



**PACT CAMBODIA  
ADVOCACY AND POLICY PROGRAMME**

**Progress Report  
July 2003 – December 2007**

**April 2008**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Advocacy actions in Cambodia need to develop and increase their support: they have a long way to go. The Advocacy and Policy Programme (APP) of Pact Cambodia has become established as one of the leading advocacy capacity building institutions in Cambodia. APP has forged its reputation through the delivery of advocacy training courses and the publication of a range of advocacy publications in both Khmer and English. By the end of 2007 APP was becoming increasingly involved in direct advocacy and policy activities.

APP was formed in July 2003 by an Advocacy Advisory Committee representing nine Cambodian and international organizations. There has always been the intention that APP would ultimately become a sustainable and independent Cambodian organisation. On 24 May 2007, APP made an important step in this localization/independence process by adopting the name, the Advocacy and Policy Institute (API). On 17 July 2007 a further stride was taken when API officially registered with the Royal Government of Cambodia's Ministry of Interior as a non-profit, non-government organisation. On 1 January 2008, API gained full independence from Pact Cambodia.

During its short life, July 2003 – December 2007, APP developed a strong reputation as one of the leading advocacy capacity-building programmes in Cambodia. APP has conducted numerous advocacy training courses for members of Cambodian civil society and produced a range of advocacy publications in both Khmer and English. APP also facilitated a number of civil society forums focusing upon Cambodian advocacy and policy initiatives.

2007 was a transitional year for APP as the organisation gradually evolved from a programme of the international NGO Pact Cambodia to become an independent, Cambodian non government organisation: the Advocacy and Policy Institute. A direct consequence was that a large part of the year's activities were dedicated towards this progression towards autonomy. Nevertheless API still continued its positive commitment and involvement in advocacy capacity building and advocacy action and policy development.

Throughout the four and a half year period, APP successfully implemented the following key activities and outputs:

1. **Advocacy publications:** a range of books on advocacy tools and techniques. A total of **136,980** copies have been printed in Khmer and English. These are being used by both Cambodian and international advocates.
2. **Advocacy capacity building:** The advocacy skills training implemented by Pact Cambodia's APP has a good reputation throughout Cambodia. APP conducted twenty one advocacy training sessions with 499 participants from 151 organisations. APP has been instrumental in institutionalising advocacy concepts and skills into many partner and non-partner organisations. This has helped increase the success and sustainability of

advocacy campaigns that are so crucial to enlarging Cambodia's nascent democratic space.

3. **Grassroots advocacy:** In response to a need to address community issues and develop grassroots advocacy tools, APP developed grassroots advocacy training and grassroots advocacy tools along with the publication 'A Grassroots Advocacy Handbook' aimed at community activists and leaders. The grassroots project originally supported by the Lutheran World Federation and the Cambodian Human Rights Development Association was extended with the help of Concern Worldwide and the Church World Service. The project has become API's Grassroots Democracy Programme.
4. **National forum for discussion and sharing:** The provision of national forums to enable discussion and dialogue and opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other is essential for Cambodian advocates. Two national, two day, conferences were hosted and attended by 443 participants from the Cambodian community: Cambodian NGOs, donors, international organisations, Government officials and the media. The two conferences reflected on existing advocacy efforts and networks and their input into Government plans and policies at national and community level. They also discussed various campaign outcomes, issues and experiences. Participants shared knowledge and lessons learned; key speakers from national and community government and civil society presented successful case studies and recommendations for future actions were agreed. The conferences established a strong voice and solidarity among civil society groups and developed partnerships with the Government.
5. **Access to information campaign:** The concept of access to information, 'freedom of information', has started to be openly discussed in Cambodia although its full meaning is not entirely understood by everyone. There is much work to be done. In 2004, the Royal Cambodian Government had promised to adopt the rights of access to information policy framework and law. In 2007 a policy framework was drafted. APP, with support from the Freedom of Information Working Group (a network of sixteen NGOs, see Appendix III) administered and facilitated workshops to allow discussion and increase public awareness of the importance of a rights access to information policy and law. The outcomes from the workshops indicate clearly how access to public information is vital for everyone and called for the Government to take immediate action.
6. **Successful localization/independence:** Staff worked diligently towards APP becoming an independent, autonomous non government organisation. This was accomplished on 1 January 2008. API became Cambodia's first local NGO dedicated to Cambodia's specific advocacy needs: leading Cambodia to increase its democratic space through capacity-building, direct campaign action and policy development. As part of this process, APP became legally registered as a Cambodian non government organisation with the Ministry of the Interior and developed a series of appropriate policies and strategies: a three year strategic plan; fund raising

proposals; financial and administrative policies and a Board of Directors with the apposite policies and guidelines.

Pact Cambodia, members of the Advocacy Advisory Committee and Arcadia Associates Inc. have provided crucial support to APP/API enabling it to move successfully towards independence while achieving effective advocacy goals. API fully appreciates their valued commitment. API would also like to express sincere thanks to all the generous donors: the British Embassy in Phnom Penh, DCA, Forum Syd, ICCO, USAID, PACT Cambodia and the many others who have provided welcome generous financial support. The staff of APP/API look forward to continuing to work in partnership with donors and other organisations in improving the capacity of Cambodians to work towards a fair, democratic and prosperous society.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Early in 2002, Pact Cambodia, (an international NGO with its headquarters based in Washington D.C, USA) under guidance from an Advocacy Advisory Committee composed of representatives from nine Cambodian and International NGOs (Pact Cambodia, the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association, the Cambodia Women's Crisis Centre, The Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation of Children in Cambodia, Star Kampuchea, Dan Church Aid, Forum Syd, Oxfam Great Britain and Development and Partnership in Action), initiated research into advocacy campaigns conducted in Cambodia from 1997 to 2001. This research highlighted the urgent need for Cambodian civil society to increase their advocacy skills and to create stronger relationships with the Government and other stakeholders.



