



Project#2: Youth Debate on the Access to Information Law, 2019-2021

Project Objective: To develop the capacity of youth led organisations and youth leaders to engage in strategic policy dialogue, especially the preparation and implementation of policies and strategies relating to young people’s employment.

Funding:
SDC, DCA and BftW,2020 with 80,000 USD.

Implementing Partners:
More than 20 organisations and universities that work and engage with youth

Target Areas:
Cambodia





Activities and Results:

- 2.1** API has trained and provided capacity building to a number of youth representatives. In February, about 58 young emerging leaders were recruited (28 females, 7 participants with disability, and 10 indigenous youths) representing 25 provinces and municipalities across the Kingdom. A three-day training and coaching on A2I law was organised. The training manual and content is designed to build and strengthen their capacity on advocacy and strategic lobbying approach, public campaigns via social media platforms, peer-to-peer mainstreaming, and policy dialogues with representatives and members of the legislative bodies.

- 2.2** Another notable achievement has been the recruitment of emerging leaders who have been able to meet and have three policy dialogues with a number of government and members of parliament. Those institutions include both Chambers of the Parliament, the Ministry of Information, and the Ministry of Justice. Around 40 members of parliament, ministry representatives and 50 representatives of development partners have attended the policy dialogues. This has created an enabling environment for those emerging leaders and their elected representatives to discuss and share common concerns. It is also important to note that the forum has also allowed our young participants to comment on a number of articles like Article 9, 14, 20, and 29 of Section II in the draft A2I law. Throughout this holistic and participatory approach, we have also received constructive and positive responses from members of the Legislative who have reassured their commitment to pass this bill for the public interest and open governance in the Kingdom.





2.3 API has also recorded a strong public engagement and visibility on social media with its communication and public engagement contents. In a video clip, the Prime Minister promised to get the A2I law passed by 2020. As of 31 December 2020, over 327,000 Facebook users have viewed this video clip and more than 1,100 have shared that clip. In addition, more than 429,000 netizens have viewed and engaged with API's Facebook page and the CCIM affiliated page "Voice of Democracy", which have posted 9 radio talk shows and a 4-minute video report. Those materials are about the importance of the right to access to information for various sectoral issues, and they seek support from the public to demand the passing of the access to information law. Each radio programme was contributed by experts in specific sectors and youth representatives who received training on the right to access information. Thousands viewed and shared these programmes covering the topic of access to information in education (29k viewed and 65 shared), health (26k viewed and 116 shared), the informal economy (6.9k viewed and 26 shared), environment (8.2k viewed and 18 shared), governance (5.6k viewed and 19 shared), Covid-19 (13k viewed and 32 shared), indigenous people's rights (5.6k viewed and 21 shared), disability related issues (4.7k viewed and 19 shared), and the current status of draft law of Access to Information (4.9k viewed and 40 shared). API has posted a statement and an advocacy video clip calling for the access to information (A2I) law to be urgently adopted. Following this public outreach campaign, approximately 93% of the total 12,577 Facebook users who participated in the opinion poll have shared the same perspective with API and urged the adoption of this law. It is important to note that representatives of the 10 National Assembly Commissions, including the General Department of Research of the Senate, as well as of the Ministry of Information, have accepted and expressed a strong support on the recommendations made by the 58 youth representatives (28 females, 7 people with disabilities, and 10 indigenous people) in the debate on the draft A2I law on the 20th of April 2020 in the side-line meeting.

Challenges:

2.4 As of 31 December 2020, the access to information law has still not been passed, although in January 2020, Prime Minister Hun Sen publicly urged Parliament to adopt this law.

The Way Forward:

2.5 API will continue to work with youth and young emerging leaders in the form of training and capacity building in order to ensure that they are able to keep track of government decisions and policy interventions in response to their needs and recommendations. More importantly, API will create an enabling environment and discussion platforms like policy dialogues and forums, which will bring together these recruited youth representatives and members of government and the Legislative in order to have discussions and policy debates.