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EVALUATION

Accountability in Governance and Politics Program, Cambodia 2009–2013

Award AID-442-A-09-00001

August 2013 (updated March 2014)

This evaluation was conducted at the request of the United States Agency for International Development, by MM. Eric des Pallières (consultant), Ley Kem (consultant) and Jeffrey Noel Vanness (USAID).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- In a context marked by the dominance of the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) on all facets of governance, persistent corruption and limited political space, USAID/Cambodia pursues the long-term goal to improve political competitiveness in Cambodia. Building on its long standing assistance, USAID entered into an award agreement with the *Consortium for Electoral and Political Process Strengthening* (CEPPS) to implement a new *Accountability in Governance and Politics Program* (AGAP), with the 5-year objective to promote increased accountability and transparency in policy-making and implementation. Its three sub-objectives are: to strengthen accountability and expand transparency and access to information; to generate progressive leadership; and to support election systems.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- USAID/Cambodia commissioned this performance evaluation of the AGAP program to assess achievement towards objectives as defined in the initial program description, as well as subsequent program expansions in 2011 and 2012. One year before program completion, this evaluation serves two purposes: (1) to determine to what extent the project's objectives and goals have been achieved, and (2) to provide crucial information, which will inform the design of a new elections and political processes program. This evaluation report aims to present both the mission's findings on the overall performance of AGAP activities from 2009-2013 as well as suggestions to guide decisions on the design for the next elections and political processes program from 2014 to 2019.
- Evaluation questions were prioritized as follows: (1) To what extent have the project objective and sub-objectives been achieved? Why or why not? (2) Targeted groups included political parties, women and youth in order to expand political competitiveness and general inclusiveness in the political process. Did the applied interventions adequately lead to greater plurality and civic participation by the targeted groups? (3) Did the program interventions lead to a high return on investments in terms of realization of the intended results? Were some interventions more successful than others? Why or why not? (4) In order to inform planning for future programming, the evaluation team should also address the following questions: Were there any unanticipated political factors influencing the ability to achieve the goals and objectives? Were there any unintended consequences of program interventions? Was the development hypothesis and project structure adequate to achieve the goals and objectives? What effect did political space have on multi-party competition and political participation?
- Because of the change in political context since the preparation of its Statement of Work, the evaluation team was specifically asked by USAID/Cambodia DG to look at broader opportunities for future programs, such as engaging the legislature or reversing an implicit decision to move away from engaging the government on electoral reform.

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

- To adequately answer all the evaluation questions, the evaluators have opted for a sequential combination of methods, as follows: (1) The first round consisted essentially of semi-structured interviews with key informants, including USAID/Cambodia, CEPPS partners, sub-grantees and other implementing partners as well as key beneficiary institutions. In the meantime, the evaluation team conducted a thorough review of all program documentation, M&E data, and other relevant sectorial data; (2) To understand behavioral changes among target groups, the evaluation team then conducted a series of individual and focus group interviews with representatives of key beneficiary groups in four selected provinces, including local election officials, political party cadres and community-based activists, particularly among women and youth; (3) Ultimately, the evaluation team conducted a series of panel discussions with key other stakeholders, including civil society organizations, traditional and new media, as well as other donors and development partners, to discuss likely post-election scenarios and practical recommendations.
- Proximity to the election limited the evaluation team's ability to fully capture the lasting consequences of its unanticipated outcome for the upcoming programming period. Further to the absence of some key CEPPS personnel, intense focus on the contested elections also hindered the availability of some key interlocutors within beneficiary institutions. Notably, in spite of repeated attempts, the evaluation team was unable to meet with representatives of the National Election Commission (NEC), the Ministry of Interior and CPP leadership at the national level. As it is generally the case for performance evaluation, and even more so in the field of democracy, causal links were difficult to ascertain between program activities and some of the most salient changes observed, and the data then available for one of the impact evaluation was inconclusive. Last, the full impact of some interventions may not be discernable until well after completion of the current program. This may be especially true for some of the activities under sub-objective 2.

FINDINGS

- The evaluation team found many positive changes in the political environment following the 2013 National Assembly elections, notably: the sudden willingness of Cambodians of all socio-economic standings and locations to speak openly about their political views, the unprecedented levels of youth engagement in the political process, the gains made by the opposition unified around an issue-based platform, not to mention the recognition by some members of the ruling party that their electoral losses are attributable to better performance by the opposition. Although CPP still dominates all branches of government and could well opt for further restrictions on political space, the newly competitive political context may provide new incentives for reform.
- It is hard to directly attribute these results to the AGAP program (failure to ascribe causality does not mean that the causal link does not exist, only that the evaluation was unable to document it), although the evaluation found that activities of the CEPPS partners under this program and previous interventions have contributed to greater political accountability and competitiveness. To date, however, the completion of program outputs by the CEPPS partners hasn't fully aggregated into the achievement of the program's objective and sub-objectives. Whatever the outcome of the current political deadlock, the changed political situation does provide unforeseen opportunities for the CEPPS partners to make progress in the final year of the program, but requires fresh thinking by both USAID and CEPPS about what is in their manageable interest.

Strengthen Accountability and Expand Transparency and Access to Information

- AGAP's first sub-objective was to strengthen accountability and expand transparency and access to information, by enhancing the oversight role of elected leaders at all levels, creating constructive policy focused interactions between citizens and elected/appointed leaders, and improving the quantity, quality and dissemination of policy research and analyses. Key activities included town-hall style constituency dialogues and moderated candidate debates before the commune council and the legislative elections, as well as youth-oriented televised programs and public opinion surveys. A sub-grant was also made to sponsor policy research and outreach by civil society organizations.
- While they haven't fully aggregated into the achievement of this objective, activities have had a positive effect on political accountability and competitiveness, as well as awareness of public policy issues. Town hall style constituency dialogues, multi-party candidate debates and youth policy debates created a modicum of political space where none existed before, setting positive precedents as "proof of concept" for introducing practices into Cambodia's closed political space. Interactions between citizens and elected leaders through program activities generally gravitated towards specific benefits more than larger policy issues within the realm of the National Assembly (NA). They had a positive effect on participants, albeit no discernible lasting impact on MNAs' legislating role.
- Multi-party candidate debates not only offered voters irreplaceable opportunities to hear differing viewpoints from competing candidates and parties in a context where political rivals are not used to participate in a constructive contest of ideas, but their extended audience allowed them to have a significant impact that contributed to a more competitive pre-election political environment.
- Despite shortcomings in their administration, parts of AGAP public opinion research activities have had a noticeable impact on political parties in regards to policy. Disappointingly this has not yet resulted in any political party commissioning their own research. AGAP research activities were conducted without adequate coordination with implementing partners or other stakeholders.

Generate Progressive Leadership

- AGAP's second sub-objective was to generate progressive leadership by cultivating leaders who advocate for government accountability and data-driven policy debates. The cooptation of this objective as "youth" under the original program description and corresponding CEPPS' proposal however was made at the expense of women's and other types of progressive leadership, while broader youth engagement appeared somewhat unrelated. As a result of two program extensions, additional activities were designed to support a more competitive and inclusive political environment, and to strengthen women's political leadership.
- Sustained engagement with political party youth branches at provincial and national levels, as well as advanced training for a smaller cadre of youth political and civil society leaders were well received. They undoubtedly contributed to enhance the visibility and influence of youth political leaders, to whom political parties do assign a larger role, with the potential to advocate for reform. Although a valuable investment in the long run, broader youth programs and civic education efforts appeared a stretch from the explicit focus of sub-objective 2 to build a cadre of several hundred given access to positions of leadership. All recognize youth as key factor in political change, but it is hard to directly attribute this to YCC activities, which results may fully realize long after program completion.
- Efforts to elevate women's political leadership were largely unsuccessful, as a result of limited and scattered interventions. Confined to gender balance and gender-based advocacy in election administration under the original award, the advancement of women's political leadership was only given more attention following a program extension in 2012, which introduced targeted training and roundtables. Though beneficial, these activities remained too limited to significantly impact the low

capacity levels of Cambodian women. Despite limited progress in the 2012 commune elections, not only there was a significant decrease in women candidates for the NA between 2008 and 2013, but a common old school thinking persists within political parties and civil society that assign women an inferior role as too scared, unqualified, or devoid of resources necessary to campaign.

Support Election Systems

- AGAP's third sub-objective was to support election systems, by providing targeted assistance in the lead up to elections to ensure a more level playing field. Specifically, activities aimed at reforming the electoral legislation and supporting domestic election observation. Two program extensions brought pre-election activities to improve the voter lists and reach out to new voters and youth.
- Election Law reform did not happen. As minimal amendments pertaining to voter registration failed to address core shortcomings, the 2013 elections were marred by unprecedented levels of voter lists and voter identification flaws. Issues that have undermined successive elections since 1998 have not changed significantly: NEC's independence, voter registration and dispute resolution, not to mention a general environment that is not conducive to a level-playing field. Notwithstanding the standard of the expertise provided, the strategy pursued appears disconnected from lessons learnt by other stakeholders, notably CEPPS partners. Voter registration was deemed a secondary priority, certainly not matching the demand-side efforts. Activities nevertheless brought welcomed attention to campaign finance, though legal reform and enforcement proved too ambitious.
- Solid support to the voter registration audit (VRA) and sample-based election observation helped document a compelling case for reform, including a complete overhaul of voter registration. Although sustainability in building domestic capacities may require specific attention, new partner *Transparency International Cambodia* (TIC) took maximum advantage of the assistance provided and swiftly gained recognition. These activities were conducted independently of similar Cambodian-led activities. Attribution to an international actor probably lent strength and visibility to VRA findings and increased pressure on NEC to commission their own audit. The diversity of voices and methods with similar findings reinforced them. In the absence of a thorough investigation of irregularities, further data analysis proved instrumental.
- Activities to expand public access to information on elections targeting new voters and youth included public service announcements, content development for an election hotline (IVR) and social media training for political parties contributed to increase awareness and participation.

CONCLUSIONS

- Cambodia may have reached a turning point,
- Political space opened like never before but may be temporary,
- Women are not making the same organic gains as youth,
- AGAP demand-driven development hypothesis was relevant,
- Lack of coordination had real costs in terms of results,
- Limited political space affected multi-party competition and political participation,
- Most political factors influencing the ability to achieve objectives were not unanticipated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrated project design and greater coordination among implementers and their partners

- Ensure that achievements towards program objectives and sub-objectives are understood to be a shared responsibility by all implementers.
- This requires integrated project design and results framework to ensure that interventions fully aggregate into program objectives and sub-objectives.
- Throughout implementation, programmatic work should be coordinated to maximize synergies and, in turn, overall effectiveness.

2. Place stronger emphasis on Cambodian ownership and sustainability

- Place stronger emphasis on sustainability through lasting capacity-building and progressive transfer of skills to Cambodian-owned initiatives,
- Program design should prioritize activities that can be ultimately replicated by Cambodian partners, notably to allow increased frequency and larger reach.
- Ensure greater participation of all sub-grantees in activity design and achieving results that fulfill program objectives (*AGAP and future project*).

3. Electoral reform: Prioritize and intensify the demand-side approach while exploring new approaches to supply side

- AGAP should intensify its demand side approach to help sustain and build upon momentum,
- Integrity of the voter registry should be a key focus moving forward. Other issues have equally been well documented, but the voter list has high awareness among voters and stakeholders,
- Further interventions should acknowledge that the current NEC is not a willing partner. New approaches to the supply side may be worth exploring, preceded by political dialogue,
- Any credible VR reform would require a holistic approach and meaningful coordination between stakeholders and other developments partners.

4. Political party support: Emphasize goal of politically competitive system, as political party strengthening returns to core themes.

- Orient activities towards producing a stable and sustainable system of political competition (*AGAP and future projects*)
- Mainstream women and youth advancement into more traditional party strengthening topics such as policy development, candidate selection processes, party financing, membership development, and strategic communications (*AGAP and future project*)
- Initiate self-assessment and learning exercises within political organizations (*AGAP*)
- Require parties to lead on propagating capabilities throughout party structure (*future project*)
- Oversee active compliance with USAID's Political Party Assistance Policy (*USAID*)

5. Role for traditional and new media to support reform and progress

- Assess and confirm increasing utilization of Internet, social media, and emerging communications technologies and defend Internet and press freedoms (*USAID*)
- Building on increasing traffic of online and social media, develop responsible and authoritative online media outlets (*future project*)
- Journalistic and citizen-led efforts to promote the elected legislature as a center for decision-making and to increase accountability to Cambodians need support now, while the increased

level of political competition within the government and society generally provides an incentive for news houses to invest in better coverage of politics (*AGAP and future project*).

6. Engage elected members of the National Assembly through new windows of opportunity created by the 2013 election, if possible

- Accelerate town hall meeting initiatives and establish precedents for sustained dialogue between citizens and elected officials (*AGAP and future project*),
- Assist MNAs to present policy ideas in debate, through media, and with constituents (*AGAP*)
- Assess NA capacity and willingness to perform lawmaking and oversight responsibilities (*USAID*)
- Leverage potential NA support by integrating focus on other USAID priorities (*future project*)
- Support civil society and media oversight of NA (*AGAP and future project*)

ACRONYMS

ADS	Advanced Democracy Seminar
AGAP	Accountability in Governance and Politics Program
CCHR	Cambodian Center for Human Rights
CD	Constituency Dialogues
CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
CNRP	Cambodia National Rescue Party
COMFREL	Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CPWP	Committee to Promote Women in Politics
HRP	Human Rights Party
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IRI	International Republican Institute
LD	Living Democracy
LMI	Lower Mekong Initiative
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MNA	Member of the National Assembly
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NEC	National Election Committee
NICFEC	Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SBO	Sample Based Observation
SOW	Statement of Work
SRP	Sam Rainsy Party
TIC	Transparency International – Cambodia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VRA	Voter Registration Audit
WGPF	Working Group on Political Finance
YCC	Youth Council of Cambodia

INTRODUCTION

USAID/Cambodia commissioned this performance evaluation of the *Accountability in Governance and Politics Program (AGAP)* to assess achievement towards objectives and goals as defined in the initial program description, as well as the subsequent program expansions in 2011 and 2012. The current AGAP Program is scheduled to come to a completion in September 2014. This evaluation is in line with the USAID Forward reform agenda with respect to strengthening evaluation and transparency as part of the commitment to quality programs which uses evaluation findings to inform decisions, improve program effectiveness, increase accountability to stakeholders and support organizational learning.

EVALUATION PURPOSE

This evaluation will serve two purposes: (1) to determine to what extent the project's objectives and goals have been achieved, and (2) to provide crucial information, which will inform the design of a new elections and political processes program. The present evaluation report aims to present both the mission's findings on the overall performance of AGAP activities from 2009-2013 as well as suggestions to guide decisions on the design for the next elections and political processes program from 2014-2019.

Because of the change in political context since the preparation of its Statement of Work, the evaluation team was specifically asked by USAID/Cambodia DG to look at broader opportunities for future programs, such as engaging the legislature or reversing an implicit decision to move away from engaging the government on electoral reform.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Key questions addressed by the evaluation are prioritized below:

1. To what extent have the project objective and sub-objectives been achieved? Why or why not?
2. Targeted groups included political parties, women and youth in order to expand political competitiveness and general inclusiveness in the political process. Did the applied interventions adequately lead to greater plurality and civic participation by the targeted groups?
3. Did the program interventions lead to a high return on investments in terms of realization of the intended results? Were some interventions more successful than others? Why or why not?
4. In order to inform planning for future programming, the evaluation team should also address the following questions:
 - Were there any unanticipated political factors influencing the ability to achieve the goals and objectives?
 - Were there any unintended consequences of program interventions?
 - Was the development hypothesis and project structure adequate to achieve the goals and objectives?
 - What effect did political space have on multi-party competition and political participation?

