

Midterm Evaluation of NPA-Cambodia Office's Development Program

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Final Report

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings, conclusion and recommendations of a mid-term evaluation of NPA's development programme in Cambodia. The Cambodia programme support local partners in their efforts to influence political decision making through popular mobilisation and advocacy. The main objectives are to promote democratisation and a more just distribution of land and natural resources. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide recommendations for improvement in terms of program design and strategies, partnership cooperation and NPA's added value.

The evaluation shall identify achievements and lessons learnt from the previous 2012-2015 programme cycle, review the implementation of the current 2016-2019 cycle and provide inputs into the next (2020-2023).

The evaluation relied on mixed methods – documents reviews and interviews with NPA staff in Oslo and Phnom Penh, with local partners and with beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Relevance

The team concludes that the relevance of NPA's Cambodia is satisfactory. The selection of thematic areas and partners are well aligned with NPA's global policy guidelines. They are also relevant in relation to major development challenges facing Cambodia. NPA's approach to local partners – emphasizing advocacy and strengthening of partners – is also well aligned with NPA guidelines and with challenges facing civil society organisations in Cambodia.

However, the Cambodia political context is changing and deteriorating rapidly. This may require certain shifts in the approach and focus of NPA's development programme. The space

for civil society is being restricted and the ability to promote policy changes in relation to democratization and just distribution is weakened. This will also have severe ramifications for NPA's partners and their activities.

Results: Efficiency and effectiveness

Overall, the team concludes that NPA's development programme is performing well with local partners delivering on activities and outputs and programme implementation running reasonably smoothly. Relations between NPA and partners are in general good. However, the evaluation also identified several challenges and bottlenecks. They are likely to be exaggerated with the current deteriorating space for independent civil society action.

Many partners will need to adapt to changing political context. This requires revision of strategies and work plans. Maintaining focus, and in some cases even securing the survival of partners advocating for democratisation and human rights, will be important.

The evaluation also finds that the role of advocacy in relation to service delivery and community development needs to be revisited. It will be increasingly difficult to pursue advocacy on land and natural resources as a stand-alone activity, especially at the local and community level. There may still be space to support advocacy but it may to a much greater extent have to be mainstreamed with support to community development efforts. This may make it easier to secure space to operate and easier to get access to both local authorities and local communities.

A stronger programme approach and better linkages between partners may also improve effectiveness. This applies to relations between

partners working on the ground and nationally; between different NGOs working on related areas; and to the role of national networks.

Overall, the team also found that partners tend to fulfil contractual obligations and that NPA had good monitoring instruments to address failures. Some of the challenges relate to some of the old and bigger partners that does not always report as required or respond sufficiently to requests. With these partners, NPA need to put more emphasis on dialogue on professional and substantive programme issues.

The evaluation team found that gender aspects appeared reasonably well integrated with the programmes implemented by partners. There is strong focus on quantitative indicators (number of women attending meetings and training and so on). The team also noted a strong female participation in our focus group discussions with community focal points and other beneficiaries.

Added value

The team found that NPA's Cambodia programme pays insufficient attention to its added value in relation to partners. NPA plays an important role as an intermediary between the donor (Norad) and the local partner. NPA also plays an important role in identifying and selecting partners. Beyond this, the added value is found to be more uneven.

NPA provides strong added value in strengthening the organisational capacities of their partners. This is most evident in support for financial management and reporting, but other issues – such as internal governance – is also addressed systematically.

The team found that NPA puts relatively little emphasis on providing technical assistance and other professional support to their partners and their programme planning and implementation. Nor did the team find much evidence of any dialogue between NPA and their partners on substantive programme issues.

The evaluation team also found that NPA provides some value added in relation to strengthening of civil society networks both at community, subnational and national levels.

The uneven approach to providing added value has contributed to a situation – paradoxically in view of NPA's policy documents on partnership – where local partners often view NPA more as a donor than as a partner.

For NPA Cambodia this follows from NPA guidelines and its emphasis on strengthening partners' own agenda. The evaluation team feels that this interpretation of the guidelines should be revisited and that NPA head office should provide sufficient support to the Cambodia office to ensure that NPA can have a proper dialogue with partners also on substantive issues. This dialogue will become more important with the current move towards increased authoritarianism in Cambodia.

Recommendations

The evaluation team sums up its findings and conclusion through the identification of six main recommendations:

1: Maintain support to partners working for democratisation and popular participation

NPA's must contribute to the survival and - if need be – the reorganisation and refocusing of the work programmes of these partners. This implies maintaining flexibility in the support, and with a willingness and capacity to adapt to changing needs. It also implies putting more emphasis on a professional dialogue with affected partners on the way forward.

2: Mainstream advocacy in service delivery with more emphasis on programme approach

NPA's support on land, housing and natural resources has typically focused on advocacy through community focal points. It may be increasingly difficult to focus on advocacy as a stand-alone activity, Access to both authorities and communities may be more dependent on the ability to integrate or mainstream advocacy

with service delivery and community development projects.

3: Help ensure that networks deliver

Some of the national networks supported by NPA do not provide sufficient services to members. Some could also do more in relation to improving relations with NPA's partners among community organisations, perhaps especially related to land and natural resources. This includes improving the evidence base for national advocacy through data from the ground, as well as providing professional support to partners on the ground.

4: Maintain emphasis on support to governance certification of partners

NPA should maintain its support to the efforts to improve governance and accountability of civil society organisations. This should include continued dialogue with partners that fail to get certification with a view to help them acquire the skills required.

The evaluation team will also recommend that the focus of NPA support should shift in relation to partners that get certification.

These partners should be considered for multi-year funding. The relations with such partners should also focus more on substantive issues and programming and less on financial management and reporting.

5: Protecting NPA's space – and the role of humanitarian disarmament

NPA itself may also be directly affected by government restrictions. The development programme may find it more difficult to operate in the country. The demining programme on the other hand, maintains excellent working relations with the authorities. This should be exploited as far as possible. It may also offer NPA an opportunity to protect its development programme.

6: Maximise NPA's added value

NPA's Cambodia office should put more emphasis on maximising its added value in relation to partners. This implies - in particular – that NPA should put more emphasis on professional and thematic issues in their dialogue and support to partners and less on financial management and reporting.

Acronyms and abbreviations

AMARA	Cambodian Women’s Network for Development
BS	Banteay Srei
CCC	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
CDA	Children Development Association
CDE	Community Economic Development
CELA	EC Community Empowerment for Legal Awareness
CHRAC	Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee
CMI	Chr. Michelsen Institute
CMFP	Community Mining Focal Points
CNRP	Cambodian National Rescue Party
CPP	Cambodian People’s Party
COHR	EC Community Organising for Housing Rights
COMFREL	Committee for free and fair elections in Cambodia
CPN	Community Peace-Building Network
CRRT	Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DP	NPA development programme
DPA	Development and Partnership in Action
DW	EC Development Watch
EC	Equitable Cambodia
EI	Extractive Industries
EISEI	Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Network
EWMI-ODC	East West Management Institute – Open Development Cambodia
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
GPP	CCC Good Professional Practice scheme
HA	Highlanders Association
HRTF	Housing Rights Task Force
KYSD	Khmer Youth and Social Development
LANGO	Law on NGOs and Associations
LICADHO	Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NGOF	NGO Forum on Cambodia
NOK	Norwegian kroner
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPA	Norwegian People’s Aid
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products

OPKC	Organisation to Promote Koi Culture
PKH	Ponlok Khmer
STT	Sahmakum Teang Tnaut
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
YRDP	Youth Resource Development Program

Introduction

This mid-term evaluation report of NPA's development programme in Cambodia was prepared by senior researcher Elling Tjønneland from the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen, Norway working in collaboration with independent consultant Pou Sovann from Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The evaluation was commissioned by NPA's Cambodia office following a tender process. The main purpose of the evaluation was to assess NPA's partnership with local NGOs/Civil Society Organisations and to identify results and lessons learnt from the programme. The evaluation should incorporate the current country political context and other external factors that might affect NPA's future development programme and strategy. Furthermore, the study should identify best practices and key lessons and provide recommendations for improvement in terms of program design and strategies, partnership cooperation and NPA's added value.

The specific evaluation questions included

1. Identifying and assessing the main outcomes of selected areas and partners in the development program, and the impacts on primary beneficiaries;
2. Assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of NPA-Development Program and their added value, and identify the key achievements and challenges of NPA Cambodia over the last few years;
3. Assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of selected partners' organization and whether their systems and capacities are appropriate to achieve results, and reach outcomes/impacts agreed in the cooperation with NPA; and
4. Identifying positive and negative (intended or unintended) experiences.

The evaluation team's data collection and analysis progressed through distinct phases. Following the signing of the contract, the first phase was data collection in February through desk reviews and the team leader's interview with NPA staff in Oslo. The next step was data collection in Cambodia (Phnom Penh and Preah Vihear) over 10 days in March and then the writing and submission of the draft report to NPA in Cambodia on 17 April. The field period ended with a debriefing with NPA in Phnom Penh. A debriefing and discussion with NPA in Oslo also took place before submission of the draft report. The final report was submitted in May 2018 following written comments from NPA's Cambodia office and additional data provided in early May.

The evaluation team has benefited from the support and assistance of a number of people. Staff of NPA in Oslo and Phnom Penh have provided much assistance to the team during the evaluation. We are in particular grateful for the valuable support and assistance provided by Kann Kall and his team in Phnom Penh and to Kjersti Berre in Oslo. We are also grateful to the numerous staff of NPA's local partners in Cambodia.

The team would like to take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge and thank the numerous individuals interviewed. They graciously gave their valuable time to facilitate the team's Cambodia visit and to provide information, analysis, interpretations and explanations. The views of all of these stakeholders were crucial in helping the team to formulate its assessments and recommendations.

The team has attempted to address all the evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference. Needless to say, any flaws and omissions are entirely ours. The team is also responsible for the views and recommendations expressed in this report.

Bergen and Phnom Penh

May 2018

A variety of approaches and methods were selected to collect data enabling the team to respond to ToR and the evaluation questions. This included desk review, interviews with staff of NPA and partners and focus group discussion with beneficiaries.

