



Project#15: Access for All: Promoting Access to Information in Cambodia, 2020-2021

Objective:

The overall goal of the project is to increase the availability of independent, evidence-based information and promote freedom of expression in Cambodia. Specifically, the initiative concentrates on helping indigenous women and other marginalized groups to obtain and use the information they need in order to express their concerns and hold the government to account. The project focuses on local government services and on monitoring corrosive investments, with a particular emphasis on mining and other land concessions that most negatively impact indigenous communities.

Funding:

\$186,956 is funded by the United States Department of State allocated to a consortium consisting of API and the East-West Management Institute, Inc. (EWMI).

Implementing Partners:

The East-West Management Institute, Inc. (EWMI).

Target Areas:

Three target districts: the Phnom Kravanh district in Pursat, the Prasath Ballangk district in Kampong Thom, and the Chetbori district in Kratie.





Activities and Results:

- 22 API proceeded with the inception phase in mid-November 2020. This phase included presentations and meetings between the API, EWMI, and CIPO staff members, local authorities and potential beneficiaries in the target areas of Kratie, Pursat, and Kampong Thom. These events have produced a fruitful and long-term cooperation between API and stakeholders from local administrations and communities.
- 23 The project kick-off meeting and project presentation in Kratie were attended by 54 participants (39 females), followed by 51 participants (27 females) in Kampong Thom, and 49 participants (22 females) in the Pursat province. The project kick-off events were also attended by a number of commune chiefs and commune councillors who expressed their strong support and willingness to cooperate, which will certainly determine the success of the project and a potential scale-up to other geographical areas. Vice-presidents of provincial local authority associations, chiefs of district councils, commune councillors and the directors of API, EWMI, and local partner organisations (CIPO and CIYA) participated in the meetings to build partnerships between the communities and local authorities.
- 24 The project has interviewed and recruited around 90 female indigenous community leaders to join the project capacity building programme and later support their community advocacy efforts. It has also improved awareness on district administration functions through the project kick-off meetings joined by over 100 female indigenous community participants.
- 25 Budget information for 2020 in the three target districts was collected, analysed and posted on AP's and Open Development Cambodia's websites and Facebook pages.

Challenges:

- 26 Most of CBOs have no indigenous women in leadership positions.
- 27 The education background of many indigenous women is low.



The Way Forward:

- 28 Assess the needs of indigenous women and other vulnerable populations groups.
- 29 Build capacity of indigenous women and other vulnerable groups to obtain and document information to participate in their communities.
- 30 Develop innovative tools to maximise the use of information by vulnerable groups.
- 31 Support advocacy and community participation by indigenous women and other marginalised groups.
- 32 Strengthen systematic learning and adaptation.