In July 2003 as a direct response to this need, the Advocacy and Policy Programme (APP) was established at Pact Cambodia, APP's mission was to increase Cambodia's democratic space by creating more effective advocates and responsive government institutions to address issues of public policy, justice, human rights, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

APP provided civil society organisations working on social justice and human rights issues with the technical knowledge to effectively conduct advocacy campaigns and forge stronger ties with the Government. APP's hands-on training and mentoring programmes were designed to assist Cambodian civil society to create, implement and monitor advocacy campaigns seeking fairness, democracy and prosperity.

Consistent with Pact's mission to empower local stakeholders and strengthen their ability to look after themselves, Pact's Advocacy Policy Programme worked to integrate advocacy skills and awareness into all levels of Cambodian society.

In its efforts to create more effective advocates and responsive government institutions, APP pursued three specific objectives:

1. To increase the number of Cambodian NGOs and local elected officials skilled in the development and implementation of advocacy campaigns.
2. To increase the number of communities initiating and participating in advocacy activities on issues directly affecting their livelihoods.
3. To increase public access to public institutions, information and the legislative process.

## II. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES

APP worked towards building a socially relevant and sustainable advocacy capacity-building programme. In accomplishing the programme's goals, APP received invaluable support from Pact Cambodia and members of the Advocacy Advisory Committee.

### II 1. ADVOCACY PUBLICATIONS

In order to provide Cambodian advocates with the necessary advocacy tools and techniques, APP decided to produce advocacy publications addressing the needs of Cambodian NGOs, community based organisations and community activists. These publications incorporate a range of international and Cambodian best practice principles adapted to specific situations. To

date, eleven separate publications are available in Khmer and English:



- 'A Practical Advocacy Guide to Increasing Democracy in Cambodia'
- 'An Assessment Report on Advocacy in Cambodia'
- 'Advocacy Expert Training' (AET) Series (six handbooks to date)
- 'A Parliamentary Handbook'
- 'A Grassroots Advocacy Handbook'
- 'A Training Manual on Grassroots Advocacy'

APP and API have received extremely encouraging feedback on these publications:

*"I found the book very informative and interesting."*<sup>1</sup>

*"I am writing to let you know that we are very interested in the Grassroots Advocacy Handbook and that we find them very worthwhile."*<sup>2</sup>

*"We are really interested in the publications of PACT, particularly the Grassroots Advocacy Handbook, as it fits into what we are doing at the local level..."*<sup>3</sup>

APP printed a total of 136,980 copies of these publications. They have been distributed to Cambodian and International NGOs, community based

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from letter written by Sharon Wilkinson, Country Director, CARE International in Cambodia to APP, 1 September 2006

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from letter written by Haidy Ear-Dupuy, Advocacy and Communications Manager, World Vision Cambodia to APP: 12 September 2006

<sup>3</sup> Quoted from letter written by Il Oeur, ADI Project Coordinator, Cooperation Committee of Cambodia (CCC) to APP: 1 September 2006

organisations, UN agencies and individual advocates. APP used a number of these publications during training. The publications have also been used for Echo training by some associated NGO's such as:- Star Kampuchea, Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights, NGO Forum, Cambodian Women's Crisis Center, Project Against Domestic Violence and World Vision. APP also distributed its publications to such government institutions as the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the National Assembly. Organisations operating outside of Cambodia have also requested these publications, further highlighting their practicality and relevance to advocates.

## II.2. ADVOCACY CAPACITY BUILDING

### II 2.1. Advocacy Expert training

APP developed Advocacy Expert training to raise the capacity of Cambodian NGO's to design, implement, and gauge the progress of advocacy campaigns. The training consists of six modules covering such relevant topics as building relationships with the Government and working with the media. This oversubscribed training takes an equal number of participants from rural and urban organisations. There is a high community demand for the advocacy skills and concepts taught throughout this training.

After the very first Advocacy Expert training it was noticed that the improved advocacy skills of the NGOs directly increased their ability to have a positive impact on policy change. In addition over half the participating organisations started conducting training to their local partners using APP's techniques and materials and organized advocacy campaigns to address issues ranging from domestic violence to land and forestry.



*“Advocacy is still a new word for Cambodia, and there is a great need to increase the community's knowledge of it. I found APP's training to be extremely useful and informative. APP's facilitators were extremely knowledgeable and taught not only concepts of advocacy but also how we could practically apply them to our particular issues. I also learnt a great deal from the guest-speakers and the diversity of ideas and experiences shared by the other participants.”*

**Mr. Vann Sophath, (past Advocacy Expert training participant)  
Programme Manager, Cambodian League for the Promotion and  
Defense of Human Rights.<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Mr. Vann Sophath, Advocacy Expert trainee, 20 December 2006



Post-training activities reveal that Advocacy Expert training significantly raises the capacity and confidence of Cambodian NGOs to advocate for their cause and enter into productive meaningful dialogues with authorities:-

- Local non government organisation, Ponleu Komar successfully negotiated with the provincial governor of Banteay Meanchey to provide free school registration and take action on child-trafficking.
- Phnom Penh non government organisation, Solidarity for the Urban Poor Federation lobbied municipal authorities to develop long-term strategies for policy change on housing for the urban poor. It was specifically able to use the advocacy skills gained from the Media Relations module to acquire free air time to present their message on the Cambodian Television Network.

