

# Cambodia Agricultural Value Chain Program (CAVAC)

## Manual of Operations CAVAC Communications Plan

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**Australian Government**

**AusAID**



## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AWP	Annual Workplan
CAVAC	Cambodia Agricultural Value Chain Program
FWUC	Farmer Water User Community
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MOWRAM	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NSC	National Steering Committee
OC	Operational Contractor
PCC	Provincial Coordination Committee
PCO	Provincial Coordination Office (CAVAC provincial offices)
PDD	Program Design Document
PDWRAM	Provincial Department of Water Resources and Meteorology
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SMG	Sector Monitoring Group
TL	Team Leader

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## 1 PURPOSE AND OUTLINE

This plan is part of the Manual of Operations for the Cambodian Agricultural Value Chain Program (CAVAC).

Under the direction of the Team Leader and the management team (including the General Manager, Procurement Manager and all component managers), the program will follow a communications philosophy based on openness, collaboration and delivering on what is promised.

Transferring information and facilitating dialogue are central to the methodology of the program. Both require a strong focus on communication. In addition, CAVAC is a key program in the relationship between Australia and Cambodia. Strong communication between the program and its counterparts supports this relationship and its promotion.

This Communication Plan is a key tool in creating and maintaining the CAVAC reputation among stakeholders. For the purposes of this paper, CAVAC divides the Program stakeholders into two key groups:

**AusAID / Government / Donors and Development partners** – CAVAC will have a reputation for partnership with these stakeholders. Working with these partners, the Program aims to be collaborative, open, professional and helpful.

**Private Sector, NGOs and other business delivery channels** – CAVAC will have a reputation with these stakeholders as fair but tough. The Program will work with these partners in a businesslike manner, and focus on being a ‘deliverer’ and an effective market player. As a business, CAVAC will work towards: competitive neutrality; respecting commercial in confidence arrangements; meeting commitments on time; and cultivating a “deal” mood.

Overall, CAVAC’s image and reputation will be created through the attitude and action of all members of the team. This Plan outlines the aims and key mechanisms (both external and internal) for creating and maintaining this reputation.

## 2 DONOR /GOVERNMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

CAVAC’s key government partners in implementation include AusAID, the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), and the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM). CAVAC also has a broader role to play in the development community with other donors in the sector, particularly with the Technical Working Group on Agriculture and Water and other relevant technical working groups

The basis of our relationship with these partners will be based around three key principles, which will be cultivated through the attitudes and actions of all staff.

The three key principles are:

- Collaboration
- Openness
- Professionalism

## **2.1 Communication Lines**

**As a general rule, the Team Leader is the primary senior point of contact for the Program. In his absence, the General Manager is the primary contact.**

Specifically, the Team Leader is the point of contact for technical, operational and strategic matters. The General Manager is the point of contact for administrative, logistical, financial management, procurement and human resource matters. In addition, the Research and Extension Manager plays a dual role as the ACIAR in-country representative, and is the key contact for ACIAR related matters on CAVAC.

### **Key Points of Engagement:**

- The Team Leader and General Manager are the key contacts for government stakeholders AusAID and the RGC. Both parties will be cc'ed on all email correspondence (unless there is a reason not to). The exception for this is ACIAR matters, where the Research and Extension Manager will be the key contact.
- The two Co-Deputy Team Leaders (one each representing MAFF and MOWRAM) will provide direct links to their respective ministries. The Team Leader and Co-Deputy Team Leaders will be supported by two Assistant Team Leaders who will be based in the CAVAC Phnom Penh office.
- Staff are encouraged to engage with government counterparts, however official contact with senior officials should be limited to the Team Leader, General Manager, ACIAR In-country Representative, and other Managers as appropriate. Only the General Manager can generate emails without prior approval to Senior Government officials, and all emails must be cc'ed to the Team Leader.
- Staff are encouraged to liaise with donor partners and should be willing to share information. Formal strategies for engaging other donor programs should be approved and coordinated with AusAID and the counterpart donor's country / regional office.
- All CAVAC documents are to be available to share with counterparts and donor partners, and any exceptions to this rule will be clearly noted on the document.