Desk reviews included relevant NPA policy documents together with global reviews and mid-term reviews of several country programmes. Related to the Cambodia programme, the team reviewed documents available to the team from all NPA partners in the current (2016-2019) programme period and select documents from the previous programme period. This included partner’s strategy documents, work plans and reports, including case studies as well as NPA reports to the donor (Norad). It also included main reviews and evaluations commissioned by partners and/or other donors as well as minutes from meetings between NPA and partners, report from NPA visits to partners and more.

The team interviewed more than 35 individuals, including current and former staff of NPA (In Oslo and in Cambodia), officials of partners and beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Interviews was carried out among a selection of NPA’s local partners in Phnom Penh and the Preah Vihear province. The interviews were semi structured based on interview guides developed by the team.

Furthermore, the team interviewed 29 individuals in five different focus groups. This included direct beneficiaries (community activists, local government officials and others).

A full list of all persons interviewed with a gender breakdown is provided in Annex 2.

The scope of this evaluation did not allow for a visit to all local partners. A selection was made by NPA’s Cambodia office based on their needs and practical considerations. The selection was made in consultation with the team leader.

Box 1

Case studies: Selection of NPA partners

Organisation	Justification for selection
<i>Ponlok Khmer (PKH)</i>	Ponlok Khmer was selected based on (i) Ponlok Khmer support for local and indigenous communities to gain access to land and resource rights and to improve management their community resources. (ii) Strengthening of grassroots community networks to enhance their solidarity and ability to negotiate with government and investment companies, and to protect their land and natural resources from external land grabbing. (iii) PKH is enriching their model and role in mobilizing and leading advocacy at community and provincial level, and beyond. (vi) PKH organisation and project goals are highly aligned with NPA 2016-19.
<i>Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)</i>	The selection of YRDP was based on contribution to raise youth consciousness and awareness on (i) youth role in social development in actions; (ii) democracy and rights, including election monitoring; (iii) politics and good governance; (iv) natural resource and extractive industries. YRDP has also been actively involved in advocacy activities and lobbying the government to end repressive policies. In addition, YRDP have implemented a project that encourage and support (funds and knowhow) youth groups to initiate and lead the projects that contribute to enhance community resolutions, protect community interest and rights, and conflict resolution. This project is potentially a great learning experience for youth who are willing and devoted to bring changes to society.

<i>Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)</i>	CCC was included due to their long-term role in building CSOs/ NGOs institutional capacity; coordination of CSOs/ NGOs voice in negotiating with the government and improving the work environment for CSOs/NGOs; and promotion of governance professional practice. CCC also have several networks and about 180 NGOs under their umbrella. Thus, it is expected that by including CCC in this evaluation, NPA will gain more knowledge on the impact of NGO network, how it would sustain and should expand. Secondly, it may help NPA be able to identify to what extent CCC is able to achieve the organization’s vision and mission, and how NPA support provide added value to CCC vision and mission.
<i>Equitable Cambodia (EC)</i>	EC was chosen because of their nature of work as a right based organization. They promote equitable development and progressive realization of human rights through community organization, legal empowerment, and evidence-based advocacy. Unlike PKH who have strong work relationship with grassroots community, EC have strong evidence-based advocacy skills. They also have networks at international level. The project that NPA funds aims at supporting EC to motivate, organize and mobilize communities to work together to secure their land and housing rights. NPA support the “Community Organizing for Housing Rights” and “Development Watch” programmes.
<i>Development and Partnership in Action (DPA)</i>	DPA was included due to the organization’s in-depth involvement in Extractive Industries (EI) in Cambodia. DPA’s Extractive Industries programme focus on awareness raising, establishment of community networking and building Community Mining Focal Persons (CMFPs) capacity. Furthermore, DPA play active role in reviewing and commenting to government and companies’ EI Assessment report and EI’s policies and Environmental Code of Conduct; join other organizations and network to dialogue with government and investors in order to create favourable laws, conditions and fairer situation to vulnerable communities.

The visit to DPA was too limited to enable any proper case study of progress of their Extractive Industries programme. On the other hand, the team also visited one partner – the Non-Timber Forest Products based in Preah Vihear province – not originally planned for and had interviews with their staff and focus group interviews with community organisers (mining focal points).

While the team only met with a selection of partners, we did review documents from all. The quality of reporting is however a bit uneven, with some partners providing no reports on projects and activities funded by NPA but report on projects funded by others. However, the team is confident that we have managed to give a proper review of the main features of NPA’s Cambodia programme and have been able to provide assessments and recommendations addressing the evaluation questions.

Overview and relevance

NPA's Cambodia programme originated in the early 1990s with humanitarian relief operations (mainly linked to refugees and repatriation) and with the first deployment of de-miners under UN auspices in the north-western part of the country. The NPA has provided financial and technical assistance to the Cambodian Mine Action Centre since 1993.

A coherent development programme only materialised in the 2005-2010 period. This was linked to the phasing out of NPA's operational and service-oriented projects - a legacy of humanitarian work from the previous decade. By 2010, NPA's development programme had more than 20 partners in the country. The programme was funded by Norad's civil society grant as the sole external funder (in the early years there was also a small contribution from Norad's "oil for development" programme). The annual external funding has remained relatively constant (from about NOK 6.5 million in 2010 to 7.3 million in 2016). See more on this in the next chapter (see especially Table 2).

In addition to the development programme, NPA also maintains a major demining programme. In funding terms, this accounts for about two-thirds of the current total NPA activity in the country. NPA's demining programme is however, an operational programme implemented by NPA itself. This also includes - apart from demining - running a dog training school. Furthermore, the demining programme works closely with the government and is also a channel for foreign funding (e.g., from the US Department of Defence) which would otherwise not have been available for the Cambodian government. There are currently no professional relations or links between the development and the demining programme. NPA's country director is from the de-mining side. A few years ago there was an effort to facilitate closer relations with the demining programme emphasizing the use of land cleared of mines, but there has not been any subsequent efforts to address these or related issues.

NPA's demining programme may have other implications for the development programme. It may also offer some protection and space for the development programme. The restrictive space for civil society support makes it increasingly difficult for foreign NGOs supporting advocacy and human rights to operate in the country. The good relations between the NPA's demining programme and the authorities may reduce the likelihood of government restrictions on the NPA's development programme.

The development programme 2012-2019

The focus and priorities of the current 2016-2019 programme is largely unchanged from the previous period, but there has been a major reduction in the number of partners from over 20 to 12 at the start of the current programme cycle.¹

Table 1 below lists all partners in the 2016-2019 period with a brief summary of their thematic area of operation, beneficiaries and target location. Annex 2 provides further details on each.

¹ Data below is derived from the global 2012 and 2016 applications from NPA to Norad as well as a list of partners provided by NPA Cambodia to the team.

Table 1

NPA Cambodia: Partners 2016-2019

Name of partner	Alignment to NPA thematic area	Target beneficiaries, history of NPA engagement, NPA support (2017)	Target location
Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)	Good Governance and accountability – Democratic Governance	Originated as a coordinating body for international NGOs, Currently it has some 180 International and local NGOs as members. NPA became a member in 1996 and CCC has been partner since 2009. Current support NOK 440 000.	Nationwide
NGO Forum on Cambodia (NGOF)	Land and Resources Rights	94 organizations as membership (33 INGOs, 58 LNGOs, and 3 Associates). NPA is a member and the Forum has been a partner since 2003. Current NPA support is about NOK 350 000.	Nationwide
Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF)	Land and Resources Rights (housing and anti-eviction in urban areas)	National NGO coalition working on housing and anti-eviction in urban communities. NPA partner since 2006. Current support is NOK 290 000.	Poor communities around Phnom Penh
Equitable Cambodia (EC)	Democratization. Land and resource rights	Evidence-based advocacy and support to urban communities. Current NPA support is NOK 440 000.	Nationwide (mainly Phnom Penh)
Committee for Free and Fair Elections (COMFREL)	Democratization - Promotion of Free and fair elections	Works for free and fair elections and to promote citizens participation in politics. NPA partner since 2003. Current support is about 530 000.	Nationwide
Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (CHRAC)	Democratization – Promoting a human rights approach to development	Primary target (land-affected community): approx. 5,000 families. Secondary target (mobilization 50 NGOs and 16 government institutions on advocacy purposes). Partner since 2008. NPA support (2016): 308 000.	Nationwide (only selected high profile cases)
Ponlok Khmer (PKH)	Land and Resources Rights	PKH assist indigenous communities of the Preah Vihear province, especially with a view to strengthening their advocacy capacity to protect and claim their land and resource rights. 47 targeted communities (65,000). NPA partner since 2009. Current funding: 308 000.	Preah Vihear province
Development and Partnership in Action (DPA)	Land and resources right (extractive industries)	Host Secretariat for the Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Impact Network. Support community mining focal points on the ground and undertakes advocacy in relation to mining companies and national authorities. NPA partner since 2010. Current funding: NOK 352 000.	Nationwide. Ratanakiri, Preah Vihear
Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP)	Land and resources right	Advocacy in relation to mining companies and authorities. Direct beneficiary: 2 communes, 49 focal point, 3920 people. Indirect beneficiary: 8 villages in Preah Vihear Province. NOK 264 000 from NPA in 2017. Partner since (?)	Ratanakiri and Preah Vihear
Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of	Democratization – Promoting a human	Major NGO. Legal assistance, support to victims of human rights abuses, investigations. Aim for the period: At least 3000 cases are investigated. At	Nationwide (Phnom Penh and

Human Rights (LICADHO)	rights approach to development	least 150 victims are represented by lawyers. At least 600 victims receive medical and social assistance. NPA partner since 2010. Funding: 528 000	13 provincial offices)
Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)	Democratisation and land & resources right	Promote youth participation through training, awareness and youth clubs. Direct beneficiary: 5664. Indirect beneficiary: 10,529. NPA partner since (?) Current funding: 396 000.	Nation wide
Banteay Srei (BS)	Land and resources right	BS is working with rural communities in Battambang and Siem Reap provinces with the aim of empowering vulnerable women to improve their political, economic and social situation. NPA partner since 2009. Current funding NOK 440 000.	Siem Reap

Source: The list is derived from NPA's global application to NPA.

