and solve issues particularly on law enforcement.

2.4 Create space for civil society networks to interact and dialogue to improve their collaboration and their work.

3. Providing tools and publications

3.1 Gather practical examples of advocacy work in Cambodia and elsewhere, publish and share with Cambodian advocates.

3.2 Produce, based on the need, issue base advocacy handbooks for supporting issue base networks to improve their work effectiveness.

4. Income generation

4.1 Provide training courses, as required, on either advocacy, public policy, access to information or...
4.2. Provide consultancies which compliment the organisation’s mission as requested.

5. Putting the Priorities into Action

5.1 All three strategic priorities are interlinked and lead the organisation towards its overarching mission. They underpin the essential requirements for good governance, the necessity for increased capacity in national and subnational government, civil society and community people and the fundamental need for mutual trust and collaboration among all sectors of society.

5.2 Strategic priorities one and two work closely with subnational government promoting access to information and supporting District and Commune Councils to understand and competently undertake their roles and responsibilities. Priority Three concentrates on the empowerment of civil society organisation networks. It focuses on improving civil society organisation network knowledge and understanding about advocacy, access to information and Deconcentration and Decentralisation and strengthening collaboration and partnerships among these networks and the Cambodian Government and Parliament to increase space for cooperation over issues relating to policy and Government and civil society relations.

5.3 Throughout the three years, there will be effective, objective, monitoring and impact assessments to inform donors and future activities, to ensure the organisation is meeting the potential of the strategic plan and to act as factual evidence for training and collaboration among Parliament, Government and civil society.

5.4 The strategic plan will be an active reference document, frequently used to encourage implementation planning and ensure activities are achieving the expected results.

6. Organisational supports

In order to effectively achieve the strategic priorities it is essential to put supports in place.

6.1 Principles of good governance:

Continue to be bound by clear lines of accountability and transparency in API’s actions and procedures and ensure effective management of the organisation and its resources.

6.2 Funding:

Make certain adequate funding is in place to enable the strategic priorities to be delivered effectively and ensure all actions provide value for money. Implement and monitor the Funding Strategy through a small working group of senior management and Board members. Income generation will concentrate on providing training for civil society, national government, the private sector, trade unions and the media and selling publications.

6.3 Human resources:

Ensure staff are employed appropriately and have opportunities to balance their responsibilities and workload. Make certain staff benefit from access to relevant quality training to update and increase skills, particularly English language skills. Quality staff performance is encouraged and reviewed annually.

6.4 Lines of accountability:

Guarantee lines of accountability that are clear and understood. The Board of Directors places authority and responsibility for the organisation on the Director, who delegates appropriately.

6.5 Strategies and procedures:

Undertake the implementation of funding and marketing strategies along with procedures based on recognised standards for monitoring and evaluation and practical guidelines for...
publications and capacity building activities.

6.6 Information technology:
Establish a reliable mechanism directly supporting the organisation’s information technology and ultimately the organisation's services and website.

6.7 Research:
Provide adequate research resources to allow staff to update training and publications and to possess in depth knowledge on their training subjects. API will consider partnerships with research institutions and organisations to undertake research and use the findings to support advocacy actions.

6.8 Networking:
- Strengthen collaboration between the Access to Information Working Group and the Civil Society Lobby Group to encourage both Groups to promote an Access to Information Law.
- Join civil society networks with similar objectives for support and information and to provide advocacy skills and promote access to information.
- Network with other NGOs and key NGO networks to enable API to take on a facilitation role in implementing certain activities in the provinces.

6.9 Public relations, marketing, communication
- Ensure clear and accessible methods of communication between the organization, its service users, partners and donors.
- Make certain all written material and publications adhere to accepted standards for accessibility.
- Actively market the organisation’s services and publications.
- Provide and maintain an Advocacy and Policy Institute website.
- Use clear effective communication within the organisation.

6.10 Premises:
Ensure the organisation’s staff have suitable premises in which to work and to prepare and store the resources required for their activities.