## 2.2 Specific Stakeholder Arrangements

### National Steering Committee (NSC)

The Team Leader is the key contact for the NSC. The NSC meets biannually; the agenda and other key documents will be distributed in advanced. At the request of partners the draft minutes of the meeting will be distributed within two days of the meeting to enable partners to use this information for their internal reporting requirements.

### NSC Executive Group

NSC comprises of the 2 co-chairs from MAFF and MOWRAM and representatives of AusAID. The executive group can meet between formal NSC meetings and can take decisions that should not wait for the next NSC meeting.

### Provincial Coordination Committee (PCC)

The PCC will work closely with the Team Leader and program team on intervention design and implementation in provinces. In addition, the PCC will provide a local perspective to the NSC. The PCC will meet quarterly and members will meet with CAVAC Provincial Coordinators regularly. Communication protocols are yet to be finalised but will be done so in consultation with PCC members.

### AusAID

It is paramount that the Program ensures AusAID, as the Program donor, is kept up to date with progress, both formally through contractual reporting requirements and informally through regular communication. Key contact points in the CAVAC office are the Team Leader and General Manager. Australian based contacts include contractor representatives from ACIAR and Cardno Emerging Markets; Mr Gamini Keerthisinghe and Mr Bruce Coyne, respectively.

Contractual requirements include:

**Written reports** : Annual workplans, six-monthly progress and procurement reports, monthly exception reports, activity completions reports, and the program completion report will be provided electronically to AusAID and kept on record at the Program management office.

**Meetings**: six-monthly planning and review meetings, and other meetings as agreed, will continue throughout program implementation. Agendas are to be circulated a reasonable time beforehand and minutes distributed promptly and kept on record at the Program management office.

### Sector Monitoring Group

AusAID will establish a Sector Monitoring Group (SMG) to provide independent, expert performance monitoring and strategic advice on CAVAC and AusAID's broader support to

agriculture and rural development in Cambodia. The SMG will report to AusAID and the NSC. The SMG will, comprise four suitably qualified experts, I visit the Program collectively or individually 1-2 times per year. The Team Leader, General Manager, and ACIAR In-country Representative will collaborate with the SMG, briefing them and providing them with additional information as required.

### **RGC Ministries**

The Team Leader, General Manager and ACIAR In-country Representative will be responsible for establishing effective working relationships between implementing partners, including RGC institutions at all levels. There will be active and regular liaison with MAFF and MOWRAM in particular on matters concerning the Program and its implementation. The Team Leader, General Manager and ACIAR In-country Representative will ensure that MAFF and MOWRAM are kept well-informed of progress through regular formal and informal communication.

The Program will maintain communication with other RGC Ministries and working groups, including the Technical Working Group on Agriculture and Water, other relevant Technical Working Groups, the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC), Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Rural Development , by:

- participating in meetings, forums, workshops and briefings when requested;
- encouraging and supporting participation of agencies at key Program meetings forums and workshops; and
- working jointly and actively with MAFF and MOWRAM to support and encourage the sector and program approaches to the development of the sector.

### **Farmer Water User Communities (FWUC)s**

A partnerships approach will be taken in supporting the development of FWUCs. A significant role for the RGC, particularly MOWRAM and the Provincial Department of Water Resources and Metrology (PDWRAM) exists in developing FWUCs, and it will be critical to generate commitment from local authorities and the community.

