



**Advocacy and Policy Institute**

**Programme Progress Report  
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**Submitted to**

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## Acronyms (A-Z)

A2I WG	Access to Information Working Group
ACSC	ASEAN Civil Society Conference
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APF	ASEAN Peoples' Forum
API	Advocacy and Policy Institute
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Aid
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CC	Commune Council
CCF	Cambodian Coalition of the Fishers
CCIM	Cambodia Center for Independent Media
CISA	the Coalition for Integrity and Social Accountability
CPN	Cambodian Peace Building Network
CRRT	Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
D&D	De-centralisation and De-concentration
Danida	Danish Cooperation for International Development
DC	District Councils
DO	District Ombudsman office
DPA	Development and Partnership in Action
EED	Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
EFN	Environment Forum Network
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment Law,
EISEI	Extractive Industry Social Environmental Impact
FACT	Fishery Action Coalition Team
GDCC	The Government Development Partner Coordinating Committee
GIZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
GRSP	Global Road Safety Partnership
HIF	Handicap International Federation
HRTF	Housing Rights Task Force
ICCO	Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation
IEC	Information Educational and Communication
LDD	the Local Democratic Development Programme
LWD	Life with Dignity
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MoNASRI	Ministry of National Assembly, Senate Relation and Inspections
NACOC	National Advocacy Conference Organisation Committee
NCDD	National Committee for Subnational Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OD	District Ombudsmen Office
OWSO	One Window Service Offices
PRN-C	Cambodia Pesticide Reduction Network
R4D	Result for Development
RCC	River Cambodian Coalition
REDD+	Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (Plus)
SCS	Supporting Civil Society
SIDA	Swedish Cooperation Agency for International Development
SNA	Sub-National Administration
TAI	The Access Initiative
TEI	Thailand Environment Institute
UNDEF	The United Nations Democracy Fund
WGPD	the Working Group for Partnerships in Decentralization

## **A. Introduction and Overview of API and API's Programmes**

In 2010, the Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) developed a second three-year strategic plan for 2011-2013. The plan, approved by the Board of Directors in August 2010, is being carried out to meet programme goals.

This plan focuses on three main programmes:

1. **The Local Democratic Development (LDD) Programme** promotes transparency and accountability within the de-centralization and de-concentration framework in Cambodia.
2. **The Access to Information (A2I) Programme** promotes access to information by supporting the legislative process leading to the passage of an access to information law and encouraging a culture of information disclosure.
3. **Supporting Civil Society (SCS) Programme** enhances 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 supports civil society networks.

This is API's second annual report. The report demonstrates that API has made considerable progress in achieving the outputs, outcomes, goal and objectives programmes, contributing to Cambodia's long-term democratic and social development.

### ***Key Summary of Results***

In 2012, API organised 20 training courses on access to information, advocacy, information management; developed one citizen feedback survey on One Window Service Offices (OWSO), five new booklets and 10 different education materials on public information about commune and municipality public services; organised four district and one twenty four district councillor meetings and nineteen commune public outreach hearings on natural resources management; four consultative workshops, twelve campaigns and fifteen policy dialogues with national government institutions, parliaments and development partners, three analysis and two surveys with several joint statements for drivingly pushing government on adopting the access to information law; supported fifteen civil society networks and seven media, thirteen partnering teams, reflection meetings and coaching sessions to briefing on policy issues related fishery, extractive industry, economic land concessions, forestry and environment.

### **The above activities have produced following results:**

- API promoted access to information and supported One Window Service Offices (OWSO) in three municipalities building capacity of target officials on democratic accountability and awareness and knowledge of access to information and advocacy.
- API encouraged local governments to accept more inputs from local people and civil society activists, gained more support from media, civil society organisations, networks, and government officials, UN Agencies, and development partners on advocacy for the adoption of the access to information law and contributed to improved law enforcement and policy dialogues at local, national, regional and global levels.
- API promoted the demand for better services and governance in One Window Service Offices (OWSO) of 3 municipalities in 3 provinces raising awareness in 20,719 households. 6,270 clients accessed OWSO services 10,835 times. Local governments provided a platform for 3,714 citizens to voice their concerns and complaints regarding the practice of municipality administration and services.
- District councillors, District Governors and technical officials in five target districts and municipalities increased their understanding of democratic accountability and transparency. API encouraged local government listen to and accept more inputs from 2,032 local

people(722 women) and civil society. They addressed 5 legal cases on fishery issues, unofficial fees for public services and land conflict.