However, the 12 2016-partners was soon reduced to 10. Two long-term partners were dropped in 2016 and 2017. One was the support to a main human rights NGOs, CHRAC, which ended in 2016 following financial misconduct. CHRAC has since dissolved. The support to Banteay Srei – NPA's only current partner dedicated to gender and empowerment – ended in 2017 following BS's failure to submit a request for funding for 2018. This followed disagreements with BS reporting and application criteria, but essentially revolved around BS's management.²

A new organisation funded in 2017 through the small grants facility is being considered for partnership in 2018. It focuses on promoting internet security for CSOs. The team has not reviewed this organisation.

Former partners

Partners from the 2012-2015 period that were dropped included

- *Community Peace-Building Network (CPN)*: The CPN is a network of community-based advocacy groups, active in 24 provinces. They assist communities affected by land developments – particularly related to land grabbing, logging, fisheries and mining – and facilitates awareness-raising and popular mobilisation. NPA partner since 2010.
- *Srer Khmer*: Srer Khmer originated as a FAO programme in 1997. Srer Khmer works with rural farmers to support and empower village-based farmer associations and networks. NPA partner since 2001.
- *Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT)*: STT is a housing NGO established in 2005. It is working with poor urban communities in Phnom Penh and Kampot to improve tenure security and the physical conditions of housing areas. STT supports communities to strengthen local networks and to be able to articulate and advocate for their rights. NPA partner since 2007.

² The management challenges facing BS also came in out In a mid-term review commissioned by BS itself. See Carol Strickler and Pou Sovann (2016) *Banteay Srei. Mid-Term Review Report 2014-2018..A review of the progress of Banteay Srei's Country Strategic Plan 2014-2018*, Phnom Penh, November 2016 (unpublished).

- *Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency (CRRT)*: CRRT is an NGO coalition working to promote transparency and accountability regarding the use of revenues from oil, gas, and mining. NPA partner since the start in 2008.
- *The Cambodian Women's Network for Development (AMARA)*. AMARA was established as an NGO in 1994. It is based and works mainly in the Battambang district. Its aim is to strengthen the leadership qualities of local women leaders, to empower women for equal participation with men and for gender mainstreaming, and to build leadership capacity for engagement between citizens and the elected commune councillors and improved commune governance. AMARA became an NPA partner in 2001.
- *Children Development Association (CDA)*. The CDA is working in the north-western province of Oddar Meanchey. It works in the rural forest areas of the province and seeks to improve the living conditions of rural communities through sustainable management of forest resources. NPA partner since 2009.

Other local partners dropped included *The Community Economic Development (CED)*, *Organization to Promote Kui Culture (OPKC)*, *Highlanders Association (HA)*, *Khmer Youth and Social Development (KYSD)*, and the *East West Management Institute-Open Development Cambodia (EWWMI-ODC)*.

The relevance

NPA's Cambodia partners all work in areas prioritised in NPA's global strategy. Several partners work on different aspects of land and natural resources, including rural development and urban housing. They are national NGOs with nationwide activities: the NGO Forum on Cambodia and (until 2017) Banteay Srei and - specifically on extractive industries – Development Partners in Action and to some extent the Youth Resource for Development Programme. NPA also supports two partners working specifically on urban land and housing (Equitable Cambodia and Housing Rights Task Force) and on land rights, including mining, in rural areas in the northeast (Ponlok Khmer and Non-Timber Forest Products).

On democratisation and governance, NPA supports several major NGOs: the Committee for Free and Fair Elections; Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (until 2016); Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights; and - specifically on youth mobilisation - the Youth Resource Development Program. In addition, the NPA supports the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia and its work to promote internal governance and accountability in civil society.

An important crosscutting feature of NPA's support has also been support for networking involving local partners. This has included support to national network bodies (CCC, NGO Forum and DPA) as well as efforts to support provincial and regional networks involving local partners (e.g. Ponlok Khmer and Non-Timber Forest Products). Several partners also seeks to support network of community activists (Equitable Cambodia, Housing Rights Task Force, DPA, Ponlok Khmer and Non-Timber Forest Products).

A focus for programmes supported by NPA is advocacy and popular mobilisation. None of the programmes supported are specifically addressing service and community development (with a partial exception for Banteay Srei). Some of the earlier partners dropped in the previous period had a stronger focus on community development.

None of NPA's are popular organisations. They are all typical NGOs. Most are big, national and run by a fairly large and professional secretariat with a head office in Phnom Penh, but some are smaller and has more direct links to local communities. Cambodia, like most developing countries with a weak civil

society, hardly have any strong popular or social movements available as potential partners. NPA Cambodia emphasises in most programmes the need for empowering citizens with dedicated resources from the NPA provided for mobilising local communities – often working through community focal points and associated networks.

The team concludes that the relevance of NPA's Cambodia is satisfactory. Selection of thematic areas and partners are well aligned with NPA's global policy guidelines. They are also relevant in relation to major development challenges facing Cambodia. NPA's approach to local partners – emphasizing advocacy and strengthening of partners – is also well aligned with NPA guidelines and with challenges facing civil society organisations in Cambodia.

Deteriorating space for civil society

However, the Cambodia political context is changing and deteriorating rapidly. The year 2017 marked a major turning point in the democratic path Cambodia embarked on with the first UN-sponsored elections in 1993. Just three months after the hotly contested local elections on 4 June 2017, Kem Sokha, the leader of the main opposition Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP) was arrested and charged with treason. The party had made significant electoral gains and was widely expected to pose a credible challenge to the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in the 2018 general election (now set for 29 July). The CNRP was banned in November, dozens of its leaders went into exile fearing arrest and 118 senior members received a 5-year ban from participating in the political arena.

Ahead of the political crackdown, independent media outlets were silenced. Space for civil society contracted to the point that many previously vocal groups and individuals were afraid to speak out. Most public protests ground to a halt as even small groups demanding their rights were met with threats, intimidation and a disproportionate security response.

The space for civil society is being restricted and the ability to promote policy changes in relation to democratization and just distribution is weakened. This also have severe ramifications for NPA's partners and their activities. Two of NPA's partners (LICADHO and COMFREL) were identified in the government's February 2018 white paper as being subversive and working in collusion with the opposition.³ One partner (Equitable Cambodia) had its formal licence to operate suspended for a brief period in late 2017 (it has now received an official letter allowing it to resume operations). Several leaders of civil society organisations have been detained or fled the country. It has become increasingly difficult to mobilise and work on advocacy issues. We shall return to the implications of this for the NPA programme. First we shall look at the effectiveness of the programme. What are the achievements and results? And is the NPA programme sufficiently coherent and informed by a programme approach?

³ See the Government's *White Paper on the Political Situation in Cambodia, Strengthening the rule of law and liberal democratic process*, Phnom Penh, Office of the Council of Ministers, 8 February 2018 (available from <http://m.en.freshnewsasia.com/index.php/en/7905-2018-03-11-05-23-24.html>). The NPA partners are discussed on pp 69. See also the End of Mission Statement from the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, Professor Rhona Smith, Phnom Penh, 14 March 2018 (<http://cambodia.ohchr.org/en/news/press-statement-professor-rhona-smith-un-special-rapporteur-human-rights-situation-cambodia>). See also a recent background paper on the state of civil society produced by CCC: *Civic Space for Civil Society Organizations in Cambodia* (2 March 2018, unpublished).

Achievements and results

What have NPA's development programme and NPA's partners achieved? The overall impression is that NPA's programme in Cambodia is performing well with partners delivering on activities and outputs. The drastic reduction of partners from the 2012-2015 to 2016-2019 period has allowed for improved concentration, allocation of more resources to each partner and it has enabled the NPA office to allocate more staff time to each partner. The result areas have largely remained the same although – following the demise of the partnership with BS in 2017 – NPA no longer has a partner dedicated to women's issues. However, the reduction of partners also implied that the remaining support for partners focusing on service delivery now *de facto* has disappeared with a sharper focus on advocacy taking its place.

Table 2

NPA's development programme - Management costs and transfer to partner

(Actual disbursements 2016 and 2017 in NOK)

	2016	2017
<i>NPA's share of expenditures</i>	<i>3 427 177,00</i>	<i>4 328 231,15</i>
NPA Cambodia running costs	2 660 182,00	3 377 741,05
NPA head office administrative costs	766 995,00	950 490,10
<i>Transferred to NPA's partners</i>	<i>4 548 845,22</i>	<i>5 806 009,19</i>
NGO Forum Cambodia	326 169,41	387 418,54
Housing Right Task Force	269 333,74	298 877,98
Development Partnership in Action	322 401,62	436 940,24
Ponlok Khmer	281 845,48	423 791,06
Banteay Srei	406 383,80	494 128,87
Equitable Cambodia	403 262,16	491 721,62
Committee for free and fair elections	485 851,36	848 398,28
Cooperation Committee for Cambodia	649 362,52	528 819,62
Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights	699 222,15	754 612,15
Non Timber Forest Products	239 997,04	317 319,80
Youth Research Development Program	366 048,11	591 762,56
Cambodian Grassroots Cross Sector Network	83 778,24	83 774,66
CENTRAL	-	148 503,79
Southeast Asia Development Program	15 189,59	-
<i>Total expenditures Cambodia programme</i>	<i>7 976 022,22</i>	<i>10 134 300,34</i>

*Data provided by NPA Cambodia to the team in early May.

Table 2 above summarises the disbursements of the total funds available for the Cambodia development programme in 2016 and 2017. Out of nearly NOK 8 million in 2016 and 10 million in 2017

about 57% are transferred to partners. 11 partners received financial support in addition to funding through a small grants facility, which provided funding for two partners in 2017 (Central and Grassroots Cross Sector Network).

NPA's development programme in Cambodia has specified work plans with activities and outputs. This is included in the 2016 Norad application. A result framework is also in place and each partner is expected to provide progress reports in accordance with this. Typically, indicators on political mobilization focus on number of people trained, people attending meetings and so on. Advocacy is measured in number of proposals/submissions from partners to relevant authorities, responses from authorities and more. These documents and reports indicate that the implementation overall is dedicated and that the programme delivers in terms of activities and outputs.