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

At the time the AGAP program was designed, political governance in Cambodia had made progress, after decades of conflict, with the assistance and support of the international community. However, the ever consolidating dominance of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) had prevented meaningful participation by opposition parties in the National Assembly, limited access to information and restricted political space. As documented for years by national and international watchdogs, other challenges included lack of confidence in the electoral administration, flawed voter lists, limited political party capacities, limited opportunities for citizen engagement with elected officials, low youth awareness of key concepts of democracy, and low levels of women's engagement in the political process.

USAID/Cambodia pursues the long-term goal to eventually **improve political competitiveness in Cambodia**. Building on its long standing assistance, USAID/Cambodia entered into an award agreement in 2009 with the *Consortium for Electoral and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS)* to implement a new *Accountability in Governance and Politics Program (AGAP)*. The five-year objective of AGAP is to **promote increased accountability and transparency in policy-making and implementation**.

The three main sub-objectives of AGAP are:

1. **Strengthen Accountability and Expand Transparency and Access to Information** – By enhancing the oversight role of elected leaders at all levels, creating constructive policy focused interactions between citizens and elected/appointed leaders, and improving the quantity, quality and dissemination of policy research and analyses;
2. **Generate Progressive Leadership** – Cultivate leaders who advocate for government accountability and data driven policy debate on a wider range of policy issues. The program will create a cadre of approximately 500 to 700 young people (18-35 years of age) who will become future leaders; and
3. **Support Election Systems** – Provide targeted assistance in lead up to the 2012 local government and 2013 national elections to ensure a more level playing field.

Specific, intended results are detailed in the relevant sections of this evaluation.

DEVELOPMENT HYPOTHESIS

The development hypothesis behind this objective is that **USAID activities under this program will help Cambodians hold all levels of their government accountable for policy performance**. Specifically, if the Cambodian electorate increases its knowledge and understanding of the political and electoral processes, then it will demand greater government accountability and transparency by demonstrating that policy-driven reform, versus patronage-led mandates, promotes greater social and political stability. By engaging the electorate and political parties, it is expected that over time the inherent weaknesses of the patronage system will be demonstrated. Furthermore, if government policy performance increasingly becomes an expectation of citizens and a criterion for voting, savvy political

leaders will seek political gain by transparently presenting progress achieved in implementing new policies. Elevated voter expectations will drive all political actors to compete on policy performance and platforms. Once demonstrated to citizens by increasingly sophisticated and dynamic political actors, including women and youth as they mature and gain power, citizens and voters increasingly will make political choices based on this information and thus hold elected officials more accountable and create greater opportunity for more competitive politics to emerge over the coming decades.

IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY

AGAP is implemented through the *Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS)*, which is comprised of the *National Democratic Institute (NDI)*, the *International Republican Institute (IRI)* and the *International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)*. AGAP was launched in 2009 following the national elections of 2008. The project carries out its activities nationwide through forums for constructive dialogue between citizens and elected officials and candidates, technical assistance to the National Elections Committee and targets youth and women for greater civic engagement.

An impact evaluation was written into the original project design and was successfully completed as part of the program. CEPPS contracted evaluation experts from Yale University and USAID contractors to design the impact evaluation strategy and provide guidance.

The project document specifies that USAID/Cambodia remains substantially involved over the life of the Cooperative Agreement to assist the recipient in achieving the expected outcomes and results of the program. The Cooperative Agreement implies a level of “substantial involvement” by USAID through the Agreement Officer Technical Representative (AOTR). The intended purpose of the AOTR involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement. The substantial involvement elements anticipated under this award were notably: approval of annual work plans; approval of key personnel; approval of monitoring and evaluation plans; and approval of sub-recipients and proposed sub-grants that directly support the Royal Government of Cambodia.

PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS

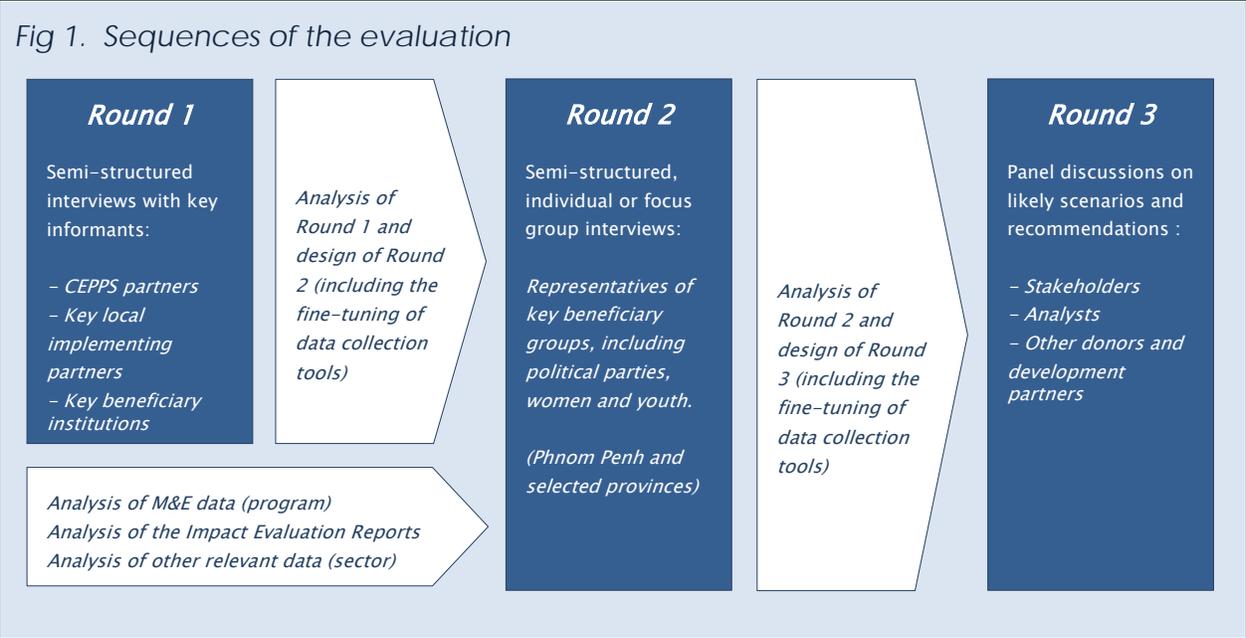
The five-year cooperative agreement (AID-442-A-09-00001), which runs from October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2014, includes program objectives applicable to both the pre- and post-election phases; however, the approved program awarded in 2009 reflects a distinct post-election strategy, as it focuses on accountability of officials elected in the 2008 elections. Pre-election activities were not approved at the time that the cooperative agreement was signed. As Cambodia prepared for the 2012 Commune Council Elections and the 2013 National Elections, USAID/Cambodia modified the existing CEPPS Associate Award to include critical pre-election activities not represented in the original program. These pre-election activities include: voter education on voter registration and political party platforms; training for Ministry of Interior (MOI) and National Election Committee (NEC) members on developing and maintaining accurate voter registries; training for political parties on debates and constituency outreach; training for domestic election monitoring activities; and support for youth and women’s political participation.

EVALUATION METHODS

In line with USAID’s Evaluation Policy and related guidelines, the evaluation team sought the best combination of methods to answer the evaluation questions. While such *performance evaluations* lack rigorously defined counterfactuals for before-after comparisons, the evaluation team could also make use of the systematic collection of monitoring and evaluation data conducted throughout the program as part of the *Performance Monitoring Plan*, including two pilot *Impact Evaluation* reports.¹

MIXED METHODS, SEQUENTIAL COMBINATION

Taking into consideration the complementarities and respective limitations of the various methods they deemed adequate in this context – including the review of existing M&E data, the evaluators have opted for a sequential combination, where the results of each round helped fine-tune the design of subsequent rounds using other methods and data collection techniques, as summarized below (detailed information, including the precise timeline of the evaluation, the list of key informants, participants to focus groups interviews and panel discussions, as well as data collection tools are provided in the annexes).



¹ The statistical analysis of IRI’s Impact Evaluation was not completed at the time when this performance evaluation was conducted, and preliminary findings were then rather inconclusive.

Round 1 – Program design and management, M&E data, key achievements

Consisting of a series of semi-structured interviews with key informants, including USAID/Cambodia’s Office of Democracy and Governance, CEPPS partners, international and Cambodian sub-grantees² and other local implementing partners as well as key beneficiary institutions – including political parties, electoral officials and civil society organizations involved in the electoral and political processes, this first round focused on the project design and management, coordination between the CEPPS partners, relations with sub-grantees and other implementing partners and well as the achievements made under the various program interventions. In the meantime, the evaluation team conducted a thorough documentation review, starting with the original program description and subsequent extensions, corresponding CEPPS proposals, result frameworks, quarterly reports, performance monitoring plans (PMP) and M&E data, *Impact Evaluation Reports*, and other relevant sectorial data³. An analysis of the results of key informant interviews and documentation review helped fine-tune the design of round 2, with a focus on areas where causal links were difficult to ascertain.

Round 2 – Understanding behavioral changes among key target groups

To gain a more complete understanding of the factors and mechanisms behind observed changes and gain more confidence in the findings of round 1, the evaluation team conducted a series of individual and focus group interviews with representatives of key beneficiary groups, including local electoral officials, political party cadres and community-based activists, particularly among women and youth. Due to time constraints, the team divided to conduct interviews in four selected provinces of particular relevance as identified in the first round: Kratie, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang and Battambang.

Round 3 – Testing recommendations

Ultimately, the evaluation team conducted a series of panel discussions with key other stakeholders, including representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of human rights, democracy and electoral processes, contributors to traditional and new media, as well as other donors and international development partners, to discuss likely post-election scenarios and practical recommendations for the final year of AGAP and for future programming by USAID/Cambodia. A number of complementary meetings were also conducted during this final phase of the evaluation, including one-on-one interviews with key CEPPS personnel unavailable during the first round.

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

- ***Proximity to the election and uncertainty about consequences.*** The evaluation took place in the immediate aftermath of the elections, in a context marked by potentially far-reaching, yet uncertain changes to Cambodia’s political environment. This situation limited the team’s ability to fully capture the lasting consequences of the unanticipated election outcome for the upcoming programming period: possible result of the current political standoff, potential role of the future legislature and incentives for the ruling party to either reform or to further restrict political space. Because of the change in the political context since the preparation of its Statement of Work, the

² These include: Freedom House, the Committee to Promote Women in Politics (CPWC), Transparency International Cambodia (TI-C) and the Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC).

³ Sources listed in annex.

evaluation team was specifically asked by USAID to look at broader opportunities for future programs, such as engaging the legislature or reversing an implicit decision to move away from engaging the government on electoral reform.

- **Availability of key interlocutors.** Further to the absence of some key personnel within the CEPPS partner organizations, intense focus on the contested elections also proved a hindrance to the availability of some key interlocutors within beneficiary institutions. Notably, in spite of repeated attempts, the evaluation team was unable to meet with representatives of the National Election Committee (NEC), the Ministry of Interior and CPP leadership at the national level. The lack of access to CPP national leadership limited the evaluation team's ability to draw conclusions on some aspects of the AGAP program, notably the effect of political party development work on the ruling party's attitude toward public opinion research. The evaluation team had no such difficulty in meeting with NEC and CPP representatives outside of Phnom Penh.
- **Causal links difficult to ascertain, impact evaluation inconclusive.** As it is generally the case for *performance evaluations*, the absence of rigorously defined counterfactuals made it difficult for the evaluation team to ascertain causal links or inference between AGAP interventions and some of the most salient changes observed. Further, the statistical analysis of IRI's Impact Evaluation of the *Advanced Democracy Seminar* was not completed at the time when this performance evaluation was conducted and preliminary findings then available were rather inconclusive.⁴ Last, the full impact of some of AGAP's interventions may not be discernible until well after the completion of the current program. This may be especially true for some of the activities conducted under Sub-Objective 2, *Generate Progressive leadership*. Limitations are discussed in further details in the annexes.

⁴ *Update March 2014* - IRI has since completed the statistical analysis, but these were not included in the performance evaluation due to timing.

FINDINGS

Overall, interventions by the CEPPS partners are well received in Cambodia, with nearly all respondents reporting favorably on their interactions with or knowledge of the *National Democratic Institute* (NDI) and the *International Republican Institute* (IRI). The *International Foundation for Electoral Systems* (IFES) is the least well-known of the CEPPS partners but its work is perceived similarly by those cognizant of it.

The evaluation team found many positive changes in Cambodia's political context following the 2013 National Assembly elections, notably: the new willingness of Cambodians of all socio-economic standings and geographic locations to speak openly about their political views, the unprecedented levels of youth engagement in the political process, the gains made by the opposition popularly attributed to consolidation of parties around a unified issue-based platform during the campaign, not to mention the recognition by some members of the ruling party that their electoral losses are attributable to better performance by the opposition. Although the CPP still dominates all branches of government and could well opt for further restrictions on political space in the coming years, the newly competitive political context does contribute to **increased accountability in policy-making and implementation**, and may provide new internal and external incentives for reform.

It is hard to directly attribute these results to the AGAP program (failure to ascribe causality does not mean that the causal link does not exist, only that the evaluation team was unable to document it), although the evaluation found that the activities of the CEPPS partners under this program and previous interventions did contribute to greater political accountability and competitiveness. Policy-based forums such as constituency dialogues, multi-party candidate debates and youth policy debates set critical precedents into Cambodia's closed political space; sustained engagement with party youth branches did encourage political parties to assign them a larger role; parts of the public opinion research activities had a noticeable impact on political parties in regards to policy; and solid support provided to domestic election monitoring initiatives helped document a compelling argument for electoral reform. Yet, as AGAP is on course to complete activities, the program outputs by the CEPPS partners haven't fully aggregated into the achievement of the program's objective and sub-objectives. Whatever the outcome of the current political deadlock, the changed political situation does provide unforeseen opportunities for the CEPPS partners to make progress in the final year of the program, but requires fresh thinking by both USAID/Cambodia and CEPPS about what is in their manageable interest.

SUB-OBJECTIVE I

AGAP's first sub-objective was to "**Strengthen Accountability and Expand Transparency and Access to Information**," or more specifically, to "**enhance the oversight role of elected leaders at all levels, creating constructive policy focused interactions between citizens and elected/appointed leaders, and improving the quantity, quality and dissemination of policy research and analyses.**" The specific intended results were the following: more informed target groups (women leaders and youth), increased citizen and government access to improved social science information, and increased citizen access to the policy development process.

Key activities included NDI's town-hall style constituency dialogues (CD) and moderated multi-party candidate debates ahead of the commune council elections in 2012 and the legislative elections in 2013, as well as IRI's televised programs and public opinion polling. IRI also made a sub-grant to *Freedom House* to sponsor policy research and outreach activities by Cambodian CSOs.

I.1. Creating constructive policy focused interactions between citizens and elected officials

NDI's focus was on increasing interactions between members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and their constituents. A hundred MNAs have participated to 62 CDs since the inception of AGAP, reaching a direct audience of some 30,000 citizens. Selected events were also broadcast on radio in 20 of the 24 provinces, which expanded the reach of the program. These interactions provided attendees with a rare opportunity to learn about their MNAs and government decision-making in general. They had a positive effect on participants, albeit no discernible lasting impact on MNAs as regards their legislative role. An impact evaluation⁵ conducted by NDI during 2012-2013 found that they caused positive changes in individual knowledge levels and self-reported engagement in some civic and political behaviors⁶. Although NDI did document anecdotal evidence of MNAs changing their approach to constituent outreach and becoming more responsive to issues raised by their constituents, interactions generally gravitated towards specific benefits and services rather than larger policy issues within the realm of the National Assembly. Events were one-off occasions, which did not motivate MNAs or local authorities to replicate the practice themselves or to introduce the norm that elected officials should seek opportunities to engage supporters and non-supporters alike. NDI did enhance the impact of their constituency dialogues by working with citizens to prepare ahead of the event through exercises of refining questions and expectations. This aspect was also subject to an impact evaluation conducted by NDI which showed a positive result. NDI has also recognized that there could be further impact in the future by concentrating the program and repeating constituency dialogues in the same places over time, although that would mean reaching a fewer number of places. These efforts to stimulate the thinking of participants before and after the event, and to provide opportunities for continuing follow-up with MNAs, would further strengthen the activities.

