



Advocacy and Policy Institute

Annual Report 2016



Contents

Message from Chair of the Board of Directors	3
Forward from the Previous Director	4
Acronyms	5
Executive summary	6
1. Introduction	10
1.1 Our values	11
1.2 Our strategic objectives	11
1.3 Our inclusivity	12
1.4 Our implementing strategic approach	12
1.5 Our target groups	13
1.6 Where we work	13
2. The context of our work	14
3. Our programme achievements during the year	15
3.1 Our facts and figure	15
3.2 Our programme changes toward long term impact	18
3.3.1 Policy change	18
3.3.2 System change	22
5. Our organisational achievements	31
5.1 Partner and networks portfolio	32
5.2 Budget and expenses	33
6. Our challenges and learning experiences	33
6.1 Our challenges	33
6.2 Our learnings	34
7. Our focus on the sustainability	34
8. Conclusions for 2016 and looking to the future	35

Message from Chair of the Board of Directors

As Chair of the API Board, I and the rest of the members are confident that this has been a successful year's work. During the year, we maintained our focus on three programmes outlined in the Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018: access to information, promoting local democratic development and supporting and strengthening civil society organization networks, in which gender and youth are mainstreamed. The staff is committed to uphold the values of API and have worked tirelessly in their efforts to complete their tasks and to run their projects effectively and efficiently.

This year's annual report contains many achievements that API has made in fulfilling its responsibilities. We built on the successes of our previous endeavors and have made significant changes to our target beneficiaries. We have been working with the Government and civil society toward the passage of access to information legislation, strengthening the rights holder/duty bearer relationship, educating and empowering CBOs and citizens for civic engagement, building the capacity of change for supply and demand sides on the areas of decentralization reform and social accountability. We have collaborated with a wide range of civil society actors, locally, regionally and internationally. These are all essential elements in our desire to improve the knowledge and skills of civil society through the Capacity Building for Change approach of API.

Strong local governance, transparency and accountability in all of our practice areas are critical to the long-term success of delivering our five strategic outcomes. We will maintain our focus in fulfilling our strategic outcomes through three programme areas. However we are planning to regenerate our programme to be more focused and increasing the scale of our interventions following the key recommendations from the impact assessment reports. This is a key focus among other important programmatic work as we look to increase the impact that API is having.

Finally, the entire Board and API's employees would like to thank our donors, development partners, implementing partners and Royal Government of Cambodia for their continued support and collaboration.

I am looking forward to a New Year with new challenges and achievements for API.



**Soeurng Chandara
Chair
Board of Directors**

Forward from the previous Director

On behalf of API staff and Management Committee, I would like to congratulate and state my appreciation to the API Boards of Directors, donors and implementing partners and the Royal Government of Cambodia and private sector for their collective efforts, valuable contributions and tireless supports to API. This support has enabled the organization to successfully achieve its strategic outcomes through significant achievements in its project implementation.

2016 was another busy year for API and it was an amazing to see significant achievements highlighted in this annual report and the impact assessment report conducted by an Independent Consultant. Excellent results have been achieved towards our Strategic Outcomes through our 8 successfully implemented projects financially supported by **Bread for the World, DanChurchAid, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the European Union, Care Cambodia, UNESCO, Development Innovative (USAID), and Transparency International**. The capacity of local government and community based organisations and its networks have been strengthened to better serve citizens and provide greater community knowledge to demand basic services and access information, and their confidence to engage and influence local decision making processes. Many issues and concerns raised by citizens have been addressed and the lives of the poor in the target areas have been improved and much hope for the future has been shared.

Our profile is high at both regional and national level through our intervention and support in working with the Government and civil society toward the passage of access to information legislation, decentralization reform including social accountability and networks strengthening by representing CSOs networks in technical working groups on decentralization reform and access to information, working groups, CSOs networks steering committee and regional CSOs networks.

A new organizational structure has been implemented to make ensure API has the appropriate number of staff in appropriate roles for effective implementation of API programmes and have the ability to implement our fundraising plan for financial sustainability of the organization.

At the same time, we recognized that some identified key challenges highlighted in annual and impact assessment reports such as the, financial sustainability and demands from the emerging national, regional and international development agendas will need to be addressed. The recommendations stated in this report which will be turned to an action plan, and we will also expand our interventions through partnership with CCC and WGPD at sub-national level and grass-root level networks.

API has experienced almost a decade of stable leadership. I have been the Director of API since December 2005. However, the period of a Director's appointment has now been restricted to a maximum of two 3-year terms, meaning that I have stepped down to take over a role of a Senior Technical Advisor for 12 months focusing on fundraising, business development and service contracts. I wish the new Director appointed in December 2016 well over the next few years and we will work closely together to achieve a stronger and more successful API. He brings a wealth of experience to the role from which we can all learn. I am confident in the new management leadership of Mr. Chea Vantha, my successor, will make API future difference and growth.

I am looking forward to an exciting and interesting new era for API.



Sinthay Neb, Ex-Director



Acronyms

A2I	Access to Information	IVR	Interactive Voice Response
A2I WG	Access to Information Working Group	INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
AA	Annual Assessment	IP3-II	The first three year implementation plan – phase two
ASEAN	Association of South East Asia Nation	JAAP	Joint Accountability Action Plan
BftW	Bread for the World	KBSC	Khmer Buddhist Society in Cambodia
BKA	Bandos Komar Association	LA	Local Authority
BWG	Budget Working Group	LOGIN	Local Governance Initiatives and Networks
CAF	Community Accountability Facilitator	LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organisation
CADDP	Cambodian Agency Development of Disability and the Poor	MoI	Ministry of Interior
CBOs	Community Based Organisations	MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
CC	Commune Councilor	MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
CCC	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia	MC	Management Committee
CCiM	Cambodian Centre for Independence Media	NRM	Natural Resource Management
CDP	Commune Development Plan	NRSC	Natural Resource Management Committee
CIP	Commune Investment Plan	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CRY	Coalition of Road Safety	NEP	NGOs Education Partnership
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations	NCDD	National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development
DC	District Councilor	NCDDS	National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development - Secretariat
DCA	Dan Church Aid	OIA	Organisational Impact Assessment
DIP	District Investment Plan	PVT	Prom Vihear Thor Organisation
DPA	Development and Partnership in Action	PDP	People Centre for Development
DI	Development Innovative	RSTL	Road Safety Traffic Law
DPs	Development Partners	SDG	Strengthening Democratic Governance
D&D	Decentralisation and Deconcentration	TWG	Technical Working Group
DM	District and Municipality	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
DELGOSEA	Democratic Local Governance in Southeast Asia	USAID	United State Agency for International development
ECCD	Early Childhood	WMC	Women Media Centre
GRSP	Global Road Safety Partnership	WGPD	Working Group for Partnership in Decentralisation
ISAF	Implementation of Social Accountability Framework	YCC	Youth Councils of Cambodia

Executive summary

API is a leading advocacy capacity building institution, working on promoting access to information, decentralization and policy dialogue. The Institute has forged its reputation through the delivery of advocacy training courses and the production of advocacy publications in both Khmer and English to promote understanding of advocacy, access to information (A2I) and the Government's Decentralisation and De-concentration (D&D) policy. API is becoming increasingly involved in direct advocacy and policy activities, sponsoring research and functioning as a think tank.

The ASAIN integration is one of the positive contributing factors for Cambodia to focus on the improvement in its economic and political issues through pushing the implementation of the three reforms:

- Public financial management.
- De-concentration and decentralization.
- Public administration with the purpose of streamlining planning, identifying synergies and strengthening momentum.

Another positive factor is the most significant changes have been brought about by the dynamic new Ministers who really commit to move the reform agendas forward.

Last year, the trends in funding indicated that many donors were reducing and are continuing to reduce their commitments to Cambodia. International and National NGOs were competing for a dwindling development dollar. However API was able to mobilize its available resources to succeed in implementing its strategic plan. This success is due to the amazingly ambitious, mutually supportive development partners (DPs) and partners including the Government and the enthusiastic staff team who are determined to do everything to the best of their ability.

In 2016, we worked in seven provinces: Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnang, Banteay Meanchey, Oddor Meanchey, Kampong Thom, Kratie and Pursat but we increased number of communes from 66 to 76. Over the course of the year the beneficiaries the programme teams worked with in cooperation with 7 provincial partners which contributed to build the professional skills and knowledge of 178,581 (48,734 female) beneficiaries, who ultimately made a *positive impact* for 621,996 (230,091 female) people.

Through partnership with radio stations in 6 target provinces and Phnom Penh, 562 broadcasts, live talk shows and round table discussions and 2280 radio spots were disseminated on how to use Interactive Voice Response (IVR), self IVR, and road traffic law enforcement in target provinces.

The successes this year include:

- API is the leading organization and a CSO representative designing and drafting the A2I law with the support from UNESCO and Ministry of Information. API played a key role in convening other CSOs and its networks and collecting their inputs for improvement of the contents of the law.
- API has been a part of a global and national network advocating on road safety and drunken driving issues. Through effective advocacy approaches, with the support from other CSOs networks, API was able to push the Road Safety Traffic Law (RSTL) and advocate for another one on driving under the influence of alcohol.
- API provides technical assistance where issues at grassroots level are identified, and its approach specifically in Open Forums has been well received with all stakeholders.

- Through its multi-stakeholder approach API was able to facilitate an approach that is non-confrontational, non-adversarial, non-violent, non-partisan, neutral, independent, built on positive relationship with local officials, joint problem exercises, focuses on problem solving and solution identification, grounded evidence based through research.
- LAs and councillors demonstrate more transparent and accountable procedures. They feel more confident, aware, are able to face the people and their demands. API has made them more knowledge confident and secure in delivering their duties.
- APIs constructive engagement approach has improved trust, mutual respect, understanding, satisfaction, and better communication between councillors and citizens

The programmes have remained focused on delivering APIs strategic outcomes and some changes have been seen over the last year. The following changes have been identified in the organizational impact assessment report 2016 conducted by an Independent Consultant:

Policy change – it is clear that we have contributed to policy change in Cambodia. As evidence, there were a number of key policy changes influenced by API:

- Influential actor in the policy dialogue between government and civil society concerning A2I.
- Positive supporter of the ISAF, and the National Development Strategy of the government, in particular resulting in the integration of A2I in ISAF.
- Significant contributor in helping to get the Road Safety Law and the prakas on alcohol advertisements passed

Systems change - in general the greatest impacts over the past years have been the refinement of a constructive engagement approach to working with government and CSOs.

