INNOVATIONS FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN CAMBODIA

END PROJECT REPORT 2019-2024

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INNOVATIONS FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN CAMBODIA (ISAC)

Statement Of Problem Before Project Started

API Strategic Plan 2019-23 aligns well with the Innovations for Social Accountability in Cambodia (ISAC)'s goal and objectives and strategies to support citizens to improve capacity, access to information, and network for collective action, helping them to build public demand and develop solutions to address community's priorities. The ISAC activity vision is that, after the project concludes, Cambodian citizens will have the information, knowledge, skill, and network necessary to hold local government accountable for public service delivery.

Ta Khmau, Kandal province did not implement social accountability phase I. Therefore, API proposes to implement ISAC activities in Ta Khmau, Kandal, to expand the API's experiences on outstanding performance in empowering citizens in the joint ISAF implementation in Kampot, social accountability work in Banteay Meanchey and Kampong Thom and esp. the successful piloting of social accountability (ISAF) in the urban context in Khan Sen Sok of Phnom Penh. The ISAC activity will engage citizens and civic groups in urban areas parallel to ISAF Phase II. By building on the experiences and learning from the Implementation of the Social Accountability Framework (ISAF) Phase I process and pilot innovative tools, activities, and ICT-related and new sectors in urban settings.

The project will facilitate and build the capacity of key stakeholders and provide ongoing coaching support to Community Accountability Facilitators, and the JAAP committee. So that they can communicate, facilitate, and implement project activities.

The project will conduct public awareness and dissemination to ensure citizens access to information on government decisions and processes and the planning, spending, and investment of public funds; conduct community scorecard – citizen scoring service providers and mobilize citizens to assess the services of health centers, primary schools,

and Sangkat administrations based on the criteria developed by citizens themselves to hold local government accountable for public services; and raise awareness about social accountability digital applications to increased utilization of new or existing technologies enabling citizen engagement to increase accountability for public services; and to raise awareness of accountability and integrity in public administration.

The Objective Of API Strategic Plan 2019-2023

To fulfill rights and enhance the voices of citizens for sustainable development in Cambodia.

Project Objective

To support citizens to improve their capacity, access to information, and network for collective action, helping them to build public demand and develop solutions to address the community's priority.

Funding

USD580,141funded by USAID through FHI360

Target areas

10 Sangkats and 01 municipal in Ta Khmau Municipality, Kandal Province, Cambodia

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Following internal discussions, please share your team's top five achievements under the ISAC activity. When sharing the achievement, please include the project year(s) it took place in and its significance to the overall objective of ISAC.

Sustainable Social Accountability Actions After The Project Ended

From 2023, all levels of local administration of Kandal province have reallocated their local budget of around $1,750 to $2,000 annually per commune/Sangkat to implement social accountability (SA) activities. Ta Khmau Municipal administration planned to allocate a budget amount of 500,000 Riels ($125) for each Sangkat and 14,000,000 Riels ($3,500) to implement social accountability at the DMK level in Ta Khmau. Furthermore, 10 Sangkats

planned to allocate a budget of around 81,014,000 Riels ($20,253) to implement in 2025 by themselves. Through the government's budget allocation, Sangkats conducted the information for citizens (I4C) dissemination meetings, Joint Accountability Action Plans Committee (JAAPC) meetings, and Joint Accountability Action Plans (JAAPs) dissemination…etc. This is a great role model in the country to ensure social accountability's sustainability and ownership of the state.

Through the Innovation for Social Accountability in Cambodia (ISAC) project implementation, there were 130 I4C meetings, 176 inception and share vision meetings, 312 scorecard meetings, 40 interface meetings, 20 JAAPC trainings, 118 JAAPC meetings, and 60 JAAP dissemination meetings conducted. Citizens dare to express their ideas and get Sangkat service by themselves. Moreover, they had opportunities to raise their voices. Local authorities changed their behavior, and improved work performance. Local authorities responded effectively to the citizens' need for Sangkat, health center, and primary school services.