Although NDI worked with local partner organizations to arrange the constituency dialogues, there was no program component to institutionalize these events or to establish Cambodian ownership of them. NDI reports that it attempted to transfer ownership of the model to the National Assembly without success,⁷ and that UNDP's attempts at a similar initiative failed notably because of the ruling party's reluctance to participate in such an arena moderated by any group other than NDI. Both CPP and CNRP representatives expressed appreciation for the bipartisan nature of the constituency dialogues as

⁵ *Constituency Dialogue and Citizen Engagement in Cambodia: Findings from a mixed method impact evaluation*, Feb. 2013.

⁶ While the survey did not detect evidence of CDs causing citizens to demand that MNAs address their concerns, focus group conducted during the present evaluation found anecdotal evidence of such changes among women's groups.

⁷ NDI explained that, while NA representatives liked the idea, they did not want to include members of the opposition.

vital to drawing a diverse audience with each seeing value in being given a microphone in front of the other's supporters. Political party representatives and civil society activists generally insisted on the added value brought by NDI to these town hall meetings. Explanations given included that, as an international organization, NDI was immune from harassment from local authorities and thus generated a modicum of political space where none existed before. As well, NDI's rigorous approach and format was seen as a best practice which provided a level of comfort for political representatives ensured of a chance to present their views, whereas events by Cambodian organizers would have been less balanced. One civil society leader however questioned whether it wasn't time for Cambodians to overtake NDI's predominance in this field, recognizing that, compared with a few years ago, more capable local organizations exist.

1.2. Improving the quantity, quality and dissemination of policy research and analysis

IRI's polling was a generally well-regarded high profile activity. However, its programmatic effectiveness was recently hobbled by a lack of coordination and advance planning. Although IRI conducted multiple polls under AGAP, the evaluation team found interlocutors⁸ naturally most conversant about the most recent survey conducted in January 2013 (as such, some of the findings below are thus not generalizable to IRI's public opinion polling program as a whole). Some were most skeptical of the results of the "right/wrong direction" question, perhaps not being able to place the survey finding in the January context, sometimes also of the accuracy of the horserace as they questioned the ability of the survey's respondents to provide genuine answers in a context marked by intimidation, particularly in rural areas. The delay between data collection in January and the public release of the findings in May diminished the utility of the survey. Considerations of coordination between partners should have been taken up front, and a timetable and plan for utilizing public opinion research should have been set before activities took place. Additional integration of IRI's research activities with those of NDI and IFES, conducted completely independently and supporting different purposes, could have multiplied the impact of this program element. For example, IFES's fielding of a survey between IRI's January effort and the election could have provided a valuable update or, at a minimum, a check of some key findings in the IRI survey which were questioned by Cambodian partners and other CEPPS partners.

Despite shortcomings in the administration of the most recent poll, IRI's public opinion research activities have provided a wealth of information to many partners and have had a noticeable impact on political parties in regards to policy. Both CPP and CNRP leadership were attentive to key issues raised in IRI's surveys and publicly and privately incorporated data from IRI into their strategies. Notably, the surveys had consistently shown, since 2009, that support for the *Sam Rainsy Party* (SRP) and the *Human Rights Party* (HRP) would significantly increase as a result of the parties unifying.⁹ The findings did provide incentive for the opposition parties, who ultimately merged in advance of the 2013 National

⁸ Interviews with political party representatives and civil society activists in Phnom Penh, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chnang and Kratie. The evaluation team could not meet with the CPP's national leadership.

⁹ In the survey conducted in January 2013, 32 percent of respondents indicated that they would be more likely to vote for the CNRP with knowledge of the merger.

Assembly elections. IRI also reported¹⁰ that the Council of Ministers had shown high interest in using poll data to inform its policy deliberations, specifically requesting IRI to investigate public opinion on crime, corruption and land titling, and that the *Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM)* had broadcast a radio program focusing on potential solutions to issues raised by IRI's public opinion polling. Yet, IRI's cultivation of survey committees within political parties has not yet resulted in any political party commissioning their own research.¹¹ Disappointingly, representatives of two political parties dismissed the idea as impractical because of expense, despite the lavish amounts they reported as campaign expenditures; such quick dismissal of the idea of investing party resources into public opinion research raised the question of how much value they place on this tool.

IRI's sub-grant to *Freedom House* illustrates how the lack of coordination between AGAP's implementers undermined achieving results under the objective to strengthen accountability and expand transparency and access to information. *Freedom House's* work with a number of Cambodian civil society groups to conduct professional policy research and conduct advocacy-oriented outreach with their findings fits squarely within this sub-objective. However, it received minimal attention from the CEPPS partners in country. *Freedom House's* inclusion in AGAP was described as a function of CEPPS's internal politics with the sub-grant managed out of Washington, not Phnom Penh. IRI did not provide normal oversight of its sub-grantee and made little effort to integrate the sub-grant activities into the larger program. For example, topics of research were not selected based on relevance to AGAP's overall purposes. Where Cambodian organization did engage in policy topics of great relevance to AGAP, their findings were not linked to further other AGAP results.¹²

I.3. Enhance the oversight (and policy-making) role of elected leaders at all levels

USAID's aspiration to use AGAP to open up the policy-making process and enhance the oversight role of the legislature was largely hindered by the fact that policy is essentially made in the executive branch, not by elected bodies. In the meantime, recent development have arguably vindicated the demand-based development hypothesis, notably the notion that elevated voter expectations would drive political actors to compete more on policy platforms and performance. Depending on the outcome of the current political deadlock, there may be significant opportunities in the future with a sizeable opposition in the NA, having the possibility to introduce legislation, pass amendments and possibly participate in lively debates. There is a possibility – of unknown probability right now – that the legislating and oversight role of the National Assembly may improve. The final year of AGAP may, therefore, pose more opportunities to achieve lasting results under this objective than the first four years.

¹⁰ CEPPS/IRI Cambodia FY11, 3rd Quarterly Report

¹¹ While no political party has publicly released opinion research to date, IRI believes that the CPP has, in fact, data driven public opinion research. The evaluation team could not meet with the CPP leadership to confirm this.

¹² Among the topics covered: "*Ethnic minority participation in local elections*" and "*Draft law on freedom of information*".

SUB-OBJECTIVE 2

AGAP's second sub-objective was to “**Generate Progressive Leadership – Cultivate leaders who advocate for government accountability and data driven policy debate on a wider range of policy issues**”. More specifically, the program description sought to “focus youth programs on building a cadre of several hundred well trained and mentored youth who are provided increased levels of responsibility and access to positions of leadership”. Under the original award, three specific intended results were foreseen: (1) Strengthened democratic political understanding and action of target groups; (2) Increased understanding of the political system among targeted citizens; and (3) Expanded higher quality civic education initiatives. Following two successive program extensions, respectively in 2011 and 2012, the following intended results were added to this objective: (4) More competitive and inclusive political environment supported, and (5) Women's political leadership strengthened.

The programmatic design of this sub-objective appears somewhat inconsistent. First, it was quickly narrowed to “youth” under the original program description and the corresponding CEPPS proposal, at the expense of other types of progressive leadership, notably women's. Second, intended results such as “expanded higher quality civic education” and, following a program extension, “more competitive and inclusive political environment” appear unrelated to the stated objective to focus on creating a cadre of reform-minded, progressive leaders – and meant to justify already-decided-upon activities. Last, initially designed under sub-objective 1, policy-based events such as candidate debates and televised programs were added later to sub-objective 2.

2.1. Strengthened democratic political understanding and action of target groups

Political Party Youth Wings

Amongst the many activities of its multi-faceted youth program, IRI's sustained engagement with political party youth wings at national and provincial level may have been the fittest intervention to contribute to the achievement of AGAP's sub-objective 2. Through the complementary, *Provincial Youth Activist* and *Future Leaders* programs, IRI's activities aim to develop the leadership skills of policy-minded youth political leaders and their exposure to democratic practices. The *Provincial Youth Activist* program offered training to selected youth political activists from all major parties at provincial level, culminating with internal *speaking competitions* allowing participants to showcase their skills to party leaders, multi-party *youth debates* that set positive precedents for constructive contest of ideas outside the limited pre-election campaign periods, as well as *recruitment showcases* to promote the selection of talented party youth as candidates for the 2012 Commune Council elections. *Future leaders* provided more advanced training to a smaller cadre of promising youth political and civil society leaders at national level, and supported initiatives such as youth outreach or voter registration drives.

With around 70 percent of Cambodia's population under the age of 30, political parties are paying increasing attention to young party leaders as their best resource to gain greater youth membership and ultimately more votes. In this context, IRI's sustained engagement with youth wings was well received by the main political parties and has undoubtedly contributed to enhance their visibility and influence

within partisan structures.¹³ As they progressively assign a larger role to their youth wings, political parties are requesting more training and support. Most importantly, these youth political leaders have the potential to replicate some of best practices they have been exposed to, and to advocate for reform.

2.2. Expanded higher quality civic education initiatives (and increased understanding of the political system among targeted citizens)

Support to YCC's Civic Education Programs

A significant part of IRI's broader youth program is implemented through partnership and support to its sub-grantee, the *Youth Council of Cambodia* (YCC), which conducts a wide range of activities aimed to encourage greater youth participation and activism: these encompass a large civic education program, developing a network of thousands of youth activists in selected local communities, the election of youth representatives to attend Commune Councils meetings in a limited number of places, the organization of events such as the *Youth Democracy Festivals*, the production of youth-oriented television shows such as the *Youth Leadership Challenge* (YLC), as well as targeted campaigns such as voter registration drives. Through AGAP and previous programs, YCC has provided civic education training to thousands of youth to develop their capacities to engage in their communities and advocate for issues of public concern¹⁴. Outstanding graduates were encouraged to join YCC Youth Network. An extension of the ADS curriculum was added to develop the use of social media for citizen journalism. Significant resources were invested in the design and conduct of an Impact Evaluation of the *Advanced Democracy Seminar* (ADS). While the evaluation's conclusions are still under review, preliminary findings appeared inconclusive on the trainees' learning curve and behavioral changes. While there was an attempt to develop a database of participants, YCC acknowledged that there was no mechanism to track achievements and potential success stories by former ADS trainees, thus making it harder to document the longer term impact of this training and mentoring program.

Notwithstanding the importance of encouraging youth civic engagement in their local communities, the intervention appears a dilution of the explicit focus of sub-objective 2 to build a cadre of policy-minded progressive leaders. Illustrative activities listed in the program description were clearly suggesting to “focus youth programs on building a cadre of several hundred well trained and mentored youth who are provided increasing levels of responsibility and access to positions of leadership”¹⁵ while broader civic education objectives would be addressed, instead, by “supporting the introduction of civic education within informal and formal education systems”.

While the unprecedented levels of youth engagement in the last elections do vindicate a programmatic focus on Cambodia's youth, it is hard to attribute these changes to YCC's activities under the AGAP

¹³ The Institute has notably documented a number of instances where participation in IRI program had gained young activists not only explicit recognition from party leadership but also promotions to positions of responsibility.

¹⁴ The *Living Democracy* (LD) course provides basic civic education to youth aged 13–17, while the *Advanced Democracy Seminar* (ADS) target youth aged 18–23 with a more comprehensive course on democratic participation as well as tutoring in the conduct of concrete projects.

¹⁵ AGAP Program Description, April, 2009 (p.5).

program. Focus group interviews conducted during the evaluation highlighted many factors unrelated to the intervention, including the explosion of social media and the word of mouth, prompting a “snowball” phenomenon that saw many youth ultimately dare to speak their mind after witnessing other do so.

2.3. More competitive and inclusive political environment supported

Multi-party Candidate Debates

In a closed political space and restricted media environment, NDI organized a series of commune council candidate debates ahead of the 2012 commune elections, offering voters a unique opportunity to hear differing viewpoints from competing candidates and parties. The program also encompassed debate training workshops for participating candidates. While 7,000 audience members attended, the overall reach was much larger as these debates were broadcast on three radio stations, estimated to reach 20 out of 24 provinces in the country. A survey¹⁶ commissioned by NDI to evaluate the reach and impact of these debates on voters across the broadcast area found that 13 percent of them reported listening to the debates, equivalent to one million Cambodian adults. Among them, 89 percent said that the candidates spoke to the issues that are most important to them, and 79 percent reported that the debates had changed their opinion of one or more of the political parties or their candidates. Yet, 25 percent of respondents also deemed not having adequate information about their electoral options. This sentiment was especially pronounced among youth, rural and less educated populations, prompting NDI to increase its programming and radio outreach to reach out to these populations.¹⁷ In the run-up of the 2013 National Assembly elections, NDI carried out another series of high-profile debates at provincial and national levels, respectively broadcast on radio and television. The effort, however, was met with increasing reluctance by the CPP, leading to numerous hurdle and delays.¹⁸

Overall, the debates not only created a modicum of political space where none existed before – setting critical precedents where political rivals are not used to participate in a constructive contest of ideas, but their extended audience allowed them to have a significant, positive impact. Although at the time when the performance evaluation was conducted, no data was available yet¹⁹ on the actual reach of the high-profile, televised debates, the results of the previous survey indicate that they may have significantly contributed to a more competitive pre-election political environment. A lawmaker-elect told the evaluation team that the debates had provided the only opportunity to publicly debate with other parties and reach out to their supporters. As was the case regarding Constituency Dialogues, interlocutors generally deemed the added value brought by NDI to these events as critical, not only

¹⁶ The local research firm CAS surveyed 1,200 adult citizens across the broadcast area, i.e. 20 out of the country’s 24 provinces, and conducted face-to-face interviews among a representative sample of the respondents.

¹⁷ CEPPS/NDI Cambodia FY13, 3rd Quarterly Report.

¹⁸ Notably, a ban on foreign broadcasting during the election period was briefly implemented, threatening to prevent the debates from taking place, but was lifted following domestic and international protest.

¹⁹ *Update March 2014* – NDI has since completed the survey, which findings are reportedly similarly positive.

because of its recognition by authorities as an international organization, but also because of the rigorous approach taken in the enforcement of pre-agreed format and rules, which helped secure the participation of CPP representatives – thus the interest of the event, they stressed – in contrast to other similar initiatives.

Youth Television Programs

Other high profile activities included IRI's youth-oriented television programs, notably the broadcasting of youth policy debates. Under the 2011 program extension, IRI successfully launched the *Next Generation* television talk show, one of the first political discussion talk show formats in Cambodia that provided an opportunity for youth from different parties and civil society to collaboratively discuss solutions for national policy ahead of the 2012 commune council and 2013 legislative elections. The show created space for meaningful discourse, enabling youth to share their views on issues of importance in their community and providing a platform for debating political opinions. The program faced new resistance from the authorities in the lead up to the 2013 elections, and as a result IRI was not allowed to air the final episode of the second season. While the program sought to encourage dialogue among young political party and civil society leaders, IRI acknowledged that "*it (was) unclear what the immediate and long term outcome (would) be for the participants as well as the value for the audience*". No specific survey has measured the full impact of this innovative program. IRI has documented instances where participation in the program had gained young activists not only explicit recognition from party leadership but also promotions to positions of responsibility. As for the audience, focus groups conducted by the evaluation team gave only qualitative evidence of increased skepticism of television among youth, fueling the influence of social media while limiting the reach of such programs.