## II 2.2. Advocacy Skills training

APP provided specialised advocacy skills training to Pact Cambodia's staff and sub-grantees along with staff at the American Centre for International Labor Solidarity.

In 2006, 27 Anti-Corruption Coordinated Action Programme sub-grantee organisations attended specialised advocacy skills training. Two separate six day courses were required to accommodate all the participants. The courses developed advocacy skills which were of particular use in the 'clean hands' anti-corruption campaign. Today most people in Cambodia recognise the 'clean hands' anti-corruption campaign as an effective tool for raising awareness to fight corruption.

Additionally APP provided one-off advocacy training to 27 Cambodian national staff at Pact. The advocacy principles gained since have been mainstreamed into all of Pact's programmes and disseminated to various sub-grantees.



APP also worked in partnership with the American Center for International Labor Solidarity Cambodia (ACILS) to conduct two advocacy skills training sessions for federations and trade union leaders. Fifty participants attended (including fifteen women) from trade union federations and labour institutions: American Center for International Labor Solidarity, Cambodia Construction Workers Trade Union Federation, Cambodian Independent Civil Servant Association, Cambodian Laborers Union Federation, Cambodian National Federation

of Building and Wood Workers, Cambodian Tourism and Service Workers Federation, Cambodian Women Movement's Organisation, Democratic Independent Solidarity Union Federation, Free Trade Union Workers of Kingdom of Cambodia, Informal Development Economic Association and the National Independent Federation Textile Union of Cambodia.

Due to effective monitoring and evaluating and the efficient implementation of the advocacy plans prepared during training, there was increased advocacy achievements towards promoting and implementing the labour law by the ACILS's partners, both in Phnom Penh City and Siem Reap province. In the latter there were huge successes among the three ACILS's partners: The Informal Development Economic Association, The Cambodian Tourism and Service Workers' Federation and the Cambodian Construction Workers' Trade Union Federation in their efforts to promote the implementation of the labour law. The Provincial Labour Department's officials agreed to facilitate negotiations between the employers' associations and the employees' unions and federations. The employees were seeking for leave with an allowance on public holidays, a provident fund and transparent recruiting and dismissal processes. The employees' advocacy tactics included demonstrations, strikes and negotiation meetings. The conditions were approved by the employers and the labour law has been enforced and implemented effectively.

A further positive outcome of the training courses has been the valuable networking between participants, building good and close relationships and strengthening collaboration and solidarity to advocate for the benefit of their members. As a direct result of the new union solidarity a new union office opened in Siem Reap at the end of October 2007.

### **II 2 3. Grassroots (rural) Advocacy**

An increase in activity by villagers protesting against land, fisheries and forestry issues highlighted a need for effective and peaceful new advocacy methods to be introduced at the grassroots level. Pact Cambodia's Advocacy and Policy Programme, Dan Church Aid, the Lutheran World Federation and the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association committed to a one-year Grassroots Advocacy pilot project. The project aimed to strengthen the ability of village champions to address development issues directly affecting their communities. The training involved not only looking at advocacy techniques but also training skills, tools and procedures.

The pilot project was completed by March 2006 and successfully achieved its projected aims. Based on the perceived results of the project, the grassroots advocacy training was extended for two years with Concern Worldwide and the Church World Service in order to train and support their partner organisations.

Throughout this period, API provided grassroots advocacy training sessions for trainers: over 98 people attended from 33 community based NGOs and eleven community groups from Phnom Penh; Kampot; Kampong Cham; Siem Reap; Kampong Thom; Battambang; Banteay Meanchey and Svay Rieng provinces.



This training was designed so that the participants could return to their home communities and conduct Echo training using the skills and techniques they had gained. Feedback was extremely encouraging:

*"After attending this six-day training course by APP, I now understand the concept of advocacy and how it can be applied at a grassroots level. Advocacy does not mean to work against the Government as other people have said. I believe community advocates will use the skills and knowledge they got from this course to more effectively address the concerns of their communities."*

**Mr. Uy Sam Oeun,**  
**Deputy Governor of Dam Bei District, Kampong Cham Province**

*"I had attended many training courses from other organisations before, but I had never attended one on advocacy. I wanted to study advocacy very much, as Concern has explained that there is a very strong linkage between successful advocacy and community development. I am very impressed by the grassroots advocacy training provided by APP. This training is very useful for both community activists and provincial NGO staff. I am sure that because of this training my organisation will improve the way it addresses the needs of the local people."*

**Mr. Long Sokhom, Programme Officer,**  
**Vulnerability and Illiteracy Reduction, Siem Reap Province**

In the training follow up report, participants indicated that they had gained additional skills in writing cases, documenting evidence and developing advocacy strategic plans. Participants had also started using advocacy methodologies in their programmed developments and activities. Over 80% said that they had integrated the acquired knowledge and skills into their community projects while 33 community based organisations conducted over 43 Echo Grassroots Advocacy training courses to 1364 grassroots (rural) Cambodian citizens (including over 500 women).