There Is Increased Government Accountability Toward Citizens

A total of 71% (838 of 1,176 issues & activities) of collective citizens' voices and integrated into joint accountability and local development plans to improve health, education, and administration at Sangka and Municipal levels.

Local services and the quality of Sangkat, the health center, and the primary school improved. Citizens send their children to their local schools. They used their health center and Sangkats' services. Citizens' concerns addressed. In addition, citizens got the benefit from it. The local issues raised by citizens were the real issues that were needed and reflected by the service providers through 118 JAAPC meetings and 08 reflection workshops in Kandal province.

Building More Local Citizen Leadership And Employment.

There are significantly increasing active citizenship actions and improvements in public service delivery through social accountability activities. At least 15,873 (10,417 females) Citizens including 192 religious, 117 people with disabilities, and 26 LGBT have improved their understanding and actions. Citizens changed from less to more active citizens in monitoring public services and demanding government officials to change their behaviors in providing public service to citizens in Kandal province and actively participating in public local council meetings, provided feedback to address around 1,000 issues on health, education, and administration services to benefit 146,510 populations in Ta Khmau. Citizens more actively monitored the joint accountability action plan through regular quarterly meetings and participated in Sangkat monthly meetings. Citizens' awareness of 130 I4C meetings, 312 scorecard meetings, and 40 interface meetings.

After 83 Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) (56F) have played active roles for a few years. CAFs have significantly increased knowledge and skills through 27 training courses on social accountability, information for citizens, budget disclosure, community scorecards, action for change, leadership, Mojo video, etc. Now, they can facilitate social accountability activities and community works professionally to serve people in their communities, and they are qualified and employed in different places, 04 CAFs are working with NGOs, 05 are working with the government, and 19 are working in the private sector.

Increased Transparency Of Local Government Budget And Expenditures

- Increased transparency of local government budget and expenditures has been publicly disclosed for public access since 2020 through the inception workshop at the Municipality level collaborates with the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic (NCDD) and the Social Accountability focal person of Kandal Provincial to provide training data

collection and 130 I4C dissemination meetings. Citizens and local service providers have understood the local budget income and expenditure. Citizens joined and monitored the budget usage of their services. So, Citizens played an important role in contributing directly to reducing corruption.

PROJECT OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITY RESULTS

Please share key results including achievements and challenges throughout the period of performance for each output under the ISAC award. When possible, please use quantitative data to explain the results.

Outcome 1: Improved information access on government decisions and processes, and the planning, spending, and investment of public funds

Output 1.1: Government-sourced information on national and sub-national budgets, planning, and spending more available to citizens

- A total of 13 videos (03 animation videos I4Cs & 10 MoJo videos) were produced on citizen rights roles, standard services, and budget, one per selected sector on health, education, and administration.

Output 1.2. Citizen knowledge of local government functions and responsibilities for budgeting, planning, and services increased

- 10,558 (7,918F) individuals receiving civic education through USG-assisted programs (2 times per Sangkats).

- 60% of people who have completed USG-assisted civic education programs demonstrate increased knowledge.

- 92 times (two times each Sangkat) of mobile loudspeakers (Tuk Tuk) conducted to display I4C to approximately 22,500 (12,700F) citizens around the village in each Sangkat.

Outcome 2: Increased citizen participation and collective action to hold local government accountable for public services

Output 2.1: Citizen-generated information on government decisions, processes, and performance increased and shared, and Output 2.2: Citizen-driven community and local solutions on how to engage and provide feedback to local government increased

- 3,439 (2,040 Female) participants attended the inception and share vision meetings to introduce SA, ISAC, and CAFs; agreed on the community scorecard schedule, and collected priority issues.

Output 2.3: Coalitions between and among associations, councils, and other civil society groups expanded

- A total of 11 JAACs with 223 members (105F) have been established during the project implementation in the project target.

Output 2.4: Dialogues between the RGC and CSOs on local government accountability increased

- 40 (23F) CAFs attended the 04 pre-meetings to discuss and prepare tools for the community scorecard.