The Team Leader and General Manager will be responsible for maintaining regular, effective communication with key focal points within MOWRAM and PDWRAM. Program staff will be responsible for providing information and support as required to local PDWRAM authorities and FWUCs, including encouraging and supporting the participation of FWUC members at key meetings, and working in close coordination to establish participatory planning and development approaches. Emphasis will be on a two-way exchange of knowledge. Allowing sufficient time for the participation of local stakeholders will also be critical to effective

communication. Program material to be used at this level should be prepared in a style and manner that is readily useable, easy to read and understand, and clear in its purpose. When necessary, Program material should be supported by face-to-face individual or group briefings.

### **Other donors, development partners, and civil society groups**

In addition, the Program will actively and regularly liaise with other donors development partners (including World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Cambodia Development Resource Institute, International Development Enterprises Cambodia (IDE), etc), and key civil society organisations and individuals to achieve program objectives. Staff are encouraged to liaise with other partners and should be willing to share information that is not sensitive or confidential. Participation by program staff in workshops, seminars and forums will be encouraged where appropriate, and approved by the Team Leader, General Manager and/or ACIAR In-country Representative. Staff will also encourage and support participation of other stakeholders at key sector and Program meetings, forums and workshops to encourage learning and the sharing of information.

### **2.3 Feedback**

Open dialogue and two-way learning are essential to both the 'open architecture' design of the Program and to working towards alignment with country systems. Any feedback provided on the Program by any of the stakeholders should be recorded and responded to through identified coordination / liaison officers for particular program aspects.

Feedback expected and requested at meetings, workshops and training, whether written or verbal (to be decided by level of participants and forum as to what would be most effective), is to be recorded and passed on to relevant program personnel.

## **3 PRIVATE SECTOR, NGOS AND OTHER BUSINESS DELIVERY CHANNELS**

CAVAC's key private sector stakeholders include business associations, commercial traders, processors, and input suppliers, and the aim is to develop mutually beneficial partnerships and market connections. The Program will also engage with NGOs and other delivery channels such as communities in developing its business arrangements. With private sector and business stakeholders, CAVAC will operate in a business-like manner, and focus on being a 'deliverer' who is reliable, market-driven, and tough yet fair. Table 1 below, demonstrates the breath of partners.

**Table1: PRIVATE SECTOR, NGOS AND OTHER BUSINESS DELIVERY CHANNELS**

Type of relationship	Institution	Interaction
Long-term development partners	Government institutions	Collaborating
	CARDI	Supporting
	Member of the technical working groups	Collaborating
	GDA, RUA, Bantambang University, Banteay Mean Chey Ag University, Prey Veng Ag University, Mean Chey Ag University	CARF, Knowledge sources, student mentoring,
	WB, IFAD, AFD, JICA , IFC etc	Collaborating
	CDRI	Collaborating, subcontracting
Short-term development partners	IDE, SNV, Asia Foundation	Collaborating
	Research companies	Subcontracting for surveys
	Consultants	Subcontracting for studies
	NGO's like CIDAC	Collaborating or supporting
Associations	FWUCS	Supporting, irrigation
	Rice Miller Associations, provincial and national	Supporting, marketing, policy
	Rice Exporter Association	Supporting, marketing
	Agricultural Machinery Import Association	Supporting, farmer knowledge
Private sector companies	Heng Pich Chhey Import Export Company	Supporting, extension
	Agritech Company	Supporting, extension
	Crop Bayer	Supporting, input markets
	Dupont	Supporting, input markets
	Syngenta	Supporting, input markets
	Indochina Gateway Capital Fund	Using as benchmarks
	BKK Capital Fund	Using as benchmarks
	Retailers and distributors	Supporting, input markets
Traders	Supporting, market information	

### 3.1 Communication Lines

**As with Donor/government partners, as a general rule the Team Leader is the primary senior point of contact for the Program. In his absence, the General Manager is the primary contact. In practice, the Team Leader will delegate much of this responsibility to the responsible managers.**

Specifically, the Team Leader is the point of contact for technical, operational and strategic matters. The General Manager is the point of contact for administrative, logistical, financial management, procurement and human resource matters.