2.4. Women's political leadership strengthened

Efforts to elevate a new cadre of women leaders, notably within political party structures as candidates and elected officials, proved largely unsuccessful as a result of limited and scattered interventions. In the original program description and corresponding CEPPS proposal, the objective to generate progressive leadership was narrowed to "youth", at the expense of other types of progressive leadership, notably women's. The only explicit references to women's leadership were limited to IFES' efforts to address gender imbalance in election administration and to promote gender-based advocacy on electoral issues, while broader advancement of women's political leadership was somehow deemed secondary.²⁰ In response to the "Gender and Development Issues" section of the program description, the CEPPS partners did maintain an emphasis on women's inclusion in all aspects of programming. IRI and NDI notably required that women represent political parties in some policy-based events, not just on special women's panels.²¹ Yet, despite an already significant downward trend in the number of women

²⁰ « *While acknowledging the continued focus on women's participation as candidates, elected officials, and leaders within political parties, activists confirmed that more attention must be paid to rectifying the imbalance of women's representation in election administration.* », CEPPS/IFES Project Proposal, p.18

²¹ NDI also reported having tried to facilitate a women's caucus in the National Assembly, but female MPs refused to work together across party lines.

candidates and elected to the National Assembly since 2003,²² CEPPS did not identify this as a relevant priority for intervention under the original award.

Women's Progressive Leadership in Election Management and Administration

In an effort to address the underrepresentation of women among electoral agents, IFES partnered with local company VBNK to craft a professional development program in election administration targeting women in selected provinces, and promote their recruitment. Generally well regarded by Provincial Election Commission (PEC) administrators, the series of training sessions have benefited to date to a total of 490 women in 14 provinces. Almost half of them were recruited for short-term positions in the election administration, essentially as polling station staff. Though a valuable effort to enhance the representation in these appointed government positions, the activity appears to have little to do with women's "progressive leadership", for it does not clearly contribute, in the program's limited timeframe, to the specific sub-objective of generating progressive leadership, i.e. "cultivate a cadre of leaders who advocate for government accountability and data driven policy debate", as explicitly specified in the program description. In this respect, IFES also worked with the *Committee to Promote Women in Politics (CPWP)* to promote information exchange and advocacy on electoral issues of specific concern to women's organizations.²³ Despite solid networking with stakeholders and political parties, including CPP, CPWP's long standing advocacy to introduce women quotas in elections have not led to reform to date.

Women's Political Participation's Training and Women's Dialogue

A program extension in 2012 allowed filling the gap by incorporating new activities to support women's political leadership. Building on the momentum of the IRI's *Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) Women's Policy Dialogue*, the intervention aimed to enable the continuation of policy-based dialogue among women leaders in Cambodia. It consisted of training sessions organized jointly by NDI and IFES, as well as issue-based policy dialogues and national women's roundtables held by NDI, bringing together civil society and elected women's leaders. These activities provided a rare opportunity for women's leaders to build their capacities and demonstrate leadership. They provided training to nearly 200 elected women leaders, and exposed 1,200 audience members to presentations by women officials. NDI reported increased networking between civil society and elected women's leaders also clearly benefited both groups, allowing the latter to lead on policy issues. Focus groups conducted by NDI as part of the women's participation program found that Cambodians generally have more faith and trust in CSOs than in political parties to solve problems, yet CSO leaders demonstrated little understanding of the political process. NDI however acknowledged that, given the considerable needs they have revealed, these activities remained much too limited in scope and duration to significantly impact the low capacity levels of Cambodian women in public life, whether as elected officials, government officers, or civil society representatives.

²² « In 2008, the number of women candidates fell by more than 9% and the number of elected women fell by 3% relative to 2003. », CEPPS/IFES Project Proposal, p.18.

²³ These efforts also encompassed radio call-in shows conducted with CPWP and the Women's Media Centre to increase the awareness and participation of young women in politics.

Last, whereas this program extension occurred in the run-up to the 2013 National Assembly elections and did include pre-election activities,²⁴ efforts to strengthen women’s political leadership were explicitly designed as a post-commune council elections activity, hence devoid of any specific component aimed at promoting greater numbers of women candidates for the National Assembly elections.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 3

AGAP’s third sub-objective was to “**Support Election Systems – Provide targeted assistance in lead up to the 2012 local government and 2013 national elections to ensure a more level playing field**”. Under the original award, the intended results were: (1) Effective and cost efficient domestic political process monitoring and (2) Election Law Reform. Two program extensions subsequently added the following intended results: (3) Increased number of registered voters and integrity of the voter list, and (4) Expanded public access to information related to elections targeting new voters and youth.

3.1. Effective and cost efficient domestic political process monitoring

Voter Registration Audit (VRA)

As documented for years by national and international observers, serious flaws in the registration and identification of voters have affected successive Cambodian elections since 1998. In a renewed effort to document the critical need for reform, NDI cooperated with its local partner, the *Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free Elections in Cambodia* (NICFEC) and the *Center for Advanced Studies* (CAS) to conduct an audit of the 2013 voter registry²⁵ and of the ‘deletion lists’ – key to disenfranchisement in past elections. With strong oversight by NDI, the activity was conducted with quality that stands up to scrutiny. Showing further decline in the quality of the voter lists since 2008, the findings received very significant attention from national and international stakeholders and extensive coverage in the Khmer and international press²⁶ – with multiple stories about the findings and reactions by the NEC and political parties. As COMFREL released the results of its own, comparable survey in the same period, the NEC tried to capitalize on perceived discrepancies between their respective findings to discredit them as equally flawed²⁷. While both studies differed in methodologies and assessment areas, their findings were particularly compelling in one common area of measurement: both found very significant percentages of voters who thought they were registered, but could not be found on the list²⁸.

²⁴ See ‘*Expanded public access to information related to the elections, targeting new voters and youth*’.

²⁵ The VRA used a two-way field test, with list-to-people and people-to-list comparisons.

²⁶ Receiving mentions from press outlets including the *New York Times* and *Al-Jazeera*, as well as from PM Hun Sen.

²⁷ After careful review of both surveys, the evaluation team found NEC’s accusations to be erroneous, and reflecting a poor understanding of internationally recognized methodologies for VRAs.

²⁸ 13.5 and 10.8 percent respectively for COMFREL and NDI/NICFEC’s surveys – statistically similar, given the margins of error. The VRA also showed that almost one in ten names on the deletion lists

Attribution to an international actor (NDI) probably lent extra strength and visibility to the findings, and increased pressure on the NEC to commission their own audit – which produced comparable results. One cannot overstate the importance of such accomplishment: not only was a Cambodian government institution compelled to adopt this best practice, but it also created an official record of the issue in a government-produced document.

Sample-based Observation (SBO)

Following a competitive call for proposals, NDI issued a subgrant and provided substantial technical assistance to *Transparency International Cambodia* (TIC) to conduct sample-based observation (SBO) of voting and counting operations for the 2013 legislative elections. Although relatively new in Cambodia, even more so in election observation, TIC took maximum advantage of the technical assistance provided by NDI and swiftly gained recognition as it presented its findings. Its press conference and subsequent post-election statements released during the course of this evaluation received significant coverage in Cambodia's Khmer and English language media. While the specific requirements of its methodology prevented TIC from fully integrating the *Situation Room's* election day operations, members of this large coalition of Cambodian CSOs – who had joined forces for the observation of the electoral process – did value its contribution as a key complement to their own efforts: in fact, the most salient statistics cited in the *Situation Room's* joint statement of August 21 were TIC's findings.²⁹ Its well-documented final report also received significant attention.

Overall, similar findings from a diversity of voices reinforced them, helping raise public awareness on the extent of the flaws undermining the quality of the voter registry. Although the NEC rejected *en bloc* all related recommendations ahead of the 2013 elections, the survey's findings were clearly vindicated on Election Day as TIC and all other observer groups coalesced in the *Situation Room* reported widespread disenfranchisement of eligible voters as well as inflated lists, numerous allegations of impersonation and abuse of identification forms – all contributing to document a compelling case for a complete overhaul of the voter registration system. Without a thorough investigation of irregularities, electoral data analysis conducted by NDI also proved instrumental.

3.2. Election Law Reform

Electoral and Political Processes

Election law reform did not happen. Minimal adjustments were made to the legislative and regulatory provisions governing voter registration, but much too tardy and limited in scope, they failed to address well-documented, core shortcomings. As a result, the 2013 elections were marred by the same, serious flaws in the registration and identification of voters as in previous elections – but their extents reached, this time, unprecedented levels (see *above*). Issues that have affected successive elections since 1998 have remained the same, as documented for years by civil society watchdogs, international observer

were incorrectly removed, and that only 64 percent of names on the voter registry could be verified to exist in person.

²⁹ « *TIC and CISA found that in 60% of polling stations, people had the proper documents but could not find their names on the voter list* », Joint Statement of August 21. The *Situation Rooms* is a large coalition of Cambodian CSOs.

missions and other development partners: the independence of the NEC, the registration of voters and the resolution of electoral disputes, not to mention a general environment that is not conducive to a level-playing field, notably as regards access to media and the use of State resources.

Notwithstanding the standard of the technical expertise provided, the approach developed by USAID/Cambodia and IFES from the early stages of program design appears a flawed premise, disconnected from lessons learnt by other stakeholders, including the CEPPS partners.

First, in the same time as the AGAP program sub-objective to “ensure a more level playing field through targeted technical assistance” and subsequent intended result of election law reform may have been too broad, these were quickly narrowed to prioritize one of the traditionally most difficult endeavors in any other context – not even to mention in Cambodia – namely: the adoption and enforcement of campaign finance regulations. The award thus left unaddressed almost all other key issues that have affected the level playing field of elections for decades, and consensually identified as critical priorities for reform, notably following the NDI-sponsored *Civil Society Expert Group*³⁰ efforts in 2009. Voter registration became a secondary priority, certainly not matching the demand-side efforts described above.

Second, the intervention was developed on the assumption that the NEC would be willing to address reform, despite the fact that authorities had clearly shown no political will for further electoral reforms, particularly since the aftermath of the 2008 elections. Throughout the year that preceded this award, national watchdogs and international partners alike were all confronted with a defensive electoral administration,³¹ which held to a restrictive interpretation of its mandate that excluded any involvement in possible changes to the legislation. Engagement with the NEC hence yielded little meaningful result. Four years into the project, CEPPS’ quarterly report states that “successful collaborations in non-sensitive programming areas” had positioned IFES as “a trusted technical assistance partner for the NEC”, thus invited to “advise the commission on a larger range of issues including on more sensitive election administration topics”.³² It may prove too late since the 2013 elections have worsened the discredit on an institution now in need of reform. On the other hand, IFES’ supply-side engagement with other government actors may grant new opportunities for advancing electoral reform in the final year of AGAP, as a result of current negotiation between the CPP and the opposition.³³

Political Finance

Considering the above, pursuing adoption and enforcement of political finance regulations appears to have been overly ambitious despite signs that the government could be open to engagement on the

³⁰ In 2009, the NDI-facilitated *Civil Society Expert Group* made a significant contribution to the reform agenda by forging a consensus on key, achievable recommendations. A recurrent weakness in some of the recommendations formulated by civic organisations was, at times, their inconsistency or the fact that not all have been sufficiently thought through in terms of actual impact or technical feasibility – hence weakening the chances of seeing a consensus emerge.

³¹ For months in 2009, the NEC declined any participation to public workshops held by civil society platforms on electoral reform, and critical reports were systematically met with dismissive rebuttals.

³² CEPPS Quarterly Report: April 1, 2013 – June 30, 2013, p.13.

³³ *Updated March 2014* – Particularly since the idea of a bipartisan Electoral Reform Committee has taken shape.

issue. However, while it would be unrealistic to expect regulating political finance to fully address the abuse of the State apparatus, including the mobilization of much of the administration for campaign purposes, the language of the draft law put forward with IFES' assistance and dedicated training took abuse of state resource into account, and public discussions of the draft legislation raised political party, civil society and media awareness of these issues. The civil society *Working Group on Political Finance* (WGPF) held six regional forums on the issue, each attended on average by 200 people. Hence, although neither the CPP nor Funcinpec have joined the voluntary disclosure pledges by five other political parties ahead of the 2013 elections, the demand-side impact of the activity should not be overlooked.³⁴

3.3. Increased number of registered voters and integrity of the voter list

As Cambodia prepared for the 2012 commune councils elections and the 2013 legislative elections, a program extension offered the opportunity to include critical pre-election activities not represented in the original award. One of the key objectives of this extension was to “*increase the number of registered voters and integrity of the voter lists*”. To that end, USAID/Cambodia intended to support both supply and demand side approaches. On the demand side, foreseen activities included nationwide voter education campaigns and support to domestic observation of the voter registration process. On the supply side, these activities included technical assistance to the electoral administration and training of its national and provincial staffs “*on various topics, including but not limited to the development and maintenance of accurate voter registries and managing a transparent voter registration process*”.

In a perplexing dilution of the effort, USAID/Cambodia allowed CEPPS partners IFES and IRI to use the extension to expand regular program activities with little or no direct relation with its stated objectives and intended results. Hence, despite the explicit objective to enhance the inclusiveness and integrity of the voter lists, IFES chose to expand unrelated initiatives to “*increase the participation of women in election administration*” through its *Women's Progressive Leadership in Election program*.³⁵ Similarly, IRI chose to convert the extension's focus on voter registration into their own, broader goal of fostering not only youth turnout but also higher civic engagement during and between elections.³⁶ Hence, while activities did include voter registration drives by sub-grantee YCC and party youth, this came along with extended support to YCC's provincial structures and to the Advanced Democracy Seminar (ADS). NDI, for its part, did use the extension to consolidate related, domestic monitoring activities (see above section) and assist political parties in their outreach to constituents on the voter registration process.

IFES' activities pertaining more specifically to voter registration included collaboration with the NEC in the development of a series of public service announcements and a national media campaign aimed at raising public awareness of voter registration procedures and of the importance of the period for public review of the voter lists. On the supply side, IFES contributed to improve NEC's training program,

³⁴ *Updated March 2014* – See notably the related recommendations of the *Joint Report on the Conduct of the 2013 Cambodian Elections*, the *Electoral Reform Alliance* (ERA), p.49.

³⁵ See section on Sub-Objective 2

³⁶ « *Youth actively engage in public life through increased youth voter turnout and active civic engagement between elections* ».

notably by introducing innovative training techniques³⁷ and audiovisual material. However, the provision of training on “best practices for developing and maintaining accurate voter registries” to lower level executives at national and provincial levels was bound to have limited impact on a voter registration process which remains fundamentally flawed.

³⁷ Through a pilot project targeting PEC chairs, IFES managed to create an interest for the participatory approach of the BRIDGE methodology (BRIDGE stands for *Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections*, <http://www.bridge-project.org>). Despite genuine interest, however, participants interviewed by the evaluation team acknowledged that time and resource constraints made it difficult to replicate the methodology in cascade training for subordinates.

3.4. Expanded public access to information on elections targeting new voters and youth

Recognizing the challenges of the country's restrictive media environment, USAID/Cambodia used a program extension in 2012 to introduce new activities aimed at capitalizing on new opportunities to use social media and technology to ensure that citizens have greater access to a diversity of information: a survey³⁸ commissioned by USAID/Cambodia in 2012 found a fifteen-fold increase in the use of Internet, and that 93 percent of Cambodian had access to a mobile phone. IFES' *Public Service Announcements* (PSA) broadcast on mass media and *Interactive Voice Response* (IVR) system, developed jointly with the Open Institute and the NEC, enabled hundreds of thousands of voters to receive simple and practical information on the 2013 National Assembly election, which significantly contributed to expand access to information about elections. Related efforts by IRI to develop IVR content with political parties were unsuccessful because of reluctance from the NEC.