- Local authorities in six target communes have grown in their understanding about rights on access to information and importance of public access to public information. Commune councillors made 29 requests for information from higher levels to meet community needs. All 6 target communes improved Commune Council information management system. More information is available and 21,900 people accessed this information.
- A significantly increased number of people regularly participated in monthly commune meetings. 17 CBOs and 1,660 households attended commune investment plan meetings.
- CSOs and government officials, UN Agencies and development partners are knowledgeable about the importance of access to information law and supported access to information campaigns during national and ASEAN regional meetings and workshops in Cambodia.
- 15 civil society networks and 48 community representatives increased their knowledge and skills of advocacy, access to information and public policy and brought issues to the national government for fair compensations and justice.
- API supported advocates by producing advocacy tools and publications such handbooks, briefing papers, brochures, NGO joint position papers, CSO joint statements and case studies. With facilitation from API, these were used in high level dialogues between CSOs and the Government and Parliament.
- API has also been strengthening partnership among key development actors and established democratic space for the active engagement of civil society networks with the Government and Parliament. API strengthened civil society networks.
- The Government now is more accountable and took more and more actions on deforestation, fishery, environmental issue, extractive industry, forestry, fishery, land resettlement, De-centralization and De-concentration, and anti-corruption.
- API with network partners provided inputs in the process of law development on oil and gas, Environmental Impact Assessment and Access to Information Laws. It encouraged government enforcement of the legal framework on Decentralization and Deconcentration, land management, fishery policies. API facilitated policy dialogues that contributed to the Government passing a series of legal frameworks, regulations and actions to significantly address land conflicts.
- API's independence keeps increasing providing consultancy services to 3 INGOs for a service charge of USD15,642.69.

## **B. A summary of the progress made of the project**

### **B.1. Output level of API as described in the contract**

*1. Increased capacity of the Commune and District Councils and CBOs in the target to work for the benefits of local communities and acting as a channel for public information in response to the needs of communities and as a means to relay the voice of local communities to Parliament and the Government.*

**1. a: Milestones:** *Two training manuals and one social accountability tool, three handbooks and eleven advocacy training courses. Planned Yearly Result 2012 is three; Actual Yearly Result is six.*

***Four training manuals:*** API produced four Training manuals on Democratic Accountability, Grassroots Advocacy, Access to Information and Information Management. Training curriculums were developed in Khmer in response to the needs of commune councillors and community based organisations. The documents were translated into English for overseas stakeholders and donors.

**Twelve advocacy training courses:** Twelve training courses on facilitation skills, grassroots advocacy, democratic development, policy development were provided to improve the capacity of 300 (59 women) district government officials and CBOs in 4 provinces (Banteay Meanchey, Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnang and Pursat).

Government officials in target districts and municipalities improved their performance by increasing their consultation with citizens to collect information and become aware of issues so they have enough information and empowerment for decision making and to monitor the decisions made.

They became resource persons as local government officials shared their knowledge and best practices on “Good District Governance, Good Public Service” nationwide through media programmes for several times throughout the year (the Women Media Center 102.MHz).

**One social accountability tool:** A Citizen’s Satisfaction Survey was produced and used. 4,011 citizens contributed feedback on the performance of public service delivery by the One Window Service Office (OWSO) in Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Speu, Pursat and Sammeaki Meanchey District. A survey report was produced. The survey found that the payment of additional unofficial fees was reported by one fifth of service users (19 percent). Of these, 33 percent paid for services outside OWSO, and 38 percent paid appreciation costs for the assistance they received. A few people refused to provide details about the services they received.

Clients rated OWSO’s performance on five main indicators: duration of service, price of service, courtesy and communication of responsible officials, venues of OWSO, and information dissemination. The majority (88 percent) of service receivers were satisfied with OWSO’s service-delivery. Others (4 percent) were very dissatisfied, likely due to delays of getting supporting documents completed across many departments, extra expense, and the time consumed.

**Five booklets:** Five new booklets and 10 different education materials on public information about commune and municipality public services produced, printed and distributed in all target areas. 97 percent of citizens confirmed that they were satisfied and very satisfied with OWSO Information Education and Communication Materials based on the finding of The Citizens Feedback Survey report, 2012. During third quarter of 2012, just over two thirds (69 percent) of citizens were aware of the OWSO. Notably, three fourths (74 percent) learned of OWSO through information dissemination by project youth volunteers and IEC materials.

**1b: Milestones:** *16 public forums and 36 meeting dialogues on NRM issues at district level*  
*Planned Yearly Result 2012:10 and Actual Yearly Result 2012:28.*

**Four public forums on NRM issues in the target districts and municipalities:** 200 people (122 women) in communities directly dialogued with district government officials in four public fora on public services of One Window Service Offices (OWSO), land issues; land titling, natural resources, social and public security at the district level. 221 specific questions and issues were raised. Local authority is responded well with clear commitments to take more effective actions to address the community issues, particularly on the practice and issues of good governance.

**Twenty four meeting dialogues on NRM issues at district level**

Twenty four regular District Council meetings were held at district level to dialogue on NRM issues. Meetings and fora encouraged district government officials to listen to and accept more inputs from local people and civil society in five target districts and municipalities. They performed their duties to address 5 community cases in two districts (cutting flooded forest for

private agricultural lands, illegal digging in public fishery lots to make water ponds and 2 cases of land conflict that directly benefited 859 people). 70 percent of participants confirmed that they will access OWSO services in three provinces.

