



# Youth Voice

## Cambodia Communication Assistance Project Impact Assessment Briefing

April, 2015



International Development  
Australian Broadcasting Corporation



# Youth Voice Background



Youth Voice was launched in July 2012 by the Battambang Provincial Department of Information (PDI) in Cambodia, as a weekly youth-oriented program. It provides information that aims to give young people the confidence and understanding to participate in governance processes. The program delivers information through a mix of entertainment, personal story sharing, current affairs, discussion, and news. The program encourages listeners to call into the program live on-air to share their stories, ask questions, and discuss issues important to them in order to promote youth civic participation and engagement.

Youth Voice has six separate segments that are broadcast each week on the program.

**DISCUSSION** | A conversational style segment that focuses on topical issues and subjects reflecting youth concerns within the community. The segment combines a feature story followed by callers commenting on the topic.

**WHAT'S UP** | Information is provided on youth-related activities happening around the province. The segment also includes short radio stories that discuss relevant issues such as university debates, and cultural and sporting events.

**MY STORY** | A blog style segment that enables youth to talk about experiences and concerns in their own way. The personal stories portray how individuals respond to or resolve issues and concerns facing their lives.

**RISING STAR** | An entertainment segment aimed at promoting young provincial talents. Youth are given a chance to pre-record a song on the phone or at the radio station and have it played on air.

**SPEAK YOUR MIND** | A segment that allows callers to raise and discuss important youth concerns. This segment focuses on young people's views on how to make a positive change at a provincial and national level. Youth Voice producers choose a national or provincial topic and ask a young person how they would respond to the issue.

**ASK GOVERNMENT** | Government officials answer predetermined questions and explain current initiatives relating to youth. This segment plays a pre-recorded 2-3 minute clip on information relating to youth that concerns the law, provincial regulations, or provincial government services.

Youth Voice is supported by the Cambodia Communication Assistance Project (CCAP) and ABC International Development (ABC ID), and funded by Australian Aid. The program airs on Battambang PDI every Friday evening from 7:00–8:30pm across Battambang province.

# Youth Voice Impact Assessment



The Youth Voice Impact Assessment is based on qualitative research. The Youth Voice database was analysed for this briefing note to determine the profile of youth voice callers.

Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted among program audiences and production staff to assess the impact of the program. Two focus groups were conducted with Youth Voice listeners and six in-depth interviews with Youth Voice producers and members of the Youth Reference Group.<sup>1</sup> The focus groups and interviews provided perspectives from both the program's audience and the staff who work on the program.

The briefing note is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on the program's caller profile, the second section highlights audience, program staff and reference group preferences of Youth Voice segments, and the final section looks at the overall impact and relevance of the program.

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<sup>1</sup> The Youth Reference Group consists of young people interested in radio production and youth media. The group has rotating attendees and meets monthly to discuss youth-relevant governance issues that are used to inform YV programming. The group has a capacity building element that allows members to contribute to news reading, radio production, and co-present the YV program with an experienced PDI presenter.

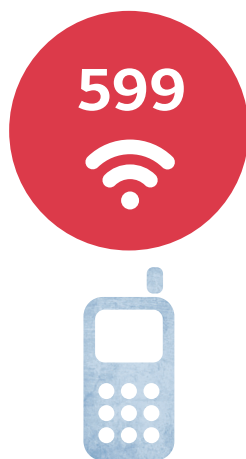
# Youth Voice

## I. Caller Profile

Number of programs produced:



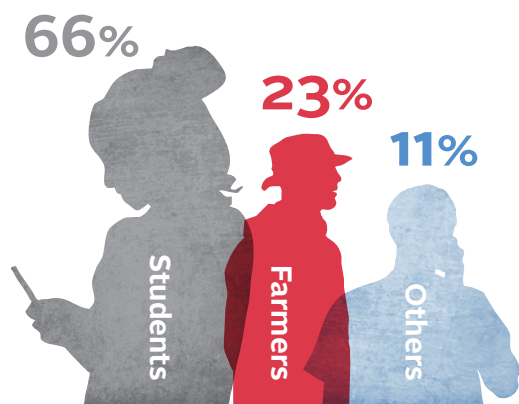
Total callers:



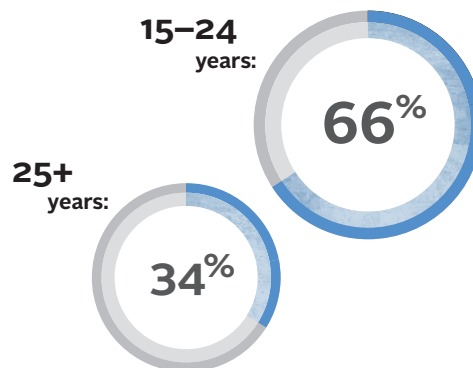
Callers by gender:



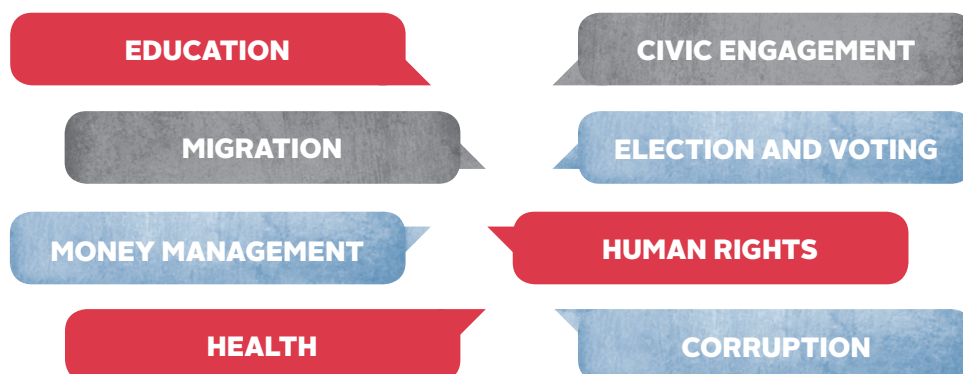
Callers by occupation:



Callers by age group:



Topics that produce the most debate, discussion, and interest are:





# Youth Voice

## II. Preferences for Youth Voice Program Segments



Youth Voice audience, producers and reference group members ranked their preferred program segments. Interestingly, the views of the audience were in contrast to that of the programs producers and reference group members. For listeners, *My Story* and *What's Up* ranked in the top three most preferred segments, whereas for producers and reference group members these segments ranked in the bottom three. Likewise, for *Speak Your Mind*, listeners ranked the segment last, while producers and members ranked it as the second most preferred. This reflects a contrast in the views of the audience, and producers and reference group members on how they perceive the program overall and each individual segment. The overall average rank for each segment is highlighted in the table below.

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### PROGRAM RATING BY AUDIENCE

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My Story	2
Discussion	2.5
What's Up	3.5
Rising Star	3.5
Ask Government	4
Speak Your Mind	5.5

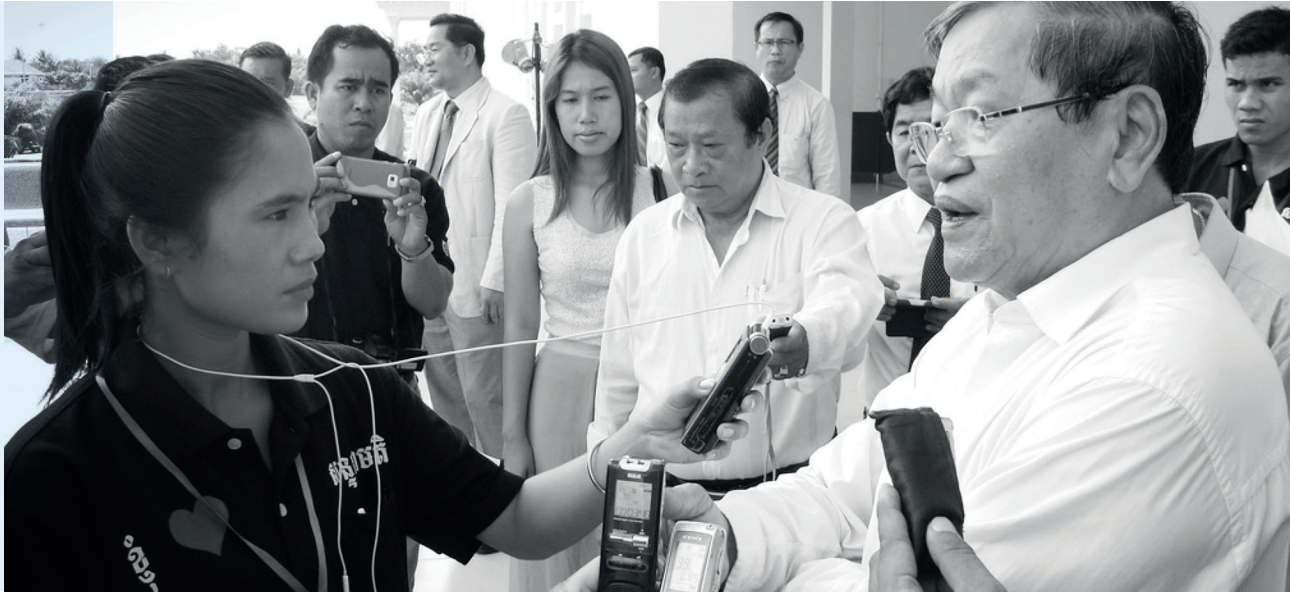
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### PROGRAM RATING BY YV STAFF (YRG AND YV PRODUCERS)