Grassroots advocacy training proved to be a great success due to good organisation and strong cooperation between APP and its partners. There were high levels of satisfaction and active participation from all participants throughout the training sessions. The training evaluation conducted at the end of the training showed that participant expectation was successfully met and the knowledge of grassroots advocacy increased and integrated into projects. This pilot project became the basis for the current API's Grassroots Democracy Programme.

#### **II.2.4. Contract advocacy training courses**

Due to the growing demand for advocacy capacity-building, several local and international organisations applied to APP to provide specialised courses for their staff and partners. APP responded by providing eleven contractual training courses for participants representing 53 partner organisations of

Oxfam Great Britain, the Community Legal Education Centre, the Cambodian League for the Protection and Defense of Human Rights, Forum Syd, Diakonia and the United Nations Population Fund in addition to over ten ministries attending as members of the National Aids Authority (NAA).

Requests for specialised training reflected APP's growing reputation for providing quality advocacy training, effectively adapted for the Cambodian context:

*"This type of training allows us to be more effective in carrying out our work responsibilities and increases our ability to advocate for HIV/AIDS support to our superiors, colleagues, and friends. These skills are not only useful for our professional work, but also help our personal lives as we need to advocate and negotiate with all sorts of people every day."*

**H.E Ing Vuthy,  
Vice Chair of the National AIDS Authority, 27 November 2006**

### **II.3. THE NATIONAL FORUM FOR DISCUSSION, SHARING AND LEARNING**

The National Advocacy Conferences brought the Government (national and local), the private sector, NGOs and grassroots advocates from across the country together, allowing for numerous different advocacy experiences, knowledge and campaign strategies to be shared.

#### **II 3.1 The first National Advocacy Conference**

On 30-31 March 2006, APP and Pact's Anti-Corruption Coordinated Action Programme, with the support of an organising committee of nine local and international organisations<sup>5</sup>, hosted '**Working Together for Change: A National Conference on Advocacy and Anti-Corruption**'. The conference looked at the development and implementation of advocacy campaigns:

highlighting effective techniques and strategies and closely examining the outcomes of past campaigns.



The Conference provided the opportunity for 320 local activists from across Cambodia to network, develop skills, and discuss campaign outcomes, issues and experiences with government officials, donors, civil society groups, international organizations and the media. Conference group discussions enabled the sharing of experiences,

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<sup>5</sup> The Organising Committee advised, assisted and organised key aspects of the conference. Members included Pact Cambodia, the Lutheran World Federation, ADHOC, Center for Social Development, Star Kampuchea, Cambodian Center for Human Rights, Development and Partnership in Action, NGO Forum on Cambodia and Gender and Development for Cambodia. The conference was hosted by Pact Cambodia.

successes and challenges faced during advocacy and anti-corruption campaigns. Delegates identified their advocacy successes involved:-

- uniting communities.
- building stronger networks.
- identifying concerns resulting in investigations of corruption allegations and the subsequent firing of offenders.
- causing the postponement of various company business concessions due to questions of legality.

Delegates put forward many ideas which have been incorporated into the Grassroots Advocacy Handbook. However, despite encouraging developments, there are still a considerable number of challenges to be overcome to provide an effective sustainable National Forum. These include:-

- The lack of effective leadership.
- The lack of community participation.
- A general lack of cooperation from the relevant government institutions.

Participants' comments from the first National Advocacy Conference include:

*"The advocacy movement should start from the community and grassroots level rather than NGOs because, if advocacy starts with NGOs and NGOs leave, the campaign cannot continue."*

**H.E. Sat Setha, General Director, General Department of Administration, Ministry of Interior**

*"People already have power, they simply don't always know how to exercise it. Our role is to assist, encourage, and build their capacity, but not to lead them. This conference was a unique event where we could meet, share, learn, and discuss how to improve the services we provide the community. This conference taught me a lot."*

**Mr. Chuon Vuthy,  
Human Resources Manager, The Lutheran World Federation**

*"One chopstick can be broken but a bunch of chopsticks cannot be broken. This forum shows how by joining together we can work for positive change."*

**Mr. Hay Bunthorn,  
Community member, Kampong Chhnang**

The National Conference further sought to increase participants' capacity to link advocacy issues with Commune Councils' planning processes. The recommendations made during the Conference's conclusion were taken back to the individual delegates' communities and sent to government bodies and other relevant groups. Delegates unanimously recommended that the conference become an annual event.

### II 3.2 The second National Advocacy Conference:

The second annual National Advocacy Conference 'Working Together for Change' held on 26-27 December 2007 was particularly successful. 123 delegates attended from the community, NGOs and the Government. The workshops reflected on existing advocacy efforts and networks and their input into plans and policies at all levels of government. Delegates shared experiences and lessons learned and debated a range of issues on land conflict, forestry, fishery and mining in different Cambodian provinces; key speakers from national and community levels presented successful case studies and recommendations for future actions were agreed and recorded.

The successful partnership between the organising committee and API resulted in an effective and efficient conference. The committee members: NGO Forum on Cambodia, the Lutheran World Federation, Cambodian Human Resources Association, the Development and Partnership Association, Pact and Star Kampuchea increased the number of participants from eighty to one hundred and twenty three enabling more participants from the provinces. Each committee member shared the invitation and financial support for speakers and participants.