2. *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.*

- Target final year 2013: 88

**2a: Milestones: 8 advocacy in access to information trainings**

- Planned Yearly Result 2012: 2
- Actual Yearly Result 2012: 6

**Six trainings on advocacy in access to information:** A training needs assessment was conducted by an external consultant in January 2012. The assessment was based on a survey conducted in target communes. Then six trainings on advocacy in access to information were conducted. Of those attending (119 commune councillors, 24 CBOs, 62 municipality governors & District Councillors, 68 OWSO technical officials, 7 medias, 20 senior national government officials from National Committee for Subnational Democratic Development, 10 parliamentary members) from the 6 target communes and 5 districts and municipalities, most improved their understanding. They now have the confidence to promote information disclosure regarding forestry, fishery, land, environmental, water usage, land title registration, commune election, commune investment plan, OWSO and DO services, official fee and procedures at both local and national levels.

Example: Target commune councillors made 29 requests to higher level of government institutions for information regarding forestry, fishery, environment, agriculture, and water usage from District Councils in order to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Six target communes (*Svay Rumpear, Toul Ampil, Tholk Veau, Sethei, Kouk Balangk, and Ta Lam*) and five municipalities and districts (*Kompong Chhnang, Chhbar Mon and Pursat, Samaki Meanchey and Mongkol Borei*) improved information management systems for sharing and disclosure regarding government development, land title registration, commune elections, commune investment plans for 2012, official fees and technical procedures for the government complaint mechanism for the 21,900 people they serve.

**2b: Milestones: 30 workshops on the access to information and 68 public forums on NRM and Good Governance issues; Planned Yearly Result 2012: 18; Actual Yearly Result 2012: 23.**

**4 national workshops on the access to information:** Four workshops on the access to information were conducted for the issue based NGO networks in Cambodia. More civil society networks had knowledge about access to information and supported an access to information law campaign.

**19 Public fora on NRM and Good Governance issues:** Support and organisation of 19 commune public hearings (forums) about information disclosure on issues relating to legal public prices, natural resource management and legislation on issues of concern was provided. 1,817 participants, (642 women) in 19 communes/sangkats gained comprehensive knowledge on

commune issues and OWSO information, based on the information from forum feedback forms. 260 questions relating to all types of services and issues were raised by participants. The guest-speakers answered all questions clearly, particularly the issues and services relating to transportation, construction and the District Ombudsman office (DO). Participants requested that the government have a set of services including relevant services that should be delivered by the OWSO. The Svay Rumpear commune was strengthened with the concept of subject matter and is protecting an intervention on the environmental, forestry and water usage issues. The Toul Ampil commune chief committed to have a sound mechanism for garbage collection in the commune.

*3. Civil society organisation networks, with effective lobby and advocacy skills and understanding about access to information, working with the Government and the Cambodian Parliament for the benefit of Cambodia*

Target final year 2013: 52

**3a: Milestones:** *10 trainings on advocacy on NRM and D&D policy training ; Planned Yearly Result 2012: 2; Actual Yearly Result 2012: 2*

**Two trainings on advocacy on NRM and D&D policy:** The training needs of CPN members were identified through conducting an assessment on advocacy capacity. Two training courses on lobbying skills and advocacy in natural resource management were conducted to improve the capacity of 47 members of Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF) and Community Peace building Network (CPN), Cambodian Coalition of the Fishers (CCF). Participant knowledge of advocacy increased 37% and they produced network advocacy plans.

**3b: Milestones:** *Support 15 advocacy campaign of 15 CBOs/CSOs networks in dialogue with the parliament, the government and the development partners; 15 Civil Society Lobby Group meetings; 30 Lobby Group meetings with the Parliament.*

Planned Yearly Result 2012:12 and Actual Yearly Result 2012:15

**Support 15 advocacy campaigns of 15 CBOs/CSOs networks in dialogue with parliament, government and development partners:** API has led or assisted 15 NGO and community-based networks. The network partners have been supported through advocacy capacity building on access to information knowledge and extended dialogues with members of parliament and government. These supports boost the networks in achieving their goals and objectives. The groups include: Access to Information Working Group (A2IWG), Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency (CRRT), Extractive Industry Social Environmental Impact (EISEI), The Working Group for Partnerships in Decentralization (WGPD), The Community Peace Network (CPN), Housing Right Task Force (HRTF), Fisheries Action Coalition Team (FACT), Coalition of Cambodian Fisher (CCF), National Advocacy Conference Organisation Committee (NACOC), TAI Cambodia, The Coalition for Integrity and Social Accountability (CISA), Environment Forum Network (EFN), Cambodia Pesticide Reduction Network (PRN-C), River Cambodian Coalition (RCC), and Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (Plus) (REDD+).

Most of the above networks have been significantly supported by API in the following ways:

- A2IWG:** API is secretariat of A2IWG. API led six monthly A2IWG membership meetings about the access to information law campaign. API led A2IWG to organise four fora on Access to Information with four sectorial issues included forestry, housing in settlement, extractive industry and environment. The network members were



aware of Access Rights (access to information, public participation and access to justice) and consultation on the draft law on Access to Information. The consultation fora found that the government has performed poorly in law enforcement and in a less transparent way. 100% of participants confirmed their support of the lobbying process for the adoption of an 'access to information' law in Cambodia.