- Incorporation of API forum approaches by sub-national actors
- Appropriate use of multi-stakeholder dialogue at sub national level
- Improving the institutional effectiveness of commune and district councils

Individual change – the increased knowledge and confidence of our partners and beneficiaries are key to this change:

- Changing of people’s attitudes and gaining more knowledge, skills and confidence to perform their mandate functions and demanding local government accountable. This positive and meaningful change in their lives makes them more able to actively take charge of claiming their rights and meeting their needs.
- Strengthening relationships between community members and their elected representatives
- Promoting more effective service delivery and accountability on the part of elected officials

In the full report, through the successful implementation of our three programme areas focusing on eight projects, we can show evidence of success in all of our five key outcomes below:

1. **Access to Information programme (outcome 1 & 2): A2I law** was legally drafted and shared by the Ministry of Information. API was recognized as a CSO leading representative in the A2I Technical Working Group TWG. The contents of the draft law were improved through the consultation process with CSO A2I working group and sector networks. There have been 9 chapters and 36 articles completed but it is still on half way through. As results of a policy review, findings and analysis were brought to the attention of A2I TWG including two submitted additional analysis reports on the Secrecy information and a Complaint Mechanism.

There were 61% (55% of whom were female) of 573,914 citizens in the target area actively access public service from local authorities for their own and community use at commune and district. 28% (395) of 1418 citizens have requested information from their local authority in 2016.

- 2. Promoting local democratic development programme (outcome 3 & 4):** Sub-National Administration SNAs have become more open to citizen participation and collaboration with civil society. Increased citizen participation – expressing views and concerns, raising demands and offering recommendations during meetings/public events – was observed as a result of civic engagement activities and the implementation of the Social Accountability Framework (SAF). The confidence and understanding of citizens and CBOs to participate and raise issues, concerns and priorities during forums and local councils’ meeting have increased as result of awareness raising and coaching activities through project interventions. For instance, 175 (65%) of 269 issues/cases of social and environmental issues and needs brought by communities and local citizens to communes and district councils and government lines officers are responded in December 2016 and 72% (111) of 155 local CBOs were satisfied with local council’s solution. Moreover, 22% (306) of 1418 interviewed citizens requested public service from their local councils and 13.5% (191) of the 306 interviewed citizens spent only 1 day on their request.
- 3. Enhancing capacities of CSOs programme (outcome 5):** A2I TWG members and media increased their capacity on A2I concept and actively engaged in discussing tools for accessing A2I law, complaint mechanism, whistle blower protection and confidential information based on 9 international principles of freedom of information through providing constructive discussion, coaching and attending meeting organized by API. The National Assembly appreciated the building-up of cooperation with the Budget Working Group (BWG), agreed to have regular meetings with BWG. The budget issue was attached by media and round table discussion in RFA and VOD. The API director was voted a seat in Local Governance Initiatives and Networks (LOGIN) operation committee to represent South-East Asia country platform and a member of DELGOSEA for ASAIN. As a Chair of WGPD which is Governance NGOs networks, now the collective voices are stronger for advocacy efforts at the DPs and TWG meetings.

Challenges facing API for 2017 - API is always moving forward and adapting to a changing National environment. API believes it is seen as a trusted partner of national and sub national government working in a sustainable way on capacity building for change with stakeholders, including development partners and networks at national and international levels. API is a respected effective local advocacy capacity building organisation which considers education as essential for the success and sustainability of D&D reform as well as the continuing positive impact of our work.

To sustain this position API needs to be proactive in accesses donor funding in a time of reduced funding available in the country. As Cambodia moves out of the most deprived country status and develops further it is even more important to ensure that through cooperation and dialogue with LA, the people of Cambodia share in this development and their services and lives are enhanced accordingly. API will continue its approach of inclusivity and involvement in the democratic process to ensure this is achieved.

Specifically we wish to adopt key recommendations and learning's in future years, prioritising:

- ✓ *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning*: we will work with the M&E specialist providing by BftW to further improve and refine our M&E systems, guidelines and tools. We will also focus on the analysis of the data collected in order to evaluate our work and feed this learning into improvements at programme level.
- ✓ We are learning a great deal through its present involvement as a member of the A2I working group, which needs to be documented and shared with other CSO actors. Once this experience has concluded, API will be in a position improve the policy engagement process so that it includes a wider variety of civil society and political society voices. In this respect the content of the legislation (*i.e. road safety*) is less important than the process of policy development itself. These should include civil society networks that have true grassroots constituents to whom they are accountable. API should cooperate with local academic institutions to carry out research which can serve as an evidence base. They could also develop the capacity in policy dialogue and analysis among CSOs, academics, and the government.
- ✓ We should target the district in particular and provincial levels to develop their capacity in problem solving, analytical thinking, communications, negotiations, planning, oversight, and strategy development.
- ✓ Strengthening multi-level democratic governance should be at the core of API's work moving forward. This would involve 1) improving vertical flows of information from higher to lower levels of SNAs, 2) supporting deconstruction & decentralization, especially with respect to resource allocation, 3) strengthening feedback loops from grassroots level CBOs and SNAs to national level institutions (*such as the Senate*), and 4) leading multi-stakeholder dialogue that includes private sector, government, and civil society.



1. Introduction

The Advocacy and Policy Institute is a Cambodian non-profit and non-Government organisation. Established in July 2003 as part of PACT Cambodia, registered with the Ministry of Interior in July 2007, it became fully independent in 2008.

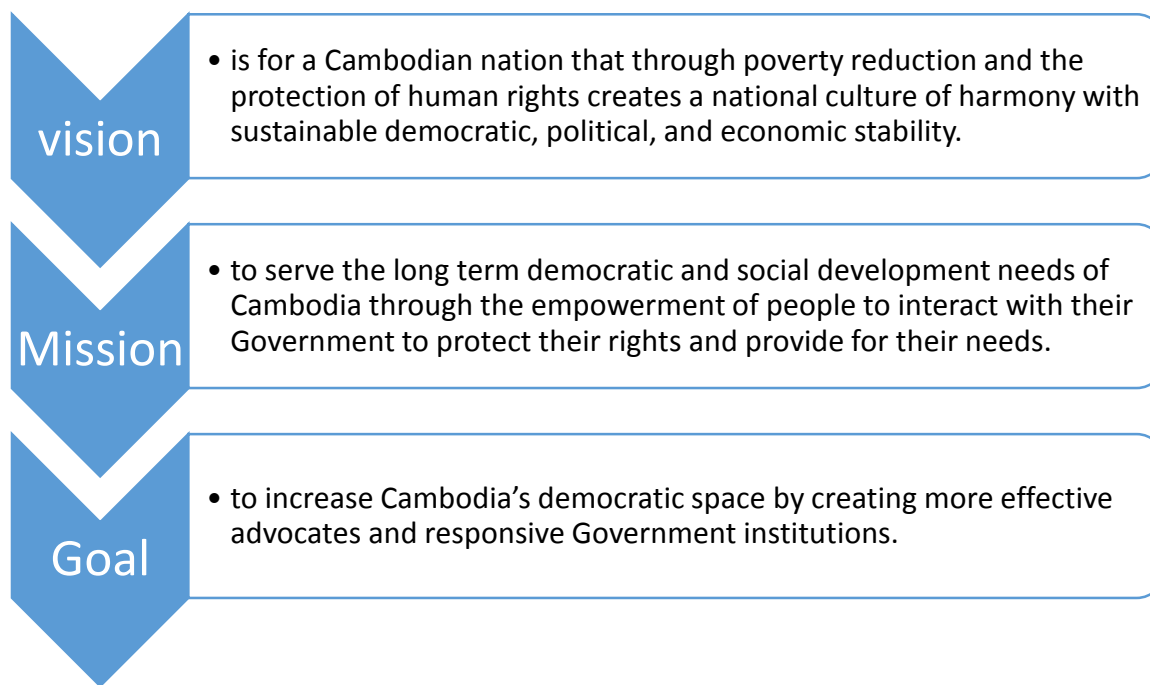
API is a leading advocacy capacity building institution, working on promoting access to information, decentralization and policy dialogue. The Institute has forged its reputation through the delivery of advocacy training courses and the production of advocacy publications in both Khmer and English to promote understanding of advocacy, access to information and the Government's D&D policy. API is becoming increasingly involved in direct advocacy and policy activities, sponsoring research and functioning as a think tank.

This report covers the 12 month period from January to December 2016. It briefly describes the context in which our work was done, and highlights particular achievements, notable successes and changes as well as the challenges we faced and the lessons which we learned in operating our three main programmes:

- access to information,
- local democratic development, and
- Supporting the civil society organisations.

API works closely with various Ministries of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Parliaments and Civil Society partners and observed significant progress and achievements in our programmes last year. We intend to build on our successes and learning as we go forward into our next annual cycle of operations.