- 988 (519F) participants attended the 90-service provider self-scoring meetings.

- 3,782 (2,113F) participants attended the 121 community scorecards to score three service providers and Municipality administration service.

- 1,020 (626F) participants attended the 31 interface meetings to develop JAAPs, JAAPs DMK, and the JAAP, JAAP DMK committees.

- 153 (58F) participants attended training on M5 and refresher training one day in year 2 and year 3.

- 1,685 (1,128F) participants attended 40 JAAPs dissemination.

- 197 (95F) participants attended 121 quarterly meetings to plan and report the progress, challenges/solutions of JAAPs & JAAPs DMK implementation including resource mobilization.

Outcome 3: Increased utilization of new or existing enabling technologies for citizens to hold local government accountable for the delivery of public services

Output 3.1: Technological tools to strengthen accountability for local public services created or adapted.

- API staff attended a digital capacity analysis training on digital literacy and hygiene conducted by the ISAC-DAI team.

Output 3.2: CSO knowledge and awareness of new and existing technological tools to strengthen accountability for local public services increased

- There are 39 (25F) participants including 08 (04F) youth, 19 (11F) adults, 12 (11F) elderly, 17 (15F) ID poor, 04 CBO representatives joined the 02 technology-focus sections meetings facilitated by ISAC/DAI in 02 Sangkats of Setbo and Svay Rolum.

- API successfully coordinated the refresher training on digital security under the technical support of ISAC/DAI to 27 (17F) CAFs to help them better understand digital security risks caused by using mobile devices including phones/tablets, and the practical ways to prevent these digital risks. The digital security training focused on Mobile Security, Internet Security, Social Media Security, and Two-Factor Authentication. Based on the pre and post-test results, 96% of the participants significantly increased their knowledge of digital security from 47.31% (pre-test) to about 81.15% (post-test) on average after the training. However, a few face challenges during the digital security practice sessions because they are elderly and lack prior IT background.

Output 3.3: Citizen capacity to use new and existing technological tools strengthened

- API & Star Kampuchea joined the radio talk show FM 102 with the topic "Citizens' rights and access to standard information" as guest speakers.

  See the link provided: https://www.facebook.com/RadioFM102/videos/130738340125962

Outcome 4: Education and outreach to raise awareness of accountability and integrity in public administration

Output 4.1: Platform to aggregate, analyze, and report local accountability data created or strengthened

- API leveraged its organization's Facebook page to disseminate I4C packages and quizzes to local citizens.

- A total of 14 videos highlighting the information standards of Sangkat, health centers, primary schools, and DMK were posted on API's Facebook page. As a result, the campaign reached 178,320 users and garnered 387,872 engagements related to I4C content on Sangkat, health centers, primary schools, and DMK. Please visit the link to related content: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/NmLN3d5xKdn5DN73

Output 4.2: The capacity of independent organizations to analyze and disseminate data and information strengthened.

- 03 (01F) API staff participated in two in-depth two-day training sessions on social media campaigns for IPs.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Please share challenges from implementing the ISAC activity. Please make sure to include how the challenges impacted implementation and the pivots taken to address said challenges.

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the commune/Sangkat election, the national election campaign, and political tension on CLV-DTA from August to October 2024, there are some activities with communes were postponed, while these activities with primary schools and health centers continued until the end process. Therefore, the ISAC team did the activities with Sangkats later.

- Some CAFs dropped out because of their different personalities, so the ISAC project team announced and recruited CAFs through ISAC outreach activities.

- There are some challenges in funding from authorities to respond to the JAAP action plan, especially the actions that need to use the budget from Sangkat and Municipality.

LESSONS LEARNED

Please share lessons learned from the ISAC activity and how they impacted implementation/impact.

- School is a great venue for I4C dissemination in person. In addition, it has more facilities such as chairs, tables, boards, and fans for participants, but it is so annoying when pupils take short rest. However, CAFs manage a team to stand in front of the door and then request pupils to play far away from the meeting room. The engagement with the Department of Education Youth and Sport Ta Khmau for secondary and high school students' participation increased the number of youths in the ISAC project.