2. **CRRT & EISEI:** API supported CRRT to lead the first and second ASEAN People Forum on Extractive Industry in 2012 when Cambodia was chair of ASEAN. ASEAN CSOs' Statement was produced and submitted to ASEAN Summit. API facilitated one official meeting between CRRT & EISEI and Commission 2: Economic Finance, Banking and Audit of the National Assembly were conducted with Representatives of Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Impact Network (EISEI) and Members of Parliament. CSOs demanded regular dialogues with the parliament. Two policy issues related to extractive industry, economic and environmental impact were discussed. Commission 2 of the National Assembly agreed to have further dialogues with CSOs on Extractive Industry Management.

API supported CRRT and EISEI to conduct two consultation fora on access to information. These aimed at raising awareness and building capacity about access to information and its significant contribution for development in Cambodian society. Consultations are, therefore, to ensure that the draft law of Access to Information Law is taken into account.

Five bi-monthly meetings were organised with participation by all organisation members including CRRT, DPA/EISEI, API, NGO Forum, YRDP, CCIM, NTFP, and Star Kampuchea. All members updated the achievements of their project activities that contributed to the network vision and discussed a way forward.

3. **WGPD:** API supported WGPD to conduct four dialogue meetings with D&D development partners, NCDD, and parliament in order to discuss D&D policy and the government's Three Year Implementation Plan (IP3) implementation. API also supported WGPD to organise regular 7 WGPD regular membership meetings and workshops on Capacity Assessment, WGPD strategic plan 2012-2015 development; Select WGPD representative in participating the National Working on Social Accountability; Dialogue with the NCDD and Ministry of Interior, Parliament; Development Partners (ADB, World Bank, SIDA, UNDP, UNICEF, GIZ), related to D&D progress and challenges; Social Accountability Framework development, Selecting Steering Committee, membership and Secretariat.

All Key development Partners, including Ministry of Interior (MOI), National Committee for Subnational Development (NCDD) and National Assembly accepted "CSO Position Paper in 2012 on D&D" with the spirit and commitment to improve the implementation of the Decentralisation and De-concentration (D&D) policy and the Organic Law and agreed to further dialogue with CSOs on D&D policy.

API is chair of WGPD. All key stakeholders opened spaces for WGPD's participation in regular high level meetings including Development Partner on D&D monthly meetings, quarterly meeting between CSOs and MOI and NCDD, six monthly meetings with TWG on D&D and other several consultative meetings. Voices of CSOs working on D&D had been raised in high level meetings of the policy makers.

4. **CPN:** API supported CPN members to build capacity on access to information and advocacy through conducting A2I consultation fora, an advocacy training course for 23 network representatives (7 women). They confirmed their support for A2I law.

5. **HRTF:**API supported HRTF target communities to build capacity on access to information, documented a case study on Forced Eviction and Advocacy in Phnom Penh (The Boeung Kok Lake), a consultation forum on access to information, a training courses on Lobbying Skills for 24 members (of which 11 are women).Participant knowledge of advocacy increased 22% based on training pre and post-tests.A lobbying plan against forced eviction issues was produced during the training.HRTF members and communities have expressed strong support for access to information legislation.
6. **FACT & CCF:**API documented a case study onPolicy Advocacy in Fishery. This case supported FACT and CCF to prepare in advocacy campaign in 2012.
7. **The Access Initiative (TAI)** Cambodia, led by the API,has supported the Environment Forum Network (EFN), Pesticide Reduction Network-Cambodia (PRN-C), River Cambodia Coalition (RCC), Reduce Emission from Forest Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) in producing a joint statement on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration and reviewing its enforcement effectiveness through organising two foraon access to information on environment issues, Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration and the Mekong related issues, particularly on the resettlement plan of the Lower SeSan2 Hydropower Dam Development Project and dialogue with the members of parliament.Fora found that poor law enforcement in Cambodia related to the issues above. Over three hundred community members confirmed their willingness to participate with the Access to Information Working Group for supporting a Passage of Access to Information Law campaign in Cambodia. Five communities along the SeSan and Srepok Rivers of Stung Trenggainedbetter understanding of their issues and needs and developed an advocacy strategy for a good resettlement plan and fair compensation.

CSOs requested a regular dialogue mechanism between CSOs and the parliament. The Chair of the Senate Commission on Planning, Investment, Agriculture, Rural Development, Environment and Water Resources (Commission 3) confirmed his interest in the discussion with CSOs on environmental issues.

8. **National Advocacy Conference Organising Committee (NACOC):** API and 17 organisations worked together within several technical meetings throughout 2012 to organize the 7th Annual National Advocacy Conference on “*Working Together for Good Governance on Land and Natural Resources in Cambodia*”. Five critical issues discussed included the extractive industry, indigenous rights, forestry, land resettlement, and land legislation. 359 participants (35 weregovernment officials, 114 came from civil society organisations, and 209 were community representatives, with 110 of these women) participated and debated the issues above. The Joint Statement on issues and concerns on serious impacts related to the governance of land and natural resources produced by the conference wassubmitted to Cambodia’s Deputy Prime Minister and the 35 senior government officials from the Office of The Council of Ministers, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, Ministry of Environment, Officials from the sub-national level. More than 18 local and international NGOs worked together to find the most feasible ways and sound strategies to improve good governance of land and natural resources through this the 7<sup>th</sup>annual advocacy conference.