Conference delegates reflected a strong cross-section of advocates with 50% from local communities and the other half consisting of representatives from the different social sectors and Government representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy; the Ministry of the Interior; the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction and the Ministry of Rural Development. This diversity particularly increased understanding on issues of land, forestry, fishery, and mining. Specific recommendations on these issues were developed and distributed after the conference to respective stakeholders: donors, the Government, NGOs and the community. The success of the conference strongly points towards the need and desire for similar national development forums to be held in the future.

### II 4. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ( FOI)CAMPAIGN

Freedom of information: building a culture of sharing information with the public is a new issue for Cambodia.

Public information in Cambodia is customarily accessed through personal contacts rather than through transparent procedures and mechanisms. This creates a system encouraging corruption and nepotism. Gaining access to

even basic information such as draft laws, regulations, national budgets and policy papers is exceptionally difficult.

In October 2003, the Advocacy Policy Programme in cooperation with other like-minded organisations, instigated a Freedom of Information (FOI) Working Group. The Group brought together key government officials, donors, private sector and civil society stakeholders to raise an awareness of freedom of information and to push for the passage of a freedom of information law to an international-standard.



APP played a leading role in the FOI Working Group ( see Appendix 3): facilitating and supporting regular meetings; organising workshops to discuss, share and learn good practice from other countries and developing educational materials to raise public awareness of the importance of access to public information held by public institutions.

At the workshops organised and facilitated by the FOI Working Group<sup>6</sup> participants came from the Government, NGOs, the community, donors, UN agencies, the private sector and the media. Discussion focused on:

- increasing public awareness about freedom of information,
- seeking a public commitment from the Government to move forward on drafting a freedom of information law,
- gathering wider support for the FOI campaign in Cambodia and developing the FOI Coalition's advocacy and campaign strategy,
- the crucial importance of FOI for Cambodian issues involving sustainable development, human rights protection and democratic growth,
- the range of FOI issues, challenges, opportunities and practices, stressing the pressing need for Cambodia to develop a culture of transparency: maximum disclosure of public information and the effective implementation of a freedom of information law to an international standard,
- pointing out the need for stakeholders from all sectors to become more involved in the campaign.

Representatives from the workshops' donors, PACT Cambodia and USAID, noted the significance of FOI in the fight against corruption. They stressed the importance of the FOI law not suffering the same fate as the anti-corruption law: it is over ten years since the anti-corruption law was introduced yet this law is still floating around the Government: it has still not been to the National Assembly for adoption. The workshops particularly pointed out that FOI is a fundamental right of citizenship.

At both workshops there was a general consensus of opinion that FOI improves trust between the Government and its citizens and brings about enormous social, political and economic benefits. All delegates agreed that

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<sup>6</sup> ADHOC, API, COMFREL, CDCAM, CDP, CHRTF, CLEC, CSD, KYA, KID, KWVC, LAC, NICFEC, OFC, Pact Cambodia, PDP-Centre, Star Kampuchea, VoD, WMC.

there is a need for more to be done to raise awareness of FOI and to actively engage with all levels and sectors of society.

Due to civil society's considerable involvement in FOI, members of the workshops called for civil society to take a leading role by reflecting FOI in their own programmes and actively campaigning with other community members, particularly those within the Government. Such actions can help in achieving the passage and effective implementation of this FOI law which in turn will start to create a transparent culture, promoting maximum disclosure and active dissemination of Government information.

By the end of 2007 the FOI Working Group had achieved the following significant outputs:

- A growing awareness within civil society about freedom of information and its importance in a range of development and human rights issues.
- The Government's FOI drafting committee established and approval given for an international FOI expert consultant to assist in developing a FOI policy paper. In 2007 a FOI policy paper was drafted. It was led by the Ministry of National Assembly and Senate Relations and Inspection (MONASRI).
- Four national FOI workshops organised with Cambodian and international speakers held on 23 June 2004, 6-7 June 2005, 26 July 2007, 15-16 November 2007 in Phnom Penh and attended by over 345 representatives from the Government, civil society, the media, unions, university and the United Nations. Participants discussed FOI principles and the steps required to secure a passage for FOI legislation through parliament.
- FOI Working Group radio discussions using the radio programmes of CSD, ADHOC and Comfrel on FM 90, 90.25, 102, 105 and 106. All the talk shows have been rebroadcast many times using different channels. The main purpose of these was to publicise and promote freedom of information and to show the value of access to information for the country's development as well as every day life.
- A FOI leaflet 'Questions and Answers' and a FOI sticker. The leaflet outlines the main elements about freedom of information and its benefits for different institutions. As a test run, two hundred leaflets were printed and tested with delegates at the FOI workshop (15-16 November 2007). The leaflet was completed and printed in February in 2008.

### **III. CAMBODIAN ADVOCACY DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS LEARNED**

As a tool for positive social change, advocacy is most effective when it is in the hands of every group and sector of a society. Advocacy's growth and development depends upon it achieving tangible successes that are both sustainable and socially relevant. APP's relevance as a contributor to Cambodian society was directly tied to the success of advocacy as a tool for positive social change. APP was therefore particularly active in assessing and learning from the advocacy experiences of Cambodian civil society.