- During the hot season, it is necessary to conduct I4C dissemination efforts through face-to-face interactions and mobile loudspeakers in the morning, utilizing venues with good ventilation and fans to enhance comfort.

- The pre-meeting with CAFs before implementing activities proved to be an effective process for ensuring that CAFs had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as for organizing logistics, which contributed to more effective implementation.

- The API team supported technical development activity and budget plan to local authorities at 10 Sangkats in Ta Khmau is a good model for local authorities to have the capacity and allocate the resource budget in I-SAF sustainability in Kandal

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue the sustainability initiative implementation of the ISAC project with low cost and Local fundraising practices in some targets with authorities. According to the commitment of Kandal province, the municipality, and Sangkat authorities allocated their budget between $1,750 to $2,000 annually per commune/Sangkat to implement social accountability (SA) activities. Ta Khmau Municipal administration planned to allocate the budget amount of 500,000 Riels ($125) for each Sangkat and 14,000,000 Riels ($3,500) to implement social accountability at the DMK level in Ta Khmau. Furthermore, 10 Sangkats planned to allocate a budget of around 81,014,000 Riels ($20,253) to implement in 2025 by themselves. It is a good opportunity for NGOs to support technical staff only in coaching and collaboration implementation. Moreover, to build more sodality and response to the JAAP actions effectively, the project needs to capacity building on the local fundraising to the stakeholders, especially JAAPC members, then support technical to them to apply local fundraising concepts at the field and buy in key stakeholders such as relevance authorities, private sector, citizen to generate fund for responding the JAAP actions in their communities. Moreover, the project needs capacity building for JAAPC members on the project budget management, transparency, and accountability. Then let them practice the project implementation and transparency budget expense to relevant stakeholders and let relevant stakeholders involved and monitor during the project implementation.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY LEADS TO AN IMPROVED SANGKAT FOR LOCAL CITIZENS

Sangkat Roka Khpos office in Prek Samrong village, Sangkat Roka Khpos, Ta Khmau municipality, Kandal province is a concrete building consisting of a red roof surrounded, standard of Ministry of Interior (MOI). There are many public services such as civil registration, identification, mother and baby health, education, anti-violent, gender, none-women and children violent, child protection, water sanitation, people with disability (PWD), poor families, old age people, anti-drug and alcohol, gender equality empowerment, and social work…. Previously, the Sangkat space was not large, untidy, old information board, no information-on-information board, service providing not so fast, Sangkat monthly meeting does not invite CAFs and citizens representative, no slope for people with disability, Sangkat councils & ISAF focal person didn't attend ISAF activities and doesn't have CAFs work in this Sangkat. In addition, chief of Sangkat, a chair of JAAPC always absent in ISAF meeting either and did not deeply involve on ISAC. Therefore, some of JAAPC members didn't fully join ISAC.

Since late 2020, the Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) funded by USAID through FHI 360 have been implementing the Innovations for Social Accountability in Cambodia (ISAC) project throughout Ta Khmau municipality, including work in Sangkat Roka Khpos. The project aims to support citizens to improve their capacity, access to information, and network for collective action, helping them to build public demand and develop solutions to address

community's priority. Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) accompanied API staff to facilitate I4C dissemination, inception, share vision, self-assessments, community scorecards, and interface meetings between citizens and service providers, including the Sangkat Councils, health centre, and primary school. Through this process, citizens had the opportunity to score the service providers' performance and standards. In addition, API-ISAC had launch ISAF MDK in the late of March 2023 then has been implementing ISAF MDK at Ta Khmau municipality level.

Mr. Chhoueng Chhou, the chief of Sangkat Roka Khpos, participated in some of the ISAC project. Even of he missed to join some of ISAC activities because of his core tasks. However, he authorized the ISAF focal person and Sangkats councils to join ISAC activities. There were some positive notices such as the I4C posted, Sangkat's budget posted, the JAAPs results 2022 on the information board at the mechanism of one window service office. The results of citizen scorecards with all the Sangkat councils shared, so Sangkat councils could understand their own strengths and weaknesses. The proposed activities to enhance the performance of Sangkat councils and standardize Sangkat shared with JAAPC members.