H.E. MrYimChhay Ly, Deputy Prime Minister, agreed to forward the CSO’s joint statement of concerns to the Prime Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister supported the 7th annual Conference, its objectives and topics including fishery issues. He recognised the importance of the conference to highlight very important issues to achieve the government’s goal to reduce poverty and increase economic growth with the sustainable use of NRM with good governance principle. He confirmed positive progress and commitment to address land and

environmental issues. He recognised the importance of public participation in country development and good governance of NRM, recognised the importance of organising more strong CBOs. He supported the conference themes, results of discussion, CSOs' statements and recommendations, which positively support the government plan 2009-2013. In addition, he supported and recognised the roles and the importance of NGOs in promoting governance of natural resources, environment and land management.

9. **CISA:** API supported CISA to conduct two member meetings to discuss the strategy to disseminate the anti-corruption law. API supported CISA to conduct a training course on Anti-corruption Law for 31 members.
10. **EFN, PRN-C, RCC, REDD+:** API and A2IWG supported EFN, PRN-C, RCC, REDD+ to organise a forum on access to information on environment issues. They identified key practical information highly needed, challenges, their efforts and strategies for supporting the practice of access to information, public participation and access to justice related to forestry, land concession, climate change issues. They then confirmed their willingness to participate with the Access to Information Working Group for supporting an Access to Information Law campaign in Cambodia.

**4. *The Law on the Access to Information will be passed with significant input from civil society and NGOs.***

**1. Target final year 2013: 82**

**4a: Milestones:** *Facilitate 40 access to information campaign by commune councillors and CBOs and 60 Access to Information Working Group meetings; Planned Yearly Result 2012: 18 and Actual Yearly Result 2012: 18.*

**Facilitate 12 campaigns on access to information by commune councillors and CBOs:** 12 access to information campaigns were conducted by commune councillors and CBOs. A significant increase of people engaged in local council affairs, such as regularly participating in monthly commune meetings, occurred. 19,436 community members participated in dissemination activities. 17 CBOs and 1,660 households attended commune investment plan meetings.

API produced and printed publications regarding public services of targeted commune and municipalities. Publications including posters, booklets, books, leaflets, banners, and the laws related to commune access to information and OWSO were produced in Khmer in collaboration with the Access to Information Working Group, municipality governors, Commune Councils, Ministry of Interior and The Asia Foundation. They are:

The 21,329 copies of 5 different booklets on information on commune and municipality public services, 132 OWSO banners, 31,299 posters, and 88,120 brochures were distributed and displayed throughout at least 270 villages within municipalities of Pursat, Kampong Chhnang and districts of Chhbar Mon, Sannaki Meanchey, and Mongkol Borei. 19,436 households in target areas received materials.

**6 Access to Information Working Group Meetings:** Access to Information Working Group increased its members from 19 in 2011 to 23 organisations in 2012 and 11 NGOs registered to be partners in promoting Access to Information Law campaigns. More civil society networks had knowledge about access to information and supported access to information campaigns. These included: seven media stations (ABC, VOD, Comfrel, 102, 103, 106.5 radio station and national Khmer television-TVK), 2 newspapers (Phnom Penh Post and Cambodia Daily), Cambodian websites, eight civil society networks (Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency

(CRRT); The Community Peace Network (CPN); Housing Right Task Force (HRTF); Extractive Industry Social Environmental Impact (EISEI); Environment Forum Network (EFN); Cambodia Pesticide Reduction Network (PRN-C); River Cambodian Coalition (RCC); Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (Plus) (REDD+). The information broadcasted outlined the concepts of access to information, the current situation of access to information and related laws in Cambodia, case studies, and public services provided by OWSO.

***4b: Milestones: Work with UN agencies and Government Ministries on Access to Information Law development with 10 joint initiatives; Planned Yearly Result 2012:2 and Actual Yearly Result 2012:5***

*Work with UN agencies and the Government Ministries on Access to Information Law development with 5 joint initiatives:*

API facilitated the discussions on Access to information Law related to extractive industry and natural resources in several national and regional events including a national workshop, two regional 2012 ASEAN Civil Society Conference/Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF), the 7th annual national advocacy conference, the 19th meeting of the Government Development Partner Coordinating Committee (GDCC). To support the discussions, API produced three analyses and two surveys on access to information.

All above events produced joint statements which recommended the Cambodian government as well as Asian countries to adopt an Access to Information Law. These events positively influenced the Cambodian government and parliament to promote the legislative process of an Access to Information and Law. The National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development (NCDD) cooperated with civil society organisations, particularly API, to build capacity of national and sub-national government officials on transparency and Access to Information. The opposition party is also pushing Cambodian parliament to review the drafted law on Access to Information.

More than 1,200 delegates representing various civil society organisations supported adopting an Access to Information Law in Cambodia as well as in ASEAN countries. Public attention and efforts to support the passage of an access to information law have been made.