7. Implementation, resources and monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan

7.1 The strategic plan
Outlines strategic priorities to inform the framework for the Implementation Plan 2011-2013. The implementation Plan contains details of all activities supported by tasks, timeframes, resources required and assigned responsibilities as well as performance indicators, expected outputs and outcomes and monitoring tools.

7.2 Implementation progress
Will be monitored every six months and annually, and adjusted as necessary. At the end of 2013, API will commission an external consultant to evaluate the organisation, its activities and their impact.

7.3 To enable the successful implementation of its strategy API will:
- Network with other NGOs and key NGO networks to enable API to take on a facilitation role in implementing certain activities in the provinces.

7.4 The full implementation
Of this strategy will depend on the continued and guaranteed provision of appropriate resources.
The Advocacy and Policy Institute’s main achievements, 2008-2010 show that the Advocacy and Policy Institute effectively working towards achieving its mission and goal. The evaluation of May 201015 supports the vital message that the activities of the organisation’s three programmes appear to be effective and the Advocacy and Policy Institute should be proud of its work. The three Programmes of the organisation have been particularly successful with capacity building on advocacy and encouraging community and subnational government communication; supporting understanding about access to information and promoting participation in a campaign for public access to public information; encouraging civil society collaboration and engagement with the Government and the Cambodian Parliament, particularly over the Anti-Corruption Law.

1. Capacity building

The Advocacy and Policy Institute is well respected for its effective distinctive training courses that empower people to contribute towards advocacy campaigns for sustainable livelihoods and to support people’s rights by enhancing their advocacy skills and increasing their confidence and understanding about democratic participation. Training also promotes understanding about the right of public access to public information and its support of democratic processes. Through improving understanding and providing skills, the organisation contributes to good governance, particularly in the provinces. The effective training is encouraging communities to work together on community issues particularly those affecting livelihoods. The Advocacy and Policy Institute publishes useful, easily understandable, printed material to support training.

2. Strengthening community and Commune Council partnerships

Directly through participating in advocacy training, indirectly through community forums and encouraging local councils and organisations to plan together their activities, the Advocacy and Policy Institute is supporting a unique situation in which Councilors, representatives from Community organisations and community people interact, build mutual trust and collaborate on community concerns. A further step towards encouraging and improving local democratic participation has been the work of the Advocacy and Policy Institute with the Commune Information Disclosure Pilot Project (2008-2010), which enables useful training and collaboration with Commune Councils, local civil society organisations and local communities. This has led to increased appreciation and knowledge about Council roles and their responsibilities to the Government and their communities; increased understanding of the value of accessible public information to encourage transparency; enhanced council/community relations and increase community participation in council meetings. In general, there appears to be a growing solidarity and more interaction between and among Commune Councillors, local community based and civil society organisations and local people in the targeted communes.

3. The promotion of public access to public information

The organisation through the Access to Information Working Group16 promotes understanding about the right for public access to public information; raises public awareness, increases understanding, and encourages and supports the Cambodian Parliament and Government to pass an Access to Information Law. In the eight target Commune Councils of five provinces taking part in the Commune Disclosure Pilot Project this is achieved by encouraging access to public information among Commune Councils; promoting disclosure of information to local communities particularly about livelihoods, strengthening transparency and accountability, and printing diverse educational materials.

4. Working with the Government

The Advocacy and Policy Institute supports the Cambodian Government particularly the Ministry of National Assembly-Senate Relations and Inspection and Parliament to advance the making and passage of an access to information law and encourages public understanding of the laws. Through the Civil Society Lobby Group the organisation enhances communication with the Cambodian Parliament and Government. The organisation’s aim is to encourage mutual trust and respect and to construct effective channels of collaboration between and among civil society, Parliament and the Government.