**Advocacy training for Cambodian Advocates:** Cambodian civil society has a growing need for advocacy capacity-building. However, to be effective any training must reflect the real needs of the target community rather than the aims of the service provider. APP came to understand this while providing the first Advocacy Expert Training to participants whose knowledge base was not sufficient for them to gain the full benefits from the course curriculum. On realising this APP became committed to continually improving and updating the advocacy training to suit the varying requirements of participants and their communities.

APP also came to recognise that its responsibility to participants goes further than delivering the training and that follow-up support is imperative to the success of participants' advocacy campaigns. Unfortunately, due to a lack of human resources, APP was frequently unable to provide the mentoring and monitoring requested by trainees. This factor was especially true with the Grassroots Advocacy training (see Appendix I) and is a programme gap that API expects to address as it grows as an organisation.

**Grassroots Advocacy Development:** APP understood that the bottom-up approach is the most effective and sustainable form of development and so APP placed increasing attention into the provision of advocacy instruction and resources to people at the grassroots level. This created challenges for APP: it required to revise its advocacy strategies and resources to respond to the capacity gap being presented by different levels of advocates and course participants.

For example, one of the biggest challenges of the Grassroots Advocacy Pilot Project was to contextualise the advocacy skills being taught. APP and its partners the Lutheran World Federation and the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association recognised that using case studies and focus group surveys is the most effective way to integrate real grassroots advocacy issues into the training curriculum.

APP understood that grassroots advocacy training increases the ability of community-based organisations, commune councils, and provincial organisations to discuss and ultimately look after their own affairs. APP was acutely aware that support needs to be provided in good time and must be ongoing. A number of trainees requested assistance with their advocacy campaign activities, requests - unfortunately - that due to lack of resources, APP was not always able to fulfill. This is a programme gap which API hopes to reduce significantly as it grows as an organisation.

**Joining hands for advocacy efforts:** Cambodia is inundated with a multitude of international and local organisations often contesting with one another, all doing essential work but all pulling in different directions. APP was aware that by organisations working together, in partnership, there was a greater opportunity for everyone to achieve their goals. This was shown by the success of the Grassroots Advocacy Project carried out with the Lutheran World Federation and the Cambodian Human Rights and Development

Association W Concern Worldwide, and Church World Services. A further example was the particular success of the National Advocacy Conferences organised by APP with nine other organisations. Neither the Grassroots Advocacy pilot project nor the National Advocacy Conference would have had such success without the sharing of knowledge, time, and resources among the partners. It is important, however, that clear roles and responsibilities are established prior to beginning a joint partnership ensuring that the project is of mutual benefit to all of its stakeholders and of greatest benefit to its target audience.

**Mobilising resources for the National Advocacy Conference:**

Empowerment and ownership are the keys to working together. The second National Advocacy Conference was particularly effective and a good example of all the organising committee members working together through the process of individual consultative and group consultative meetings, mobilising resources and increasing responsibilities. The participatory approach to decision making was extremely successful. Originally, APP planned to invite only eighty participants from Phnom Penh City. Finally, the plan was expanded to enable the number of participants to increase to 123. This was a direct result of the organising committees' ownership and commitment. Financial support increased from the budgeted US\$4,440 to more than US\$9,000 as a result of contributions from such organizations as the NGO Forum on Cambodia and the Lutheran World Federation.

**Access to Information:** In the past Working Group members had discussed the rights of citizens to gain access to public information. At November 2007's FOI workshop, participants and speakers emphasised the need for all key stakeholders from across all sectors to have more involvement with the campaign. The benefits of FOI were acknowledged for everyone, particularly the private sector requiring updates on public held information; the Government requiring details of investments and corruption charges and civil society as their trust in the Government increases so leading to sustainable development and poverty reduction. The FOI campaign emphasises the value of a three way flow of information, from the Government, the private sector and communities to improve Cambodia's economic competitiveness.

#### **IV. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT, FINANCE AND FUNDING**

Since its inception, APP as a programme of Pact Cambodia was under Pact's leadership and management. APP began with three Cambodian staff and a selection of foreign advisors. By 2006 API had five members of staff and was ready to begin building a strong team capable of leading APP to independence by the end of 2007.

APP's organisational operations were overseen by members of the Advocacy Advisory Committee. This committee provided guidance and advisory support directly to APP. Its role included creating APP's long-term vision and goals,

advising on possible research avenues, helping to establish topics for APP's training, fundraising, and assessing APP's performance.

Over the years APP has received over \$US 600,000 in funding from generous donors including Forum Syd, Dan Church Aid, The British Embassy, The Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation and Pact Cambodia. APP also received support from local and international volunteers, such as that provided through AUSAID's Youth Ambassador for Development Programme.

## **V. APP LOCALISATION/INDEPENDENCE AND BEYOND**

The Advocacy Advisory Committee always had the intention of APP becoming a sustainable, independent Cambodian organization: this was achieved at the end of 2007, when APP became the independent Advocacy and Policy Institute. To facilitate this change a number of activities were undertaken by APP, including research into the demand for and positioning of such an organisation in Cambodian civil society and how such an organisation would be funded, its legal registration and organisational development. APP/API admittedly struggled for a while as employees naturally focused on programme implementation to reach expected outputs while they simultaneously attempted to achieve the localisation plan and associated activities. The staff however made every effort to support each other to achieve the goal of independence. APP/API's localisation process involved several activities: a localisation study to identify the experiences of other organisations that had gone through the process and recognise what is good practice and what does not work, a market analysis study and the development of a three-year strategic plan. APP/API successful transition was thanks to the strong support of Pact Cambodia and Arcadia Associates Inc., USA.