**B.2. Agreements at the level of API outcome**

*Three target districts, 8 communes and Phnom Penh municipality have been implementing the good governance. The number of provinces and cities in the target final year 2013:24*

***1a: Improved transparency and accountability and public participation in sub-national government, particularly district and commune councils. Planned Yearly Result 2012:N/A and Actual Yearly Result: 22***

Two target districts, six communes, three municipalities and the Phnom Penh municipality have improved governance. Significant improvements were in the areas of promoting people's participation, public consultation, and disclosure of public service information. More and more people accessed public information and basic services with transparent procedures and fees. They increased their efforts and coordination among vertical and horizontal government agencies and community based organisations to address community issues, particularly issues related to natural resource management.

Individual target districts, municipalities, and communes have demonstrated their changes as following:

**Mongkol Borei district:**

The District Council Chief expressed to API in January 2013 that there was remarkable progress in District Council and Board of Governors capacity. API provided a support and inspired them to get ready to play their roles and duties with high responsibility and accountability.

24 CBOs are more actively engaged with local council affairs. They were informed and consulted by local authorities on daily development agendas. They participated in the decision making of District Councils (DC) for 16 decisions, which is one of the most important purposes of establishment of “Community Conflict Resolution Committees”. All DC decisions were announced publicly, including the distribution of important public documents such as the 2012 district monthly activity plans, progress reports, regular district monthly meeting minutes and decisions to the public, particularly to members of CBOs, Commune Councillors from different political parties and other line government officials. This has led to an increasing public participation and attention in the local authority affairs.

**Kouk Ballangk commune**

CBO representatives: Mao Sam On and Yorng Yin expressed their interest about support of API people via CBOs representatives confidentially expressing their concerns and raised issues in the monthly District Councillors meetings as they have never done that before. They know possible ways to boost their concerns and issues to be solved. There is significant increasing of community people participation and contribution in the commune development projects, particular fishery community management, road and dam construction projects.

**Sameakki Mean Chey district:**

District Council, District Governors and district administration officials expressed their confidence and interest since the presence of API, whose assistance helped build their capacity to function and play their roles and responsibilities within Sub-National Administration's (SNA) mandates entrusted by the Upper Government. API not only augmented capacity but also supplied complementary tools and systems that improved their work.”

Commune councillors and chiefs from both **Thlok Vien and Sedthei** strongly supported and welcomed the presence of API. A Commune Chief stressed that they are happy to be disclosing information and serving basic services to people. They don't charge fees for the poor related to civil status for the poor, including service fees for obtaining of certificates, certified letters, and the like even though commune councils faced some difficulties paying the government for its annual partial contribution.

**Svay Rumpear and Toul Ampil Communes**

There is increased community participation in monthly commune meeting both attendance and contributing ideas. Before no community members had attended commune monthly meetings. Currently 6 to 8 people always attend every commune meeting. Moreover, the number of communities participating in village meetings doubled from 25 to 50.

It observed that all above commune have well-organized commune documents for public accessibility. Most communities accessed registration and administration services.

The poverty rate of target communes and districts decreased for all except one target commune which are partly contributed by the API's interventions in a few years as table below.

Target Areas	Poverty rate	Poverty rate
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Name of district/commune	2010	2012
Basedth district	33.8	30.8
Toul Ampil commune	32.9	29.7
Svay Rumpear Commune	29	27.3
Sameakki Mean Cheydistrict	32.1	29.1
Sedthei Commune	30.6	29.3
Thlok Vien Commune	33.1	31.5
Mongkol Borei district	26.1	22.6
Kouk Ballangk Commune	29.8	26.4
Ta Lam Commune	27.3	27.4
Pursat Municipality	27.3	19
Kompong Chhnang Municipality	14.7	12.7
Chhbar Mon Municipality	14.4	12.6

Source: Royal Government of Cambodia, Ministry of Planning, *Poverty Reduction in Provinces, Capital City, Municipalities, Districts, Khan, Communes and Sangkat, Commune Data Base, issued on July 2012.*

**API enhanced people's participation in One Window Service Offices (OWSO) in Kampong Chhnang, Chhbar Mon and Pursat Municipalities.** 70 OWSO and local authorities improved their performance in provision of public services at the municipality level. It is one of the best practices of the government good governance projects in Cambodia. API has facilitated 714 citizens in providing feedback on OWSO's services. As a result, OWSO significantly improved their services by listening to citizens' feedback. All municipalities actively cooperated with the API to produce and disseminate educational materials (IEC) for raising public awareness and understanding OWSO. 20,719 households approached and accessed the OWSO services after the project outreach activities.

It resulted in 69 percent of potential clients being aware of the OWSO. Based on a citizen satisfaction survey conducted by the API among 714 people, API's initiative and action had provided a great support to OWSO. Business people (52 percent), farmers or labourers (12 percent), teachers (8 percent), public servants (7 percent), students (6 percent), and remaining respondents including taxi and motor taxi drivers, nurses and homemakers (15 percent), accessed OWSO services. 10,835 services were accessed by 6,270 clients. At the end of 2012, there was a 33% increase in clients requesting services and a 192% increase in OWSO income. The survey found that the majority (88 percent) were satisfied with OWSO's service-delivery. Others (4 percent) were very dissatisfied, likely due to delays in obtaining supporting documents and needing to complete documents across many line departments, a time consuming and expensive process.