However, the quality of reporting from the partners are uneven which makes it challenging to assess in a precise term achievements in 2016 and 2017. For example, one of the major recipients of funding from NPA, the human rights NGO Licadho, has - in its 2017 results report to NPA - highlighted its various activities in providing legal assistance to human rights victims and related areas. However, the funding from NPA was specifically for social assistance to victims and their families. On this, the report is silent. Licadho is a professionally NGO with a strong and solid track record. The evaluation team has no reason to doubt that they have delivered also on social assistance to victims, but based on the reports to NPA we cannot really tell. The global 2017 report from Licadho, on the other hand, informs us that the Social work and medical projects programme assisted 6416 individuals that year. This included food and material assistance to 810 households affected by land grabbing and 523 medical consultations in prisons and families of victims.⁴

Another major NGO – the NGO Forum on Cambodia – receives NPA funding for its land and livelihoods programme. It had not – at the time of the mid-term review - submitted any reports to NPA on implementation in 2017.⁵ They, and some of the other bigger NGOs, tend to receive *de facto* core funding from NPA. The funding may be earmarked for specific programme areas but often the partners' reports are a joint report to all donors on all activities. In some cases, the activities supported by NPA are not specifically mentioned in this report.

External conditions have also posed severe challenges for implementation. The deteriorating political context and shrinking space for civil society have had a strong negative impact for many CSOs, especially for advocacy NGOs and efforts to deepen democracy (see the previous chapter). The space for civil society became increasingly restricted during 2017, ending in a full-blown attack on civil liberties in the last few months of the year. Most attempts to organise protests or public gatherings ground to a halt by September, when the crackdown on media, civil society groups and the opposition was in full swing.

After the June 2017 election, threats, accusations, and investigations were announced almost on a weekly basis in what appeared to be an all-out witch-hunt — based on a fabricated “colour revolution” narrative — targeting NGOs and associations, rights activists and former opposition members and supporters. Government officials specifically mentioned several former and current NPA partners as being of being “accomplices” in the US-backed “colour revolution”. This included the urban housing rights group Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT), the land rights NGO Equitable Cambodia (EC) and the election watchdog the Committee for Free and Fair Elections (COMFREL).

⁴ See Licadho, *Human Rights 2017: A Year in Review. A Report issued in February 2018* (Phnom Penh 2018).

⁵ The 2017 report from the NGO Forum has later been submitted and became available to the team in early May.

The Cambodian NGO law (the 2015 Law on NGOs and Associations - LANGO) was also used to restrict free expression and to shut down or suspend NGO activities (see more on this in the discussion of Equitable Cambodia below). LANGO was also used to close the US-funded National Democratic Institute. Authorities also sought to impose greater administrative control over the day-to-day work of NGOs, associations and communities. A Ministry of Interior letter from 2 October 2017, for example, ordered them to inform provincial and local authorities about any planned activities at least three days in advance.

In conclusion: Cambodia is currently further away from democratization and a more just distribution of land and natural resources compared to the situation at the start of the programme period.

The evaluation team used the selected case studies and NPA partners to address the issue of achievements and results.

Land rights, poor communities and democratisation in the northeast

Ponlok Khmer has been a key partner for NPA. PKH assists forest and indigenous communities of the Preah Vihear province, especially with a view to strengthening their advocacy capacity to protect and claim their land and resource rights. The region has been severely affected by deforestation and allocation of land and mining concessions to foreign companies. In Preah Vihear, there is an estimated 87 concessions granted (34 agro-plantations and 53 mining) covering 232,651.54 hectares of arable land in the whole province. The concessions are considered as a major threat to the livelihoods of local and indigenous communities, and forest and biodiversity. Rural communities in the affected areas have suffered from land grabs and forced eviction. In Preah Vihear 5,548 households, according to PKH project documents, are affected by land grabbing/forced evictions.

PKH works mainly in Preah Vihear but also in three other provinces in the northeast and targets a total of 29 000 families in 182 villages in 52 communes in 15 districts. Working through community activists (focal points), awareness campaigns and advocacy the aim is by the end of 2017 to ensure that at least

- 8% more of communities out of 35 communities are actively discussed/negotiated with authorities or company for demanding their land tenure security and management of natural resources;
- 4 communities (120 households) out of 35 land affected communities are fairly settled;
- 2% (1) of the total 35 land concessions in Preah Vihear will be cancelled by the government; and
- 7% (9) of the total 35 land concessions in Preah Vihear are fairly solved and provide adequate compensation to land affected communities.

NPA provides de facto core funding (about 30%) but with programme funding (70%) earmarked for PKH's efforts to develop and strengthen community networks (a network of community focal points).

Progress is solid with good results also in relation to outcomes. Some noticeable concessions have been secured from both authorities and companies. However, the deteriorating political situation has made it far more difficult to operate. It is more challenging and sometimes impossible to engage with local authorities and to mobilise in communities. The community network established with the help of

PKH and support from NPA is very vulnerable. The members are increasingly frustrated and fear that there will be limited possibilities to make further progress. The network is also – and will remain so for the foreseeable future – highly dependent upon PKH for financial and technical skills.⁶

A similar pattern is evident with the smaller Non-Timber Forest Products NGO. The NPA supports the efforts to mobilise community focal points (or mining focal points in this case) that can help advocate the rights of forest communities in relation to mining companies. They have faced similar challenges with the added hurdle that much of the decision-making related to mining licences is handled at the national level where the NTFP has limited direct engagement.

Through DPA (see below), NPA is also supporting a related effort to mobilise a network of community mining focal points (but in other districts in the northeast). The evaluation team does not have data on achievements through this initiative, but note that the support to DPA's focal points is managed from Phnom Penh while PKH and NTFP has a more direct presence.

There is limited interaction and information sharing between the NPA partners in the northeast, but a regional network has recently been established with the PKH acting as the coordinator and Secretariat. Several other NGOs active in the region are also members. The network still has to develop a proper purpose and work plan.

Overall, however, the potential linkages between the NPA supported projects in the northeast and national advocacy appears underutilised. This included using evidence from the ground in national advocacy, but also ensuring that more use is made of national resource institutions in assisting organisations working on the ground. For example could the NGO Forum play a more active role in providing professional support, including e.g., studies of the operations of the Chinese and other foreign companies in the area.

DPA and the Extractive Industries Initiative

Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Impact Network (EISEI) was established in 2008. EISEI is a national communication and knowledge-sharing network that facilitates research and information dissemination on extractive industry social and environmental impact happening. The network envisions providing a solid foundation for education, technical support and advocacy initiatives to address concerns of communities and civil society on extractive industry in Cambodia.⁷

Network members include international and national NGOs (Oxfam, CRRT, YRDP, and WWF). It operates under support and guidance by a steering committee chaired by DPA. The Secretariat is also hosted by DPA.

NPA's funding to DPA is for the management and programmes of the EISEI network. The programme revolves around promoting civic awareness on extractive industries to ensure good governance and transparent management. It has three defined outcome areas:

⁶ This information is largely derived from various project documents, including case study reports (such as PKH's 2017 report on their support to the Community Network in Action) as well as a range of interviews.

⁷ See also EISEI Network: *Strategic Plan 2017-2021* (unpublished, March 2017).

- (1) Target affected community members are better informed and exercise their right to demand appropriate interventions on social and environmental impacts from the government and the companies. The main approach is to work through mining focal points in communities in northeast Cambodia;
- (2) Mining, oil and gas companies comply with EIA related laws and adopt corporate policies on FPIC, compensation, operations, and value chain process toward more responsible mining business development. This is mainly to be achieved through dialogue with selected companies, including facilitation of community involvement; and
- (3) More favourable laws, policies, and guidelines related to social and environmental impacts are developed in a participatory manner and effectively enforced to ensure they are managed in a socially responsible manner. This is to be achieved in through advocacy in relation to national authorities, including provision of technical inputs to relevant government departments.

Broadly, the data from reports and interviews indicate that the EISEI Secretariat has not made much progress in relation to outcome 2 (the companies). There is some progress in relation to outcome 3 (government authorities), but mainly in relation to providing technical inputs. Government departments respect DPA. This indicates that it is possible to engage with authorities on “soft” and technical issues. Work on the ground – support to mining focal points in communities in the northeast – is managed directly by the EISEI Secretariat (while the activities related to the other two outcome areas are managed by DPA itself on behalf of EISEI). Training and related support are provided to the community focal points, but it does seem to have had limited impact on ability to mobilise communities, engage local authorities or mining companies (although two cases were recorded in 2017 of mining focal points raising issues in meetings with authorities and companies).

The EISEI network is – despite progress in delivering on activities and outputs – further away from improved governance in extractive industry sector. The main reasons for this are outside the control of EISEI. The sector is expanding, it generates much money and the government is imposing restrictions affecting EISEI’s ability to work. This includes restrictions on public expression and the ability to mobilise community participation in training, meeting, and advocacy activities. On the other hand, the EISEI Secretariat could also work more closely with the community focal points, particularly in support to community mobilisation and advocacy in relation to local authorities and companies. The team did not come across any evidence of cooperation or sharing of experiences between this EISEI component and the community focal points of other NPA partners (Ponlok Khmer and Non-Timber Forest Products) also operating in the northeast. The team is also uncertain about the EISEI Secretariat’s ability to provide services and to mobilise other members of the network.

Mobilising Youth – the case of the Youth Resources Development Programme

Cambodia’s recent history and the effects of the Khmer Rouge genocide may have installed a culture of fear and silence in the population, which also affects the youth. It is often claimed that young Cambodians have been deterred by their elders traumatized by the Khmer Rouge regime, from getting involved in social or political activities. The transmission of fear and trauma from parents to children may have resulted in youth becoming passive towards issues concerning national development.