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Discussion	1
Speak Your Mind	3
Ask Government	3.5
My Story	4
What's Up	4.5
Rising Star	5

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**DISCUSSION** | Discussion on topical issues and subjects reflecting youth concerns within the community. The segment combines a feature story followed by callers commenting on the topic.

The *Discussion* segment appeals to the focus group participants (referred to as participants hereafter) because it provides them with an opportunity to share their experiences, but also hear stories from other young people who are facing similar concerns and challenges.

It is also an important segment because it motivates them to engage in community issues and helps to keep local authorities accountable to villagers' needs.

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**“I like listening to the program because Youth Voice motivates me to talk about both good and bad experiences I have had in my life.”**

MALE, FGD, 25, NON-STUDENT, BB PROVINCE

Across the focus groups and interviews, the *Discussion* segment was one of the most popular – with the exception of the rural, non-student focus group. Typically, urban students make up the large majority of callers to the program. As rural listeners may have limited ability to contact the program, this may have affected their interest in the segment.

**WHAT'S UP** | Information is provided on youth related activities taking place around the province. The segment also includes short radio stories that discuss relevant issues such as university debates, and cultural and sporting events. Other discussions are based on listeners' preference, including IT and science news.

Youth Voice listeners, and the program's producers and reference group members shared a similar perspective on the *What's Up* segment. Some participants discussed the value of *What's Up*, stating that it provides up-to-date information that keeps them informed on the latest news and current affairs. Other participants discussed how the up-to-date news attracted young people to listen in for topical news stories.

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**“I get updated news and want to know more about issues and find out more information.”**

FEMALE, FGD, 18, STUDENT, BB PROVINCE

**MY STORY** | A blog style segment that enables youth to express their experiences and concerns in their own way. The personal stories portray how individuals respond to or resolve issues and concerns facing their lives. Listeners are able to call the program after the segment to discuss the story.

*My Story* was a popular segment across all groups, and similarly across the rural and urban audience. Participants said the program provided a positive outlook and increased the confidence of listeners to speak their mind. Some participants discussed how the stories shared during the segment could evoke emotion and taught them to be strong and strive for a better life.

*My Story* encouraged young people to share their personal experiences, both positive and negative, so others could learn from these experiences. Other participants added that the audience learn from each other's successes and failures and the segment was a good way for young people to stay motivated. The Youth Voice audience was able to benefit from the personal story sharing because they could learn from their peers. Some participants discussed being motivated to participate in community development initiatives after hearing how others had been able to help in the development of their own community.

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**“I think that why young people like *My Story* segment is because this part enabled young people to be strong to speak their mind and be more confident to express their personal experiences.”**

MALE, FGD, 25, NON-STUDENT, BB PROVINCE



**RISING STAR** | An entertainment segment aimed at promoting young provincial talent. Young people are given a chance to pre-record a song on the phone or at the radio station and have it played on air. It is recommended the songs contain social messages. Rural Youth Voice listeners ranked *Rising Star* as their most preferred segment.

*Rising Star* contains entertainment for young people but also encourages young people to show their ability of writing and singing their own songs. Young people reported that they were interested to find out who would win the *best singer* award, decided by the Youth Voice production team.

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**“*Rising Star* gives opportunities for youth to show off ability of singing.”**

FEMALE, FGD, 22, NON-STUDENT, BB PROVINCE

\* *Speak Your Mind* and *Ask Government* were not discussed in detail by the research participants and are therefore not included in the analysis.