*1b: Increased engagement and open dialogue between community members and (local) government on important of promoting access to information, human rights, democracy and developments issues.*

#### 2. Yearly Result 2012:3

More people accessed public information and basic services. 2,269 people (1,444 women) in target communes accessed health services without paying unofficial fees. 3,398 people accessed commune services related to birth or death certificates and marriage licences paying only official fees. There were many cases where conflicts had been resolved.

A land case of 8 hectares and other 3 cases on illegal logging, illegal fishery, and air pollution were resolved completely. These cases came to light in the focus group discussions during follow up and coaching activities with 12 CBOs.

API has supported both local authorities and community organisations in addressing together environmental issues, such as water pollution and pollutant utilisation, in farming systems and waste management along the Mongkol Borei River. The discussions were held at the district level with participation of 353 villagers and local government officials.

At the same time, API has supported district councillors and governors to play more active roles in supporting commune councillors. 47% of the 132 commune council meetings in target districts were conducted with the presence and support of district councillors. District councillors have brought to the regular monthly district councillor meetings issues that could not be solved by commune councillors.

Key issues are natural resource disputes and environment issues, including water pollution, pollutant utilisation in farming systems, waste management, fishery management, climate change, and unofficial fee payment for public services. Some issues addressed were:

- 1) Air pollution in Sethey commune: An unregistered factory operated in Sethey Commune caused pollution in Chamkar village. Considering the adverse effect of factory's activities on the people living around the area and their complaints, it was ordered to be shut down by district and provincial officials.
- 2) A land conflict between community members and Krang Lavea Pagodawas successfully and peacefully solved by the District Council assisting the Commune Council.
- 3) District and commune council and CBOs addressed issue of unofficial fee payment on the public services.
- 4) A land conflict in Sambour Commune remains under intervention. A District Committee was set up to investigate and redistribute land to families who are entitled to the disputed land.
- 5) A land conflict in Sameakki Meanchey District which had been ongoing since 2008 was resolved in 2012 after the District Governor, District Council and Provincial governors intervened by gathering all relevant people for a number of meetings. A committee they set up resolved the problem.

The government's legal framework: the proposed of Access to Information Law, Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Law, Hydropower Plans, and Social Accountability Framework, were open for public participation and involvement in decision making from relevant stakeholders and were published and distributed nationwide to the public.

Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister and the 35 senior government officials from different ministries including 18 local and international NGOs worked together with the API to improve good governance of land and natural resources in Cambodia. This made API's program of activities implementing with great influences to top policy makers in addressing natural resource management issues at both local and national levels.

The Government has strengthened law enforcement and implementation in a more accountable manner, particularly the Law on Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management, The Land Law, Law on Mineral Resources Management and Protection, The Forestry Law, The Fishery Law, Law on Governance of Water Resources, Labour Law, Organic Law, Sub-Decree on Environment Impact Assessment Process, Sub-decree on Addressing the Socio-Economic Impacts of Development, Sub-Decree on Fishing Lot Cancellation, Sub-Decree on Community Forestry Management, Civil Procedure Code, Criminal Procedure Code; Sub-decree on Procedures of Registration of Land of Indigenous Communities, Sub-Decree for Economic Land Concession and National Policy on Land Title Distribution. However, CSOs observed that the

independence and impartiality of the judiciary when hearing a case to ensure that the rights of all parties are fully upheld and equally addressed has not seen significant improvement.

### **C. Reflective Analysis: success and failure**

Internal rules and leadership structures of the Senate and National Assembly were changed. It led to a change in the ways of communication between parliament and CSOs. Cambodia was Chair of ASEAN Summit in 2012. The government and parliament were occupied with several ASEAN summits, resulting in the API's work plan to organise a parliament workshop was postponed.

The Royal Government of Cambodia confirmed it is reviewing the Draft Access to Information Policy Framework and the second draft of Access to Information Law that were submitted to the National Assembly by the opposition party. This was rejected by Commission 5 of the National Assembly on 22 January 2013 after being proposed by the opposition party. Local, national and regional advocacy events in Cambodia produced joint statements to support Access to Information Law. The Access to Information Law statement was supported as the highest priority recommendation by the 500 civil societies in Cambodia. More issue-based NGOs networks in Cambodia and in the region confirmed their support for adopting an access to information law in Cambodia. The API and the A2I Working Group will speed up the progress of the legislation of the access to information in Cambodia through mobilising the sub-national government, Sectorial NGO and CBO networks and local community people to participate in information demand campaigns. The results of the campaigns will be submitted to the Government and the Parliaments in order to alert them that freedom of information and Access to Information Law are necessary for Cambodian people.

API advocated for public information disclosure at local and national levels. API acts as CSO Representative for the Procurement Committee of the Government Anti Corruption Unit. It pushed some government ministries to disclose more public information. Ministry of Interior, National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development (NCDD), Councils for Development of Cambodia (CDC) and Ministry of Economic and Finance, Ministry of Commerce are publishing more public information. This includes information related to their functions, official fees of public services, the type and form of records held, relevant laws and policy documents, audited accounts, services to the public, achievements and so on.