**Key Points of Engagement:**

- The Team Leader and General Manager are the key contacts for private sector and business stakeholders. Both parties will be cc'd on all email correspondence (unless there is a reason not to). The ACIAR In-country Representative should also be cc'd on correspondence regarding the Research and Extension component of the Program.
- The Team Leader and General Manager are responsible for authorization of materials, in consultation with AusAID if necessary, as some material will remain contractually confidential or commercially sensitive.
- Suitable market rules will drive all business communication, including, for example, that all emails will be replied to within the day, commitments will be met on time, and competitive neutrality is to be maintained at all times.

## 4 PROMOTING THE PROGRAM

The program design includes a significant role for the media as a publicity and dissemination tool. This does not happen by itself, but requires building appropriate relationships and knowledge.

Program staff are encouraged to identify opportunities to publicise the success of the Program, sponsorship by AusAID and the role of Cardno and ACIAR.

**Note: No comment on any matter relating to the Program or related sector issues is to be made to the media without the prior approval of AusAID, and requests should be directed through the General Manager or Team Leader, or appropriate ACIAR In-country Representative.**

The Team Leader will seek endorsement of any media releases from the AusAID Post. The AusAID Activity Manager at Post will seek the approval of AusAID for any formal press releases and make submissions to AusAID's Canberra-based Public Affairs Branch.

AusAID is keen to promote their sponsorship of programs through signage and logos on documentation. Refer to Annex 1 for a copy of AusAID's guidelines for promotion of Australian identity.

### 4.1 Aims of Promotion

Any promotion undertaken by the Program needs to be linked with developing and honing key messages for different audiences to meet different aims. This is particularly important when engaging with the media. What these messages are depends on the aspect of the program being discussed, and what the key point that needs to get through is.

The aims of promotion include:

- To stimulate interest and buy-in by counterparts through the media.
- To disseminate information and ideas (including research, analysis, and new tools/methods) to a range of stakeholder audiences.
- To stimulate discussion on sector issues with the aim of changing behaviour and attitudes.
- To publicly support (through publicising research/evidence or expert opinion) reform-minded counterparts.
- To promote CAVAC to Australian audiences as a program central to the bilateral relationship between Australia and Cambodia.

## 4.2 Communication Lines and Methods

**Media comments:** Information released to the media (such as press releases) or responses to requests for comment from the media must be approved by AusAID. AusAID provides clear rules to AusAID officials or program personnel providing comment. Only senior A-Based personnel (Head of AusAID post) should comment to the media. This should include at least two English speakers and two Khmer speakers – so an authorised spokesperson is likely to always be on hand in either language.

Within these limits, comments to the media should be clear and concise, avoiding jargon as much as possible and should respond to the questions asked, not avoid them. Requests for comment should be responded to as quickly as possible, taking account of media outlets' deadlines.

There will be media interest in program activities, such as VIP visits and stakeholder workshops, which can be used as significant publicity tools. These activities do not allow for as controlled a response, so it is important that journalists are referred to senior program / AusAID personnel at the event and that key messages have been developed and agreed upon beforehand.

**Media as a publicity tool:** The type of media to use will vary depending on the message being promoted and the target audience. Radio or grassroots dissemination tools will be most effective for reaching farmers, but suitable media methods can also support the opening of debate on policy issues or exploring the role / changing attitudes on business organisations in agriculture. In these cases the national press, as read by decision makers, or business media would be the logical choices to use.