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15 Details of evaluation results can be seen in Appendix One and at the Advocacy and Policy Institute’s office
16 See Appendix Three: Civil Society members of the Access to Information Working Group
17 See Appendix Three: Civil Society networks complimenting the work of the Advocacy and Policy Institute.
Appendix Two: the context of this strategic plan

The external context

1. Non Government Organisations (NGOs)

1.1 These are a very necessary part of Cambodian society. Together they cooperate to influence and monitor the Government’s development policies and practices to benefit the poor and vulnerable sectors of society. Singly they work towards either making improvements for the benefit of the poor and vulnerable or by empowering people to take action to benefit themselves and their communities.

1.2 The work of NGOs spans a wide range of development issues and involves close collaboration with all sectors of society. NGOs are in the optimum position to observe the impact of development and bring the voice of poor and marginalised communities to the attention of policy and decision makers in the Government and the Government’s Development Partners. In the past twelve years the power of advocacy actions has emerged dramatically in Cambodia.

1.3 Networks of NGOs are more and more working with the Government and the Government’s Development Partners to make recommendations and support the making and implementation of policies. Crucially, the Government is gradually recognising the value of NGOs and including consulting with them, however, to date this is very limited. NGOs networks are progressively more aware of the importance of monitoring Government activities, particularly the Joint Monitoring Indicators.

1.4 The Government is working towards more enhanced and responsible civil society participation in the national development process. It considers civil society organisations as important development partners and will continue to encourage their engagement in the process of socioeconomic development and in the promotion of democracy and human rights and encourages their participation in monitoring the implementation of national development strategies and policies. The Government will continue to pursue the adoption of a Law on Non Government Organisations and Associations in close consultation with relevant agencies and organisations.

2. The Government

2.1 The National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013 specifically notes:

2.1.1 Commune Councils were established in 2002 and Districts and Provincial Councils in 2009. The Government is committed to the Decentralisation and Deconcentration Reform Programme which is aimed at strengthening and expanding local democracy and promoting local development to reduce poverty. The Ministry for National Assembly Senate Relations and Inspections is focusing on strengthening institutions to increase institutional capacity at the subnational level.

2.1.2 On 11 March 2010, the National Assembly passed the Anti-Corruption Law and the National Body on Anti-Corruption was established. To support this Law and to prevent, reduce and fight corruption, the Government has launched campaigns to provide information to educate the public and is encouraging access to this public information about corruption.

2.1.3 The Government is aware that there are huge economic and development gains to be made from Cambodia’s extractive industries (oil, gas and mining) if they are managed well. The emerging oil, gas and mineral industries are one of the priorities for the Government which recognises the benefits of oil and gas to Cambodia’s energy needs and has put in place policies to be implemented through the Cambodian National Petroleum Authority. The oil and gas industries are mainly contracted out to foreign companies, while currently the Government contracts out the mineral industry to both foreign and domestic companies. There is a need to support communities from the effects of the extractive industries and to encourage peaceful solutions to difficult social and environmental issues while at the same time encouraging transparent revenue and expenditure management in the Ministry of Economy and Finance and by working with the Cambodian Parliament to ensure that policies are in place.

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18 NGOs are included in the aid coordination mechanism led by the government, the Cambodian Development Cooperation Forum, Government Donor Coordination Committee and fifteen of the nineteen Government’s Technical Working Groups. NGO Position Papers on Cambodia’s Development in 2009-2010 to the 3rd Cambodian Development Forum, May 2010, P125.
19 Ibid, p.119
20 Ibid, p.116
21 The National Strategic Development Plan Update, p.16.
22 Ibid, p.104
23 Ibid, p.51
2.2 The National Programme for Subnational Democratic Development 2010-2019, put in place by The National Committee for Subnational Democratic Development notes:

2.2.1 Deconcentration and Decentralisation reform is the most ambitious and important change in Cambodia governance since the 1993 Constitution.24

2.2.2 The Government emphasises the challenge that for functions to be transferred to subnational government, the elected councils and appointed public must have the appropriate skills, competency and commitment.25 While there have been increased efforts to build capacity at the subnational level and training has been provided for thousands of subnational councillors and staff, the crucial challenge to further build capacity has led to a Capacity Development Plan being considered. When this is put in place there may be the requirement for civil society to provide coaching to put it into action and ensure competent functioning and response to needs.