Other activities included IRI's series of targeted training workshops for political parties on ICT and the effective use of social media for online outreach. These helped political parties enhance their websites and social media pages, notably through the addition of sharing tools and cross-integration of platforms. While the popularity of some political leaders' Facebook pages illustrates successful online outreach by political parties, the remarkable boost in the use of social media by Cambodian youth during the last elections appears to have been essentially fueled by spontaneous, social-media activists outside official party structures, like the author of *'I Love Cambodia Hot News'* and a new brand of online journalism as represented by *VOD Hot News*.

³⁸ *Rapid Technology for Development*, USAID/Cambodia, 2012

CONCLUSIONS

1. To what extent have the project objectives and sub-objectives been achieved? Why or why not?

As discussed throughout the ‘findings’ section of this report, program outputs have not yet fully aggregated into the achievement of the program objectives and sub-objectives.

In the aftermath of the 2013 surprise elections, the evaluation team could not help but observe many positive changes in Cambodia’s political environment: the new willingness of Cambodians of all socio-economic standings and geographic locations to speak openly about their political views, the unprecedented levels of youth engagement in the political process, the gains made by the opposition popularly attributed to consolidation of parties around a unified issue-based platform during the campaign, not to mention the recognition by some members of the ruling party that their electoral losses are attributable to better performance by the opposition. Although the CPP still dominates all branches of government and could well opt for restrictions on political space and suppression of dissent in the coming years, the newly competitive political context does contribute to increased accountability in policy-making and implementation, and may provide new internal and external incentives for reform.

It is hard to directly attribute these results to the AGAP program (failure to ascribe causality does not mean that the causal link does not exist, only that the evaluation team was unable to document it), although the evaluation found that the activities of the CEPPS partners under this program and previous interventions have contributed to greater political accountability and competitiveness. Policy-based forums such as constituency dialogues, multi-party candidate debates and youth policy debates set critical precedents into Cambodia’s closed political space; parts of the public opinion research activities had a noticeable impact on political parties in regards to policy; sustained engagement with party youth branches did encourage political parties to assign them a larger role; and solid support provided to domestic election monitoring initiatives helped document a compelling argument for electoral reform. However, as AGAP is on course to complete activities, the program outputs by the CEPPS partners haven’t fully aggregated into the achievement of the program’s objective and sub-objectives. Whatever the outcome of the current political deadlock, the changed political situation does provide unforeseen opportunities for the CEPPS partners to make progress in the final year of the program, but requires fresh thinking by both USAID/Cambodia and CEPPS about what is in their manageable interest.

2. Did the applied interventions adequately lead to greater plurality and civic participation by the targeted groups?

The evaluation found that AGAP interventions have had a positive effect on competitiveness and plurality, as well as civic participation by youth. By contrast, the evaluation found that women are not making the same organic gains as youth. Efforts to elevate women’s political leadership were largely unsuccessful, as a result of limited and scattered interventions. Confined to gender balance and gender-based advocacy in election administration under the original award, the advancement of women’s political leadership was only given more attention following a program extension in 2012. Four years

into the program, women's political leadership remains extremely limited in Cambodia. Despite progress in the 2012 commune elections, not only there was a sharp decrease in women candidates for the National Assembly between 2008 and 2013, but common old school thinking persists within political parties and civil society that assign women an inferior role as unqualified and too scared of politics. Or devoid of resources necessary to campaign: among other hindrances cited by most respondents are political corruption and the absence of established, democratic procedures for candidate selection. More generally, women leaders are given few opportunities within their own political parties. No one could satisfactorily explain the continued decrease in women candidates between 2008 and 2013, although the recent merger of opposition parties accounts, in part, for this new drop: figures shows that while the number of women on CPP candidate lists remained the same, the merger of SRP and HRP mechanically pushed women further down the joint candidate list. In Cambodia's closed list systems, any effort to advance women's representation in elected positions should actually be mainstreamed as an integral part of broader engagement with political parties on internal democracy.

3. *Did the program intervention lead to a high return on investment in terms of realization of the intended results? Were some interventions more successful than others? Why or why not?*

As discussed earlier, some program interventions were more successful than others in terms of realization of the intended results, notably: policy-based forums such as constituency dialogues, multi-party candidate debates and youth policy debates set critical precedents into Cambodia's closed political space; parts of the public opinion research activities had a noticeable impact on political parties in regards to policy; sustained engagement with party youth branches did encourage political parties to assign them a larger role; and solid support provided to domestic election monitoring initiatives helped document a compelling argument for electoral reform. As detailed throughout the 'findings' sections, insufficient focus on the program's intended results, lack of coordination between implementers or resistance from beneficiary institutions led other interventions to a lower return on investment.

4.1. *Were there any unanticipated political factors influencing the ability to achieve the goals and objectives?*

AGAP undoubtedly operates in a challenging political environment. Nevertheless, the program was designed within this well-established context and its objectives and specific activities informed by it. Overall, political factors that affected the ability of AGAP to achieve objectives were not unanticipated.

The court case against Sam Rainsy and his self-exile to avoid imprisonment on what are considered by some to be politically motivated charges pre-dates AGAP. However, it proved a distraction for the SRP, which, in turn, significantly complicated IRI's planning with the party. His celebrated return following a royal pardon came only recently and has not been reflected in the program. The merger of the *Sam Rainsy Party* (SRP) and the *Human Rights Party* (HRP) had a significant effect on political competitiveness and the conduct of the election, but arguably cannot be considered to be fully unanticipated since talks of a merger have been ongoing for several years. Last, the expulsion of opposition Members of the National Assembly belonging to the CNRP in 2013 on the basis that they had been elected as SRP or HRP was unanticipated but did not have a significant effect on AGAP.

CEPPS report that it has had to repeatedly engage in extensive protracted negotiations to overcome reluctance by CPP, the NEC, and media outlets to cooperate in AGAP activities. These obstacles were

attributed to both lack of familiarity with proposed activities and intentional strategies. Frequently, the establishment's non-cooperation was effective in stopping or scaling down planned activities such as constituency dialogues, debates, and television programs. The CEPPS partners were generally willing to compromise on scale, participation, and frequently content. These negotiations consumed considerable time and effort, however, these issues cannot be considered unanticipated as they were equally familiar to CEPPS from their work in Cambodia prior to AGAP.

Unanticipated was the outcome of the 2013 National Assembly elections. Whatever the result of the current political deadlock, the changed political situation does provide unforeseen opportunities for the CEPPS partners to make progress in the final year of the program, but requires fresh thinking by both USAID/Cambodia and CEPPS about what is in their manageable interest.

4.2. Were there any unintended consequences of program interventions?

The evaluation team did not find unintended consequences of program interventions.

4.3. Was the development hypothesis and project structure adequate to achieve the goals and objectives?

AGAP demand-driven development hypothesis was relevant

AGAP was designed in an environment marked by many challenges to political competitiveness, with the consolidating dominance of the ruling CPP on all facets of governance and increasing restrictions on political space. In particular, the aftermath of the 2008 legislative elections, which saw CPP secure a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly, was marked by a clear lack of political will for reform, stepped-up defiance of perceived foreign interference, judicial harassment and intimidation of dissent. This challenging context informed a development hypothesis fittingly based on demand, i.e. on the assumption that increasing Cambodian citizens' understanding of the political and electoral processes would help them hold all levels of their government accountable for policy performance. In particular, the notion that elevated voter expectations would ultimately drive political actors to compete more on policy-based platforms and performance was vindicated. Although recent changes to the political context may lead to review the hypothesis, the demand side will remain important.

Inconsistencies in program design and lack of coordination had real costs in terms of results

USAID/Cambodia's programmatic design of AGAP appears somewhat fragmented, notably as Intended Results (IR) do not fully aggregate into the realization of its objectives. As mentioned earlier, results such as "expanded higher quality civic education" and, following a program extension, "more competitive and inclusive political environment" appear unrelated to the stated objective of generating a cadre of reform-minded, progressive leaders – and meant to justify already-decided-upon activities.

Despite generally well designed, respective interventions by the CEPPS partners, failure to consolidate them into a coherent, integrated results framework for the AGAP program as a whole illustrates how the lack of coordination further than formal division of labor led to selective engagement and undermined collective achievements, with no sense of responsibility for attaining program objectives outside of respective components. Beside exchange of information, AGAP programmatic work was generally insufficiently coordinated. Hence, research activities by CEPPS partners were conducted completely independently, and where IRI's sub-grantee *Freedom House* and Cambodian organizations did engage in policy topics of great relevance to AGAP, their findings were not linked to further program

results. Likewise, the overall strategy developed by USAID/Cambodia and IFES on electoral reform overlooked the lessons learnt by its CEPPS partners after two decades of presence in Cambodia, and the lack of coordination meant that its efforts stood alone without reinforcement.

4.4. What effect did political participation have on multi-party competition and political participation?

Limits on political space have affected multi-party competition and political participation

Limits on political space in Cambodia have consistently affected political competition. Use of state resources for political purposes, control of the television content, judicial measures against dissent and use of patronage have led to a consolidation of power in the CPP from 1998 to the 2012 commune elections. Although the dissenting voices of journalists, civil society activists and opposition political leaders were tolerated to some degree, whenever these activities affected the entrenched power structure, the ruling party took decisive action to counter them and dissuade others.

The ruling party's dominance of broadcast media has been well documented by election observers and others. Limiting airtime for opposition voices is a key obstacle to genuine multi-party political completion. Several AGAP activities, including youth-oriented television programs and the broadcasting of debates, were designed to present a range of political parties on an equal stage. CEPPS reports that these activities required continual negotiation with the government and accommodation with the ruling party to ensure their participation, and even then events encountered challenges. Non-participation and denial of permission or airtime for AGAP activities decided on a case-by-case basis illustrate the ruling party's control. Other efforts, such as an interactive voice response system to share political party messages, never got out of the gate.

On the other hand, skepticism of official news sources fueled the influence of social media including Facebook and word of mouth. Cambodians viewed television as the domain of the government and some radio stations as the home of the opposition. In between, social media is seen as a more open forum when users can digest news, information and commentary to form their own opinions. Despite low levels of Internet access, the evaluation team saw that ideas promulgated in social media, specifically on Facebook, were shared with relatives without Internet access. Mobile phones, both "smart" phones with Internet interfaces and "dumb" phones with SMS capability, were key to sharing information.

How the outcome of the 2013 legislative elections will affect political openness over the longer term remains highly speculative. The opposition's strong showing despite the closed political space has startled nearly everyone. Citizens appear inspired and encouraged to challenge previous perceived limits on political speech and activity. The ruling party understands the clarity of the message sent, but the "lesson learned" could lead to either reform or contraction of political space and suppression of dissent. Although previous attempts have failed notably due to international outrage, passage of a highly restrictive legislation on non-governmental organizations could seriously weaken the role of the civil society sector. The political standoff that resulted from the elections has already sent mixed signals about the ruling party's intents, and international pressure remains critical.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROJECT DESIGN, COORDINATION & SUSTAINABILITY

Integrated project design, greater coordination among implementers and their partners

Integrated project design should be required to ensure that, well beyond a summary division of labor, the respective interventions of all implementers fully aggregate into the program objective, sub-objectives and intended results. This should translate into the development of a single, coherent result framework for the program and help ensure that achievements towards intended results are understood to be a shared responsibility. Throughout implementation, programmatic work should be closely coordinated to maximize synergies and, in turn, overall effectiveness.

Place stronger emphasis on Cambodian ownership and sustainability.

Further interventions should place stronger emphasis on sustainability through lasting capacity-building of sub-grantees, local implementing partners and beneficiary institutions, and progressive transfer of skills to Cambodian-owned initiatives. Program design should prioritize activities that can be ultimately replicated by Cambodian partners, notably to allow increased frequency and larger reach. For the remainder of the AGAP program as for future interventions, implementers should also ensure greater participation of all sub-grantees in activity design and achieving results that fulfill program objectives.

ELECTORAL REFORM

After two decades of sizeable international assistance, the electoral process in Cambodia still falls short of key international standards for democratic elections³⁹. Lack of progress was largely due to absence of political will by the Cambodian authorities and the NEC to genuinely address any of the key cumulated recommendations formulated over the years by national watchdogs, international observer missions and development partners alike⁴⁰. This time, however, in the immediate aftermath of the legislative elections, unforeseen opportunities have come to light: not only because of the magnitude of irregularities, which have directly affected citizens at the poll, and have fueled public outrage, but, moreover, the extent and potential impact of these irregularities on the credibility of the election results have been well documented by the complementary findings of the *Situation Room* coalition and NDI-supported VRA and SBO. These efforts have served to increase public awareness and have contributed in critically informing current, as well as future, advocacy efforts. Regardless of the immediate outcome

³⁹ See previous sections.

⁴⁰ See in particular the NDI matrix « *Progress on Key Recommendation for Electoral Reform* », November 2012

of the present political talks between the ruling CPP and the opposition CNRP, it is indeed possible that the coming months could offer a rare, if not historic, opportunity for finally advancing electoral reform. Failure to strongly invest in this current momentum would unquestionably constitute a missed opportunity.

AGAP should intensify its demand side approach to help sustain and build upon current momentum. In the months ahead, CEPPS/NDI will be critically positioned to further contribute to the electoral reform agenda by disseminating an updated matrix of key recommendations from both national and international stakeholders, while reactivating previous advocacy efforts with civil society groups. Providing further electoral data analysis and technical counsel to the recently established *Situation Room* could prove instrumental in facilitating the emergence of a coherent set of consensual and technically workable steps towards reform. Building on the 2009 experience, this assistance could encompass legal advice in the drafting of suggested amendments to the electoral legislation. Moreover, expanded public dissemination of VRA and SBO findings and other analysis appears critical to further document and promote similar advocacy efforts – espousing an overall consistent message – by interested political parties, international watchdogs, other development partners, as well as members of the diplomatic community. AGAP should consider providing support to highly visible, Cambodian-led initiatives, such as dedicated national conferences that would target all aforementioned stakeholders alongside the media. Finally, other AGAP activities, such as town hall meetings and policy debates, could also be used to provide another forum in which electoral reform is addressed with government and elected leaders.

Integrity of the voter registry should be a key focus moving forward, along with the structural overhaul of a discredited NEC. As discussed above, other issues have equally been well documented. Nonetheless, issues surrounding the voter lists have high awareness among citizens as it most directly affected them. As well, a reformed NEC may *de facto* create opportunities for further electoral reforms to be considered. Most critically, though, the volume of technical and legislative work required⁴¹ for any meaningful overhaul makes voter registration clearly stand apart in the electoral reform agenda: primarily the result of flawed civil records and an increasingly mobile population, core shortcomings affecting the voter registration system may require adopting a holistic approach that would give due consideration to a necessary modernization of Cambodia’s civil registry,⁴² as well as ensuring that close coordination takes place between all concerned institutions and development partners. With, at best, only three years until the final update of the voter registry is due to start in preparation of the 2017 commune elections, USAID may seek urgent consultation with all interested stakeholders, in order to

⁴¹ While any reform would imply substantial changes to the electoral law (LEMNA), required legislative amendments may be suggested only once a comprehensive technical process has been designed and its feasibility guaranteed.

⁴² A primary obstacle to the integrity of the voter lists stems from flaws in the civil records: in a context where there exists no standardized name spelling nor address system and approximate date of birth, the voter registry does not contain any reliable set of comparison points to detect with sufficient certainty multiple entries and other processing mistakes, leading to an inflated voter registry and, in turn, the introduction of “deletion lists” – key to disenfranchisement in all recent elections.

evaluate achievable measures – and other donors’ interest to fund complementary interventions⁴³ that may not be deemed, as such, USAID priority.