Any planned use of the media for publicity or information dissemination reasons should take account of these two basic questions: Who is the target audience and what is the key

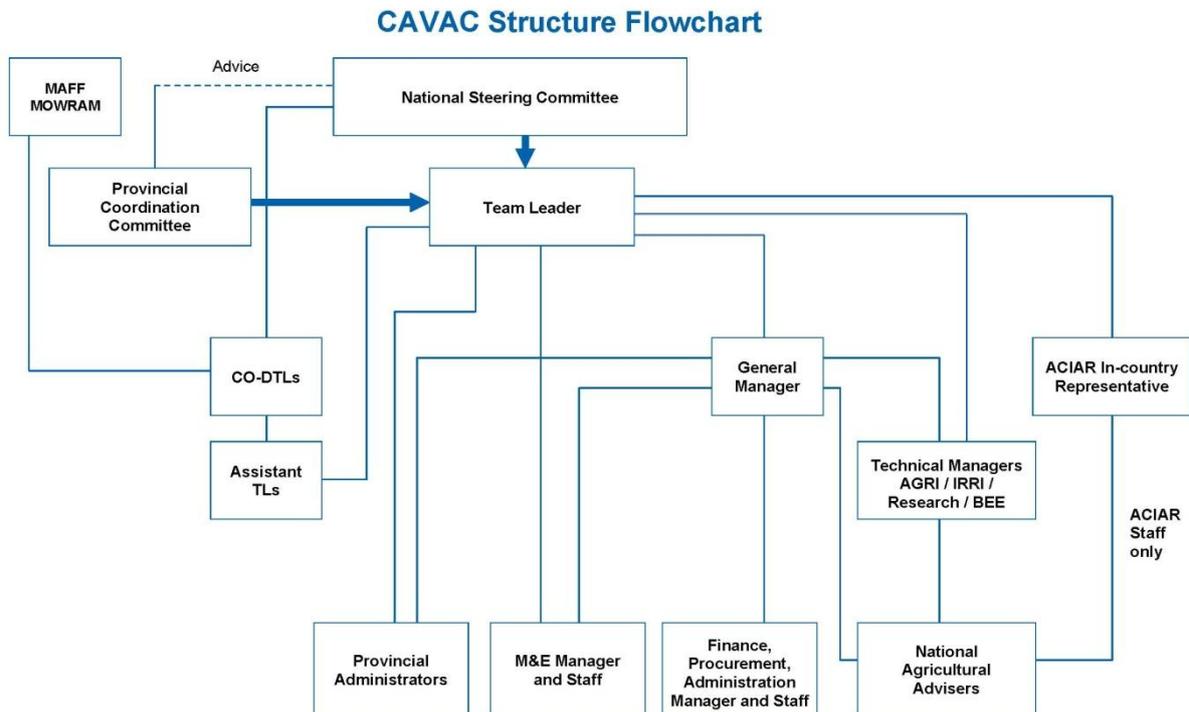
message that needs to get through? As above, publicity material needs to be approved by AusAID and conform to contractual requirements.

**Key events:** On a number of occasions it is likely CAVAC and AusAID actively will look for media coverage. These events will include the official Program Launch, Annual stakeholder meetings, CARF symposia, handing over of irrigation schemes or major seminars jointly organized by CAVAC and the two line ministries. In these cases draft media releases will be prepared by the program and submitted to AusAID for approval. In each case specific instructions will be requested from AusAID without which no media coverage will be requested.

**CAVAC signage:** AusAID Post is in the process of seeking advice on CAVAC signage from the Public Affairs staff in Canberra. Upon receipt of this advice, the manual will be updated.

## 5 CAVAC INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

### 5.1 CAVAC Organisational Structure



### 5.2 Communication Lines

Informally, communication within the team and across the technical and support staff is actively encouraged and supported as a means of learning. Sharing program information amongst personnel at all levels enhances team building efforts and creates a supportive work environment.

For formal matters, contracts and induction briefings will clearly show who each team member reports to (program staff and sub-contractors), as well as detail official channels for any complaints against an immediate supervisor or other staff member (e.g. for sexual harassment).

The main language of communication for the program office will be English, including for scheduled meetings and recorded written / email communication. Khmer is expected to be used freely, however, by Khmer-speaking team members for any communication that does not involve a non-Khmer speaker.