All our work is based on our vision, mission and goal:

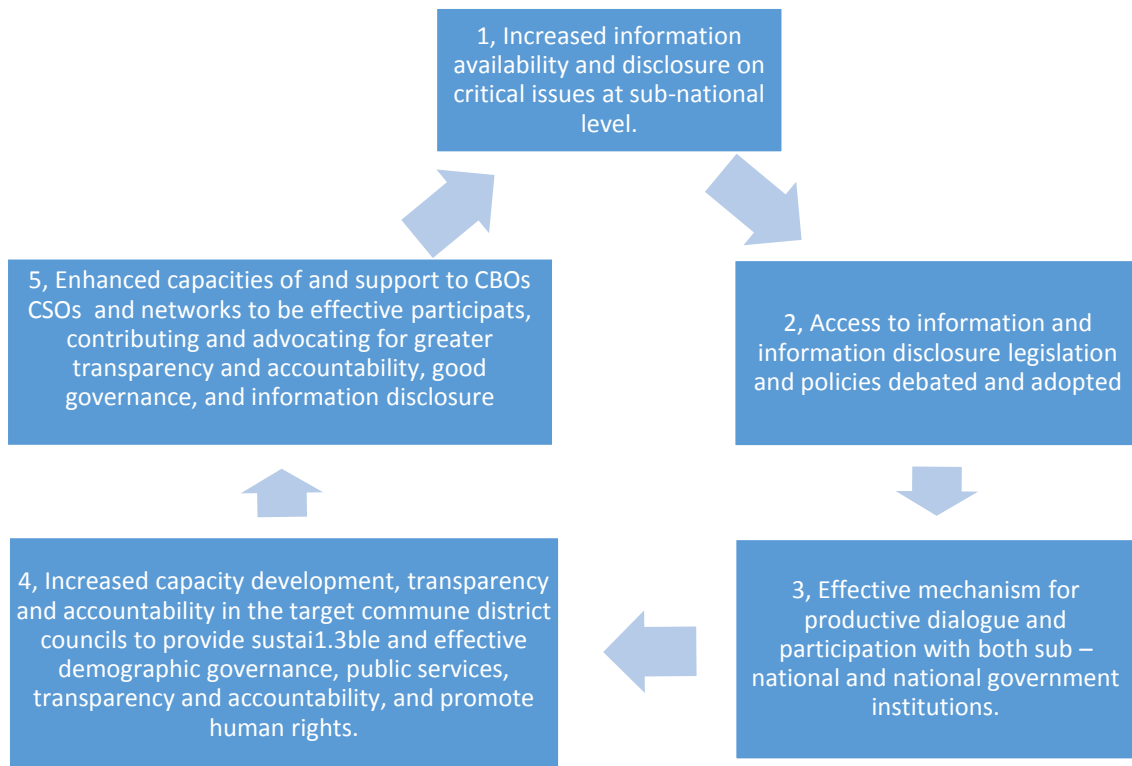


1.1 Our values

- ✓ All Cambodians have the right to participate, mobilize and express themselves in matters that affect their daily lives.
- ✓ All matters should be resolved peacefully and justly according to the principles of our shared humanity.
- ✓ Building capacity, particularly at the community level, is the most sustainable way of building a brighter future for all Cambodians.
- ✓ Engaging with all social sectors ensures that when solutions are reached, they are of greatest benefit to the community.
- ✓ 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.

1.2 Our strategic objectives

To achieve the goal, five strategic objectives will yield outcomes ensuring positive impact benefiting vulnerable and marginalized groups in which the sub-national and national Government institutions are more accountable and responsive.



Our international objective is to achieve these outcomes API through its organisational strengthen and support will ensure financial stability, strong management, results, accountability and transparency as overseen by an effective and active Director and Board of Directors.

The above strategies intensify our focus on governance, access to information, advocacy and civic engagement, providing the foundations and hence, sustainability for increasing access to basic services and improved livelihoods.

1.3 Our inclusivity

API has a totally inclusive policy and works for all members of Cambodian society. ALL our work in the communities is based on a participatory approach and we encourage all members of the community to be active in our projects. The most vulnerable in society, children, women head of households, youths, disabled and those who are landless and illiterate are the most vulnerable but they are the ones who can benefit substantially through effective local management of issues of health education and social protection.

We envision that citizens (including women, youth and disadvantaged groups) will have an effective voice in the decision-making processes that affect their lives and actively participate in their own development. They will have the confidence to demand and access public information and will fully understand and exercise their rights. They will prioritise their needs and will be able to devise practical solutions for implementation. Civil society networks and CBOs will be accountable to their communities and recognised by government bodies. The networks will operate in a coordinated manner, sharing information and working together on focused advocacy campaigns. National and sub-national governmental bodies will consult with their communities to understand their challenges and will be transparent and accountable at all levels to deliver coordinated and responsive public services.

We encourage women to take an active part in their local governance to challenge their local representatives about the issues that they face. The staff of API is also gender representative with equal representation of men and women in both the implementation of projects and the management of the organisation.

1.4 Our implementing strategic approach

The expected strategic and programme outcomes will be achieved through implementing five strategic approaches, the following emerge:

- ✓ Working with the Government and civil society toward the passage of access to information legislation (Parliament, Ministries and CSO networks) and public access to public information.
- ✓ Strengthening the rights holder – duty bearer relationship between citizens and their elected representatives at the local levels.
- ✓ Educating and empowering CBOs and citizens for civic engagement.
- ✓ Building the capacity of change for supply and demand sides on the areas of decentralization reform and social accountability.
- ✓ Collaborating with a wide range of civil society actors, locally, regionally and internationally, in pursuit of its advocacy and policy goals and objectives.

Within the period of twelve months from January to December 2016, there was considerable progress in term of achieving the five strategic outcomes through successfully the implementation of **eight projects**:

Project 1: Strengthening Democratic Governance (SDG) Project funded by Bread for the World (BftW), ended on 31st December 2016.

Project 2: Promoting Road traffic law Enforcement through Stakeholder engagement and Support (PRESS) funded by Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), ending on 30th April 2017.

Project 3: Supporting the development of an effective Cambodian Access to Information Law funded by UNESCO, ending on 1st May 2017.

Project 4: Promoting good governance by increasing A2I and strengthening the independent media project funded by EU through DanChurchAid (DCA), ending on 31st December 2017.

Project 5: Enhancing Citizens Access to Information through Mobile Technology funded by Development Innovative, ended on 29th February 2016.

Project 6: Promoting Rights, Voices, Choices, and Decisions for Citizens (PRO-citizens) funded by DanChurchAid (DCA), ending on 31st December 2018.

Project 7: Capacity Building to the LNGOs on ISAF funded by Care, ending on 31st December 2018.

Project 8: Budget Information Disclosure project funded by Transparency International (TI), ended on 31st December 2016.

We also provided training consultancy services as income generation:

1. Training on Advocacy Skills for Bandos Komar Association (BKA).
2. Building the capacity for addressing out of school children in Cambodia for Aid et Actions (AeA).

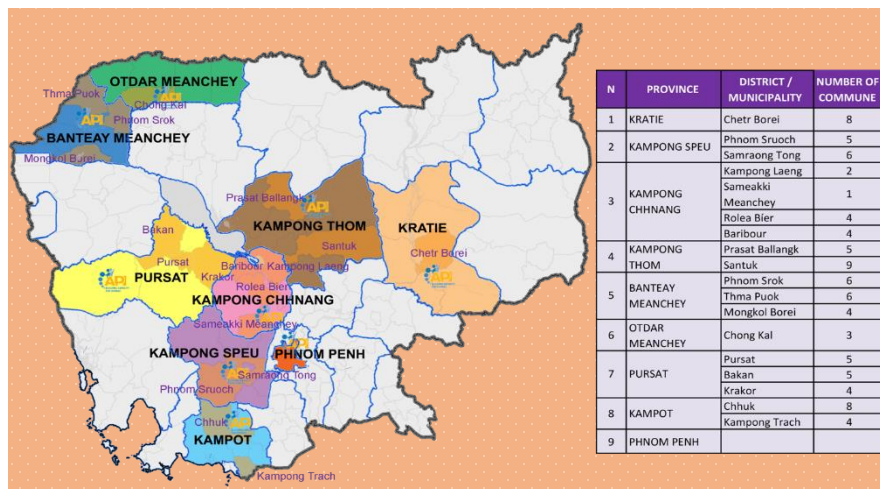
1.5 Our target groups

API works to promote voices and rights and address the needs and concerns of vulnerable and marginalized groups through the strategic partnerships with community based organisations, local and national government institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector. API builds capacity and supports institutions and organisations so they are able to tackle the issues, concerns, and needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups in the target areas.

At local and provincial levels, the target groups are local residents (men and women), community based organisations (young people, women, fishermen, farmers, people with disabilities and elderly people) and local government officials in selected districts and municipalities. At the national level, API's work relates to the adoption of an access to information law and is directed at civil society organisations and issue based networks, government institutions and the Cambodian Parliament.

1.6 Where we work

In 2016, the number of target provinces and districts and municipality (7 provinces, 15 districts and 1 municipality) was remained the same as previous year but we increased number of commune from 66 to 76 due to the expansion of the PRESS project. The province's names are: Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnang, Banteay Meanchey, Oddor Meanchey, Kampong Thom, Kratie and Pursat.



2. The context of our work

The ASAIN integration is one of the positive contributing factors for Cambodia to focus on the improvement in its economic and political issues through pushing the implementation of the three reforms:

- Public financial management.
- De-concentration and decentralization.
- Public administration with the purpose of streamlining planning, identifying synergies and strengthening momentum.
- Another positive factor is the most significant changes have been brought about by the dynamic new Ministers who really commit to move the reform agendas forward.

The increasing open engagement from the Government and decentralization of powers to local governments, as part of the second phase of democratic development implementation plan, lies in the decentralization processes that has taken place at the sub-national level in which some powers, roles and responsibilities including local decision making, implementation and service delivery decision are starting to transfer to LAs through functional assignments in education, environment and health sectors.

A2I is more open from the government level demonstrated through their openness to share the national budget for 2017 and commitments in the formulation of A2I law with full participation from civil societies, NGOs and media working on that area. This shows positive political wills that has created a better enabling environment for civil society and NGOs including API to be able to build excellent relationships and trust with local governments to implement our programmes successfully.

Policy and regulations on Sub-National Administration (SNA) own source revenues developed and approved and a decision was made to implement tax sharing whereby urban communes/Sangkats from 2017 will receive an additional 30% of capital and provincial property tax collection and district/municipality administrations will receive shared tax revenues from provincial administrations.