Mrs. Douk Sreypov, ISAF focal person of Sangkat worked with the Sangkat councils, charities, NGOs and Ta Khmau municipality to address and prioritize actions. All the service providers then integrated their respective actions into the Joint Accountability Action Plan (JAAP). Mrs. Douk Sreypov shared the proposed actions with all the citizens in the community and stakeholders.

On September 20, 2022, to implement JAAP, Sangkat implemented its planned action. As a results, 22 among 37 JAAPs action implemented. In those implemented JAAPs, there was 02 external JAAPs action done for such instant 02 toilets with divided male and female funded $1,500 by Sangkat constructed in the early of 2023. In addition, 650 poor and older families supported and funded 18 million riels from the Cambodia government. New information board constructed with I4C posted and above information posted funded by Sangkat amount $250. Moreover, Sangkat councils' contact numbers posted on Sangkat' wall funded by Sangkat amount 40,000 Riels. The slope for people with disability constructed, Sangkat' environment cleaned, regularly control by villages on village' security. On the other hand, equity cards to the poor families offered, the mechanism of one window service prepared, citizens representative were invited to join Sangkat monthly meeting. Furthermore, Sangkat had internal regular meetings on discipline strengthening, working hour, services offer speed up. Finally, 03 primary schools of Sangkat actively in ISAC and majority of JAAPs action implemented.
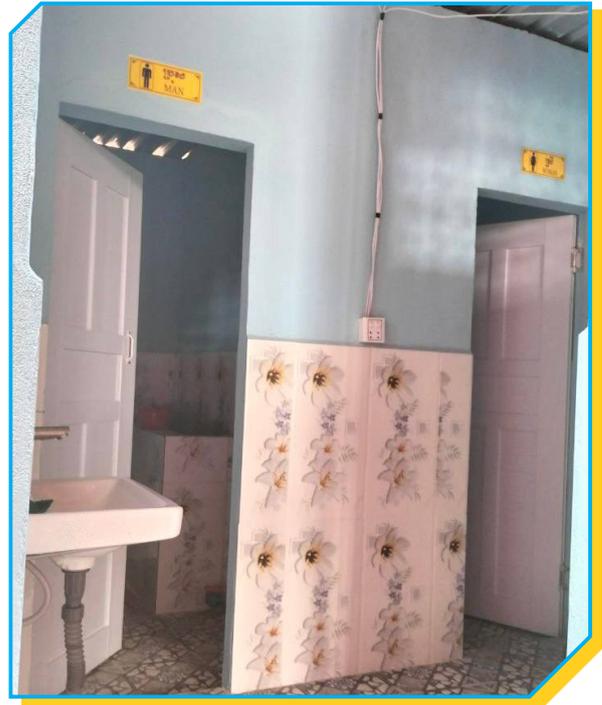
The I4C dissemination, inception, share vision meetings, community scorecards and self-assessment helped Mr. Chhoueng Chhou improve his management, leadership skills, and communication with citizens. The process has also helped to improve the performance of Sangkat councils. Citizens now say they are satisfied with the Sangkat's service delivery. Mrs. Roeun Chen, 50-year-old, a local citizen, living in Prek They village, Sangkat Roka Khpos said, "I am so glad that the Sangkat's chief has worked hard to improve the quality of Sangkat's services, management, and the Sangkat environment."