YRDP was established in 1992. It believes that youth are a resource and have the potential to hold the government responsible and accountable. YRDP’s projects are designed to promote youth participation in politics and the democratization process, and through this, demonstrating their civic

role in a democratic society. It aims to equip youth with the capacity to think critically and independently, to seek accurate information, and to become influential citizens through the exercise of their civil and political rights.

Currently, YRDP work with youth (age 15 – 30 years old) who are push outs, failing, current students and graduate students of high school and students of higher education institutes.

NPA supports YRDP in two programme areas. One is promoting of youth participation in politics. This is achieved through awareness campaigns via training courses and exposure field trips to communities. It also includes participation in youth clubs and activities implemented by other NGOs. The second programme area is to promote civic awareness on extractive industries to ensure good governance and transparent management. This is achieved mainly by facilitating participation of youth in special activities organised by networks such as EISEI.

YRDP has a strong record in training youth. Since the inception, more than 70 000 youth has participated in its training activities. The reputation is also strong. YRDP's own survey data of former trainees also indicates that participants benefit, get improved awareness and are likely to become more active citizens.

Data available does not allow the team to provide any firm assessments of YRDP's results. Activities and outputs are delivered and the number of participants is impressive. Our impression is that the primary impacts of YRDP's activities are found at the level of individuals; in building the capacity of large number of youth to become active and engaged citizens. We are more uncertain about YRDP's role in promoting collective action. While many youth participate, the impact – we believe - is mainly found at in the contribution it makes to the individuals.

Urban housing – Equitable Cambodia

Equitable Cambodia (EC) is a major land rights NGO working to promote equitable development and the progressive realization of human rights in Cambodia through community organizing, legal empowerment and evidence-based advocacy. Equitable Cambodia was formed out of the localization of Bridges Across Borders Cambodia, an international solidarity organization active in Cambodia since 2003. Equitable Cambodia was registered by the Ministry of Interior as a Cambodian national non-governmental organization in 2012.⁸

EC currently has three main or core programs – Community Organizing for Housing Rights (COHR), Community Empowerment for Legal Awareness (CELA), and Development Watch (DW). The COHR Program works to organize urban poor communities in Phnom Penh and motivate them to secure their land and housing rights through collective active action. The CELA program aims to address barriers to just and inclusive development by extending rights and legal awareness to vulnerable and marginalized communities, building the capacity of grassroots human rights and environmental defenders and supporting community-led advocacy. The DW program conducts evidence-based advocacy on harmful development, trade, and investment activities, with a view to preventing adverse impacts, seeking redress and holding responsible actors accountable. DW seeks to support communities whose housing,

⁸ See more about EC in their *Three-Year Strategic Plan January 2016 – December 2018 December 2015* (unpublished) and in Tucker McCravy with Vuthy Victory (2016), *External Program Evaluation for Equitable Cambodia* (unpublished February 2016, commissioned by EC).

land and natural resource rights are infringed by development or corporate activities that receive support from foreign investors or institutions.

NPA's support are provided as core funding and support to the DW and CELA programmes. EC has a high activity and profile and with good implementation of activities. However, it has not yet succeeded in bringing the various urban communities in Phnom Penh together in a joint Federation. This was one of the project objectives.

EC has also been badly affected by the deteriorating space for civil society in the latter half of 2017. It was suspended for 30 working days on 28 September for allegedly violating the NGO law. The letter of suspension explicitly referred to the group's assistance to evicted communities affected by sugar-producing Economic Land Concessions. Although the 30-day suspension ended on 15 November, EC only received the approval to re-open in February 2018. The Director fled the country in this period.

Another NPA partner, the Housing Rights Task Force, is also working with urban communities in Phnom Penh (but in different locations). There is some rivalry and poor cooperation between these two NPA partners.

EC is the only NPA partner that has refused to apply for a good governance certification (see below). They argue that confidential EC documents may become available to the government if they apply (the government is represented on the assessment committee).

Strengthening civil society – networking and the governance certification process

A notable feature of the NPA's development programme in Cambodia is a rather strong emphasis on civil society networks. This is evident in the support to partners where the programme focus often is support to community focal points and networks among these (as illustrated with Ponlok Khmer, Non-Timber Forest Products and the EISEI project above or the housing projects in Phnom Penh). It sometimes also includes support to regional/provincial networks (such as the one led by Ponlok Khmer). Several of NPA's past and current local partners are NGO coalitions of different types. Finally, and most importantly, NPA supports a number of national NGO coalitions, especially the NGO Forum on Cambodia and the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia. These networks emerged in the 1990s as coordinating bodies for international NGOs, but have since become localized and led by Cambodian NGOs. These two coalitions have become relevant and important channels for communication between civil society and the authorities. They also sit on various technical working groups with government ministries. This is mainly related to social and economic development issues. NPA has also deliberately used these partners to provide technical and professional support to other partners.

Civil society networks are generally considered to play an important role in strengthening civil society. This is also believed to be the case in Cambodia. However, this experience from NPA's support to partner networks also illustrate challenges.

None of the community networks bringing community focal point together is financially sustainable. They would also break down without professional and technical support from NGOs. Several of the networks would collapse if NPA were to end its support (unless alternative funding was secured).

A second feature is that these networks also critically depend on the role of the network host. There is much evidence of network hosts losing interest or failing to provide any tangible services to members, or they may take on a life of its own. Importantly, there is still competition and rivalries

between many Cambodian NGOs, which limits commitment to networking. All examples are found or have been found in the case of NPA-supported partner networks.

Finally, the evaluation team shall comment on one key dimension in the NPA support to partner – the support to local partners provided by CCC through their Governance Hub programme. This programme seeks both to strengthen the capacity of CSOs and to improve legal and contextual space for CSOs to operate. NPA is supporting one component here: efforts to strengthen CSOs compliance to good governance and accountability through a special certification within a Good Professional Practice (GPP) scheme. CCC has developed a comprehensive scheme to assess CSOs. The aim is to ensure that CSOs function based on good governance principles and standards of good practice. The application and assessment process is demanding with many applicants failing to meet the requirements. A successful application leads to the award certificate. CCC runs organisational assessments, assist and mentor partners that are unsuccessful, undertake compliance monitoring of organisations that have been awarded certificates, and so on.

The scheme has been in operation since 2007. By the end of 2014, some 64 CSOs have been awarded certificates. The aim was to increase this to 92 by the end of 2017. They managed 86. NPA's partners are strongly encouraged to apply for certificate. The aim was to have five certified by the end of 2017. They managed three (CCC, NTFP, DPA) with one additional partner almost there (YRDP which was just missing an old legal registration document). Most other partners failed to be certified because of conflict of interests (e.g., nepotism and hiring of relatives in the organisation), legal and governance issues. One NPA partner – Equitable Cambodia – has refused to apply because they feel information provided with the application and made available in the assessment may become known to the government.

At one level, this certification has been a success. It has emerged as an innovative Cambodian instrument to tackle and address often very sensitive issues. The challenges are that few have applied and have been certified. CCC itself has more than 180 members and there are well beyond 1000 NGOs in the country. Some 225 NGOs have applied since the start. It is also a challenge that many donors maintain their own organisational assessments and do not sufficiently rely on the CCC/NGO GPP mechanism. The team also noted that several partners complain that the process and demands are too bureaucratic.

NPA appears to the extent possible to use the findings and recommendations from the certification process in their dialogue and design of support to partners. While the details of the findings of the assessment are classified information and therefore not distributed outside CCC and the applicant, the main conclusions are made available.

[An effective programme?](#)

Overall, the team concludes that NPA's development programme is an effective programme with programme implementation running reasonably smoothly. Relations between NPA and partners are in general good. Challenges and bottlenecks are experienced. They are likely to be exaggerated with the current deteriorating space for independent civil society action. This revolves around especially three areas:

- Many partners are experiencing new challenges with the deteriorating political situation. It requires adaption and revision of strategies and work plans. Maintaining

focus, and in some cases even securing the survival of partners advocating for democratisation and human rights, will be important. This will require flexibility in NPA's relations with partners and a good dialogue with them on the way forward;

- The role of advocacy in relation to service delivery and community development becomes more important. It will be increasingly difficult to pursue advocacy on land and natural resources as a stand-alone activity, especially at the local and community level. There may still be space to support advocacy but it may to a much greater extent have to be mainstreamed with support to community development efforts. This may make it easier to secure space to operate and easier to get access to both local authorities and local communities. This will require certain shifts in the current NPA approach to their Cambodian partners; and
- A stronger programme approach and better linkages between partners may also improve effectiveness. This applies to relations both ways between partners working on the ground and nationally; between different NGOs working on related areas (e.g. housing in Phnom Penh); and to the role of national networks. Some of the current NPA-supported networks could do more in supporting members and in facilitating a programme approach such as the NGO Forum or DPA in relation to PKH and NTFP in Preah Vihear.

Overall, the team also found that partners tend to fulfil contractual obligations and that NPA had good monitoring instruments to address failures. Some of the challenges relate to some of the old and bigger partners that does not always report as required or respond to requests. With these partners, NPA need to put more emphasis on dialogue on professional and substantive programme issues.

The team also noted that with the disappearance in 2017 of BS as a partner, NPA lost its sole partner focusing on gender and empowerment of women – and a programme mainstreaming this with support to service delivery and community development. The evaluation team found that gender aspects appeared reasonably well integrated with the programmes implemented by partners. There is strong focus on quantitative indicators (number of women attending meetings and training and so on). We also noted a strong female participation in our focus group discussions with community focal points and other beneficiaries.

What is NPA's added value?

What value does the NPA bring to its partners in Cambodia? This is an issue often raised in discussion of the role of Northern/international NGOs as intermediaries between official aid agencies in the north and local civil society in developing countries. It is also an important issue considering that about 40% of the funds for the Cambodia programme is retained by NPA (head office and Cambodia office).

There is an obvious value in transferring funding to local civil society organisations. NPA's partners in Cambodia critically depend on external funding. NPA is a small donor to most of the partners (providing somewhere between 5 and 30 % of the income for most (although it can be a more dominant donor for individual projects such as Ponlok Khmer's Community Network). Norad's civil society department does not have the capacity to manage funding to individual local partners. In the case of Cambodia, there are no other mechanism that is available to act as intermediary for Norwegian support. Without NPA, there would be no Norwegian funding to these partners.