### 5.3 Mechanisms

The design of the program and its structure – four separate components across a national office and three provincial offices, involving a range of stakeholders – means good communication is vital to ensuring activities and teams are not left isolated. Even in the best

situation with a harmonious and cooperative team, a structure supporting regular communication is required.

The structure and mechanisms to support good internal communication will include:

- **Team meetings** – a formal team meeting will be held at least bi-weekly. Minutes are to be completed and made promptly available to staff who are not able to attend the meeting. Less formal and more purpose driven communication amongst team members will occur regularly as the need demands.
- **Provincial Coordinators** – will have regular contact with the team, and fortnightly meetings with the Team Leader, or nominated representative.
- **Managing administrative issues** - the OC and ACIAR will have regular communication with their respective program managers in Australia.
- **Reporting** - managers will provide monthly updates by the 25th day of each month which the Team Leader will compile into exception reports, and other six monthly and annual reports required by AusAID. The Team Leader will finalise the report with support from the OC and ACIAR as required.
- **Email** - will be extensively used throughout the program. Web-based access will be available to ensure remote access. See Annex 2 for Computer Use and Security Policy and Guidelines.
- **Internet** - All staff will have access to the internet. Internet access is strictly for work purposes only. See Annex 2 for Computer Use and Security Policy and Guidelines.
- **Laptops** - All staff members who regularly travel will have access to a laptop with wireless access.
- **Mobile phones** - will be a key tool for communication for team members working outside of the main office. Mobile numbers will be included on a regularly updated contact list.
- **Calendar** – a three-month program calendar including all major meetings, travel, leave, public holidays (Cambodia and Australia) will be sent to all staff on a regular basis (e.g. first Monday of the month). This will be compiled by the relevant Administration Officer, and will be used as a key management tool.
- **Internal communications list** - with team members' positions, names, phone numbers (including emergency contacts) and email addresses will be distributed internally and updated regularly. It will include clear instructions for all staff about colleagues' privacy and when it is appropriate to call at home or out of work hours, with some of this information restricted to certain key personnel.

## 5.4 Printing, Managing and Storing Data

For communication purposes, program data needs to be easily accessible by relevant program personnel (wherever they are located) and up to date. This includes the proper electronic and paper filing (where appropriate) of external and internal reports, meeting agendas and minutes, any training materials created / used as part of the program, documents or other items in the research library. Standard file names for the documents are to be used, which enable easy identification and access by staff to the relevant files.

An online archival system will file relevant email correspondence. Hardcopies of other correspondence to and from the Program Office/staff will be filed in the centralised Program file system at the central Program Office in Phnom Penh. All Provincial Offices are to provide copies of all email and hardcopy correspondence to be filed electronically or in paper form by the relevant Administration Officer at the main Program Office.

In order to file and track reports, the General Manager will establish and maintain a Reports Register which will include the report title, the principal author(s), the date, report status (draft, approved etc.) and dissemination conditions and instructions. All reports will be uniquely numbered using codes, such as:

TR	Training	S	Security
C	Construction	A	International Staff Completion Report
MP	Monthly Report	P	Procedure
AP	Annual Plan	T	Technical
Q	Quarterly		

Each report under each code will be sequentially numbered, for example the third training report will be numbered TR003, and filed accordingly.

## 6 PROTOCOLS AND OVERARCHING ISSUES

This section includes points on consistency and quality in presenting program information for both internal and external communications.

### 6.1 Languages

The main language for program-related communication is English. This includes reporting and administrative documents, and both verbal and written communication which is contractually required by AusAID to be used or stored. Khmer will still be used widely within the program, both formally and informally. For use of English and Khmer in internal

communications, see above in Section 4.2 'CAVAC Internal Communications: Communication Lines'.