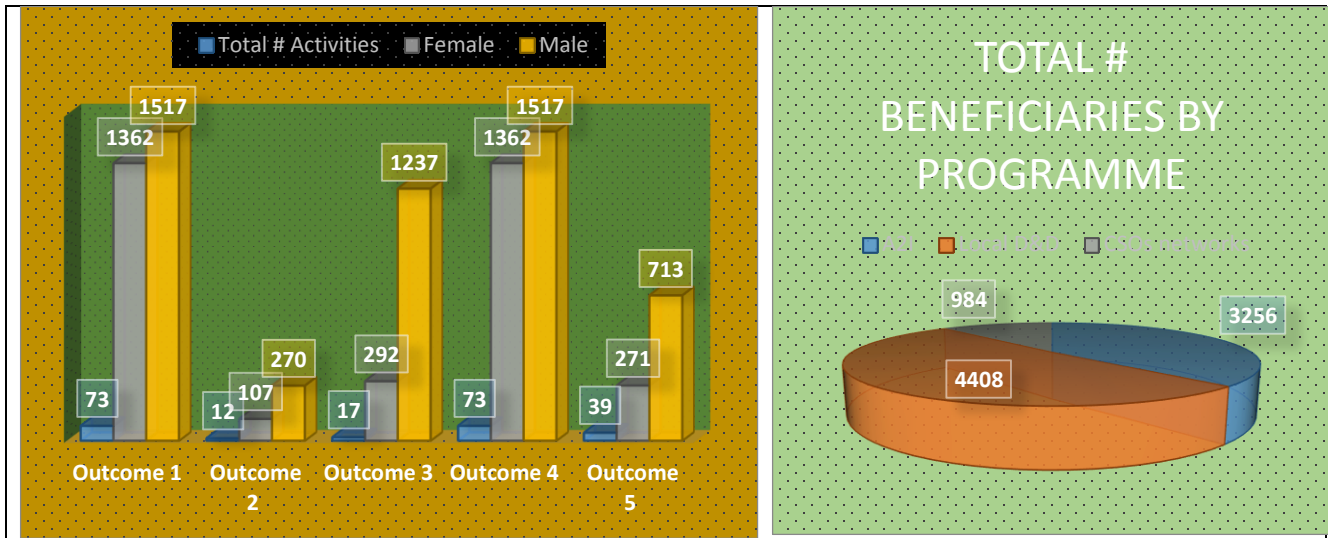
Although the national budget allocation to the sub-national level under the D&D reform increased, it remains low as a percentage of the national budget and the development part did actually not increase because of the faster increase in the administrative costs (salaries, allowances etc.). Tax revenues increased substantially but almost USD400m of the national budget were not spent due to poor budget forecasting and planning. However, a Royal Decree ("*SNA Personnel Statute*") on transferring staff and financial resources, approved by the King in April 2016 provides the framework for decentralized HR management. A sub-decree on conditional grants was approved in Dec 2016 to mobilize about USD2M budgeted for DMs to apply for in 2017. Hopefully, the LAs at the district and commune level will be able to access more resources for improving social services and development.

At national level, the progress of API's works has faced more challenges, it is often a case of taking three steps forward and two back, due to the political deadlock between the ruling party, main opposition and civil societies who are working in human rights. It impacted considerably on the progress of our programme at the national level and the shrinking civic and political space and the level of advocacy possible at the national and sub-national level. The stronger involvement by donors, INGOs and other international actors can help to maintain the three steps going forward, and reduce the likelihood of a full and final reversal. Cambodia will hold a national commune election in June 2017, and then the national election of Parliaments in 2018, could lead to a slow progress which impacting to API's works in both sub-national and national level. Many donors, INGOs and civil societies are maintaining a 'wait and see' fair and transparent elections through a new technology registration system with 81% voter registration achieved.

Last year, the trends in funding indicated that many donors were reducing and are continuing to reduce their commitments to Cambodia. International and Local NGOs were competing for a dwindling development dollar. It was difficult for API to achieve the fundraising target. But API was able to mobilize their available resources to succeed in implementing its strategic plan. This success is due to the amazingly ambitious, mutually supportive DPs and partners including the Governments and the enthusiastic staff team who are determined to do everything to the best of their ability.

3. Our programme achievement during the year

3.1 Our facts and figure



The graph shows that over the year, our programme teams worked with 7 provincial partners to build the professional skills and knowledge of 178,581 (48,734 female) beneficiaries, who ultimately made a positive impact for 621,996 (230,091 female) people.

It also shows that API conducted several activities (outputs) to achieve its 5 outcomes. These activities are the following:

Outcome 1: Increased information availability and disclosure on critical issues at sub – national

From the period January to December 2016, the planned project activities were implemented successfully. They are the following:

- ✓ 67 forums with 6625 (2886 female) local citizens were conducted to address many issues and concerns including Natural Resource Management (NRM), Climate change, local development, social affair, economic, public administration and security, gender, important of accessing local service through IVR and Self IVR, RTL enforcement.
- ✓ 98 outreach activities to 6293 (3136 female) local citizens were conducted to promote A2I through IVR and self IVR, RTL enforcement, commune investment plan, public service, land registration, how to transfer land title, commune, village safety policy, public health, A2I on election registration process, domestic violence, climate change, civil registration, etc.

- ✓ Through partnership with radio stations in 6 target provinces and Phnom Penh, 562 broadcasts, live talk shows and round table discussions and 2280 radio spots were disseminated on how to use IVR, self IVR, and road traffic law enforcement to target provinces.
- ✓ One press conference on 'Voices of Road Victims' was conducted with 83 participants (35 women) in Phnom Penh from NRSC, university students, NGOs, journalists and government institutions to promote public attention about the new RTL which came into effect on 1 January 2016 and also providing opportunities to vulnerable road victims to share their experiences with the public.
- ✓ 108,940 IEC materials with 19 kinds ¹of information were printed out and distributed to direct beneficiaries in the target area.
- ✓ 19 communes and 5 districts of current target provinces have developed mechanism/ tools for information collection, management and disclosure in providing easier access of information. 7 case studies on different topics ²were documented on positive and negative impact from project implementation.
- ✓ 1 information material on budget information at sub-national level was produced and disseminated to target beneficiaries in the target area to promote the increasing access on budget in local development process.
- ✓ 4 public discussion forums with 380 (178 female) on budget issue in local development process were conducted at national and sub-national level.
- ✓ 3 follow up; monitoring and reflection the disclosure were made.



Outcome 2: Access to information and information disclosure legislation and policies debated and adopted

- ✓ A comprehensive draft law on A2I was completed by the legal team of the Ministry of Information and it was widely shared to public for inputs/comments. The draft of A2I law was also available for online comments through: <http://a2i.info.gov.kh> .
- ✓ Approximately half of the inputs from CSOs and LAs were contributed to the drafted A2I law during 5 meetings of A2ITWG that was co-facilitated by the Ministry of Information UNESCO. These inputs were gathered through five consultative forums with 135 CSOs and local authorities working in education, environment, disability, youth and women.

¹how to use IVR and Self IVR, Voice, Choice and Decision handbook, budget information @SNA, T-shirts, glasses, banners, stickers, note books, CJs curriculums and handout, CBOs Curriculums and handout, LAs curriculum and handout, 'Road Traffic and My Safety, sub decree on driving speeds, the sub decree on fines and penalties, the sub-decree about organizing and creating a road safety committee and the roles of its members, the regulation on the public service fees of the Ministry of Public Work and Transport, understanding of the road traffic law enforcement, road traffic and alcohol and finding report on road traffic law

²1) Resource Mobilization to support CBOs at Meteuk Commune, 2)Increase Information Disclosure and Open Space for Engagement at Lolork Sa, 3) Lobbying and Advocacy of CBOs to Local Authorities: A respond to Community Road Reconstruction4) Increase Transparent Delivery of the Commune Service on Civil Status Registry at Ponley 5) Strengthening the capacity of Commune Councils in addressing community health issues 6) Illegal Land Grabbing of Community Forestry, Kroyear Commune 7) CBOs Increased Capacity to Advocate and Lobby with Local Authorities to respond the demands on Waste Management

Outcome 3: Effective mechanism for productive dialogue and participation with both sub – national and national government institutions

- ✓ 4 dialogues of Budget Working Group (BWG), for promoting decentralization and ISAF with government’s institution according to guideline/framework were conducted at national level.
- ✓ 5 debrief meetings with 211 (31 female) were conducted with relevant institute at sub-national level to revalidate and collect feedbacks, comments and recommendations on key issues of the survey report on road traffic law enforcement.
- ✓ 7 district forums with 1249 (236 female) were conducted to identify the needs and concerns of local citizens.
- ✓ 34 CBOs and groups have meeting at sub-national with commune, district and province for advocacy to address their local citizens need and concerns.
- ✓ As a member of BWG, 1 meeting was conducted with parliament and government institution about budget allocation at SN level.
- ✓ Through partnership with World Renew, API, CCC and Transparency International Organization, 1 workshop with 65 (25 female) on dialogue between CSOs and the Private sector to promote partnership and corporate social responsibilities was conducted.



Outcome 4: Increased capacity development, transparency and accountability in the target commune district councils to provide sustainable and effective demographic governance, public services, transparency and accountability, and promote human rights

- ✓ A capacity building activity with LAs and commune councilors (CC) to access information issues was done through 11 trainings with 295 participants (82 female) and all topics were identified from training assessment report in 7 target districts.
- ✓ 3 half-day reflection meetings were conducted with 38 female councilors/other council members to collect specific evidences of CBO issues for proposal development in Pursat, Kampong Speu, and Kampong Chhang Province.
- ✓ One citizen satisfaction survey on the performance of local councils and government was conducted to 1940 (1047 female) citizen, CBOs representative, and LAs in 11 target districts in 5 provinces by API.
- ✓ 7 policy analysis and reflection issues were discussed for better enforcement with LAs, relevant authorities, CBOs and CSOs in each 7 target district in 4 provinces.
- ✓ 28 target communes and districts were supported by API in information disclosure mechanism in terms of documentation and filing management, and disclosure of information in the commune through information boards, commune and district halls and public areas.
- ✓ 6 partnership and reflection meetings with 509 participants (138 female) to encourage and support better involvement of relevant partners and stakeholders in local administration in social accountability and good governance framework.



Outcome 5: Enhanced capacities of and support community – based organization and civil society organizations and networks to be effective participation, contribution and advocating for greater transparency and accountability, good governance, and information disclosure

- ✓ 121 individuals from CSOs' partners of Aide Et Action and Bandos Komar were fairly increased their capacity on advocacy skills, school governance and SA that enable them to work effectively with children groups and core parents on advocacy for addressing issues on school dropout children and ECCD services providing in the community. In addition, advocacy learning was shared to 350 participants of a co-organised National Advocacy Conference by 48 NGOs.
- ✓ NGO staff from CADDP, YCC and PVI increased their capacity in implementing the I-SAF project that enables them to manage 24 (12 female) CAF, mainstream JAAP to DIP and fairly communicate with the LAs at all level of sub-national.



- ✓ Policy gaps on A2I and concrete issues in health and education sector is recognized by the Ministry of Health and the MoEYS while dialogue meeting with legal experts from government, API, NEP, KBSC, Medicam, RHAC, and CHEM.

- ✓ A joint-statement of CSOs on new RTL implementation is acknowledged by the National Road Safety Committee (NRSC). The statement covered such issues as the inadequacy of law enforcers, the transparency and accountability of law enforcement; the allocation of sub-national budgets to implement road safety and consultation opportunities for stakeholders, including CSOs, on law and policy.