Mr. Chhoeung Chhou and all the Sangkat councils plan to continue to work closely with JAAPC members to raise more funds to implement further actions addressing the remaining issues.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY LEADS TO AN IMPROVED HEALTH CENTER ENVIRONMENT FOR LOCAL CITIZENS

Prek Ho Health Center (HC) in Prek Ho village, Sangkat Prek Ho, Ta Khmau municipality, Kandal province is a concrete building consisting of a red roof surrounded. There were some services such as general medical consultation (general), birth delivery, pregnancy check-up, wound curing, minor surgeries, health follow-up after maternity, patients check with equity card, NSSF card, people with disability. Previously, there were not any regular monthly meetings, late request medicines, didn't have permanent staff for standby 24 hours and not many patients came to get service either. Moreover, there were not enough staff for HC serving services. The chief of the health center and staff did not plan to address it. Local citizens were very dissatisfied with HC staff and HC chief's inaction in addressing these issues.

Since late 2020, the Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) funded by USAID through FHI 360 have been implementing the Innovations for Social Accountability in Cambodia (ISAC) project throughout Ta Khmau municipality, including work in Sangkat Prek Ho. The project aims to support citizens to improve their capacity, access to information, and network for collective action, helping them to build public demand and develop solutions to address community's priority. Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) accompanied API staff to facilitate I4C dissemination, inception, share vision, self-assessments, community scorecards, and interface meetings between citizens and service providers, including the Sangkat Councils, health center, and primary school. Through this process, citizens had the opportunity to score the service providers' performance and standards.

Mr. Hong Savoeun, the chair of Prek Ho health center (HC), actively participated in the ISAC project. He posted the information for citizens (I4C), HC's budget, results and JAAPs results 2022 in the office. He shared the results of citizen scorecards with all the HC staff so they could understand their own strengths and weaknesses. He then proposed activities to enhance the performance of HC staff and standardize the HC.

All the service providers (health center, primary school and Sangkat administration) integrated their respective proposed actions into the Joint Accountability Action Plan (JAAP). Mr. Hong Savoeun shared JAAP with all the citizens in the community and stakeholders. Mr. Hong Savoeun worked with the Sangkat Prek Ho Councils, Kandal Operational District (OD), charities, NGOs and Ministry of Health to address JAAP.

On September 20, 2022, for JAAP implementation, OD of Kandal and ministry of health mobilized resources to implement its planned action. As a result, the ministry of health contributed and funded 18.90 million Riels ($4,725) to construct health center yard, repair of the health checkup's room, purchased four beds, purchased of sanitary materials, installed lamps, and office equipment. Additionally, there are some additional services such as family planning (birth spacing) and modern birth protection. There are eight staff as HC's standardize, conduct staff monthly meetings, medicine requests regularly, and HC staff standby 24 hours. Nowadays, there are around 600 to 700 people come to Prek Ho HC for using service quarterly.

The I4C dissemination, inception, share vision meetings, community scorecards and self-assessment helped Mr. Hong Savoeun improve his management, leadership skills, and communication with citizens. The process has also helped to improve the performance of HC staff. Citizens now say they are satisfied with the HC's service delivery. Ms. Ouk Sophat, 61-year-old, a local citizen, living in Batachi village, Sangkat Prek Ho said, "I am so glad that the HC's chief has worked hard to improve the quality of HC's services, management, and the HC environment."

Mr. Hong Savoeun and all the HC staff plan to continue to work closely with the Sangkat councils, OD and ministry of health to raise more funds to implement further actions addressing the remaining issues.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY LEADS TO AN IMPROVED PRIMARY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN

The Koh Anlongchen primary school in Chong Koh village, Sangkat Koh Anlongchen, Ta Khmau municipality, Kandal province is a concrete building consisted of six rooms with a red roof surrounded. Previously, there were not any playground and football's ground for students to enjoy during break and after class. It is muddy school's courtyard so that students are uncomfortable to play in rainy season. Moreover, it was flooded after raining. The school director and staffs did not plan to rehabilitate it, and students also had no playground to enjoy. Local parents were very dissatisfied with the teachers' and school director's inaction in addressing these issues.