### **D. The key lessons learned**

1. Working in partnership between non-state and state to improve good governance is effective. However, more time was spent implementing project activities, particularly on communication, co-ordination and consultation.
2. Using monitoring and social accountability tools in deep consultation between non-state and state actors under a partnership project, the findings and citizens' feedback to improve government services are highly recognised and accepted. Organising reflection meetings among public service providers and other relevant public institutions improved public service performance. Clients/community voices gathered during public forums, reflection meetings, and citizen feedback assessments. These are seen as positive contributions to national policy makers to improve policy performance.



### **E. The cooperation with other local/stakeholders**

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 achievements in 2012 are due to ten highly committed and able staff with the effective support of the Board of Directors, volunteers, organisational advisors and short term local and international consultants and experts. API's work targets were carefully chosen and outputs were strengthened through the collaboration, partnership and support of six commune councils, two district council, three municipality council, five provincial organisation partners along with other key stakeholders such as the Secretariats of the National Assembly and Senate and API partner networks that are complimenting the work of the Advocacy and Policy Institute. They are API provincial organisation partners (the Village Support Group, the Cambodian Organisation for Women Support, the Provincial Association of Commune and the Sangkat, the MlupBaitong) and six target commune councils (Commune Council of ThlokVien, Sethei, Kok Balaing, SvayRompea, ToulAmpil and Ta Lam) and two district councils (SammakiMeanchey and Mongkol Borei), three municipalities (Kampong Chhnang, Chhbar Mon, Pursat) for implementing the projects at local level with clear roles and responsibilities signed by Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with Ministry of Interior. At the national level partnership for project implementation, there are Access to Information Working Group, Civil Society Lobby Group, Access Initiative Coalition-Cambodia; Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency, Coalition for Integrity and Social Accountability, Working Group for Partnerships in Decentralisation (WGPD), National Advocacy Conference Organising Committee for the annual conference, Fisheries Action Coalition Team (FACT) and Community Peace Network (CPN), Extractive Industry Social Environmental Impact (EISEI), Community Peace Network (CPN), Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF), Coalition of Cambodian Fisher (CCF), Environment Forum Network (EFN), Cambodia Pesticide Reduction Network (PRN-C), River Cambodian Coalition (RCC), Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (Plus) (REDD+), and NGO Forum on Cambodia.

API had a solid track record of its networks, partners and even beneficiaries achieving as much as they could with limited resources. API has learned that it is impossible to accomplish anything without cooperation and networking. API is a driving force pulling diverse groups together to accomplish our common goals. API is essential to initiating networking for the benefit of organisations and people in the nation as a whole. API continues to maximise its resources and build on the support of its networks and partners to obtain the best outcomes.

### **F. Organisational performance and changes**

In order to effectively achieve the strategic priorities it is essential to have proper supports, strategic plans, and quality human resources in place.

**Principles of good governance:** API continues to be bound by clear lines of accountability and transparency in API's actions and procedures to ensure effective management of the organisation and its resources.

- a. The report of finance audits conducted twice a year had no comments on finance management.
- b. 12 regular staff and management meetings were held in 2012.
- c. The BoD meeting approved the revised API'S Personnel Manual and Financial Guidelines and Accounting Procedures in August 2012 and in December 2012 meeting approved the Workplan and Budget for 2012.

**Funding:** To ensure adequate funding for strategic priorities to be delivered effectively and provide value for money, API submitted funding concept notes and proposals to several donors including: The Asia Foundation, British Embassy, AusAID, and Result for Development Institute, the Embassy of Finland, Open Society Foundation, Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), SIDA, Thailand Environmental Institute, and UN Democracy Fund.

The Asia Foundation, Result for Development Institute, Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), and Thailand Environmental Institute supported API.

*Please see attached API financial report 2012.*

**Human resources:** API middle management level changed significantly. Three heads of unit were recruited, including a Local Democratic Development Programme Manager, an Access to Information Program Manager, a Support Civil Society Organisation Programme Officer, and an Admin/Finance Officer and Admin/Finance Manager.

46 youth volunteers were recruited to build their capacities and exposure to social development work and to support project activity implementation in all target communes and municipalities. One volunteer was responsible for one commune in the field and each programme in the API office. 38 volunteers were responsible for the OWSO project for information dissemination and collection of feedbacks from 3,714 citizens in 16 different communes. Three new part-time project staffs for the One Window Service Office project were recruited. One staff was responsible for each target province.

**Lines of accountability:** Every new staff member recruited is orientated to the organisation's policies and procedures and their job description by the administration/finance unit as well as a proper hand over from the team member who resigned.

**Strategies and procedures:** The API's by-laws, financial policies and administration procedures were revised in 2012 in accordance with current donor requirements and the changes of API's management staff in late 2011.

Three regular bi-monthly staff meetings, 12 programme operation meetings and five Management Committee meetings took place at the API office.

**Research:** Provided adequate research resources to allow staff to update training materials and publications and to possess in depth knowledge on their training subjects. API will find partners with expertise and experience in research to undertake research and employ the findings to support advocacy trainings and actions on access to information, OWSO and natural resource management.



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25 February 2012