3.2 Our programme changes toward long term impacts

The programmes have remained focused on delivering their' strategic outcomes and some changes have been seen over the last year in terms of project focus. The implementation of the different project activities resulted in the following changes:

3.2.1 Policy change

It is clear that API has contributed to policy change in Cambodia. As evidences, there were a number of key policy changes:

- *Influential actor in the policy dialogue between government and civil society concerning A2I;* API is the leading organization and a CSO representative designing and drafting the A2I law with the support from UNESCO and Mol. API played a key role in convening other CSOs and its networks and collecting their inputs for improvement of the contents of the law. Due to API's reputation as a standard bearer for A2I among civil society and its constructive engagement approach, they were selected to be a member of this group. They play a key role in convening other CSOs and collecting their feedback on inputs on this law, for submission to the draft committee. It appears that the working relationships within the TWG are positive, and that a spirit of compromise and mutual reciprocity prevails in the dialogues and discussions.

API contributed to the development of draft of A2I law by the Ministry of Information which is currently the draft law was completed with 36 articles of 9 chapters. As a representative of 40 CSOs, API has actively participated subsequent meetings of A2I TWG to present the findings of CSOs and legal team as well as

the findings from sectorial forums on gender/women, youths, agriculture and environment, health, education, media and human right. This provides a good roadmap for what API can do when the A2I legislation is passed

- *Positive supporter of the ISAF, and the National Development Strategy of the government, in particular resulting in the integration of A2I in ISAF.*

API earned a reputation as a standard bearer for A2I among civil society and its constructive engagement approach. The fact that API has been invited as a member of the TWG on A2I and voicing A2I and SA through media, is a considerable achievement and has led to play a key role in convening other CSOs, DPs and NCDD to integrate A2I and open data to a wide range of government policies and strategies, including IP3, the national strategy and the ISAF.

- *Significant contributor in helping to get the Road Safety Law and the prakas on alcohol advertisements passed*

API has been part of a global and national networks advocating on road safety and drunk driving issues.

Through effective advocacy approaches, with the support from other CSOs networks, API was able to push the RSTL and advocate for another one on driving under the influence of alcohol. Moreover, since the RSTL has been passed, API has been quite active in creating public awareness and readiness to implement the law. Attitude changes and trust building leading to allow API and NGOs Road Safety Working Group to establish sub-national level working group to help bringing evidence based learning for the new RTL enforcement and amendment. The government has enforced an increased budget allocation for sub-national government (provincial level) to implement the new road traffic law enforcement in 2017 based on advocacy efforts through joint statements as reported by NRSC.



3.2.2 System change

In general the greatest impacts over the past years have been the refinement of a constructive engagement approach to working with government and CSOs. It is important to note that at the outset of building relationships with LAs, many of them misunderstood the intentions of API and took them as being challenging, revolutionary. After persistence and continued relationships, these same government counterparts realized the worth of API's work. In some situations, as we learned from the validation workshop, when API enters a new area, there is initial resistance, but when councilors from old target areas explain to their colleagues and promote API, this resistance turns to collaboration. Moreover, API partners have learned from this approach and have adapted their approaches to working with government. The constructive engagement approach has facilitated much of the success that API has experienced over the past years. The government sees API as an equal in development partnerships, and for the most part is willing to lend their full support and participation in API activities. API has even been mentioned by the Ministry of Interior and the Deputy Prime Minister for their model of cooperation.

- *Incorporation of API forum approaches by sub-national actors*

API provides technical assistance where issues at grassroots level are identified, and its approach specifically in Open Forums has been well received with all stakeholders. These forums supported the councilors' capacity development and on-the-job training. Opportunities were made to gather opinions, feedbacks, and resolutions to problems; and confidence to execute demands of the people to sub-national level for resolution. On the other hand, other government officers also benefited from the conduct of forums as they are able to uncover areas for self-improvement.



- *Appropriate use of multi-stakeholder dialogue at sub national level*



The conduct of multi-stakeholders' meeting/dialogue together with local authorities, CSOs and CBOs can be observed as a good participatory approach in addressing issues of the community members. These activities influence citizen participation and giving space CBOs, CSOs, community members. Resolution of problems in the community is easier when everyone is engaged. This dialogue is mutually beneficial to all stakeholders as there is collaboration, cooperation and constructive engagement with citizens. API was able to facilitate an approach that is non-confrontational, non-adversarial, non-violent, non-partisan, neutral, independent, built on positive relationship

with local officials, joint problem exercises, focuses on problem solving and solution identification, grounded evidence based through research.

- *Improving the institutional effectiveness of commune and district councils*

Through its work in the Local Democratic Development Programme, API has been able to convince sub national actors that collaboration, cooperation, and constructive engagement with citizens are mutually beneficial – both to the councilors and to the people. API has thus made a substantial contribution to helping the councils fulfill their mandate as democratic, responsive, participatory institutions. The councilors themselves have experienced efficiency and effectiveness gains which outlast the API intervention. What is meant here is ways of working together, reaching out across political lines, delegating tasks, and planning for change. These are all approaches to service delivery which improve the responsiveness of the councils as a whole.

3.2.3 Individual change

- *Changing of people's attitudes and gaining more knowledge, skills and confidence to perform their mandate functions and demanding local government accountable. This positive and meaningful change in their lives makes them more able to actively take charge of claiming their rights and meeting their needs.*

Local government and councilors demonstrate more transparent and accountable procedures. They feel more confident, aware, are able to face the people and their demands. Whereas before API interventions they were indifferent, afraid, or even looked down on the people, now they see themselves more as the



servants of the people. API has made them more confident and secure in delivering their duties. They have more skills and systems to help them deliver better services. They understand the laws and what roles and responsibilities the law gives them. Most importantly, they are more accountable to the voters, and if their services are not adequate, they will not be re-elected. This is the most powerful lever of change in the social accountability contract between the citizens and the councilors. The CBOs and its networks (youth and women) who are community representatives have the skills and feel confident to

demand councilors and local government to respond to community needs and are able to engage in commune planning process and meeting. The supply and demand sides are able to work together for their own community development.

- *Strengthening relationships between community members and their elected representatives*

APIs constructive engagement approach has improved trust, mutual respect, understanding, satisfaction, and better communication between councilors and citizens. The LAs are now working together for the benefit of their people, and NGOs and CBOs also works collaboratively in solving problems in the community. Despite political differences, API was able to make some important achievements because of its constructive engagement, and because councilors realize that both need to cooperate in serving the people, and have the skills and tools to do so. Citizens in the target areas are now comfortable to approach their local authorities, and also local authorities can now address issues in the community accordingly.

- *Promoting more effective service delivery and accountability on the part of elected officials*

The interventions of API with its target groups built the capacity of the local authorities wherein they are now able to respond to the needs of the citizens, able to coordinate with CBOs, CSOs, and other stakeholders, and they now have a clear understanding of the laws, their roles and responsibilities to deliver better services to stakeholders. Most importantly, they see that they are accountable to the voters, and if their services are not adequate, they will not be re-elected. This is the most powerful lever of change in the social accountability contract between the citizens and the councilors.



4. Progress against strategic outcomes

Outcome 1: Increased information availability and disclosure on critical issues at a sub-national level. (Figs taken from annual survey 2016, community discussion forum Oct-Dec 2016),

61%³ (55% female) of total population (573,914 citizens)⁴⁵ avail public services such as civil registration, borrow and animal certificate; 28% of 1418 citizens have requested information, and 84% obtained information from their LAs. However, 82% (64% female) of 1418 interviewed citizens understood their rights to access their commune development work and only 43% are aware of activities of the commune development plan.

Communities access to information and have confirmed that local councils have responded to their requests related to administrative services, local development projects and other information related to livelihoods. 1418 citizens said they have difficulty on approaching local

“Information is very important for citizens to avoid misunderstanding between local authorities and citizens. Citizens need to ask or visit commune hall frequently to receive information “

Mr. EmLorn, ThmorAndeuk Commune Chief, ChetrBorey District, Kratie Province



Commune councils

“Information is very important for all”. The A2I will benefit for our livelihoods such as paid and unpaid services for the poor, and other additional services from others. When communities understand the importance of A2I it will help them make the right decision for their lives.”

Ms. Kang Bunkea, LolorkSaSangkatChief

councils for information and 68 % responded easy access to information; 33% confirmed that they participated in commune investment plan but only 12% of 1418 citizens have access to this budget.69% of 1418 citizens confirmed that information disclosure mechanisms are easily accessible to the public; 50% of 1418 citizens confirmed that local authorities have disseminated information on public service, 45% legislation and 16% on budget and financial report.

The budget forum discussion conducted in 2016, 52% of 223 out of 403 (192 female) thought their annual commune budget responded their needs/concerns while 33% understood about income and revenue of national budget and 21% received information on annual commune budget.

Youth, women, men and students were however, aware of budget information.

19 of 55 communes in 13 districts and 1 municipality are able to manage their basic information, data on basic services (commune administration, health, education) and budget for

³ According to Desk Review recorded by local councils from January to December 2016

⁴Total population in the target area as stated in the proposal

⁵Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnang, Pursat, Kratie, Kampong Thom and Banteay Meanchey province

knowledge management and are available through information board, banners, forums, leaflets, posters and awareness raising events.

Youth, women, and men are now aware and guided about budget participation at sub-national level through distribution of 1700 leaflets.

45 % of 1,447 local people (962 women, 416 youth, 235 with ID poor card and 42 people with disability) are confident to raise, react and complain specific issues/problems such as spending a lot of time in civic registration, lack of medicines, poor health facilities, information disclosure and participation in the planning process. Communities are now able to demand local authorities and councils to respond to their needs through ISAF trainings.

Case study 1: Increase Information Disclosure and Open Space for Engagement At Lolork Sar Sangkat, Pursat Municipality

Lolork Sar is one of seven Sangkats in Pursat Municipality. It has 10 villages with a total of 2,065 families and 9,286 people (4,776 female). Eighty percent (80%) of the main income generating activity is paddy agriculture, small vendors, and supplemented by fishery or animal raising. Lolork Sa has 9 commune councilors (2 females) from 2 political parties: Cambodian People Party (CPP) who is the Chief of Sangkat and one from Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) as the second Deputy Councilor.