Compared to other Northern NGOs, NPA in some respects stands out favourably for partners. It is a flexible donor, listen to partners and it provides predictable funding. On the other hand, most partners interviewed also claimed that NPA was a demanding donor, which put much emphasis on reporting. It was also claimed by some that NPA should put more emphasis on providing multi-year funding, especially in cases where partners had strong financial and management capacities. Currently, NPA only provides annual contracts - although with commitment to provide the funding for the full 3-year Norad period.

In its draft global policy document on added value,⁹ the NPA emphasise that

NPA must show its added value at all levels in the country offices as well as in Head Office. Our added value is linked to, and should contribute to, our partner's achievement of their own development goals.

Three core elements of the added value are identified in the draft policy document

Context analysis: NPA's ability to do power analysis related to democratisation and just distribution of resources' and to humanitarian assistance.

Choice of actors: NPA's ability to do actors analysis and choose actors that are relevant and strategic to work with.

Being in partnership: NPA's ability to engage with partners in order to strengthen their own agenda.

⁹ The quotes are from p. 1 in the draft *NPA's Added Value. An overview* (3 pages, unpublished n.d.)

The evaluation team has noted in previous chapters that the Cambodia program is relevant in relation to the Cambodian context and NPA's global policy guidelines. This has also informed the selection of partners (although the selection is also in some cases based on historical choices).

How do we assess NPA's added value in relation to partners once they have been selected? In order to assess the value added beyond simply being a donor partner and intermediary between Norad and the local partner the evaluation team examined three critical areas in civil society support. We sought to identify and assess NPA's added value in each.

Strengthening of partner's organisational, management and financial capacities

Strengthening of the organisational capacities is critical in any civil society support. There is strong emphasis on this in the support provided by NPA. This is done directly and indirectly. Directly, the main emphasis has been on financial management and reporting. In this area, the NPA staff has contributed in several ways; through workshops/training, through monitoring visits to partners, and more. Some partners have felt that the emphasis on this has been too strong. They were sometimes left with the impression that NPA behaved too much like a donor. Some specific criticism were also mentioned regarding dates and deadlines for submitting audited reports.

The team is however, of the opinion that overall NPA's efforts to work with partners on these issues are valuable and has helped to strengthen the capacity of partners to plan, manage, report and account for how funding has been spent. These issues are important for any civil society organisation who wants to become sustainable and stand on their own feet. The team will also highlight the importance by NPA to help partners – as part of their reporting – to prepare case studies of how they make a contribution and impact in their area of work.

Beyond financial management and reporting, the NPA engaged more indirectly and have tended to rely on other NGOs to work with partners. The current focus is on CCC to work with partners to address difficult and sensitive issues on internal governance. The team finds this approach both innovative and important. It may provide an important platform for further strengthening of partners.

Professional and thematic support

The team noted that NPA has put relatively little emphasis on providing technical assistance and other professional support to partners' programme planning and implementation. Nor is there much evidence of any dialogue between NPA and their local partners on substantive programme issues. In part, this may be explained by the simple fact that the NPA does not have programme staff that can provide this type of support (e.g., on how to work with forest communities, or how to promote free and fair elections). However, the team feels that the NPA office could have a more extensive dialogue with partners on substantive issues and also help facilitate access to NPA experiences from other countries. This relates especially to strategy development and how performance and results can be improved through better interaction between NPA partners. For example, can the NGO Forum or the DPA provide more support and assistance to PKH and NTFP such as on how to deal with Chinese and other foreign companies? Are there any important lessons to be learned by comparing support to community mining focal points supported by DPA and NTFP? Can evidence from Preah Vihear be more effectively used at national level? Can CCC's governance certification scheme be simplified? How can

advocacy and popular mobilisation be advanced through community development projects? How should NPA's partners respond to the deteriorating space for civil society?

NPA should impose their solution on partners. Nor would NPA necessarily have the answers to many of these questions, but NPA should aim at having the capacity to put these issues on the agenda in their discussions with partners. And it could offer to provide additional funding to initiatives that help improve a programme approach involving several partners, addresses weaknesses and respond to windows of opportunities.

NPA provides limited or no added value to partners on these issues. The evaluation team concluded that there is a need to address substantive programme issues in several partner programmes.

Strengthening civil society networks

NPA provides some value added in relation to strengthening civil society networks both at community, subnational and national levels. The evaluation team has found this to be both relevant and important. However, the team has also noted that these networks are highly uneven in terms of activity and services provided to members. NPA may have to engage more with their network partners, raise issues and communicate views on how networks can maintain and strengthen relevance and improve services to members.

The evaluation team did not find any examples of NPA facilitating international networking between its partners and civil society organisations in other countries, or in NPA facilitating sharing of experiences from other countries. There are however, important initiatives to bring experiences from Cambodia to Oslo. NPA Cambodia also provides NPA head office useful and regular updates on the Cambodian political situation. This may help NPA head office to take action where relevant. This is for example the case with the Norwegian sovereign wealth fund (the pension fund) and their investments in Chinese and international finance institutions providing funding for Chinese companies active in land grabbing in Cambodia.

Does NPA have sufficient resources and tools to provide value added?

The answer to this specific evaluation question is more challenging. The evaluation team has noted that NPA provides relevant and important support to partners related to financial management and reporting. The attention to these issues and results achieved are very noticeable compared to what it was 15-20 years ago when NPA was emerging from running a pure operational programme. However, the evaluation team has also noted that NPA is much more absent in relation to partners' programme planning and implementation. There is limited or no dialogue on substantive issues. This has – paradoxically in view of NPA's policy documents on partnership – contributed to a situation where local partners often view NPA more as a donor than as a partner.

For NPA Cambodia this follows from NPA guidelines and its emphasis on strengthening partners' own agenda. The evaluation team feels that this interpretation of the guidelines should be revisited and that NPA head office should provide sufficient support to the Cambodia office to ensure that NPA can have a proper dialogue with partners also on substantive issues. This dialogue will become more important with the current move towards increased authoritarianism in Cambodia.

Recommendations

In the preceding chapters, the evaluation team has assessed relevance, achievements and results. We have identified new challenges emanating from the political developments and we have reviewed strengths and weaknesses in NPA's added value in relation to the support to partners. Based on this, the evaluation team has arrived at a series of observations and recommendations.

1: Maintain support to partners working for democratisation and popular participation

The current challenges facing several of NPA's partners is a serious threat to NPA's development programme. There is also a distinct possibility that one or more of NPA's partners may not survive. They may lose their licence to operate; government harassment may incapacitate the organisation; and some foreign donors supporting these organisations may be prevented from doing so or withdraw from the country altogether. Some partners may also find themselves in a situation where they are unable to develop a proper plan of action to cope with the new situation. This will affect partners differently. LICADHO are in strong position, but Equitable Cambodia and COMFREL may – depending upon political developments - be forced to refocus and recalibrate its work focus.

NPA's must contribute to the survival and - if need be – the reorganisation and refocusing of the work programmes of these partners. This implies maintaining flexibility in the support, and with a willingness and capacity to adapt to changing needs. It also implies putting more emphasis on a professional dialogue with affected partners on the way forward.

2: Mainstream advocacy in service delivery with more emphasis on programme approach

NPA's support on land, housing and natural resources has typically focused on advocacy through community focal points. It may be increasingly difficult for local partners to focus on advocacy as a stand-alone activity, especially for activities at the community level. Access to both authorities and communities may be more dependent on the ability to integrate or mainstream advocacy with service delivery and community development projects. However, citizens can be empowered also through service delivery projects. This may require a stronger emphasis both on bringing local organisations with strong skills in advocacy together with organisations with a primary focus on providing services.

These issues will be important in NPA's support to Ponlok Khmer, Development Partnership in Action/EISEI and Non-Timber Forest Products, but also Equitable Cambodia and Housing Rights Task Force.

3: Help ensure that networks deliver

Civil society networks at different level are important. Some of the national networks supported by NPA do not provide sufficient services to members. Some could also do more in relation to improving relations with NPA's partners among community organisations, perhaps especially related to land and natural resources. This includes improving the evidence base for national advocacy through data from the ground, as well as providing professional support to partners on the ground.

This applies in particular to the support provided to NGO Forum on Cambodia and Development and Partnership in Action/EISEA.

4: Maintain emphasis on support to governance certification of partners

NPA should maintain its support to the efforts to improve governance and accountability of civil society organisations through the certification scheme. This should include continued dialogue with partners that fail to get certification with a view to help them acquire the skills required. NPA should however based on their own assessments have a dialogue with CCC on quality of the certification process. Can the application be simplified?

The evaluation team will also recommend that the focus of NPA support should shift in relation to partners that get certification. These partners should be considered for multi-year funding. The relations with such partners should also focus more on substantive issues and programming and less on financial management and reporting.

5: Protecting NPA's space – and the role of humanitarian disarmament

NPA itself may also be directly affected by government restrictions. The development programme may find it more difficult to operate in the country. The demining programme on the other hand, maintains excellent working relations with the authorities. This should be exploited as far as possible. It may also offer NPA an opportunity to protect its development programme.

6: Maximise NPA's added value

NPA's Cambodia office should put more emphasis on maximising its added value in relation to partners. This implies - in particular – that NPA should put more emphasis on professional and thematic issues in their dialogue and support to partners and less on financial management and reporting.

