



Project#10: Citizens' Voices in Social Accountability, 2019-2021

Objectives:

- 1 **Specific Objective 1:** Strengthened capacities and actions of citizen representatives and service providers in the adapted I-SAF framework for Phnom Penh for improving education, health, administration and social protection services in Khan Sen Sok.
- 2 **Specific Objective 2:** Social inclusion of disadvantaged groups is improved in I-SAF's Phase II policies and practices based on joint advocacy with the target groups.
- 3 **Specific Objective 3:** Enhanced citizen engagement through the use of digital information channels for citizens and digital ways to provide feedback on public service delivery.

Funding:

\$51,017 from Oxfam Cambodia annually.

Target Areas:

Sangkat Kok Khleang, Sangkat Khuong, Sangkat Teuk Thla, in Khan Sen Sok (Phnom Penh)





Activities and Results:

- 10.1 Around 85% of the annually planned activities have been completed. We see positive change after the I-SAF implementation in Sen Sok on both the infrastructure and public services provided by the health centres, primary schools and Sangkat administrations. All of these are the result of the implementation of project activities.
- 10.2 A community mapping report was developed with the participation of 73 citizens (25 women) to identify vulnerable households and draw community and village maps in the three targeted sangkats, namely Kok Kleang, Khmuonh and Teuk Thla. The two main activities completed in the community mapping are the registration of the number of households according to each indicator that was done by CCWC and village chief, and drawing of the community map or village map carried out by the village chief. The indicators used in the community mapping process are developed by UNICEF for poor household identification. These indicators have been used by the communes and sangkats nationwide.
- 10.3 Ten community accountability facilitators (CAFs), of which four women have been selected and are now qualified to implement the I-SAF project after receiving ongoing capacity building support. They were able to explain I-SAF related issues, including the rights of citizens, through a door-to-door information for citizens (I4C) campaign, during which 2,600 booklets were distributed to low-income households. They also shared their knowledge and experience with other 40 CAFs in Takhmao, especially within the I4C dissemination through face-to-face meetings and the use of megaphones on vehicles. At least 17% (75) people with disabilities and 13% (56) vulnerable women among the 446 participants received information directly from CAFs through the face-to-face I4C dissemination.
- 10.4 A total of 306 community members (200 females, 65%) were actively involved in all processes during the eight scorecard meetings, and they could identify indicators for evaluating service providers. 322 representatives of service providers (164 females; 51%) from seven primary schools, four health centres, three sangkat administrations, as well as from the administration of Khan Sen Sok tested the access to their own services during the 15 self-assessment meetings. They acknowledged that the scoring would improve public services. In addition, 85 citizens and service provider representatives (43 female; 51%) actively participated in the three different interface meetings. Three Join Accountability Action Plan (JAAP) Committees were formed with a role in implementing the JAAPs in 2021.



- 10.5 During the JAAP monitoring meetings, citizens expressed the following needs: capacity development for government officials, educating citizens about waste management, enforce village and sangkat security, road construction, ramps for people with disabilities at the health centres, no informal payments at primary schools, the need for additional teachers, and for toilet renovation. The JAAPs of Sangkat Teuk Thla, Kok Khleang and Khan SenSok were addressed 100%, and only the JAAP of Sangkat Khmounh achieved 96%, while the remaining activities were proposed to their supervisor.
- 10.6 A total of 240 (106 female) representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, national and sub-national authorities, CSO partners and community accountability facilitators have contributed to improving the I-SAF Operational Guidelines by raising issues related to social & disability-inclusion during the National workshop “Budget for Effective, Inclusive and Equitable Social Accountability Development” on 28 October 2020. This event also contributed to strengthening and expanding the communication between CAFs/CFs, CSOs, and relevant ministries. It also offered an opportunity for them to share the progress, challenges, and recommendations in order to explore the strategy to jointly implement ISAF in the second phase.
- 10.7 A total of 102 (36 female) vulnerable citizens from Sangkat Teuk Thla, Kok Khleang, and Khmounh were interviewed by CAFs through service feedback / scorecard surveys: equality card holders, persons with disabilities and out of school children. As a result, the vulnerable citizens had an occasion and were happy to raise their concerns, talk about their needs, and make requests to the local service providers in their respective target areas.
- 10.8 Technical aspects of inclusion and learning were incorporated in the training modules. Inclusion, gender, and service mapping were also set into training modules. CAFs were made aware of the aspects of mobilisation for inclusion, as needed in order to facilitate the participation of vulnerable citizens. Moreover, they were made aware that community scorecards and self-assessments need to take aspects of inclusion into account.
- 10.9 The good relationship between API, the Khan Sen Sok administration, and the health centres, primary school and the three sangkat offices is one of the main reasons that makes the implementation of I-SAF in Khan Sen Sok proudly successful. Official participation was not limited to project implementation activities, but the Khan Sen Sok Administration also supported the JAAP presentation activities through its Khan Integration Workshop.



10.10 The visibility of project implementers and donors was ensured in all publishing activities, including 2,600 booklets, 18 shirts and other printed materials, as well as via online channels such as API's Facebook page and YouTube channel, where four animation clips and a video documentary have been presented.

Additionally, On July 18, 2020, representatives of 150 low-income families living in the three sangkats of Khan Sen Sok received emergency assistance. Each family received \$65 in cash assistance, 25 kg of rice, 1 box of noodles, 12 cans of fish, and 6 bottles of soy sauce.

Lessons Learned:

10.11 The administrative procedures of public institutions, including Khan Sen Sok, to carry out any activity always require an official letter, even if the project has already signed a memorandum of understanding.

10.12 I-SAF is a national project that has officially demonstrated co-operation in both supply side and demand side. NCDDS assistance is key to successful and fruitful project implementation. Currently, khan administrations have already been transferred functions, roles and resources previously belonging to the central government, so they are able to participate in and support the I-SAF process.

10.13 We need to communicate with khan and sangkat public officials in advance to set an appropriate time before submitting an official letter to them. Sometimes the agreed date is modified depending on the schedule changes of public officials.

10.14 Attitudes of public officials have positively changed during the implementation of the I-SAF project, and citizens have become aware of their rights to access public services.

10.15 Digital Scorecards: Khan and sangkat officials expressed enthusiasm for digital scorecards as they acknowledged the challenges involved in preparing and facilitating traditional scorecards, which are time consuming processes. They suggested digital scorecards could enable more evaluation and scoring from more citizens. They are keen to have more people participate in the citizen monitoring process, and they believe digital scorecards may be the solution.

10.16 Disseminating information for citizens (I4C) on social media has increased the public's immeasurable understanding of I-SAF. In recent years, most people in the city acquired smartphones and can access the internet at any time, which offers them an effective channel to share and access information.

10.17 API gained new experience in animation video production, especially in script development and seeking partners to provide technical support for the production.



Challenges:

- 10.18 During the reporting period, Covid19 continued to be a crucial issue, and local authorities did not allow any public meetings. Solution: The project activities are organised under conditions of social distancing; participants are required to wear masks and use alcohol in order to clean their hands and surfaces. As the number of participants was limited to 30 people, or sometimes to 15, for any given meeting, I4C awareness videos were disseminated via online communication channels in order to fill the gaps.
- 10.19 The CAF function is volunteer work, and it is difficult to attract young people or the general public to apply. Also, it takes a lot of time to build the capacity of the newly recruited CAFs.
- 10.20 Khan authorities tried to engage the private sector and economic agents such as sellers, shops, producer groups and associations, but there was less participation among them. Many companies just sent representatives to join the meeting, yet those representatives were not authorised to make any decision or comment on the raised issues.