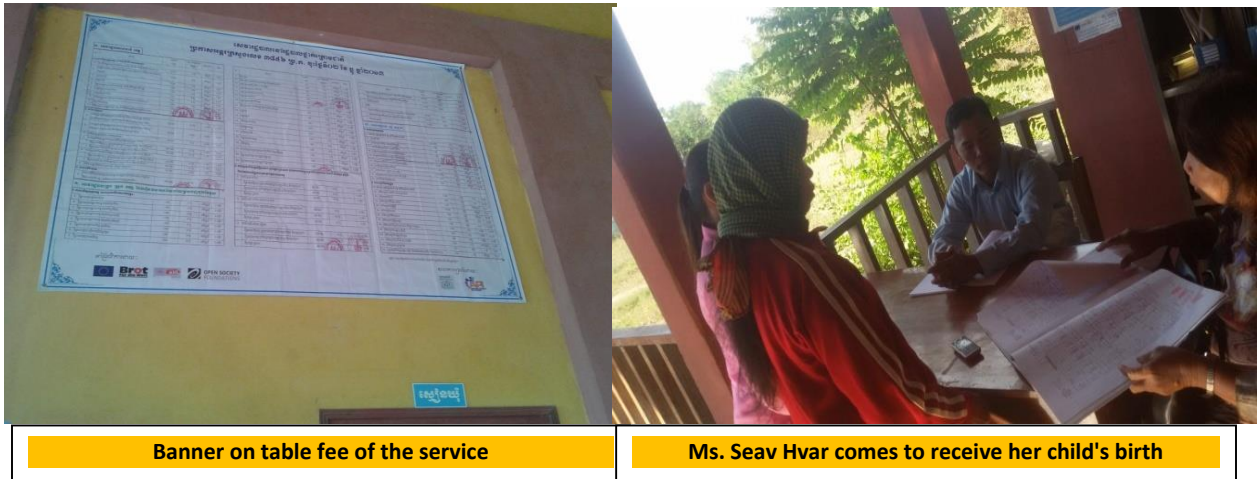
Most of the people in this Sangkat are not interested in public information or involvement in local development works as they only care about their daily living condition. On the other hand, LAs are not also keen in releasing information related to fees, procedures of public services, and financial reports.

In 2015, the Advocacy and Policy Institute has signed MoU with the municipality and Sangkat administrative for cooperation in implementation of the project named ***promoting good governance by increasing access to information and strengthen the independent media***. The project has provided capacity building to both local authorities on access to information and importance to disclose information, roles and responsibilities of local authorities. This is to encourage citizen to fully participate and for CBO representatives to identify critical issues, problem analysis, self- assessment, proposal writing, advocacy, and how to work well with local authorities. API also provided technical, financial support, and cooperated with LAs to conduct fruitful outreach activities and public forum in order to provide space to local people and build up good communication with local authorities as well as to raise issues or demands to authorities and related stakeholders for interventions. In addition, API mentored and coached CBO representatives to engage, participate confidently, and actively conduct events through Sangkat councils.

As a result, at least 5(4 female) CBO representatives in this Sangkat regularly attend meetings. In 2016, there were 807, **includes 564**¹female citizens who asked and requested information from Sangkat councilors such as: civic service, budget expenditure, road traffic law, disaster, agriculture, health, village safety policy and etc.

LAs are now performing better in their roles and responsibilities such as disclosing information related to structure, contact list, fees and procedure of doing public service, monthly report, annual schedule of the Sangkat meeting and other concerns in the community.

1243 callers raise questions on the Interactive Voice Response (IVR); 1355 accessed the Self-IVR application to download some information from 'Sevakhum' (means commune service). 52,000 IEC materials (leaflets, flyers, and posters) about IVR were distributed to households through public forums, campaigns, and training for local councilors; 40 trained young people (12 female) have increased their capacity to promote IVR and the self IVR app. on 'Sevakhum' to households, high schools students, universities and factory workers.



Outcome 2: Access to information and information disclosure legislation and policies debated and adopted.

A2I law was legally drafted and shared by the Ministry of Information. API was recognized as a CSO leading representative in the A2I TWG. The contents of the draft law were improved through the consultation process with CSO A2I working group and sector networks. As results of policy review, findings and analysis were brought to the attention of A2I TWG including two submitted additional analysis reports on the Secrecy information and a Complaint Mechanism.

Collective voices from different groups of stakeholders (114 NGOs = 228 in which 70 female) participants including women, youths, disabled people and indigenous people through forums and meeting events have been used to influence for the improvement of A2I law formulation. Most of the inputs focused on general provision, rights and obligations of providing information, procedures of requesting and providing information, confidential information, protection for information revelation, and the appeal and enforcement of decisions.

Public and stakeholders engagement including development partners, especially UNESCO on draft A2I formulation has increased as a result of promoting the importance of A2I law through radio programmes, awareness raising events and consultation meetings.

Outcome 3: Effective mechanisms for productive dialogue and participation in democratic decision making to enhance the voices of and protect the rights of Cambodian people (young people, women, men and people with disabilities) in the target areas.

SNAs have become more open to citizen participation and collaboration with civil society. Increased citizen participation – expressing views and concerns, raising demands and offering recommendations during meetings/public events – was observed as a result of civic engagement activities and the

implementation of the Social Accountability Framework (SAF). The confidence and understanding of citizens and CBOs to participate and raise issues, concerns and priorities during forums and local councils' meeting have increased as result of awareness raising and coaching activities through project interventions. 384 questions & requests were raised and 256 of them were addressed and responded by the local authority in 6 targeted⁶ provinces. 76% (84) of 111 CBOs participated in local commune councils meetings and forums; 48% raised concerns about environment and natural resource management, 20% on economic, 19% on administration and security, 11% on social affairs but only 2% on gender.

Citizen led monitoring was improved through active participation from women, youth and disabled people on using score cards for public service evaluation. Six, Joint Accountability Action Plans (JAAP) were developed and submitted to JAAP committee after debating between citizen and service providers during interface meetings. All agreed activities in JAAP were included in the district investment plans during the district integration workshop.



Citizen Score-card

10 target districts integrated the Road traffic law (activities/plan) in the five-year development plan and the three-years rolling programme. The government, implementing partners, and relevant stakeholders' level of satisfaction have increased as they promote and enforced the implementation of the road traffic law through a national reflection forum attended by 121 participants from CSO, national and sub-national government, media and youth group led by API.

111 CBOs were questioned and confirmed that the number of advocacy actions have increased so they can demand their concerns and issues to their local authorities, at sub-national and national level. CBOs have put their advocacy efforts on specific issues in which 62% on environmental and natural resource, 22% on economic, 15% on gender, 25% on social affair and 24% on administration service and public security. API has led and joined with CBOs and CSO networks to discuss and lobby government, parliament, development partners and policy makers to identify the policy gaps and provided practical recommendations for law formulation and implementation including 1) Access to information law 2) Road Traffic law 3) Government National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-18 4) Social Accountability Framework.

“After involving myself in project implementation, my capacity and confidence to work with local authorities has increased and it allows me to engage with local authorities “
Mr. Cheam Voeun, CBOs of Ty Poar Commune

A joint CSO statement and key recommendations on road traffic law enforcement was developed, published and submitted to the National Road Safety Committee, appreciated by H.E Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister, used and shared to raise the awareness and advocacy efforts during the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Road Safety in Cambodia. Strategies for Addressing the Gap were co-organized by API, AIPF,

⁶Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Thom, Banteay Meanchey and Kratie

PDP, CMH, WMC, CRY, NRSC, PCNP and Mol⁷. The government has enforced an increased budget allocation for sub-national government (provincial level) to implement the new road traffic law enforcement in 2017 as reported by NRSCI. 28 young people (14 females)⁸ trained by project have increased their confidence and ability to monitor the enforcement of the Road Traffic Law and conducted “citizen reporting cards” with the local people.

The NGO Road Safety Working Group proposed three recommendations to the National Road Safety Committee: 1) ensure stringent and targeted enforcement of the Road Traffic Law by maintaining equality, transparency and accountability, 2) provide educational public awareness campaigns using national broadcasting channels and allocating budgets to local implementers and 3) consult with key road safety stakeholders and the public to assist in any amendments to the law and its enforcement measures in the future, as the results of nine consultative discussion forums with 520 (120 women) participants⁹ in 10 target districts.

Some specific recommendations¹⁰ on public participation were documented in the policy analysis report through policy consultative discussion forum/dialogue promoting public participation in local development in Pursat province with 44 (17 women) participants.

**Case study 3: Lobbying and Advocacy of CBOs to Local Authorities: A respond to Community Road Reconstruction
Tmey Village, Ty Poar Commune, Santuk District, Kampong Thom Province**

Ty Poar is one of the ten communes in Santuk district, and is located at the east of the district. Good roads in the villages within the commune are necessary in order for people to transport their products to the market, for children to go to school, for vehicles to travel faster, for people to travel easily to places where they work, etc. Unfortunately, some of the roads in this commune have been destroyed by weather, vehicles, etc., that affected people’s livelihoods.

The two roads located in Thmey village, Ty Poar Commune for example, has a length of 3,015m had been affected by rain and the passing of big trucks. These roads had been destroyed for the past 3 years where 1,250 families should supposedly have good access of these roads and the situation has greatly affected their livelihoods.

In June 2014, the Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) and local authorities of Ty Poar commune cooperated to conduct a public forum on “**Right to Access Information and Role of Local Authorities in Community Development**” that was joined by district, commune authorities, CBOs, and community people where the issue on road reconstruction were raised and requested. As a response to the issue, the Chief of the commune council expressed that they will bring the issue to a discussion among councilors and relevant stakeholders to find a solution.

CBO representatives who attended the training with API developed a two – page proposal and submitted to the commune councilors, and on January 22, 2016, a meeting was held in order to address the issues raised by the community members about the road repair/ reconstruction. This meeting was attended by CBO representatives, village chiefs, commune councilors, post administration police and the people.

LAs responded to the demands received during the meeting and incorporated the road repair/reconstruction in their commune investment plan. They also received other funds from donors to support in the reconstruction.

In February 2016, the roads were reconstructed by the Lidada Company which lasted for 7 months to be completed.

Outcome 4. Increased capacity development, transparency and accountability within Cambodia's sub-national Government to improve functions, human rights, information disclosure, and collaboration with communities, local civil society and national Government (Figures taken from annual appraisal 2016)

Increase capacity of local authorities on roles and responsibilities to disclose information and resource mobilization confidence in translating the knowledge and skills into practices such as minute taking, reporting, facilitating meetings and collecting data using electronic devices with less support from project staff where 138 (36 females) local authorities (21% increased). LAs are more transparent and accountable to citizens through disclosure of information publicly.