### **V 1. Three-Year Strategic Plan Development for 2008-2010**

In preparation for its independence APP/API developed a three-year strategic plan (2008-2010). During its production APP/API conducted an extensive planning process which included certain critical components:-

- A 'Competitive Analysis Study': research into the experiences of other independent Cambodian organisations: their areas of operation, market gaps, strengths and weaknesses in the localisation process.
- A comprehensive 'Market Analysis and Programme Development Study', identifying current and emerging advocacy needs and demands, highlighting the competencies of existing advocacy capacity-building providers and ultimately helping to define key future programme areas.
- Four consultative meetings looking at the future development of API. These were held in May and June 2007 with 55 representatives from donors, Cambodian and International NGOs, the Advocacy Advisory Committee and PACT Cambodia.

Based predominantly on the results of the market analysis and consultations, APP/API identified its organisational pillars, mission and goal, and the main

programmes for action in the coming three years. The planning process was complete by August 2007 and in October APP/API team presented its three year strategic plan to the newly appointed Board of Directors for general comment. In the next three years, 2008-2010, API's staff will work towards three main programmes:

- 1) **Grassroots Democracy:** designed to respond to the needs and demands of Cambodian grassroots communities through supporting advocacy efforts, encouraging democratic participation and promoting human rights. The overall objective of this programme is to promote democratic participation and human rights at the grassroots level by educating and supporting Community Based Organisations, local government (commune councils), and local NGOs so that they are more effective at advocating their communities' needs.
- 2) **Freedom of Information:** designed to raise public awareness about freedom of information, by educating the Government, civil society, the private sector and grassroots communities about freedom of information and seeking public commitment from the Government to pass a freedom of information law to an international standard. The overall objective of this programme is to increase public access to public institutions, information and the legislative process through a coordinated campaign that will develop a culture of maximum information disclosure and encourage the Royal Government of Cambodia and the National Assembly to adopt an international-standard FOI law.
- 3) **Advocacy Capacity Building:** designed to strengthen the capacity of Cambodian advocates from across all sectors and community levels, to influence policy-makers through the effective design, management and implementation of advocacy campaigns. The overall objective of this programme is to increase the number of Cambodian civil society organisations proficient in the design, management, implementation and evaluation of lobbying and advocacy campaigns and initiatives.

## V 2. Funding Proposal and Fundraising Development

Based on API's three year strategic plan, funding proposals have been developed. By the end of 2007, generous donors included: Forum Syd, Dan Church Aid, Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation and Danida.

## V 3. Pact Cambodia and the APP/API Independence Process

The Memorandum of Understanding between Pact Cambodia and APP/API, dated 24 May, 2007, notes that Pact and API would continue to work together during the changeover period. PACT Cambodia played a significant role in assisting API to gain independence; however APP's 2007 work plan reflects its increasing independence and a greater autonomy in terms of leadership and management over the course of the year. Support was given in a variety of ways including: technical assistance, advice on the three-year strategic plan and on-the-job training for the new Administration and Finance Officer.

The Memorandum of Understanding states that Pact will continue to provide the following technical support:

- **Financial management:** Pact will serve as the financial advisor for API during 2008. Pact will provide capacity building services to ensure the smooth implementation and operation of API's financial systems. Pact will undertake two internal financial audits on API in April and July 2008.
- **Proposal development and fundraising:** Pact will continue to support API in developing funding sources and proposals with regard to current and/or new donors. At a minimum, Pact will provide a letter of certificate to donors in support of API's fundraising as well as introducing API to new donors and other interested institutions.
- **Staff capacity building:** Pact will continue to support the development of API's staff. This could include facilitating and/or sending members of API's staff on study tours or short-term training courses related to the organisation's purpose and work or including API staff on training courses developed for its own purposes.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding, Pact Cambodia shares its administration and financial policies with APP/API. With the assistance of these documents and technical assistance from API's organisational development advisor (Arcadia Associates Inc.), API has been able to develop its own administrative (personnel) and financial policies.

#### **V 4.Organisational Development**

A US-based consulting organisation, Arcadia Associates Inc. helped guide APP/API's organisational development towards independence. Arcadia Associates Inc. supported API's capacity-building strategies and was involved in developing the structure of API's governing board; drafting the Board of Director's Policy Manual, API's Bylaw and the Management Committee's policy.

#### **VI. CONCLUSION**

This report highlights the evolution of Pact Cambodia's Advocacy Policy Programme from a suggestion of the Advocacy Advisory Committee through to the independent non government organisation that we know today as the Advocacy and Policy institute. The report identifies the valuable work undertaken by the Programme during these four and a half years and pinpoints the way forward for the Advocacy and Policy Institute. The generous support both in kind and financial are recognized and greatly appreciated.