2.2.3 Peoples’ participation in public administration, improving local council capacity in the decision making process and the transference of responsibilities to provide key public services to subnational administration are fundamental to the process of the subnational democratic development.27

2.2.4 One of the Government’s main challenges in terms of governance is subnational administration’s poor administrative performance, accountability and responsiveness to meet the needs of local communities. Commune Councils performance and capacity are limited as functions and financial resources have not been transferred to them. Additionally, the management systems and lines of accountability at the provincial and district levels are not structured to respond to local needs.28

2.2.5 The Government envisages strengthening the lines of accountability of subnational administration. There are multiple provisions in the Law on Commune/ Sangkat Administrative management providing the basis for consultation with the people, access to information and transparency in general.29

3. The Millennium Development Goals
are set to be achieved by 2015. The Cambodian Government faces many challenges as it attempts to implement them. Two with particular relevance to the work of the Advocacy and Policy Institute include: sustainable and participatory management of natural resources and strengthening local democracy and good governance.

4. Human Rights and democracy in Cambodia
remain more a theoretical aspiration than a reality for the vast majority of the population. The situation is exacerbated by a judicial system which is not independent of the Government, not transparent, or accountable, or free from corruption. A ‘culture of impunity’ prevails among elite segments of society in which the powerful prey at will on society at large.

5. Integration of Cambodia into regional cooperation
Cambodia joined ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) in April 1999, understanding that the region would play an increasingly important political and economic role in the country and signed the ASEAN Charter (November 2007). The whole ethos of ASEAN Charter is to promote a common identity, a sharing society, and a pulling together to the advantage of common interests in strengthening peace and stability, promoting social justice and supporting mechanisms for effective public services, particularly adhering to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.30

6. Social inclusion
The Advocacy and Policy Institute abides by the non discrimination laws of Cambodia and is committed to equity and equal rights and providing services particularly to vulnerable and minority groups.

7. Social trends
7.1 Greater public expectations for service provision to adhere to international standards, achieve better efficiency, value for money, higher quality and transparency in systems and
processes.

7.2 Increased understanding and demand for good governance, social accountability and the need for democratic space to enable effective networking to consider concerns, discuss alternatives and come to a consensus opinion on actions affecting society at large and communities in particular.

7.3 Increased demand for social equity, particularly gender equity, and justice.

7.4 Improved communication (IT and physical) throughout Cambodia.

7.5 Concerns about rising youth unemployment.

8. Economic trends

8.1 The affects on Cambodia of ASEAN’s trade initiatives, globalisation and the world economic crises.

8.2 The economy is narrowly based and driven by four main sectors: agriculture, garment, tourism and construction.

8.3 The effects of the imminent oil and gas industries and new mineral extractive industries on national revenues, the environment and communities.

THE INTERNAL CONTEXT

1. The organisation

1.1 The implementation of the first strategic plan, 2008-2010, its successes and areas for improvement inevitably has consequences for future actions of the Advocacy and Policy Institute and the way partners and customers view the organisation.

1.2 The organisation works in an enabling environment that allows the organisation to meet its objectives. Committed members of staff support the organisation to provide effective services.

1.3 The organisation is, transparent and accountable with effective policies in place, including a gender policy, and an active Board of Directors. An annual financial audit supports the organization.

1.4 The organisation is driven by the needs of the Cambodian people in matters particularly relating to improving capacity in advocacy, access to information and good governance.

2. Strategic partnerships

2.1 Partners expect certain standards from the Advocacy and Policy Institute and in return they support the organisation’s work: financially through donations, physically through assistance for our activities and by enabling their staff to become members of the Access to Information Working Group and the Civil Society Lobby Group.

2.2 The organisation coordinates with other civil society local, national and international organisations that complement the Advocacy and Policy Institute’s mission.

2.3 In the provinces the Advocacy and Policy Institute collaborates and builds mutual trust with Commune, District and Provincial Councils and provincial departments and provincial organisations.