Further interventions should acknowledge that the current NEC is not a willing partner for electoral reform. Not only have years of *constructive engagement* with the committee produced little meaningful results – due to its consistent denial of any serious shortcomings and opposition to any reform of the electoral legislation – but the last elections have called into question the merits of an institution now in need of overhaul. Throughout the post-election period, and in spite of all documented evidence, the committee has maintained a dismissive stance towards constructive criticism, as exemplified in its recently published *White Paper*.⁴⁴ Until the NEC is reformed or concrete steps are taken towards meeting cumulated, past recommendations, further technical assistance and even limited engagement should be deemed counterproductive and ought to cease forthwith, so as to avoid providing undue legitimacy to an institution that remains a constitutive part of the problem. On the other hand, IFES’ supply-side engagement with other government actors may grant new opportunities for advancing electoral reform in the final year of AGAP, as a result of current negotiation between the CPP and the opposition.⁴⁵

New approaches to the supply side may be worth exploring, preceded by political dialogue at the highest level. USAID should closely coordinate with the US Embassy to ensure that members of the diplomatic community provide critically needed support to the previously stated demand-side efforts. This engagement should take place with the same, consistent message, delivered through sustained political dialogue at the highest level of the Executive, namely at cabinet level. Since past experience has shown that technical discussions conducted at a lower level would yield no result, any further engagement on the supply side must be preceded by and based on up-front agreement with the Executive. However, should current political negotiations between CPP and CNRP produce clear guarantees for the establishment of reform mechanisms, CEPPS partners NDI and IFES may consider providing substantial technical assistance to the concerned committees directly – or to participating entities. In view of future programming, USAID should assess whether the functioning of the new National Assembly could provide new opportunities for engagement on electoral reform.

POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT

Emphasize goal of politically competitive system as political party strengthening returns to traditional themes. The results of Cambodia’s July 2013 election have come as a shock to the CPP, the CNRP, and the Cambodian public (as well as to the international community). Although the outcome of the elections has not been resolved yet, it has delivered a clear message that voters can be

⁴³ The evaluation team heard from representatives of other international donors that financial contribution to the modernization of the civil registry could be considered.

⁴⁴ *Updated March 2014* – See also “*Clarifications by the Press and Quick reaction Unit concerning the Joint Report on the Conduct of the 2013 Cambodian elections by the Electoral Reform Alliance (ERA)*”, Office of the Council of Ministers, Press and Quick reaction Unit, January 2014.

⁴⁵ *Updated March 2014* – Particularly since the idea of a bipartisan Electoral Reform Committee has taken shape.

the ultimate deciders. Based on the evaluation team's meetings with CPP officials and supporters outside of Phnom Penh, the ruling party understands that their electoral setback is the result of a unified opposition campaigning vigorously on a well-crafted platform. Furthermore, both CPP and many in the public anticipate that CPP lawmakers will now enact parts of the CNRP's platform to regain public trust. Whether or not this will happen is speculative, but these views encourage the evaluation team to think that the July 2013 election may be the starting point for a period of genuine political competition which better aligns each major party with the will of the people.

The final year of AGAP should be used to promote learning within political organizations through self-assessment and through data-driven analysis. CEPPS' engagement with parties through public opinion research is a natural entry point. Not only is more research urgently needed to document *how* and *why* Cambodians decide who to vote for, now that longstanding assumptions have been challenged, but now is also an optimal time for AGAP to spur political parties to take ownership of their own opinion research agendas while the incentives are clear.

Promoting "self-help" through trainings of trainers to transmit new skills and new practices throughout political party structures is appropriate not only because AGAP's resources are limited, but because the needs of the major political parties are very different. This approach should be preferred in the follow-on to AGAP. Recognizable areas for improvement include candidate selection, fundraising and party budgeting, use of social media, debating skills, party agent training, internal communication, and research including but not limited to effective use of public opinion data.

Significantly, future program design and implementation needs to mainstream the advancement of women as integral to other activities. AGAP's approach of separating out women's leadership as a separate set of discrete activities should be rethought.

Future work with political parties should not overlook their role in commune governance. Elected commune councilors, in addition to their formal duties, represent their political parties at the community level. Future programming should recognize their potential role in transmitting citizen concerns through party channels to national decision-makers and also in relaying central party positions to the people. Additionally, elected commune councilors represent a larger number of political parties than have seats in the National Assembly;

Throughout the remainder of AGAP and in new project design and administration, USAID must actively oversee compliance with USAID's Political Party Assistance Policy.

ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA

Support the development of responsible and authoritative online media

USAID should assess and confirm the increased utilization of Internet, social media, and emerging communications technologies and defend Internet and press freedoms. Building on increasing use of online and social media, future interventions should support the development of responsible and authoritative online media outlets.

Journalistic and citizen-led efforts to promote the elected legislature as a center for decision-making and to increase accountability to Cambodians need support now, while the increased level of political competition within the government and society generally provides an incentive for news houses to invest in better coverage of politics.

LEGISLATURE

Engage elected members of the National Assembly through new windows of opportunity created by the 2013 election, if possible. Cambodia's National Assembly does not serve as a center of decision-making. Dominated by the ruling party, the National Assembly rarely sits to debate legislation, the few committees conduct little oversight, and policy-making authority is relegated to the prime minister and the ministries. Since 2006 the majority party no longer needs a two-thirds majority to form a government and minority parties with less than one-third of the seats have no rights to introduce legislation or amendments. The incoming National Assembly *may* function differently. By all accounts, the minority party will hold more than one-third of the seats and have the legal ability to attempt to shape legislation. The opposition party will gain some seats on the National Assembly's nine commissions which previously have been as dormant as the full legislature. Although the majority party can still curtail debate, Cambodia's increasingly competitive political context may provide new internal and external incentives for lawmakers to perform their representative, legislative, and oversight responsibilities better.

The final year of AGAP should promote increased interactions between Members of the National Assembly and their constituents, including local elected officials, with an aim to establish new precedents for *sustained* dialogue between citizens and their elected officials; such events should no longer be one-off events, but should be regular reoccurring fora increasingly facilitated by Cambodian civil society actors and ultimately becoming a practice adopted by elected national and commune officials themselves. Building on raised citizen expectations for the next legislature, AGAP should prepare to assist elected Members of the National Assembly with fundamental skills beginning with effective communications of policy ideas in legislative debate, the media, and directly with constituents. For example, the unrealized interactive voice response system intended to let voters self-select issue-based campaign messages from political candidates via telephone could be recycled into a similar system letting constituents hear directly from Members of the National Assembly; the purposes would be to increase citizen access to the policy-making process (intended result I.3) but also to allow CEPPS to help elected officials develop shorter, more directed messaging.

In the coming months, USAID should carefully assess whether or not the performance and practices of the new National Assembly do offer new windows of opportunity. Key questions such as whether the opposition will be able or be willing to meaningfully engage in legislative decision-making, whether the National Assembly will attempt to conduct oversight of the line ministries, and whether there is any space for cooperation across party lines on issues of common concern can only be answered once the new National Assembly is seated. Short term support should be limited to engaging individual Members and not to the institutions of the National Assembly – such as the committee structure, parliamentary staff development, and research capacities – with the emphasis remaining on elected officials' representative responsibilities to constituents including their responsibility to address constituents' needs through policy reform.

Priorities for legislative support beyond AGAP's period of performance will be better defined in the upcoming year but the opportunity to integrate support for political processes with other USAID priorities such as public health, human rights, and environmental sustainability should not be overlooked because they can provide a policy focus to encourage informed debate and decision-making on priority citizen issues. In the future, issue-based caucuses, such as a counter trafficking in persons caucus, could bring Members of the National Assembly together across party lines to address well-identified non-

partisan problems and to forge working relationships with Cambodian stakeholder groups in civil society while also providing more leadership opportunities for female lawmakers.

Regardless of the behavior of the parties in the National Assembly, citizen-led efforts to promote the elected legislation as a center for decision-making and to increase accountability to Cambodians need support now. USAID, through the remainder of AGAP, through civil society programs, and in future projects, should enable civil society and media oversight of the legislature. Existing initiatives, such as COMFREL's Parliament Watch, illustrate the type of local efforts which are needed now more than ever to showcase and digest performance of the legislature for a broader public. Consistently tracking Members' attendance during sessions of the National Assembly and its commissions, documenting voting behavior, and reporting other basic metrics with regularity provides a baseline for institutional performance and simply making this information available to the public in a user-friendly format will stimulate demand for legislators to attend to their duties.

Similarly, the increased level of political competition within the government and society generally provides an incentive for news houses to invest in better coverage of politics. Initiatives to improve journalistic coverage of legislative proceedings in Phnom Penh and relationships Members of the National Assembly create with their constituencies will have lasting benefits for both new and traditional media. Future programs should not neglect journalism's role in increasing the transparency and accountability of the National Assembly.

Finally, transparency would be best served if the proceedings of the National Assembly were broadcast live on television, radio, or the Internet. Currently, only carefully edited portions are shown in the state-dominated media environment. Allowing unfettered access to live proceedings would create an unprecedented level of transparency and citizen access to information. It would incentivize both the opposition and the ruling parties to act responsibly and build directly on AGAP's past work on promoting debates. Given the strong findings on the influence of political debates on voters found in NDI's impact evaluations and IRI's surveys, instituting this practice could have a major impact on political competition, although such an ambitious initiative would require substantial buy-in from the ruling party before it would be a feasible priority for assistance.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

USAID/Cambodia Democracy and Governance Office

Statement of Work Elections and Political Processes Performance Evaluation

Project Identification Information

Project Title: Accountability in Governance and Politics

Project Number: AID-442-A-09-00001

Project Dates: September 30, 2009 – September 30, 2014

Project Funding: \$20,110,000

Implementing Organization: Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Support (CEPPS)
which is comprised of NDI, IRI, and IFES

Agreement Officer's Representative: Socheata Vong

I Evaluation Purpose

USAID/Cambodia intends to conduct an end of project performance evaluation of AGAP, to assess achievement towards objectives and goals as defined in the initial program description, as well as the subsequent program expansions in 2011 and 2012. The current AGAP Program is scheduled to come to a completion September 2014. This evaluation is in line with the USAID Forward reform agenda with respect to strengthening evaluation and transparency as part of the commitment to quality programs which uses evaluation findings to inform decisions, improve program effectiveness, increase accountability to stakeholders and support organizational learning.

The evaluation will serve two purposes: 1) to determine to what extent the project's objectives and goals have been achieved, and 2) to provide crucial information, which will inform the design of a new elections and political processes program. The Mission anticipates the report will detail both the overall performance of AGAP activities from 2009-2013 as well as suggestions to guide decisions on the design for the next elections and political processes program from 2014-2019.

The report will be completed in two forms: a comprehensive form to be used for internal Mission use, and a redacted version to be publicly available. This strategy will make the best use of USAID's funds by allowing external actors to benefit from the lessons learned from the evaluation. The evaluation team will be responsible to make some recommendations about content which should remain confidential, especially drawing on the commitments made in interviews (for certain discussions to remain off the record). However, USAID/Cambodia staff will make the final determination regarding what information is to be made available publicly.

II Evaluation Questions

Key questions to be addressed by the evaluation are prioritized below:

1. To what extent have the project objective and sub-objectives been achieved? Why or why not?
2. Targeted groups included political parties, women and youth in order to expand political competitiveness and general inclusiveness in the political process. Did the applied interventions adequately lead to greater plurality and civic participation by the targeted groups? Why or why not?
3. Did the program interventions lead to a high return on investments in terms of realization of the intended results? Were some interventions more successful than others? Why or why not?
4. In order to inform planning for future programming, the evaluation team should also address the following questions:
 - Were there any unanticipated political factors influencing the ability to achieve the goals and objectives?
 - Were there any unintended consequences of program interventions?
 - Was the development hypothesis and project structure adequate to achieve the goals and objectives?
 - What effect did political space have on multi-party competition and political participation?

III USAID Criteria to Ensure Quality of the Evaluation Report

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- The evaluation report shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males, females and youth.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.

- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The evaluation report must not exceed 30 pages in length excluding annexes. The format of the evaluation report is as follows: (USAID's Evaluation Policy, <http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation/USAIDEvaluationPolicy.pdf>, serves as guidance)

- 1 Executive Summary - Concisely state the most salient findings and recommendations (1-3 pages)
- 2 Table of Contents (1 page)
- 3 Introduction - purpose, audience, synopsis of task (1 page)
- 4 Background - brief project overview (2 pages)
- 5 Methodology - evaluation methodology, data collection, data analysis, method, and constraints, if any (1-2 pages)
- 6 Findings - qualitative and/or quantitative based findings
- 7 Conclusion - conclusion based findings
- 8 Recommendation and Lessons learned - supported by findings and conclusion
- 9 Reference - including bibliographical documentation, meeting, interviews, etc.
- 10 Annexes - annexes that document the evaluation methods, data collection and analysis methods, interview lists and tables - should be succinct, pertinent and readable.

IV Evaluation Design and Methodology

The evaluating team will propose a design/methodology that is capable of responding to the key questions identified. The methodology is likely to include, but is not limited to interviews with key informants (USAID staff, RGC officials, donors, experts, CEPPS partners and subpartners, political parties and other program beneficiaries and other NGO representatives as appropriate.), surveys, documentation review, field visits and focus groups. It is expected that the team will work in close collaboration with USAID/Cambodia in finalizing and refining the methodology and questions.

Documentation and data sources available to the evaluating team will include, but is not limited to:

- Program Description (original and modified)
- Work Plans
- Quarterly Reports
- Impact Evaluation Progress Reports (conducted by NDI and IRI)
- Results framework
- Impact Evaluation Final Report

V Deliverables, Guidelines and Reporting Timeframes

The evaluating team will be required to achieve the following deliverables:

- Evaluation Plan and Logistics Planning (August 6-9): The evaluation team leader will prepare a written evaluation plan that explains the evaluation design and methodology, data collection, data analysis method and a detailed schedule and will submit a soft copy to the Evaluation COR at USAID/Cambodia for approval. The Analyst and M&E Specialist will set up a draft schedule for interviews and fieldwork.

- In-briefing with USAID/Cambodia (August 12): The full evaluation team (including the USAID representative team member) will meet with USAID/Cambodia Mission Director and the Democracy and Governance management team to discuss the overall evaluation and plan.
- Preliminary Findings debriefing (o/a August 23): The evaluation team will provide an oral report of its preliminary findings to USAID/Cambodia prior to drafting of the report. The contents of the oral report should be documented electronically and sent to the DG Office on the day of the preliminary findings debriefing.
- Out-Briefing with USAID/Cambodia (August 30): The evaluation team will present a PowerPoint presentation and a draft report (*in as final version as possible*) of the major finding(s), conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. A soft copy will be submitted to the Evaluation COR at USAID/Cambodia.
- Draft Evaluation Report (August 30): A soft copy of the draft evaluation report will be submitted to the Evaluation COR of USAID/Cambodia for comments and include findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations the day of the out-briefing. USAID/Cambodia will have 10 working days to provide comments to the evaluation team.
- Final Internal Evaluation Report (September 20): Submission of a final report to USAID/Cambodia that takes into consideration comments provided will be received in soft copy form no later than 5 days after receiving comments from USAID/Cambodia.
- Final Public Version of the Evaluation Report (September 27): Submission of a final public version of the report will be made available 5 working days after submitting the internal evaluation report. It should be available in both English and Khmer.