Annexes

1: List of persons interviewed

Norway

Kjersti Berre	F	Advisor, Cambodia, Development and humanitarian cooperation, NPA
Claudio Feo	M	Advisor Asia, former country director Cambodia, Development and humanitarian cooperation, NPA
Beate Thoresen	F	Advisor, Organisation development and policy, Development and humanitarian cooperation, NPA
Jane Filseth Andersen	F	Deputy Head of International Development, NPA

Cambodia

Kann Kall	M	Program manager, Development Programme, NPA Cambodia
Youthy Nuth	M	Programme officer, Development Programme, NPA Cambodia
Mam Sambath	M	Executive Director, Development and Partnership in Action
Aksel Steen-Nilsen	M	Country Director, NPA Cambodia
Huong Ly	F	Programme officer, Development Programme, NPA Cambodia
Chan Sokha	F	Executive Director, Khmer Community Development
Keo Rasmey	M	Finance officer, ERIKS Development Partner
Saroeun Soeung	M	Executive Director, Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)
El Sotheary	F	Head of program, CCC
Ros Sothida	F	Program manager, Community Development and Legal Awareness Program, Equitable Cambodia (EC)
Heang Sokun	M	Program Manager, Community Organizing for Housing Rights Program (COHR), EC
Bun Makara	M	Program Director, EC
Focus Group		Community Organisers (1 M and 3 F), Phnom Penh (COHR programme), EC
Cheang Sokha	M	Executive Director, Youth Resource Development Programme (YRDP)
Chang Ramy	F	Program Manager, Youth Engagement in Social Action Program Manager, YRDP
Hang Soviet	M	Program Officer, Empowering Youth for an Equitable Society, YRDP
Ly Bunthea	M	Program Manager, YRDP
Focus Group		Youth group members, Phnom Penh, YRDP (4 F and 2 M)
Lun Borithy	M	Executive Director, Pour UN Sourire D'Enfant (former programme manager NPA and former executive director CCC)
Mey Samphas	F	President, Youth Coalition for Unity and Development
Yong Kim Eng	M	President, People Center for Development and Peace (member Board of Directors, YRDP)
Sokta Chea	F	Programme Officer, NPA
Ang Cheatlom	M	Executive Director, Ponlok Khmer (PKH)
Poek Sophorn	M	Area Program Coordinator, PKH
Keo Siphon	M	Research and Documentation, PKH
Focus Group		7 (3F and 4M) community organisers and leaders of community networks, Preah Vihear Town
Focus Group		Commune Council Chief, four commune council members and police chief (1F and 5M), Prame Commune, Tbeng Meanchey District, Preah Vihear province
Lao Chan	M	Cambodia Human Rights and Development Association, Provincial Coordinator, Preah Vihear province
Vorg Voevn	M	Executive Director, Organisation for the promotion of Koi Culture, Preah Vihear
Hing Bunnath	M	Provincial Coordinator, Organisation for the promotion of Koi Culture, Preah Vihear
Sok Vibol	M	Program Manager, Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), Robieb Commune, Roveang district, Preah Vihear province
Chheang Meng Kim	M	Finance officer, NTFP
Tha Tevy	F	Intern, NTFP
Men Pak	M	Extractive Industries project officer, NTFP
Sao Bunkorn	M	Extractive Industries project coordinator, NTFP
Focus Group		5 Mining Focal Points for NTFP (4 M and 1F), from five villages in two communes, Preah Vihear province

2: NPA's Cambodia partners 2016-2019

Objectives (main planned outcomes)	Main focus and 2017 activities and outputs	Findings and remarks
Partner organisations influence democratisation process		
<p>Free and fair election</p> <p>(Comfrel)</p>	<p>Advocacy through conducting roundtables/debates, lobbying, etc Media programs Election monitoring for commune council election 2017</p> <p>Also special activities to mobilise youth and women, including increasing number of youth and women councillors in communes related to the 2017 election.</p>	<p>NPA is de facto providing a contribution the core funding but with programme funding being earmarked for mainly advocacy purposes and to some extent also media and monitoring.</p> <p>Activities are largely implemented and outputs achieved, but at the time of this review we are much further away from having free and fair elections in 2018. The main opposition party has been banned, COMFREL itself has been officially targeted as a subversive organisation colluding with the opposition and the organisation's director has had to flee the country.</p> <p>COMFREL is the biggest recipient of funds from NPA's Cambodia programme</p>
<p>Citizen-centered and national democratic governance</p> <p>(CCC)</p>	<p>CCC is an umbrella body for civil society organisations that seeks to advance the space for civil society. In dialogue with authorities it seeks to provide an enabling environment for CSOs, it provide coaching and mentoring for CSOs, and runs (see below) a good governance accreditation scheme to foster accountability and transparency within CSOs.</p>	<p>Good, but uneven implementation of activities. It is an important platform for CSOs in the country</p> <p>NPA supports the enabling CSOs programme area (dialogue with authorities) and the accreditation scheme (see below).</p>
<p>Increased participation by Youth and Women in politics</p> <p>(YPRD)</p>	<p>YPRD is a well established youth organisation that seeks to promote mobilisation of youth and their participation in politics. This is achieved mainly through personal and social awareness education (seminars and workshops) coupled with efforts to stimulate and support activities of the trained youth through youth clubs and their engagement in community development, exercise their political rights and more. YPRD also had special projects targeting the 2017 election (youth observation), dialogue between political parties and youth and training/mobilization related to the extractive industries.</p>	<p>NPA's support is de facto an allocation to a core funding, but with most of the funding been allocated to Youth engagement in politics programme area which includes special projects related to extractive industries.</p> <p>Reasonably good implementation with the majority of planned activities implemented. The main contribution has been in building individual capacities of youth, there is less impact from collective action (youth clubs and other initiatives) but they are important for the individual participants.</p> <p>YPRD has also been important in that it has provided space, including meeting facilities, for critical reflection, and the graduates from its training activities are attractive for NGOs seeking staff.</p> <p>Challenges have revolved insufficient capacity of YRPD staff, difficulties in retaining youth and increasing pressure from local authorities affecting ability to work in communities, and deteriorating political space for mobilising youth.</p>
	<p>Promoting a human rights approach to development. CHRAC will organize at least 8 pre consultation meetings (2 times per year) among at least 40 CSOs specialized in legal policies formulation.</p>	

<p>Improved human rights approach to development (CHRAC)</p>	<p>CHRAC will lobby relevant government institutions to promote democratic principle in legal framework formulation through at least 8 consultation workshops (2 per year), and through face to face meeting, as well as needed press conferences or issuance of public statements.</p>	<p>Funding to CHRAC was ended abruptly in 2016 following financial irregularities. CHRAC has since been dissolved.</p>
<p>Improved access to legal services for victims of human rights abuses (LICADHO)</p>	<p>Licadho is a major human rights NGOs that provides professional legal services for victims of human rights abuses. It also provides economic and social support to victims and their families.</p>	<p>NPA provides de facto core funding, but with most programme related funding being allocated to the programme for victim support. The Licadho 2017 results report to NPA does not report on this but on other programmes.</p> <p>Programme implementation on the reported areas (investigations, legal support) is solid. Licadho has a strong position but has been identified by government as threat. It's role – if allowed to operate – is expected to increase with government restrictions and clampdown on human rights activists</p>
<p>Partner organisations influence land and housing rights</p>		
<p>Communities defend their land and housing rights (EC, HRTF, NGOF, PKH, NTEP, DPA-EISEA, BS)</p>	<p>EC Equitable Cambodia is an NGO working to promote equitable development and realization of human rights through community organizing, legal empowerment and evidence-based advocacy. This includes advocating for the protection and defence of housing, land and natural resource rights. This includes tenure insecure communities in Phnom Penh</p> <p>Housing Rights Task Force HRTF is a small NGO whose mission is to prevent forced evictions and housing and land rights violations as well as to empower threatened communities to claim their rights to access quality and acceptable legal/ social services.</p> <p>HRTF support urban poor communities in Phnom Penh. The community organizing activities have organized 27 urban poor communities (13 communities in 2014, 5 communities in 2015 and 9 communities in 2016).</p> <p>In 2017, the project will continue to support the existing 27 urban poor communities and will expand to cover 9 urban poor communities in Phnom Penh.</p>	<p>EC NPA currently supports EC's efforts to assist urban communities in Phnom Penh. This includes training and empowerment activities to assist tenure insecure communities in advocating and negotiating collectively with authorities to defend their housing, land and property rights. The goal is also to help establish a federation of urban community based organisations.</p> <p>There has been reasonably good progress in implementing most of planned activities, although the urban federation is not up and running. EC has been badly affected by government restrictions. It was placed under suspension for one month towards the end of 2017. The Director had to flee the country.</p> <p>HRTF Good progress in implementation, but not all outputs are delivered. Key challenges include insufficient resources and funds to implement as planned; and the deteriorating political situation are affecting the work both of HRTF and the communities targeted.</p>