Appendix Three: challenges facing API

1. Non government organisations

1.1 The place of NGO’s in the development of Cambodia is a challenge for all NGOs including API. It has a direct impact on its activities as the organisation tries to make compatible its activities with communities, civil society, Parliament and subnational and national Government. API is an NGO that is concerned with providing a service to empower people: the service improves the capacity of subnational government and civil society organisations both nationally and locally and simultaneously empowers them to advocate on issues of concern and take their responsibilities into their own hands to make sustainable beneficial changes to communities. API is also making an effort to act as a coordinator among civil society and Parliament and the Government.

1.2 Civil society’s communication and collaboration with the Cambodian Parliament and Government is particularly difficult due to bureaucracy and a lack of timely information, the opinion of Government and Parliament that civil society is aligned to the opposition and a lack of planning or intention on the part of Government and Parliament to meet their commitments to constituents. There is strong mistrust between Government and civil society, while the diversity of civil society organisations makes collaboration particularly difficult. Increasingly, the Government is narrowing the democratic space of NGOs: it is difficult to find meeting places to share ideas and strengthen

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31 Appendix one has further details of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats affecting the organisation.
networks. It is anticipated that the voice of NGOs will become even weaker due to Government’s ‘programme approach’ to donors, resulting in donors losing their individual voices and becoming a single pronouncement.

1.3 There are a great variety of civil society organisations that do not work together to share experiences and are not united. There are limited strong networks for a collective voice to work with the Government and there is a lack of concerted effort advocating for social change. There are still a number of NGOs that do not yet take an holistic approach/are project orientated to their actions and so have questionable sustainability. There is inadequate exchange of information and fostering of coordination to the mutual benefit of civil society. The few civil society organisation networks are struggling in their attempts to collaborate with the Government.

1.4 It is challenging coordinating diverse partnerships and collaborating with project partners in the provinces where effective cooperation and attempts to instil ownership and commitment with organisations and their communities can be problematical. This is often amplified by poor resources and people’s limited knowledge.

1.5 General opinion among communities in communes is that Commune Councillors are not to be trusted and are certainly not working for the good of the community. Changing the face of the council by promoting understanding about their own roles and responsibilities, encouraging confidence in their work and a more approachable attitude is challenging: even more so is the task of altering the inherent views of communities about their councils and allaying the fear that API is working for the Government.

1.6. Encouraging participation, whether among civil society organisations or between communities and their councils is demanding; many people do not have the confidence and even more people do not have an inclination to participate. Yet both civil society organisations and the Government[31] see the need to promote participation to enhance transparency and accountability and at the same time foster ownership.

1.7 The Government has made a draft NGO Law available and has invited NGOs to participate in its making. It is anticipated that the whole civil society community will be affected by the law. This law comes at a time when there is increased global awareness of governance issues for civil society organisations and the need to align with the five principles of Aid Effectiveness[32] together with the world economic downturn. Organisations are under increasing pressure to prove that they can deliver value for money, be effective guardians of development funding and deliver on agendas that are truly accountable to the communities they serve.

2. Access to and disclosure of public information

In new to Cambodia and many people, communities, organisations, Members of Parliament and the Government are struggling to understand what it means and what are its implications for transparency and accountability in Cambodian society; they need information and training to fully understand its implications. API has a responsibility to civil society, including issue based NGOs, to support their learning needs to appreciate access to and disclosure of information so that they can look at their policies and procedures to ensure that they are ‘practicing what they are preaching’ and instill the concepts of access to and disclosure of information to the people with whom they are working and collaborating.

3. Improved global communication and more international contacts

have had the consequence that today’s Cambodian expects the best standards, optimum choice and value for money. Civil society organisations are facing a challenge to provide adequate skilled services with expert knowledge.

4. The human rights situation in Cambodia

is facing growing criticism both inside the country and with the international community. The Advocacy and Policy Institute as a human rights organisation focusing on advocacy and policy tries to work with the Government. However both the organisation’s name and its advocacy supporting activities with communities could have serious implications for the organisation in the forthcoming NGO Law.