VI Team Composition

The evaluation team will consist of a three-member team as follows:

1. Team Leader - The team leader will be an international consultant with extensive knowledge and expertise in Cambodian politics, elections and political processes issues, relevant M&E experience and a native English speaker. S/he should be excellent written skills, the ability to lead a team and deliver written products within stated timeframes.
2. Analyst and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist - The Analyst and M&E Specialist will be a Cambodian national with technical background in elections and political processes, background in M&E and ability to manage logistics for the team. S/he should have the analytical skills and detailed logistics planning skills to contribute to the analysis for the report and plan the schedule for the team. S/he should be a native Khmer speaker and be able to translate Khmer-English/English-Khmer for the team as needed. S/he should also be able to provide logistical support for the team, such as scheduling meetings and maintaining a schedule.
3. USAID Representative - USAID will provide one staff member (either from DCHA/DRG office in Washington or another USAID Mission in the region) to serve on the evaluation team. S/he will have technical expertise in elections and political processes issues and programs, and be able to provide a comparative analytical perspective of programs and issues in semi-

authoritarian regimes. S/he will be expected to attend the meetings, contribute substantially to the analysis and preparation of the report.

The Democracy Office Director, Evaluation COR and/or an M&E staff person from the Program office will provide technical guidance to the team as needed.

VII Evaluation Management

Logistics

USAID/Cambodia will provide relevant documentation pertaining to the implementation and management of AGAP program to the evaluating team. Other documentation sourced from the RGC or other international organizations will also be made available through USAID/Cambodia. In addition USAID/Cambodia will assist in providing the necessary contact information for and introductions to key informants in order to facilitate interviews and identifying candidates for focus groups. Key informants will include, but are not limited to USAID/Cambodia staff, RGC officials, National Election Committee, beneficiaries, political party representatives, and NGO representatives. USAID/Cambodia will also assist, when possible, on travel logistics including accommodations.

Period of Performance and Level of Effort

The Democracy and Governance (DG) Office estimates 26 working days to satisfactorily complete the requirements of this SOW. Work should commence no later than August 6, 2013. Below is the breakdown of level of effort for the international consultant selected (a 6 day work week is authorized):

- August 6-9 – 4 working days to develop the evaluation workplan and meeting schedule (Team Leader, Analyst and M&E Specialist).
- August 12-30 – 17 working days for performance evaluation
 - August 6 – Mission In-brief with Evaluation COR on logistics and schedule
 - August 12 – Full Evaluation Team Mission In-brief on program and evaluation and plan.
 - August 23 (on/about) – Mid-point brief of preliminary findings
 - August 30 – Mission Out-brief and submission of draft report
- On/about September 13 – Mission submits comments on the draft report to the consultant
- September 14-20 – 3 working days to incorporate the comments from the Mission and submit final report by COB September 20, Phnom Penh time.
- September 21-27 – 2 working days to submit public version of the report and final submission no later than COB September 27.

The team will work in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, with some field work in the provinces outside Phnom Penh.

Annex I. Background

Program Overview and Objectives

Cambodia's evolving democracy has made progress after decades of conflict with the assistance and support of the international community. Since then, Cambodia has made progress in strengthening key aspects of a democratic system, particularly in developing an increasingly robust civil society, strengthening multi-party competition by unifying the voices of opposition parties, and promoting civic participation in the electoral process. Yet there are several challenges, such as weak electoral administration, highly inaccurate voter lists, limited political party capacities, limited information about the voter registration and electoral process, limited opportunities for citizen engagement with elected officials, low youth awareness of the key concepts of democracy, and low levels of women engaged in the political process.

The overwhelming dominance of Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in all facets of government has kept the country under semi-authoritarian rule marked by patronage, corruption, and lack of accountability among government and elected officials. The CPP's strength is fueled by the RGC's consolidation of executive power that wields power over the political-economy, especially the judiciary. The CPP's legitimacy in governance prevents meaningful participation by opposition parties in the National Assembly and restricts access to information.

With the commune elections completed in June 2012 and the National Assembly elections scheduled for July 2013, Cambodians are confronted with a semi-closed political system as authority has been consolidated in the executive branch constraining greater meaningful involvement from both the opposition parties and the larger electorate body including, women, youth and people with disabilities. A critical factor to Cambodia's democratic development is the need to strengthen democratic pluralism and to address these needs, USAID has developed the five-year Accountability in Governance and Politics (AGAP) program.

AGAP implemented activities in support of the 2012 Commune Council Elections and will continue to conduct pre-election activities leading up to the 2013 National Assembly Elections. After these elections, USAID assistance will promote accountability of elected leaders through constituency dialogues—town hall-style meetings that allow interaction and exchanges of information between members of parliament and their constituents. Throughout the electoral cycle, the program supports public opinion polls and provide civic education to youth, to help promote political participation. The program emphasizes building progressive leadership through its work with young people, including through the Youth Council of Cambodia, the Commune Youth Representative Elections Program and the “Next Generation” policy roundtable television program.

The five-year objective of AGAP is to promote increased accountability and transparency in policy-making and implementation. The three main sub-objectives of AGAP are:

- 1) Strengthen accountability and expand transparency and access to information – Enhance the oversight role of elected leaders at all levels, creating constructive policy focused interactions between citizens and elected/appointed leaders, and improving the quantity, quality and dissemination of policy research and analyses.
- 2) Generate progressive leadership – Cultivate leaders who advocate for government accountability and data driven policy debate on a wider range of policy issues.
- 3) Support election systems – Provide targeted assistance in lead up to the 2012 local government and 2013 national elections to ensure a more level playing field.

Intended results

The **development hypothesis** behind this objective is that USAID activities under this program will help Cambodians hold all levels of their government accountable for policy performance. Specifically, if the Cambodian electorate increases its knowledge and understanding of the political and electoral processes, then the electorate will demand greater government accountability and transparency by demonstrating that policy-driven reform, versus patronage-led mandates, promotes greater social and political stability. By engaging the electorate and political parties, it is expected that over time the inherent weaknesses of the patronage system will be demonstrated. Furthermore, if government policy performance increasingly becomes an expectation of citizens and a criterion for voting, savvy political leaders will seek political gain by transparently presenting progress achieved in implementing new policies. Elevated voter expectations will drive all political actors to compete based on policy performance and platforms. Once demonstrated and explained to citizens by increasingly sophisticated and dynamic political actors, including women and youth as they mature and gain power, citizens and voters increasingly will make political choices based on this information and thus hold elected officials more accountable and create greater opportunity for more competitive politics to emerge over the coming decades.

End of program intended results are:

Sub-objective 1 – Strengthen Accountability and Expand Transparency and Access to Information

- More informed target groups (women leaders and youth).
- Increased citizen and government access to improved social science information.
- Increased citizen access to the policy development process.

Sub-objective 2 – Generate progressive Leadership

- Strengthen democratic political understanding and action of target groups.
- Increased understanding of the political system among targeted citizens.
- Expanded higher quality civic education initiatives.
- More competitive and inclusive political environment supported.
- Women's political leadership strengthened.

Sub-objective 3 – Effective and cost efficient domestic political process monitoring established.

- Election law reformed.
- Increased number of registered voters and integrity of the voter list.
- Expanded public access to information related to the elections targeting new voters and youth.

Project Implementation Methodology

AGAP is implemented through the Consortium on Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), which is comprised of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). AGAP was launched in 2009 following the national elections of 2008. The project carries out its activities nationwide through forums for constructive dialogue between citizens and elected officials and candidates, technical assistance to the National Elections Committee and targeting youth and women for greater civic engagement.

The project holds constituency dialogues and candidate debates to establish public forums where constituencies have the opportunity to raise issues with its elected members of parliament. Moreover,

the project establishes candidate debates that are televised and broadcasted over the radio in an effort to increase citizen engagement in the electoral process. Additionally, the project works with political parties to strengthen their capacity to establish platforms and effectively communicate those issues with the electorate.

AGAP engages with the Ministry of Interior and the National Election Committee (through an MOU) to promote transparency and integrity in Cambodian elections. The technical assistance focuses on: voter education, voter registration, and general capacity building which includes training of polling staff.

Youth are targeted to increase their participation in the political process. First-time voters in the 2012 Commune Council Elections were targeted through the deployment of 192 youth volunteers throughout 96 communes across six provinces to assist citizens in preparing the required voter documents, locating their names on the registration lists, and troubleshooting problems that arise. AGAP supports building a cadre of several hundred well-trained and mentored youth who assume increasing levels of responsibility and access to positions of leadership in their political parties, government, business or NGO.

Greater focus has been placed on increasing the presence of women in elections and political processes through women's electoral leadership training program. The program increases the number of women in leadership roles through strengthening the understanding and participation of women in the electoral process. Additionally, women forums are held in various provinces in which women elected leaders are invited to meet and speak with women civil society leaders in a town-hall style format to discuss policy solutions and gender-related challenges.

Post Implementation Modifications or Adjustments

The five-year cooperative agreement (AID-442-A-09-00001), which runs from October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2014, includes program objectives applicable to both the pre- and post-election phases; however, the approved program awarded in 2009 reflects a distinct post-election strategy, as it focuses on accountability of officials elected in the 2008 elections. Pre-election activities were not approved at the time that the cooperative agreement was signed. As Cambodia prepared for the 2012 Commune Council Elections and the 2013 National Elections, USAID/Cambodia modified the existing CEPPS Associate Award to include critical pre-election activities not represented in the original program. These pre-election activities include: voter education for voter registration and political party platforms; training for Ministry of Interior (MOI) and National Election Committee (NEC) members on developing and maintaining accurate voter registries; training for political parties on debates and constituency outreach; training for domestic election monitoring activities; and support for youth and women's political participation.

USAID/Cambodia recently supported a "Rapid Technology for Development" assessment that identified several program options for expanding the use of technology for development. The assessment highlighted specific activities to support the National Elections, which are represented in the amended program description of the AGAP. USAID/Cambodia recognizes the importance of expanding the use of media for voter education and outreach, and utilizing social media and technology for educating the public.

AGAP also incorporated activities to support a Women's Political Leadership program as follow up to the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) Women's Policy Dialogue in 2012. The program builds on the momentum of the event by establishing programming to enable the continuation of policy-based

dialogue among women leaders in Cambodia. The program brings together the participants of the LMI Women's Policy Dialogue (and other civil society leaders) with women elected leaders from the June 2012 Commune Council Elections and possibly the 2013 National Elections to participate in several events promoting issue-based dialogue on key policy issues.

Impact Evaluation

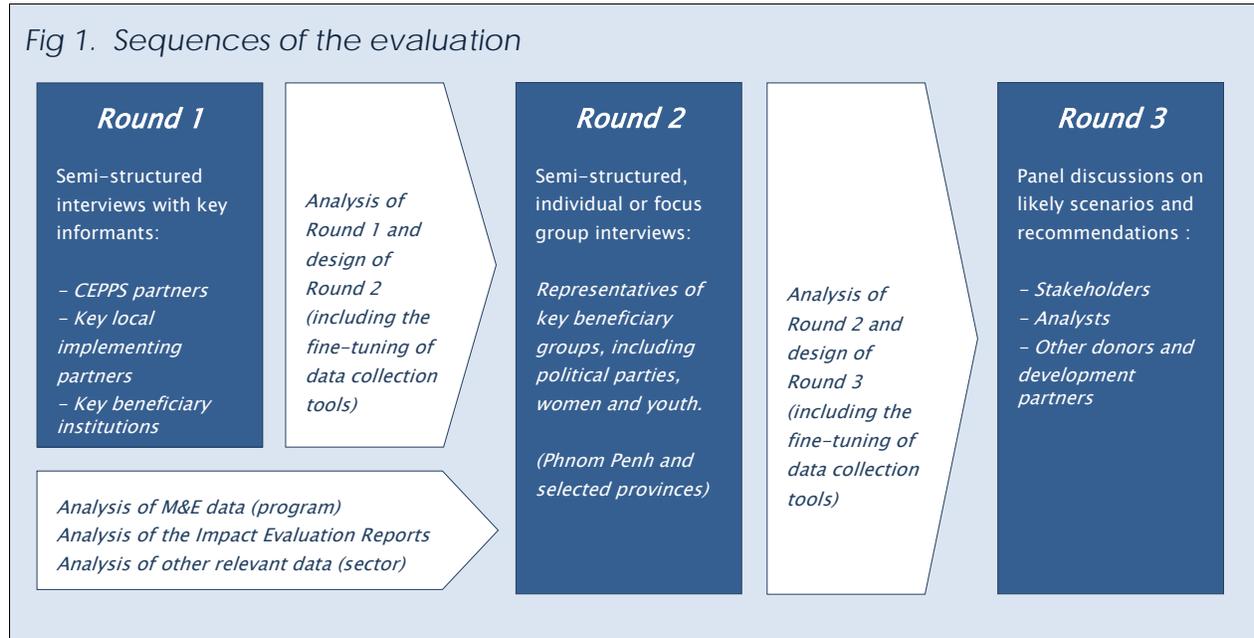
An impact evaluation was written into the original project design and was successfully completed as part of the program. CEPPS contracted evaluation experts from Yale University and USAID contractors to design the impact evaluation strategy and provide guidance.

ANNEX II: EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

In line with USAID’s Evaluation Policy and related guidelines, the evaluation team sought the best combination of methods to answer the evaluation questions. While such *performance evaluations* lack rigorously defined counterfactuals for before-after comparisons, the evaluation team also made use of the systematic collection of monitoring and evaluation data conducted throughout the program as part of the *Performance Monitoring Plan*, including two pilot *Impact Evaluation* reports.⁴⁶

MIXED METHODS, SEQUENTIAL COMBINATION

Taking into consideration the complementarities and respective limitations of the various methods they deemed adequate in this context – including the review of existing M&E data, the evaluators have opted for a sequential combination, where the results of each round helped fine-tune the design of subsequent rounds using other methods and data collection techniques, as summarized below (see detailed work plan in annex IV).



Round 1 – Program design and management, M&E data, key achievements

Consisting of a series of semi-structured interviews with key informants, including USAID/Cambodia’s Office of Democracy and Governance, CEPPS partners, international and Cambodian sub-grantees⁴⁷ and

⁴⁶ The statistical analysis of IRI’s Impact Evaluation was not completed at the time when this performance evaluation was conducted, and preliminary findings were then rather inconclusive.

⁴⁷ These include: Freedom House, the Committee to Promote Women in Politics (CPWC), Transparency International Cambodia (TI-C) and the Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC).

other local implementing partners as well as key beneficiary institutions – including political parties, electoral officials and civil society organizations involved in the electoral and political processes, this first round focused on the project design and management, coordination between the CEPPS partners, relations with sub-grantees and other implementing partners and well as the achievements made under the various program interventions. In the meantime, the evaluation team conducted a thorough documentation review, starting with the original program description and subsequent extensions, corresponding CEPPS proposals, result frameworks, quarterly reports, performance monitoring plans (PMP) and M&E data, *Impact Evaluation Reports*, and other relevant sectorial data⁴⁸. An analysis of the results of both key informant interviews and documentation review helped fine-tune the design of round 2, with a focus on areas where causal links were difficult to ascertain.

Round 2 – Understanding behavioral changes among key target groups

To gain a more complete understanding of the factors and mechanisms behind observed changes and gain more confidence in the findings of round 1, the evaluation team conducted a series of individual and focus group interviews with representatives of key beneficiary groups, including local electoral officials, political party cadres and community-based activists, particularly among women and youth. Due to time constraints, the team divided to conduct interviews in four selected provinces of particular relevance as identified in the first round: Kratie, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang and Battambang.

Round 3 – Testing recommendations

Ultimately, the evaluation team conducted a series of panel discussions with key other stakeholders, including representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of human rights, democracy and electoral processes, contributors to traditional and new media, as well as other donors and international development partners, to discuss likely post-election scenarios and practical recommendations for the final year of AGAP and for future programming by USAID/Cambodia. A number of complementary meetings were also conducted during this final phase of the evaluation, including one-on-one interviews with key CEPPS personnel unavailable during the first round.