	<p>NGO Forum om Cambodia The NGO Forum NGO Forum is a membership organization, was established in the early 1990s by international NGOs. It is today managed by Cambodians and is the main CSO umbrella body in addition to CCC. NGO Forum’s overall goal is to ensure that citizens and civil society organizations are well-equipped to contribute and influence policy making and implementation processes for the benefit of poor and vulnerable people of Cambodia.</p> <p>The Forum is NPA’s oldest partner in Cambodia. The current support is provided for one of the Forum’s main programmes – land and livelihood. There is specific focus on housing and resettlement activities.</p> <p>Ponlok Khmer also known as People and Knowledge of Highlander (PKH) is an NGO active in Preah Vihear province in the Northeast. PKH focuses on Environment and Human Rights, specifically on natural resource management, environment and resource rights for forest dependent and indigenous communities.</p> <p>They work with local community focal points (brought together in a community network) and hosts a secretariat of network of NGOs working on these issues in the north east.</p> <p>NTFP Non-Timber Forest Products, NTFP, is a small local Non-Government Organisation based in northeast (two districts in the Preah Vihear and Ratanakiri Provinces). NPA support its work at 3 communes in Rovieng district of Preah Vihear province. This is mainly through working with mining focal points in the communities.</p> <p>These focal points facilitate community meeting, dissemination, conduct community forum and negotiate with local authorities and company representatives in cases of having land issues.</p> <p>Development and Partnership in Action DPA is a relatively large national advocacy NGO, employing around 50 staff. It works in four main areas; Natural resource management; Climate change resilience and food security; Support for grassroots organisations; and Social enterprises and other livelihood initiatives.</p> <p>NPA supports a programme hosted by DPA – the Extractive Industry Social and Environmental Impact Network. DPA</p>	<p>NGOF It reports goods working relations with the government. There is limited specific reporting on the activities undertaken with NPA funding (housing and resettlements).</p> <p>PKH Good progress and has helped some concession for local communities. Its work is strongly affected by deteriorating political situation. There is growing frustration among community focal points supported by PKIH.</p> <p>NTFP They make progress in implementation, but are facing challenges related to political restrictions and also by the fact that mining licenses and regulations are handled by national authorities and not at the local and provincial levels.</p> <p>DPA They report good progress in providing technical input and in having dialogue with national authorities. This may in large part be due to DPA’s recognized technical competence and skills on the issues. They are struggling far more in their efforts to have dialogue with companies.</p> <p>There is less data available to show progress and achievements in relation to the support to mine focal points in the communities. The team is also</p>
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	<p>provides the Secretariat for this network. The network has three main focus areas. One is to train and coach community mining focal points in targeted communities affected by mining company licences in the northeast. This is done by Secretariat staff.</p> <p>Secondly, the Network seeks to ensure through dialogue and advocacy that the mining, oil and gas companies comply with relevant laws and regulations and adopt corporate policies emphasizing more responsible mining business development. This is done by DPA on behalf of the Secretariat.</p> <p>Finally, the Network seeks to advocate for more favourable laws, policies, and guidelines related to social and environmental impacts of extractive industries. This advocacy is done by DPA on behalf of Secretariat.</p> <p>Banteay Srei (BS)</p> <p>BS is a major women’s NGO that seeks to empower women and their families to improve their political, economic and psychosocial situation through mobilising communities for sustainable development, advocacy work for gender justice and engaging men on gender equality.</p> <p>NPA’s support focuses on activities intending to improve women’s economic empowerment and livelihood in targeted rural communities.</p>	<p>unable to assess the benefit of the Network for members.</p> <p>BS</p> <p>BS claims good progress in implementation, but the organisations has been badly affected by weak management. Failure to address this led to the collapse of the partnership in late 2017 with BS unable to submit a proper application.</p>
<p>Improved governance and accountability in civil society, improved networking</p>		
<p>Partner’s organizations function based on good governance principles and standards of good practice</p>	<p>CCC</p> <p>CCC has program supported by NPA that seeks to promote internal governance and accountability of NGOs through a certification process. Successful applicants are issued with a Good Professional Practice (GPP) certificate</p> <p>NPA encourages its partners to apply for certification</p> <p>The application process has revealed that major problems for many revolve around conflict of interest; internal management; and financial management.</p>	<p>The system is demanding and complicated, but it widely considered to be a good initiative to address sensitive and difficult issues.</p> <p>The system is not yet sufficiently recognized by CSOs and donors. 85 GPP certificates have been issued with 225 CSOs having applied.</p> <p>3 NPA partners were awarded certificate in 2017.</p>
<p>Strengthen civil society through community, provincial and national works</p>	<p>NPA are supporting several CSO networks at different levels. This includes national networks (NGO Forum, CCC, DPA/EIESA), provincial/regional (PKH) ad at community levels (PKH, NTFP, DPA/EISEA, EC, HRTF).</p>	<p>The results are mixed. Success depends on the commitment and dedication by the NGO leading the network (including the benefits provided to members). Several struggles with purpose and mission. At the community level the sustainability critically depends external financial and professional support.</p>

1. Background and Rational

NPA Cambodia is commissioning this study of its Development Program (DP). The main purpose is to assess how NPA's partnership with local NGOs/Civil Society Organization and results and lessons learnt in raising community awareness and mobilize stakeholders to influence political process and change of repressive state policies, strategies and actions on democratization's promotion and practice, respect land rights and just resources distribution. The evaluation shall incorporate the current country political context and other external factors that might affect NPA-DP and strategy in the future. The study shall identify best practices and key lessons and provide recommendations for DP improvement in term of program design and strategies, partnership cooperation and NPA added value. These shall provide inputs in the preparation of the next DP program cycle, 2020-2023.

Overall, NPA's support and partnership should be translated into local partners and their primary beneficiary being able to:

- influence political decision making
- mobilize around common issues
- more effective in organizing people who have a common cause, particularly local population /affected groups.

The evaluation will identify achievements and lessons learnt from the previous 2012-2015 project cycle and review the implementation of the current 2016-2019 cycle. NPA Cambodia is committed to support and reinforce the work of 11 carefully selected partners who are engaged in:

- Strengthening civil society and supporting the rights of citizens to assemble and associate.
- Advocating for equal distribution of wealth and resources, and supporting victims to claim their legal rights.
- Advocating and promoting youth engagement in democracy, civic and political rights; demanding government transparency and accountability in managing and utilizing country natural resources.
- Advocating and promoting free and fair elections and rightful citizen participation in democracy and governance; continued advocacy for gender equity and the role of women to participate in the decentralization and de-concentration process; and advocacy and lobbying at national level to influence the development of the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and legal frameworks.
- Promoting and practicing NGO good practice, transparency and accountability.

Additionally, NPA Cambodia also expect and encourage partners to work strategically together so that advocacy strengths and collective voice are further enhanced. In addition, partners should also be able to collectively learn, share experiences and solidarity.

Last but not least, NPA Cambodia also expect Partners to strongly observe and practice democratic principles, high standards of accountability and good governance in managing their organizations.

2. Purpose of the evaluation and key evaluation questions

The specific objectives of the mid-term evaluation are following a desk review of program documents and interviews with NPA staff to undertake an review of 4 or 5 selected partners through interviews with partner staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders. The selection of partners will be done by NPA Cambodia in consultation with the evaluation team. Specific evaluation questions include

5. To identify and assess the main outcomes of selected areas and partners in the development program, and the impacts on primary beneficiaries.
6. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of NPA-Development Program and their added value, and identify the key achievements and challenges of NPA Cambodia over the last few years.
7. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of selected partners' organization and whether their systems and capacities are appropriate to achieve results, and reach outcomes/impacts agreed in the cooperation with NPA.
8. To identify positive and negative (intended or unintended) experiences.

Under the above objectives, the evaluation should address the following key questions:

- a) In light of the current political context, has NPA Development program chosen the right partners to work with? To which degree have these partners contributed to the NPA-Cambodia Office overall goal and mission, and been

able to influence political decision making in Cambodia? And whether their presented proposals been taken into consideration and/or incorporated into the government policies/laws?

- b) Are there any changes of partners' organization primary beneficiary groups related to (i) engaging and advocating social changes (ii) demanding government respond to constituencies/right holders (iii) government respect to civic and political rights, (iv) build and strengthen networking among CSOs to enhance mutual support and greater synergy.
- c) How effective, efficient and sustainable are the networks developed by partners' organizations at national and community level to mobilize and influence? How and what the networks should be strengthened and expanded to mobilize people collective act.
- d) Does NPA chosen partners met up with NPA's contractual agreements and if not what are the barriers
- e) How effectively and appropriately has DP team worked with partners' organization, and what are the added values DP provided and/or shall provide to partners' organization, and what are the current gaps in NPA and partners, in term of human capacity, accountability mechanisms, tools, and resources to monitor and assure good stewardship of all partners?
- f) Are the programmatic approaches relevant to the Cambodian social political context at current and future?
- g) To what extent NPA has integrated gender aspect into its development program?

3. Methodology

The evaluation will start with a desk study of relevant internal strategies, plans, reports and past evaluations. Use of qualitative methodologies shall include interview and other form of participatory approach such as focus group discussion, informal meeting etc. The key stakeholder interview includes primary and secondary beneficiaries, authorities/ government, possibly representatives from donors who are also donors of NPA partners, and other potential NGOs/networking/grassroots groups, and key NPA Cambodia staff. In addition, desk review of most relevance NPA documents (strategy paper, multi-annual plan, proposal and log-frame, progress reports, annual reports etc...) will be done in prior to the field work. However, quantitative data will be incorporated in the evaluation where is necessary. Consideration shall be given to efforts and plans to apply gender mainstreaming within NPA and with partners.

The main findings should be presented to DP team at Country Office and in consultation with HO before the final version of the report is printed.

4. Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will be composed by one external consultant and one local consultant. The external consultant is the team leader and responsible for:

- Developing and negotiating assignment work plan with the NPA Cambodia Management
- Developing and finalizing questionnaires in consultation with NPA Cambodia management
- providing QA to the data collection, analysis of primary and secondary data and the writing of the evaluation report.
- Be responsible for quality and writing up of final report

Under lead of evaluation Team Leader, local consultant is responsible for

- Contributing to the enhancement and assuring quality of evaluation finding report through:
 - sharing his/her experience and observation about CSO work; and
 - taking part in the discussion and brainstorm around observation and emerging finding when meeting and/or interviewing with stakeholders; and
 - initiating strategies, identifying and suggesting alternative solutions; and
 - recommending and contributing opinion to the evaluation's recommendations.
- Providing translation to/from English during interviews and – of required – summary translation of documents.
- Contributing and reviewing notes from interviews with stakeholders.
- Contributing to the writing of the evaluation report and reviewing the final draft of the report
- Liaise with the NPA Cambodia in finalizing schedule of meetings and logistical arrangements. This will be done by the NPA Cambodia office

5. Reporting

The team leader will make a detailed work plan, submit this and have the approval from the NPA DP before initiating the evaluation. At end of desk review and field work, the team leader will submit to NPA for comments a power point presentation outlining key findings and recommendations followed by a draft report. A final report, including a section of the main findings and main recommendations, is to be submitted to NPA within two weeks after receiving comments to the draft report. The report shall use sex desegregated data where possible. The final report should not exceed 30-40 pages, including an executive summary. Questionnaires and cases could be attached in an annex. The report shall be written in English. A format is attached as guide (see annex 1).

Annex 1

Mid Term Evaluation Report outline template

- 1- A short introduction
- 2- Executive Summary
Up to 3 pages listing a concise summary of key finding and recommendations
- 3- Methodology
No more than 3 pages referring only to key points then refer to annex with full methodology
- 4- Main body report
Up to 20 pages outline of findings and discussion
- 5- Answering evaluation questions
Up to 4 pages
- 6- Key recommendations and conclusion
Up to 4 pages

Please note that annexes should not be counted as contents of report.