5. Aligning funding and staff resources to strategic priorities

to provide quality services within the limit of the organisation’s resources, ensuring the best possible use of finite resources, providing value for money and retaining and developing the skills and expertise of our staff are all crucial to delivering quality, effective services.
6. Ensuring adequate and sustainable funds, particularly for core funding. All donor requirements to meet the organisation’s expect the organisation’s activities to equate to the organisation’s mission and the five principles of Aid Effectiveness as expressed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

7. Planning, coordinating and where necessary upgrading crosscutting skills in advocacy, policy and access to information to meet the new strategic priorities and the needs of diverse sectors of society through enhanced training content and co-opting trainers with specialised knowledge.

8. Recognising the value of engagement with partners and the equally important service users, and ensuring there are appropriate resources to enable this to happen effectively is essential if the organisation is to meet its targets.

Appendix Four: details of the consultation and planning processes.

The Advocacy and Policy Institute started planning towards its second three year Strategic Plan in October 2009 when it approached Voluntary Service Overseas for a management advisor to assist in the process and undertake an evaluation to support the new plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 January 2010</td>
<td>Consultative forum on Organic Law in Banteay Meanchey also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 61 people attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March to May 2010</td>
<td>Research, interviews and workshops to inform an evaluation of the Advocacy and Policy Institute: the organisation, its programmes and activities and their impact during the time of the current strategic plan 2008-2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 April 2010</td>
<td>Consultative forum on Organic Law in Kampong Chhnang also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 57 people attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 May 2010</td>
<td>Consultative forum on the Organic Law in Kampong Thom; also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 117 people attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 June 2010</td>
<td>Draft evaluation presented to and discussed by staff and members of the Board of Directors. 12 people attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-29 June 2010</td>
<td>Commune Information management follow up training in Sethey commune, Kompong Chhnang Province; also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 19 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 June 2010</td>
<td>Consultative forum on the Organic Law in Kampong Chhang; also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 125 people attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 June-01 July 2010</td>
<td>Commune Information management follow up training in Phnov commune, Kompong Thom Province; also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 18 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 July 2010</td>
<td>Consultation meeting held to present the Advocacy and Policy Institute’s draft key strategic plan for 2011-2013. Participants included the Management Committee, Board of Directors and representatives from civil society and donors associated with API. 25 people attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 July 2010</td>
<td>Commune Information management follow up training in Kork Balang commune, Banteay Meanchey Province also discussed how API can support Commune Councils in the future. 16 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 August 2010</td>
<td>Draft strategic plan 2011-2013 presented for consultation with all members of staff. 9 people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 August 2010</td>
<td>Draft strategic plan sent for comment to eight people with experience in strategic planning and all of API staff were encouraged to comment. Six experts and six API staff made useful comments which have been incorporated into the strategic plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Advocacy and Policy Institute’s Strategic Plan, 2011-2013

21 August 2010 The strategic plan 2011-2013 presented to the Board of Directors who discussed
and approved it.

November 2010 Condensed version of the approved strategic plan printed and distributed to members of the
Board of Directors, donors and partners.

September- November 2010 Consultations on and production of the 2011-2013 implementation plan.