## Appendix 1: Summary of the Advocacy Policy Programme's advocacy training courses

### Advocacy Expert Training

year	length	number of courses and participating organisations	number of trainees
2003-2004	25 days	1 course (5-days per module and 5 modules) for 12 Cambodian NGOs	25 (12 men and 13 women)
2004-2005	25 days	1 course (5-day per module and 5 modules) for 12 Cambodian NGOs	26 (15 men and 11 women)
2006-2007	15 days	1 course (3 modules of 5 days each) for 12 Cambodian NGOs	23 (13 men and 10 women)
<b>total</b>	<b>65 days</b>	<b>3 courses for 36 Cambodian NGOs</b>	<b>74 trainees</b>

### Advocacy Skills Training

2005-2006	12 days	2 courses (2 modules of 3 days each) for Pact's sub-grantees	57 (41 men and 16 women) from 27 different organisations
2005-2006	10 days	1 course (6 modules of 2 days each) for Pact Cambodian staff	27 (18 men and 9 women)
2007	10 days	2 courses (1 modules of 5 days each) for ACILS	50 (35 men and 15 women) from 9 labour federations and unions
<b>total</b>	<b>32 days</b>	<b>5 courses for 37 organisations</b>	<b>127 trainees (40 women,94 men)</b>

### Grassroots Advocacy Training of Trainers

2005-2006	9 days	2 courses (5 days per module) for 2 LWF and ADHOC	31 (24 men and 7 women)
2006	12 days	2 courses (1 training per 2 modules) for Concern's partners	42 (27 men and 15 women) from 23 organisations and 11 community groups
2007	6 days	1 course for CWS's partners	25 (18 men and 7 women) from 13 organisations

<b>total</b>	<b>27 days</b>	<b>5 courses for 38 organisations and 11 communities</b>	<b>98 trainees (29 women,69 men)</b>
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### **Advocacy Contractual Training**

<b>year</b>	<b>clients</b>	<b>length</b>	<b>number and recipients of courses</b>	<b>number of trainees</b>
2004-2005	LICADHO	2 days	1 course for LICADHO staff	20 (14 men and 6 women)
2004-2005	CLEC	9 days	1 course (3 days per module) for CLEC/PLAP staff	15 (10 men and 5 women)
2004-2005	Oxfam GB	4 days	1 course for 12 Oxfam partner NGOs	20 (13 men and 7 women)
2004-2005	Forum Syd and Diakonia	10 days	1 course ( 5 days per module) for 15 partner organisations	27 (21 men and 6 women)
2004-2006	UNFPA	4 days	1 training course for 18 partner	28 (20 men and 8 women)
2006-2007	NAA	10 days	2 for NAA members (representatives from 8 ministries and 5 organisations)	48 (32 men and 16 women)
2007	CHEMS	3 days	1 training course for CHEMS staff	35 (19 men and 16 women)
<b>total</b>	<b>8 clients and partners</b>	<b>38 days</b>	<b>21 training courses</b>	<b>165 trainees (58 women, 107 men)</b>

## **Appendix 2: Members of the Advocacy Advisory Committee**

The Advocacy Advisory Committee guided the Advocacy Capacity Programme following its formation in July 2003, The Committee's members acted as a de facto Board of Directors to the Programme. Although their role was gradually phased out in the first half of 2007, as a part of API's independence process, a number of members remained involved in an advisory role. The Advocacy Advisory Committee was composed of representatives from nine International and Cambodian non government organisations

Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC):  
[www.adhoc-chra.org](http://www.adhoc-chra.org)

Cambodia Women's Crisis Centre (CWCC): [www.cwcc.org.kh](http://www.cwcc.org.kh)

Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation of Children in Cambodia (COSECAM):  
[www.cosecam.org](http://www.cosecam.org)

Dan Church Aid (DCA): [www.danchurchaid.org](http://www.danchurchaid.org)

Development and Partnership in Action (DPA): [www.dpacambodia.org](http://www.dpacambodia.org)

Forum Syd: [www.kh.forumsyd.org](http://www.kh.forumsyd.org)

Oxfam Great Britain: [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org)

Pact Cambodia: [www.pactcambodia.org](http://www.pactcambodia.org)

Star Kampuchea: [www.starkampuchea.org.kh](http://www.starkampuchea.org.kh)



**Appendix 3:**  
**Current active members of the Freedom of Information Working Group**

Advocacy and Policy Institute: [www.apiinstitute.org](http://www.apiinstitute.org)

Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association:  
[www.adhoc.org.kh](http://www.adhoc.org.kh)

Cambodian Human Rights Task Force: [chrtf@forum.org.kh](mailto:chrtf@forum.org.kh)

Centre for Social Development: [www.csdcambodia.org](http://www.csdcambodia.org)

Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia: [www.comfrel.org](http://www.comfrel.org)

Community Legal Education Centre: [www.clec.org.kh/](http://www.clec.org.kh/)

Conservation and Development on Cambodia: [www.cdcam.org](http://www.cdcam.org)

Khmer Institute for Democracy: [www.bigpond.com.kh/users/kid/](http://www.bigpond.com.kh/users/kid/)

Khmer Youth Association: [www.kya-cambodia.org](http://www.kya-cambodia.org)

Neutral & Impartial Committee for Free & Fair Election in Cambodia:  
[www.nicfec.org](http://www.nicfec.org)

Open Forum of Cambodia: [www.forum.org.kh](http://www.forum.org.kh)

Pact Cambodia: [www.pactcambodia.org](http://www.pactcambodia.org)

People for Development and Peace Centre: [www.unodc.org/ngo/](http://www.unodc.org/ngo/)

Star Kampuchea: [www.starkampuchea.org.kh](http://www.starkampuchea.org.kh)

Voice of Democracy: [www.vodradio.org](http://www.vodradio.org)

Women's Media Centre: [www.wmc-cambodia.org](http://www.wmc-cambodia.org)