Since late 2020, the Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) funded by USAID through FHI 360 have been implementing the Innovations for Social Accountability in Cambodia (ISAC) project throughout Ta Khmau municipality, including work in Sangkat Koh Anlongchen. The project aims to support citizen to improve their capacity, access to information, and network for collective action, helping them to build public demand and develop solution to address community's priority. Community Accountability Facilitators (CAFs) accompanied API staff to facilitate I4C dissemination, inception, share vision, self-assessments, community scorecards, and interface meetings between citizens and service providers, including the Sangkat Councils, health centre, and primary school. Through this process, citizens had the opportunity to score the service providers' performance and standards.

Mr. Sou Vicheka, the director of the primary school, actively participated in the ISAC project. He shared the results of citizen scorecards with all the teachers so they could understand their own strengths and weaknesses. He then proposed activities to enhance the performance of teachers and standards of the primary school.

Mr. Sou Vicheka worked with the Sangkat Councils, Kandal provincial department of education, youth and sport, charities, NGOs, and local association to develop solutions and priority actions. All the service providers then integrated their respective actions into the Joint Accountability Action Plan (JAAP). Mr. Sou Vicheka shared the proposed actions with all the citizens in the community.

In late September 2022, to implement JAAP, school management committee of Chong Koh has mobilized resources to implement its planned action. As a result, venerable from Botum Ratanaram pagoda have funded $575 to build two playgrounds in Chong Koh Primary. Additionally, charities and the citizens in the community also contributed $360 for stones filling on the flat school's courtyard in the early of October 2022 and donated $538 for outstanding students' awards. Furthermore, flashback to last couple month, charities and teachers contributed 2 million and 180, 000 riels for fan in school' rooms in February 2022. VECA organization contributed $1,000 for setting up football's ground, supported $50 monthly for football's instructor and $70 for sport materials in January 2022. Mr. Sou Vicheka said he was very happy with the results of the whole process.

The I4C dissemination, inception, share vision meetings, community scorecards and self-assessment helped Mr. Sou Vicheka improve his management, leadership skills, and communication with citizens. The process has also helped to improve the performance of school teachers. Citizens now say they are satisfied with the school's service delivery. Ms. Oeun Sreykhuoch, 33-year-old, a local parent, said, "I am very pleased that the school's director has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching, management, and the school environment."

Mr. Uch Nimol, the head of the municipal office of Education, Youth and Sport Ta Khmau notified that Koh Anlongchen primary school is now an ideal example of enhancing service delivery and creating a good school environment. Mr. Sou Vicheka and all the teachers plan to continue to work closely with the Sangkat councils and other to raise more funds to implement further actions addressing the remaining issues for such instant garden establishment, school materials printing and infrastructure.

ADVOCACY AND POLICY INSTITUTE

A leading Cambodian NGO active in advocacy, policy influencing, capacity building, good governance and dialogue facilitation between citizens and state actors

The Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) is a Cambodian non-governmental organisation active in advocacy, policy influencing, good governance and civic engagement. Capacity building and dialogue facilitation are at the heart of our efforts towards democratic and sustainable development.

We have received widespread acclaim from both local and international organisations for our reliability, relevance and professionalism. Over a time span of almost two decades, API has helped institutionalise advocacy skills and has been striving to make local democratic and accountable governance a reality. To these ends, we have been conducting more than 300 training courses for over 10,000 participants affiliated with civil society and community-based organisations, local councils, media outlets, trade unions, Government institutions and the Cambodian Parliament.

API is unique in the Cambodian civil society in serving as a connector and facilitator for citizens' empowerment in their interaction with government at all levels. API has acquired first-hand experience on policy issues like access to information (A2I) through its grassroots work. Based on this vast experience, we are in the best position to make the voices of ordinary citizens count in policy-making at the national level. Here we have been trying to support government actors serve citizens according to the law and contribute to an enabling environment for citizens and civil society to express their concerns. Finally, we have been playing an important role in helping citizens understand their rights, access to information and make use of the opportunities for engagement offered by various laws and government policies.

Our programmes are guided by a human rights based approach. API serves all Cambodians and values the diversity of gender, sexual orientation and identity, (dis)ability, ethnicity, faith and political opinons. At the same time, we are especially committed to supporting the most disadvantaged in their efforts to make their voices heard.

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