The program team should use their judgement and knowledge of counterparts to decide on which meetings or forums will need to be conducted bilingually. Working in two languages can affect both the time available and atmosphere, or flow, of verbal forums, and this needs to be taken into account when planning agendas, deciding on the outcomes expected, and planning the workshop styles to be used (e.g. will a facilitated workshop be effective using two languages with a counterpart group?).

**Written materials** – The official program documents, including official minutes, will always need to be in English. The program team will need to determine which meetings will also require Khmer minutes, taking into account that distribution lists might include a wider audience than just attendees. Translations need to be consistent – only one translated version should be distributed and recorded - and reflect the quality standards of the program.

The preparation of training documents, promotional materials (including posters and banners as well as pamphlets etc.) and any briefing notes for the media will require adequate time for translation. A bilingual program team member with strong language skills and sector knowledge will be responsible for checking the quality of all materials (e.g. spelling, grammar, correct language usage, for both English and Khmer materials), especially on materials that go to outside translators and printers.

**Working with interpreters and translators** – The program team will need to determine the appropriate level of interpreters needed in each situation, however it is envisaged that as much as possible professional, experienced interpreters (spoken word) and translators (written word) will be employed for sizable work such as training sessions, important or long meetings (including media interviews) or for journal articles and training materials. Knowing two languages is different from being able to translate across them. It is unreasonable to expect Khmer-speaking team members to fulfil these roles if they are not professionally trained. As discussed above, a bilingual team member who has strong language and sectoral knowledge should also be responsible for checking the quality of any materials translated by a contractor.

## **6.2 Website**

The website is a major source of information about the program and one of its key communication and promotion tools. The website is also a mechanism for public comment and response. It is a contractual requirement to develop the website providing public access to information on the goal and objectives of the program, and progress towards achieving the component outputs and outcomes. Information on recruitment, procurement and funding opportunities will also be posted on the site.

The same quality standards apply to material on the website as to other written materials produced by the program (see 'Spelling and Style' below). The website should be accessible (including in a font size which is suitable for vision impaired readers) and easy to navigate.

Content additional to that which is contractually required will be determined by the program team. Suggestions on content and its presentation or usefulness should be encouraged, both from within the team and from other stakeholders, throughout the life of the program. Final sign-off on content is the responsibility of the Team Leader.

### **6.3 Styles and Protocols**

#### **Emails**

The program will follow a one-day response protocol, even if the reply merely states that the email has been received and will be attended to. Program emails will all have a standard signature tag; see the template in Annex 3. Team members going on leave or travelling should provide an alternative contact in their 'Out of Office' auto-reply. An archival system will file relevant email correspondence.

#### **Telephone and faxes**

Program office phones should be answered with a consistent short introduction in English and Khmer (where possible). Team members should be encouraged to answer colleagues' phones and offer to take a message rather than leave phones unanswered. Administration staff will have rotating lunchtimes to ensure the phones and fax machine are manned at all times.

#### **Printing**

The Program office is to operate on a low paper principle. Emails instead of paper or faxes should be used whenever practical, both for internal memos and for communications with clients and customers. Correspondence that is to be filed in hard copy form needs to be clearly identified, and other email messages should not be printed unless it is really necessary.

#### **Spelling and Style**

The quality of documents reflects on the program, so all written material should maintain high standards of accuracy, spelling and grammar, and be presented clearly.

Australian spelling and grammar consistent with AusAID usage for documents written in English should be used.

## **Branding, Logos and Templates**

Contractual requirements permitting, program materials should be consistently branded. This not only supports promotion, but also reflects the high quality standards of the program.

AusAID requirements on the use of logos is included in Annex 1.

Both Khmer and English should be used where possible, e.g. business cards should be in English on one side and Khmer on other.

Templates for the following items should be developed and attached to this document, or in a corresponding electronic file:

- Email signature
- Business cards
- Letterheads
- Event invitations
- PowerPoint slides (and other presentations)
- Training / workshop handouts
- Certificates of Attendance
- Banners / posters
- Web page