# Youth Voice

## III. Impact and Relevance of Youth Voice

III. Discussion with Youth Voice audience, the program's producers, and Youth Reference Group members revealed different impact areas of the program and what attracts people to listen. The key areas of impact are:

- Increased self-efficacy
- Improved information and knowledge – understanding youth issues
- Attitude and behaviour towards social and political issues

### INCREASED SELF-EFFICACY:

Youth Voice plays a critical role in producing important information that is relevant to young people living in Battambang province. The program also gives young people access to question local authorities on issues such as commune development and service delivery initiatives. Members of the Youth Reference Group, who help to assist and support the program, expressed that they have a higher level of self-efficacy and confidence and are more knowledgeable on authorities' actions and what authorities need to improve to respond to the needs of young Cambodians within the community. Reference group members also observed that some Youth Voice listeners had increased their engagement and participation in community development activities and were able to evaluate positive and negative initiatives implemented by the government.

Many participants who listen and call Youth Voice reported that they were more likely to speak their mind and share their views on service delivery issues, government initiatives, and the role and responsibilities of local authorities. Participants also highlighted their increased confidence to attend local meetings to discuss community and youth issues with local government representatives.

Other participants discussed feeling more confident to join community development activities, with some joining NGO and CSO led social development initiatives in their community after listening to the program. Youth Voice listeners discussed the value and importance of Youth Voice, stating that it provides a communication channel between them (the community) and local authorities, and provides the opportunity for youth to hold elected representatives accountable. They also discussed gaining the confidence to participate and contribute to community development initiatives and activities.



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**“I participated in monthly commune meetings, I speak my mind to voice [opinions] about villagers’ needs.”**

MALE, FGD, 24, STUDENT, BB PROVINCE

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**“In the past I was never interested in calling the Youth Voice program. My sister told me to listen to the program and I started listening. I become braver compared to the past. I was shy to express ideas in the past but nowadays I dare to make decisions and be more confident.”**

FEMALE, FGD, 22, STUDENT, BB PROVINCE





## **INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE – UNDERSTANDING YOUTH ISSUES**

The provision of information by Youth Voice on important youth issues was reported as a key area of impact of the program. Participants described the program as a source of information and knowledge on a range of important social and youth-related issues. Some participants, especially the more active callers and listeners, expressed that the information they had gained from the program helped them to communicate more effectively with commune chiefs and local authorities on community development issues that are important to them.

Other participants reported that the program provided them with information on how to participate in the political sphere, including how to engage with local authorities and government representatives and how to keep them accountable to the people they represent. They also commented that this information helped them become more active participants in the development of Cambodia.

Some participants mentioned that young people are an important development resource for Cambodia and are key to addressing development challenges facing Cambodia. They also emphasised that having a politically engaged and well-educated youth population was critical to responding to some of the challenges faced by the community and the country.

Participants reported that the programs focus on youth-specific issues enables civic engagement and provided young people with greater access to their elected officials. Participants also highlighted that it encouraged participation and engagement in social development issues at a community level.

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**“Youth Voice programming enhances youth to participate in community development to raise youth specific issues.”**

MALE, FGD, 24, STUDENT, BB PROVINCE

.....  
**“The program enables youth to participate in monthly commune meetings to raise issues related to commune development and planning.”**

MALE, FGD, 24, STUDENT, BB PROVINCE



## **ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES**

A focus of Youth Voice is to promote engagement in social and political issues. Some participants reported that listening to Youth Voice changed some of their attitudes and altered their behaviour because of discussions and topics featured on the program. Respondents found that the most significant shifts in attitude included an increased sense that youth have a voice within Cambodian society, that young people can contribute positively to the political process, and that they are independent and able to make decisions affecting their own lives.

In relation to Youth Voice programming, participants reported that the programs focus on youth-specific issues enables civic engagement and provided young people greater access to their elected officials. Participants also highlighted that Youth Voice encouraged participation and engagement in social development issues at a community level.

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**“This kind of Youth Voice program is really good because it allows young people to think of their future and stop making their parents worried about them because of their bad activities in the village.”**

FEMALE, FGD, 34, NON-STUDENT, BB PROVINCE

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**“Youth Voice advises me to be a good man and teaches me about issues in society that are related to young people’s issues.”**

MALE, FGD, 25, NON-STUDENT, BB PROVINCE





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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