Appendix Five. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified during the organisation’s evaluation May 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The Director has credibility and commitment and a supportive staff.</td>
<td>• Limited staff and other resources and space to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Capacity building (advocacy, Access to Information and policy) with</td>
<td>• Inadequate planning and resources for income generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diverse participants for all levels of society.</td>
<td>• API’s IT systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activities reflecting the needs of the Cambodian people.</td>
<td>• Networking and sharing of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• API is adaptable to needs.</td>
<td>• Publicity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• API is recognised by the Government as an expert on Access to</td>
<td>• Inadequate monitoring and evaluation tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information.</td>
<td>• Workshop followup support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When I say advocacy and policy I think of API.</td>
<td>• Reliance on project funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good start to working with local authorities.</td>
<td>• Networking with NGO networks to support on Access to Information campaign.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to identify important issues and deal with them at multiple</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>levels: national, regional and local.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Transparent and accountable systems and policies in place.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Long lasting advisors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Publications are easy to read: Cambodian advocates use API’s tools.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges and threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identify a fundraiser to work with the Director: could be someone from the</td>
<td>• The political and social impact of ASEAN Pacific Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board.</td>
<td>• Increased foreign investment boosting the economy and affecting people’s lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Expand training to generate income.</td>
<td>• Political games affect NGOs work and overall power of the Cambodian People’s Party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Widen participation for all training.</td>
<td>• NGO Law.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve monitoring and impact assessments.</td>
<td>• People only want to know about advocacy when there is a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand and continue working with local authorities.</td>
<td>• Personal safety as working with advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Become increasingly vocal and visible about access to information.</td>
<td>• New technology will increase democratic space, but Government could increase control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Produce funding and marketing strategies and implement their</td>
<td>• Many unemployed young people causing unrest and disruption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recommendations.</td>
<td>• Global warming, extractive industries including oil will affect Cambodia: their impact on the environment could influence donor funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide a more flexible staffing structure and good management.</td>
<td>• Increasingly narrow corridor for negotiating with the Government due to growing influence from China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Widen the range of service users to include the media, trade unions, the</td>
<td>• Increase in state revenues from extractive industries.</td>
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<td>private sector and more representatives from Parliament and Government.</td>
<td>• Lack of unity among civil society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Work with the political parties to push the Government indicator on</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Continue the good work with sub national government to make it even</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>more sustainable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Implement the Anti-Corruption Law, which will raise the need for access</td>
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<td>to information.</td>
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</table>
Appendix Six: Civil Society networks complimenting the work of the Advocacy and Policy Institute

2. The Civil Society Lobby Group.
3. The Access Initiative Coalition, Cambodia.
5. The Coalition for Integrity and Social Accountability.

8. API provincial organisation partners for implementing the three programmes in the coming three years will include:
9. The National Advocacy Conference Organising Committee for the annual conference. The conference has been held annually, since 2006 and is attended by Cambodian NGOs whose work relates to human rights and natural resource advocacy. Currently it has 16 organisations.

Appendix Seven: API Three Year Strategic Plan Chart

API’s vision, mission and goal

Programme goal for 2011-2013:
Contribute to the successful implementation of the Government’s National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013 and the Subnational Democratic Development Plan 2010-2013 by establishing and maintaining mutual trust, building capacity and strengthening communication and cooperation between the national and subnational Government and the Cambodian Parliament and civil society organisations leading towards increased sustainable democratic space to address the needs and concerns of the people living in the target provinces, districts and communes in Cambodia.

Strategic Priority 1
Working with subnational government: supporting Deconcentration and Decentralisation.
Programme name: Local Democratic Development
Objective: Promote transparency and accountability within the decentralisation and deconcentration framework in Cambodia by improving capacity among subnational officials and elected council members in the three target District Councils and strengthening the voice of local organisations and people to participate in local government.

Strategic Priority 2
Promoting access to public information: increasing understanding and creating a culture of public information disclosure.
Programme name: Access to Information
Objective: Promote access to information, supporting the legislative process leading of an access to information law and developing a culture of maximum information disclosure by supporting to the Government’s initial steps towards a culture of maximum disclosure of public information and creating an ethos of access to and disclosure of public information in the target Commune.

Strategic Priority 3
Supporting civil society for change: enabling civil society to respond to specific issues and policy
Programme name: Support Civil Society Organisations
Objective: Enhance the capacity of civil society to engage and establish mutual trust in a partnership environment with the Government, the Cambodian Parliament, the Government’s Development partners and national donors and support civil society networks to collaborate to improve democratic space, good governance and human rights in Cambodia.

Organisational support, resources, capacity building, networking, coordination and partnership