World Renew Organization conducted assessment to visitors of 102 (25 female) from local authority, CBOs and local NGOs mentioned that local authorities in Banteay Chmar commune, know how perform their roles and responsibilities, more transparent and disclosed income and expenditure to the public, exhibited good team work among councils and showed capability to conduct regular community public forums.

Mr. Nou Ren CBOs' chief in Danka Ample village raised that "previously, Sangkat councilors have never opened the opportunity for CBO representatives in the commune to participate in local councils' monthly meeting, but now local councils have opened space for CBO representatives to attend the meeting and local councils have now disclosed more information particularly on Sangkat financial report".

Local authorities strengthened their capacity on their roles and responsibilities and address citizens' needs and issues. Out of 199 local authorities from district and commune level, 73% (145) (25 % female) have mentioned they have attended trainings led by API while 97% of 145 local authorities received capacity building, used their knowledge and skills to implement their roles and responsibility; Moreover, 13% confirmed that they were aware of their roles and implemented it professionally; 31% of 145 local authority rated good and 53% rated medium.



93% of 199 local authorities have good collaboration with CSOs and CBOs in terms of addressing issues on public administrative service fees, gender, education, local infrastructure development and forestry.

Strengthened LAs capacity through technical support to disclose information at their commune and district as well as allowing users to access services easily. Of the

199 LAs who have been questioned, 25 % of them confirmed that commune disclosed annual budget and 19% of them confirmed that district disclosed its annual budget work plan.

11% (155) of 1418 local citizens have made complaints to local authorities for solution while 77% of 155 local citizens whom made complaint said that local authorities addressed their complaints; 72 % of 155 citizens were satisfied with solution provided by local authorities.

Regular monthly meetings to share experience and good practices between supply and demand sides of ISAF implementation were agreed by the implementing partners as an effective mechanism for project planning and implementation process. JAAP planning process with support by API has developed 6 JAAPs (Joint Accountability Action Plans) at commune level and shared in the District Integration Workshop (DIP) for mobilizing resource to support action plan.

The capacity of 123 participants (34 women) from youth groups and local councils¹¹ have increased from 33%¹² to 60%¹³ on understanding more the right to public information and its benefits, role and responsibility of LAs to disclose information, concept of public information and how to use IVR and self-IVR which could be downloaded and tested 'Sevakhum'(commune public service fees) in the mobile app.



88 women councilors from SiemReap's, Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear and Kampong Thom have increased capacity by 23.5%¹⁴ on advocacy, public speaking and enabling participation in discussions through two separate 'capacity development workshops'.

Case study 4: Illegal Land Grabbing of Community Forestry Kroyear Commune, Brasat Ballangk District, Kampong Thom Province

Kroyear commune has a community forestry named Domnak Korkor which has a total land area of 2,285 hectares. Since mid 2015, the community has faced challenges of illegal land grabbing and such activities have been committed by local people having land next to the other community. They burnt parts of the forest, used insecticides, pesticides, caught wild animals, etc. A spot check was conducted by the head of the community forestry and their members, advised and educated the group several times. But they were not successful with the process.

Meanwhile, Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) had conducted a training workshop on "Right to Access Information, Identifying Issues, Proposal Writing, and Advocacy." The training was joined by Community Base Organization (CBOs) representatives. Responding to CBOs issues, commune councilors and relevant stakeholders conducted a field visit to community. Then, CBO representatives wrote the issues and request a clear information and evidences on what is happening within community and submit to commune councilors who are responsible to solve issues.

The councilors officially summoned the people involved in the illegal logging to clarify what/why they did within the community. They said that they do such illegal activities because there are no places and lands for them to build their houses and to do farming. Finally, local authorities advised them to agree or promise to stop grabbing land and to stop destroying the community forestry.

Outcome 5. Enhanced and effective participation and contribution of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and networks in democratic governance, human rights, environmental governance, decentralization, transparency and accountability, information disclosure and development processes at the sub-national and national levels.

20(3 females) of Bandos Komar organization's staff and Plan Cambodia's partners who work on education have an average of 38% increased knowledge on advocacy skills if compared between pre and post-test. Two main advocacy messages and 28 supporting messages on education were developed to support their awareness and advocacy campaign.

More than 80% of 101 CSOs¹⁵ of AEA¹⁶ partners fairly increased capacity if compared between pre and post-test. Of 4 trainings on "Advocacy Skills and Good Governance for Education Services".

6 NGO staff from CADDP, YCC and PVT are able to manage and monitor 24 (12 female) Community Accountability Facilitators (CAF) for ISAF. They have the ability to monitor the proposed action of JAAP for mainstreaming in the district investment plans during DIWs.

A2I WG members and media student of Cambodia Communication Institute (CCI) increased capacity on A2I concept and actively engaged in discussing on tools for accessing A2I law, complaint mechanism, whistle blower protection and confidential information based on 9 international principles of freedom of information through providing training and meeting by API.

The training that I attended helped me to learn about step by step guidance and strategy of advocacy and I use the course to advocate local authorities to allocate commune budget to social work rather than infrastructure"

Mr. Khorn Bora



425 (143 women) participants are aware of Advocacy learning through a joint National Advocacy Conference (NAC) on 29 November 2016 organized together with 59 CSOs including API.¹⁷ (4 female) Citizen Journalists (53¹⁸% increased), 18¹⁹ (3 female) provincial broadcasters (35%²⁰increased), and 139 (32 females) CBOs representative (32%²¹ increased). 21 Citizen Journalists (4 females) are now able to

¹⁵They are including COCD, KPF,RSO, Plan, Sovann Phoum, PSE, NEP, AEE, Damnok Toek, BSDA, Bandos Komar, DDSP, Save The children, YS-Cambodia, RSO, OEC, KAPE, NTFP, Ockenden,

¹⁶Aide Et Action

¹⁷Citizen Journalist: are community members. Sometimes community activists and is selected based on recommendations from local CSOs in the target area

¹⁸If compare with pre and post test

¹⁹Provincial Broadcaster: they are small provincial level radio station

²⁰If compare with pre and post test

²¹If compare with pre and post test

write advocacy articles for social media hosted by CCIM²² and posted on websites.

CBO representatives, Citizen Journalist (CJ), youth and volunteer increased their capacity on collecting data through modern Smartphone (Magpi app) where data of 199 authorities (57 females), 111 CBOs representative (24 females) and 1418 citizen (913 females) were recorded. 287 (74 females) from CBO and local authorities were able to lead the discussion.



Policy analysis report consists of 7 issue topics in English version²³ has been published at sub-national level: 1) community forestry, 2) access to information in education, 3) waste management 4) budget disclosure 5) public service delivery 6) public participation in local government and 7) Road Traffic Law enforcement.

10 prioritized issues of 2 districts and 1 municipality were identified from the target area²⁴ through a multi-stakeholder meeting. 9 of the 10 prioritized issues were selected to include in a joint proposal to local authority to address and develop proposal with joint undertaking with local authorities, CBOs, NGOs and private sector.

7 case studies²⁵ have been compiled describing about positive and negative impact from project implementations.

The National Assembly appreciated the building-up of cooperation with the BWG²⁶, agreed to have regular meeting with BWG. BWG released the statement on national budget analyses with clear recommendations on the draft budget Law in 2017 to National Assembly, EU, and media. The budget issue was attached by media and round table discussion in RFA and VOD.

API director was voted to seat in Local Governance Initiatives and Networks (LOGIN) operation committee to represent South-East Asia country platform and attended in LOGIN general assembly (GA) in Colombo, Sri Lanka in December 2016.

Local authorities are proud to be associated with the establishment of IVR and Self-IVR tools as an effective initiative to facilitate public access to 'Sevakhum' based on the reflection workshop on IVR and Self IVR (ICT innovative) with local authorities and youth in target communes."

The Provincial Association of Local Councils in Kampong Speu, Pursat, Kampong Chhnang and Banteay Meanchey province agreed to integrate the tools into the work of the National League of Elected Sub National Councils during the final reflection meeting of USAID/Development Innovations funded project. The leadership of the NCDD secretariat has shown their interest in using the mobile technology (e.g. waste management) to access to the available services of six districts/municipalities.

²²Cambodia Center for Independent Media Organization

²³Please see final version in the annex of 1 report of policy analysis

²⁴From Bakan district, Krakor district and Pursat municipality

²⁵Please check in the attached annex files

²⁶BWG: Budget Working Group

**Case study 5: Resource Mobilization to support CBOs at Meteuk Commune,
Bakan District, Pursat Province**

A fishery community in Bakan District, Pursat Province has a fishery conservation zone area in Dey Roneat commune where majority of the communities' livelihood is dependent on this fishing area. They are always confronted with fishing offenses or illegal fishing by local residents or people outside their community. Although some members of the commune tried to protect this area, they still face difficulties as there is no watch post to protect the area, no budget to support a volunteer guard to report and track illegal fishing activities, and more critically, CBOs are busy in their own lives supporting their family's needs and that they have no enough time to track and monitor the conservation area carefully.

Early in 2015, Advocacy Policy Institute (API) signed a MoU with commune councils for cooperation in the implementation of project promoting **good governance by increasing access to information and strengthens the independent media**. The project supported LAs to address community issues and enhanced good working relationships with them and CBO representatives seem to be more courageous in advocating, raising issues and finding support with LAs. Both LAs and CBOs address fishery issues through a forum and as a result, their community was supported by FACT Organization in building a water tower to protect the area. More significantly, commune councils integrated 100 USD in their commune budget annually to contribute in the protection of the conservation zone area. The law enforcement and support from CBOs have made a significant decrease in the illegal fishing activities in the protected area.



**CBOs taking action to protect their fishing community
Fishery Department**

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CBOs taking action to protect their fishing community

5. Our organizational achievements

With support from our donor, we managed to hire an independent consultant to conduct an Organizational Impact Assessment (OIA) in early 2016. The purpose of OIA is to assess the achievement of outcomes and strategic priorities as articulated in its strategic plans as well as to develop/revise strategic framework for the next few years (2017-2018) for the sake of fund raising and full implementation of the strategic plan. Eight key recommendations were made and included in the implementation plan for realization in a short-term, medium term and long-term time frame.

Based on the OIA results, it is evident that the Board members themselves are committed to the mission and vision of the organization, its approaches, and strategies. The Board is not involved with the day to day affairs of the organization, which are a testament to the strength of leadership and also the quality of the staff and their commitment to excellence. The Board presently does have some roles to play in policy oversight, and in strategic direction setting. Our Management Committee (MC) has performed its roles well for helping API's organizational and programme development and making tough decisions for effective operations.