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

- **Proximity to the election and uncertainty about consequences.** The evaluation took place in the immediate aftermath of the elections, in a context marked by potentially far-reaching, yet uncertain changes to Cambodia’s political environment. This situation limited the team’s ability to fully capture the lasting consequences of the unanticipated election outcome for the upcoming programming period: possible result of the current political standoff, potential role of the future legislature and incentives for the ruling party to either reform or to further restrict political space. Because of the change in the political context since the preparation of its Statement of Work, the evaluation team was specifically asked by USAID to look at broader opportunities for future programs, such as engaging the legislature or reversing an implicit decision to move away from engaging the government on electoral reform.
- **Availability of key interlocutors.** Further to the absence of some key personnel within the CEPPS partner organizations, intense focus on the contested elections also proved a hindrance to the

⁴⁸ Sources listed in annex.

availability of some key interlocutors within beneficiary institutions. Notably, in spite of repeated attempts, the evaluation team was unable to meet with representatives of the National Election Committee (NEC), the Ministry of Interior and CPP leadership at the national level. The lack of access to CPP national leadership limited the evaluation team's ability to draw conclusions on some aspects of the AGAP program, notably on political party development work on the ruling party's attitude toward public opinion research. The evaluation team had no such difficulty in meeting with NEC and CPP representatives outside of Phnom Penh.

- **Causal links difficult to ascertain, impact evaluation inconclusive.** As it is generally the case for *performance evaluations*, the absence of rigorously defined counterfactuals made it difficult for the evaluation team to ascertain causal links or inference between AGAP interventions and some of the most salient changes observed. Further, the statistical analysis of IRI's Impact Evaluation of the *Advanced Democracy Seminar* was not completed at the time when this performance evaluation was conducted and preliminary findings then available were rather inconclusive.⁴⁹ Last, the full impact of some of AGAP's interventions may not be discernible until well after the completion of the current program. This may be especially true for some of the activities conducted under Sub-Objective 2, *Generate Progressive leadership*.

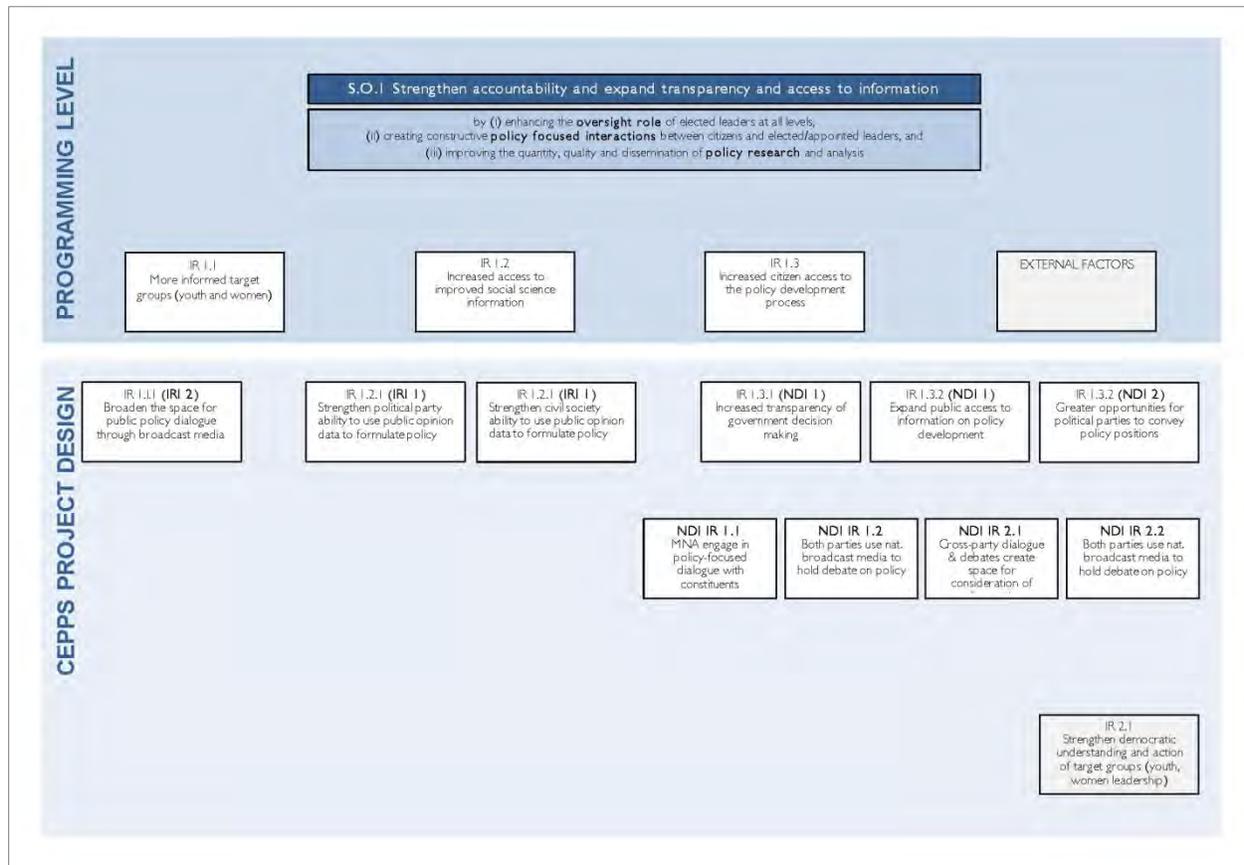
⁴⁹ *Update March 2014* – IRI has since completed the statistical analysis, but these were not included in the performance evaluation due to timing.

ANNEX III: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS INSTRUMENTS

DOCUMENTATION REVIEW

The evaluation team conducted a thorough documentation review, starting with the original program description and subsequent extensions, result frameworks, quarterly reports, performance monitoring plans (PMP) and M&E data, *Impact Evaluation Reports*, and other relevant sectorial data. Before conducting their first meetings, the team notably started with an in-depth analysis of all documentation pertaining to the program theory and result framework. In the absence of an integrated results framework, this was deemed essential for the evaluation team to get an understanding of the overall project design (see below an attempt to recreate an integrated result framework, below), and informed the preparation of the interviews with USAID/Cambodia and CEPPS.

Fig.1. Evaluation team's attempts to reconstruct an integrated results framework



DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In preparation for semi-structured interviews with key informants, the evaluation team prepared checklists for each category of respondent: USAID/Cambodia, CEPPS partners, sub-grantees and other local implementing partners as well as key beneficiary institutions as follows.

- Data Collection Tool I – Semi-structured interview with USAID/Cambodia (checklist)

- Data Collection Tool 2 – Semi-structured interview with NDI (checklist)
- Data Collection Tool 3 – Semi-structured interview with IRI (checklist)
- Data Collection Tool 4 – Semi-structured interview with IFES (checklist)
- Data Collection Tool 5 – Semi-structured interview with partners and sub-grantees (checklist)
- Data Collection Tool 6 – Semi-structured interview with beneficiary institutions (checklist)

An analysis of the results of both key informant interviews and documentation review helped fine-tune the design of round 2, and the preparation of checklists focus group discussions.

In preparation for round 3, the evaluation team developed checklists for a series of panel discussions with key other stakeholders, including representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of human rights, democracy and electoral processes, contributors to traditional and new media, as well as other donors and international development partners.

Example of questions in the checklist for a semi-structured interview with the NDI:

I. GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR CEPPS PARTNERS

- 1.1. Can you tell us, in your own words, what is the objective of AGAP?
- 1.2. What’s been the division of labor between IRI, NDI, and IFES towards achieving those results?
- 1.3. USAID characterizes its approach as stimulated the “demand side” for good governance. Was this the right approach? Is it still the right approach moving forward after the 2012 commune council elections and the 2013 National Assembly elections? Is there “supply” to meet the demand?
- 1.4. To what extent has the planning and conduct of AGAP activities in and of themselves served as a catalyst increasing citizen awareness of the restrictions on political space, i.e. has the presence of IRI and NDI (or perhaps IFES) created greater awareness of political space just by staging interventions regardless of the content of those interventions?

2. USAID PROGRAMING & CEPPS PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1. NDI’s perception of CEPPS coordination in the project design;
- 2.2. To what extent have the lessons learnt from past NDI involvement been used in other CEPPS partners’ project design?
- 2.3. Beyond the logic of each CEPPS partner’s respective intervention, how would you assess that the consolidated project provides a comprehensive answer to contribute to all sub-objectives as laid out by USAID in the program description?
- 2.4. Would you have suggestions for improvements?

3. SYNERGIES BETWEEN CEPPS PARTNERS INTERVENTIONS

- 3.1. How do you assess the synergies established between CEPPS partners’ interventions as regards specific target groups?

4. SUB-OBJECTIVE I

- 4.1. AGAP has promoted interaction between elected officials and constituents to achieve “Increased citizen access to the policy development process.” To what extent do these elected officials, as

opposed to the ministries and bureaucracies, actually set policy? Do elected officials have influence over unelected government officials? (Is there a difference between the local and national levels?)

4.2. To what extent does constituent service and responsiveness “count” as policy development?

5. ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS

5.1. Have approaches for advancing political party competition been effective in decreasing the concentration of power in the executive branch?

5.2. Will recent voter-led changes in the composition of government result in the National Assembly becoming a forum for discussion, debate, consensus-building and decision-making?

5.3. What steps can be taken in the final year of AGAP and in future activities to ensure that the "supply" of good governance can match the "demand" for it stimulated by AGAP (see development hypothesis) and other factors as evidenced in the recent national election results.

5.4. What has been the effect of the degree of openness of political space on AGAP's implementation and achievement of results, and how have AGAP activities positively or negatively affected the openness of political space in Cambodia. Particular attention should be paid to AGAP's contribute to enabling Cambodian civil society to lead reform initiatives with sustainability.

5.5. Have AGAP's achievements been more pronounced at the local or national level? Why?

5.6. What mechanisms are emerging to promote democratic intra-party dynamics (representativeness, policy formulation, communication, internal party democracy) uniting national and local party members in common purposes, including addressing local problems (land, service delivery, infrastructure development)?

DATA ENCODING AND ANALYSIS

This evaluation used two main forms of data collection, encoding and analysis:

Documentation review

The first and most straightforward was used for the documentation review of data collection. All key documents were identified (see annex V. Source of information), read, and relevant content was noted for inclusion or reference in this report.

Interview notes

The second methodology was used for collecting, transcribing and analyzing interview data:

Step 1 – Comments made in interview were transcribed on hand-written notes;

Step 2 – Rough notes were then coded with numbers in the margin, used to group responses by topic as listed in the Coding Key below;

Step 3 – The coded notes were then analyzed and regrouped: a synthesis of all notes with the same coding number was transcribed onto corresponding sections of a Word document. The compiled notes were then reviewed for key content to be included in the evaluation report.

Interview Data Coding Key

The following coding keys were derived from both the evaluation questions listed in the Statement of Work and – to fully answer the first evaluation question – program objectives and intended results:

1. Project objectives, results
2. Program design
3. CEPPS coordination
4. Most successful interventions, cost-effectiveness
5. Additional outcomes – positive and negative
6. More informed target groups: women leaders and youth (IR 1.1)
7. Increased citizen and government access to improved social science information (IR 1.2)
8. Increased citizen access to the policy development process (IR 1.3)
9. Strengthened democratic political understanding and action of target groups (IR 2.1)
10. Increased understanding of the political system among targeted citizens (IR 2.2)
11. Expanded higher quality civic education initiatives (IR 2.3)
12. More competitive and inclusive political environment supported (IR 2.4)
13. Women's political leadership strengthened (IR 2.5)
14. Effective and cost-efficient domestic political process monitoring (IR 3.1)
15. Election law reform (IR 3.2)
16. Increased number of registered voters and integrity of the voter list (IR 3.3)
17. Expanded public access to information related to elections (IR 3.4)
18. Unanticipated political factors
19. Unintended consequences of program interventions
20. Political space, multi-party competition, political participation

ANNEX IV: EVALUATION WORKPLAN

INCEPTION – Evaluation Plan and Logistics Planning	
Wed, Aug 07	Meeting with USAID DG
Thu, Aug 08	Documentation review
Fri, Aug 09	Documentation review
Sat, Aug 10	Meeting with IRI / Documentation review / Evaluation design
Sun, Aug 11	Evaluation team is complete / Inception meeting / Evaluation design
ROUND 1 – CEEPS, Sub-grantees, Partners, Key Beneficiaries	
Mon, Aug 12	In-briefing with USAID Cambodia / Documentation review
Tue, Aug 13	Meeting with NDI / Documentation review
Wed, Aug 14	Meeting with IFES, IRI, YCC, Freedom House / Documentation review
Thu, Aug 15	Meeting with FUNCINPEC, CNRP / Documentation review
Fri, Aug 16	Meeting with NICFEC, COMFREL, IRI, CPWP, CCHR / Documentation reviews
Sat, Aug 17	Data Analysis and preparation of round 2
Sun, Aug 18	Travel to provinces
ROUND2 – Key target groups (Phnom Penh and provinces)	
Mon, Aug 19	Series of Meetings and Focus Groups (Battambang, Kratie)
Tue, Aug 20	Series of Meetings and Focus Groups (Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang)
Wed, Aug 21	Debriefing with USAID/Cambodia DG on Preliminary Findings
ROUND3 – Stakeholders, other development partners	
Thu, Aug 22	Panel discussions with CSOs / Data Analysis
Fri, Aug 23	Complementary meetings / Data Analysis and Report drafting
Sat, Aug 24	Data Analysis and Report drafting
Sun, Aug 25	Data Analysis and Report drafting
Mon, Aug 26	Complementary meetings (IRI) / Report drafting
Tue, Aug 27	Panel discussions with Development Partners / Panel discussion on Media & Youth
Wed, Aug 28	Complementary meetings (NDI) / Report drafting
Thu, Aug 29	Out-briefing with USAID Cambodia / Report drafting
Fri, Aug 30	Report drafting

ANNEX V: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

I. DOCUMENTATION REVIEWED

General

Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs, National Research Council. 2008. *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge through Evaluations and Research*, National Academy of Sciences.

USAID. 2011. *Learning from Experience: USAID Evaluation Policy*.

USAID. 2013. *USAID Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, June 2013*.

USAID. 2003. *USAID Political Party Assistance Policy*.

CEPPS. 2009. *CEPPS III. Presentation of the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening*.

Program Design

USAID/Cambodia. 2009. *Program Description for Leader with Associates Award Agreement under DCHA/DG's Cooperative Agreement "Consortium for Electoral and Political Processes" (CEPPS III), Accountability in Governance and Politics program (AGAP), April 8, 2009*.

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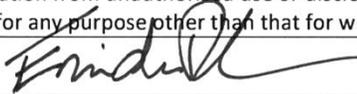
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ANNEX VI: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Eric des Pallières
Title	Consultant
Organization	
Evaluation Position?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	AID-442-O-13-00012
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	Accountability in Governance and Politics (AGAP), Consortium for Electoral and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS III), AID-442-A-09-00001
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

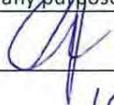
I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	14/02/2014

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Kem Ley
Title	M&E Consultant
Organization	Free Lance Consultant
Evaluation Position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number(contract or other instrument)	AID-442-A-09-00001
USAID Project(s) Evaluated(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	Elections and Political Processes Performance Evaluation, Accountability in Governance and Politics
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	18/02/2014

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Jeffrey Noel Vanness
Title	Democracy and Governance Field Advisor
Organization	USAID
Evaluation Position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	N/A
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	Accountability in Governance and Politics Consortium for Election and Political Processes Strengthening AID-442-A-09-00001
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation. 	<p>Previous volunteer work (Cambodia 2002), consultancy (Morocco 2007), and employment (Bangladesh 2007-09, Timor Leste 2009) with the International Republican Institute.</p>

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	February 14, 2014

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Washington, DC 20523