API has experienced almost a decade of stable leadership. The current Director has been employed in this capacity since December 2005. However, the period of a Director's appointment has now been restricted to a maximum of two 3-year terms, meaning that the existing director was stepped down to take over a role of a Senior Technical Advisor for 12 months focusing on fundraising, business development, service contract, access to information law and supporting and building confidence of new director which was appointed by the Boards and started his role in December 2016.

A new organizational structure was devised to make sure API has the appropriate number of staff in appropriate roles for effective implementation of API programmes with our current resources. As a result of this restructure, a few positions were changed to reflect to the current situation of API. The new structure implementation is intended to address the issue of staff workloads which highlighted in the organizational assessment report. Our **staff engagement** remains good with high commitment. The new structure started to implement towards the end of 2016 under the new Leadership and API's team has assessed their operating models and have introduced new roles, structures and working environment to ensure that they can deliver high performance to achieve quality programme implementation.

5.1 Partner and networks portfolio

Our partners and networks portfolio comprise of CSO networks at regional and national level, issues based and technical working groups with both the Governments, DPs and NGOs, NGOs and CBOs for promoting leaning and change . Our current profiles is high as API is currently representing in many networks and working groups such as A2I, WGPD, BWG, TWGs (Ministry of Information, Ministry of Finance and Economic and NCDD), DPs meetings, LOGIN, DELGOSEA and ISAF. API has a strong core set of values which promote mutual accountability and learning in its partnerships. The majority of feedback is that CBOs and implementing NGOs have smooth partnerships with API characterized by trust, respect, and strong coordination.

We need to seek more networks and partnerships with NGOs working in climate change, natural resource management, education and health relating to social accountability and with indigenous peoples and

youth to strengthen our programme implementation to address the needs of disadvantaged groups. API is a Chair person of Working Groups for Partnership in Decentralisation (WGPD), a member of Operational Committee of LOGIN at Asia Region and a member of ASEAN countries – DELGOSEA. As part of the Pro-Citizen project 2017 – 2019, API will cooperate with CCC and possibly WGPD to strengthen networks capacity at provincial and district level in our target provinces.

5.2 Budget and expenses

Even though the funding aid to Cambodia has declined API still managed to assess funding sources in a very competitive market in Cambodia. Our major donor continues to be DCA and Bread for the World. To complement fundraising activities, we are building our external profile through radio talk shows, representing CSOs in national, regional and international conferences and workshops and sitting in many national working groups, development partner meetings and technical working groups.

Financial summary by December 2016:

Income	US\$ 543,980.55
Expense	US\$ 462,535.50
Balance carried forward	US\$ 81,445.05

This success is due to the amazingly ambitious, mutually supportive and enthusiastic staff team who are determined to do everything to the best of their ability. The key aspects of our success were teamwork, tenacity and the strong profile of API in the democratic development sector with the government, development partners and civil society organisations.

6 Our challenges and learning experiences

6.1 Our challenges:

API has faced a number of key challenges in 2016. The internal challenges were funding constraints which caused a number of difficulties in achieving our strategic objectives. The financial sustainability is a challenge due to a low number of long-term funding sources but with many short-term funding sources to support many projects. It was not always possible to focus on our goals as we needed to compromise in order to meet the demands of donors. We recognised the need to have a clear operating and fundraising plan in order to minimize this mismatch and, ideally, attract donors to our programmes directly (i.e. without having to compete in open calls).

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning is another challenge. The tools, processes and data sources that are available and used by API to monitor its programmes and projects have been improved considerably. The processes and the reliability of the MEL process as whole has improved and is enhanced by the use of external data sources and external reviews provide validation. However further improvements can be made in the MEL process by ensuring that MEL guideline is improved and finalized and then staff and partners are all sufficiently trained on MEL tools and processes and understanding their role within this.

Another substantial challenge is illiteracy or lack of general knowledge among the citizenry. When speaking of access to information, most of it is written – so for semiliterate or preliterate populations this

presents a big hurdle. For API programmatically, it has meant they need to think of different and more creative ways of reaching these populations. In some cases, people lack even the basic understanding of the role of the state and the citizen. Explaining to these citizens or raising awareness about how the laws function and operate is thus very challenging.

On a more theoretical level, sometimes community members do not value capacity development or awareness because it is intangible. It is not like a well or a house that they can see some concrete benefit to themselves.

6.2 Our Learning:

Our interventions in our target districts have inspired other districts and communes on the essential role of community in governance. Engaging them at the earliest level will ensure sustainability as well as inclusiveness in the development. They also found that delegating responsibility at the lowest level will contribute to the efficiency of governance.

Without the adoption of the Access to Information law budget transparency is not likely to improve anytime soon.

It was observed that the more support from CSOs to local district councilors and governors (duty bearer/supply side) and CBOs (right holder/demand side) in the same target areas, the greater the positive change. This also helped the public officials perform their roles and deliver public services to a higher standard; improving internal governance.

Working in partnership between CSOs, local authority and CBOs at the grassroots level resulted in greater positive results and disclosure of important public information. This included local budget information which is one of the most sensitive issues in Cambodia.

Grassroots advocacy is more successful if there is a connection and well planned approach to national advocacy with all executive, legislative and courts through participation of local CBOs and local government.

Social media provides a rapid vehicle for disseminating news and information that could not pass through any other channels in Cambodian society. As such, it also has served as a powerful tool for social accountability (*i.e. in exposing the wrongdoings of government officials and thereby compelling behavior change*) and one that API should do more to better understand.

7 Our focus on the sustainability

We have clear direction of our strategic plan 2014-2018 and with constructive recommendations and management responses of the Organisational Impact Assessment report; API continuously carries out its mandates in a professional manner to meet the needs of our target groups and to address the development challenges in Cambodia.

We are seen as a trusted partner of national and sub national government as we work in a sustainable way on capacity building for change with our stakeholders, including development partners and networks at national and international levels. We are respected as an effective local advocacy capacity building

organisation which considers education as essential for the success and sustainability of D&D reform as well as the continuing positive impact of our work.

We provide support and collaboration among civil society networks and government institutions to cooperate to pass an access to information law we are having a sustainable effect on government policy and responsiveness which is beginning to improve the living conditions of many disadvantaged Cambodians.

We have changed our staff structure to mobilize the expertise of previous Director of API to take on the role of a Senior Technical Adviser focusing on fundraising and business plan development. In addition to this, fundraising expertise of the new Director of API will add values for fundraising and networking. This is an important aspect on diversify and sustainable funding for API.

We have shaped the roles of the Management Committee members (MCs) to take additional roles for supporting fundraising. The MCs will be trained on fund raising and business development concept in 2017. A new International Fundraiser who will be funded by BftW has been contracted to support API's fundraising and will start working on this job position in June 2017.

We strategically transformed ourselves in term of initiative of providing training service contracts to generate more incomes. Our financial sustainable plan is to form our long-term business plan and be creative and explore income generating activities such as consultancies.

We strengthen councilors and local authority officials to be more responsive to and actively engage with citizens, CBOs and CSOs while becoming more transparent and accountable. Through our advocacy intervention, they also create a model for advocacy that is actively adopted and used to good effect by other civil society organisations. In the long term council action should have a sustainable positive impact improving people's lives

8 Conclusions for 2016 and looking to the future

In conclusion we can say that this has been an interesting and successful year for API but also one which has focused on the need for change and adaptation to a new political and financial landscape.

The organisation has been restructured to bring in expertise on INGO management and networking skills and to allow existing staff to have the time and resources to seek out new partners and funding which API needs to move forward.

Even in this state of flux API can be proud of the results achieved this year and the success of the project implementation. IT will continue to work tirelessly to engage with Government and Civil Society in a peaceful no confrontational manner to bring about improvement and change in the lives of its targeted beneficiaries.

To that end API has identified the lessons learned in overcoming past challenges and looks forward to meet expected changes in the national context. The specific recommendations and planning for the coming year include:

1. Funding shortages are expected to hamper our work, despite mitigating steps mentioned above. This is expected to worsen as Cambodia moves up out of the list of UN poorest nations. Donors are expected to shift their focus towards other, even more disadvantaged nations.

We will develop our fundraising strategy and plan and develop our long-term business plan which focuses on providing services for income generation and to include more partnership work with the private sector.

2. Theory of Change (ToC) for Programmes: Developing individual ToC for each of our programmes will enable us to focus on our goals and objectives, and make it clearer to partners and donors how we can work in partnership to achieve common aims.
3. Develop a clearer strategy for working with women and youth, in particular young women. This could involve building strategic partnerships with other gender or youth based organizations who are already working in these areas. API could explore how to use social media to engage youth. They could also focus more on helping to women access roles in the community as facilitators, planners, as well as develop their leadership skills. By demonstrating the potential contribution that young women have to play, for example, API could help to challenge and break down some of the socio-cultural barriers to women's empowerment.
4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning: we will work with the M&E specialist providing by BftW to further improve and refine our M&E systems, guidelines and tools. We will also focus on the analysis of the data collected in order to evaluate our work and feed this learning into improvements at programme level.
5. Climate change will continue to affect the Mekong flood plain, with extremes of weather (mainly drought and flood) expected. Integration of the climate change and natural resource management to our programmes will be assessed aiming to include in the next strategic plan development in 2018.
6. API is learning a great deal through its present involvement as a member of the A2I working group, which needs to be documented and shared with other CSO actors. Once this experience has concluded, API will be in a position improve the policy engagement process so that it includes a wider variety of civil society and political society voices. In this respect the content of the legislation (*i.e. road safety*) is less important than the process of policy development itself. These should include civil society networks that have true grassroots constituents to whom they are accountable. API should cooperate with local academic institutions to carry out research which can serve as an evidence base. They could also develop the capacity in policy dialogue and analysis among CSOs, academics, and the government.
7. API should target the district in particular and provincial levels to develop their capacity in problem solving, analytical thinking, communications, negotiations, planning, oversight, and strategy development.
8. Strengthening multi-level democratic governance should be at the core of API's work moving forward. This would involve 1) improving vertical flows of information from higher to lower levels of SNAs, 2) supporting deconstruction & decentralization, especially with respect to resource allocation, 3) strengthening feedback loops from grassroots level CBOs and SNAs to national level institutions (*such as the Senate*), and 4) leading multi-stakeholder dialogue that includes private sector, government, and civil society.