

CRC 1342 No.41

# Social Policy Country Briefs

Cambodia



Fangyue Diana Bao

Education policy in Cambodia:  
global transformation  
processes, IOs' influence  
and cultural spheres



Global Dynamics  
of Social Policy CRC 1342



Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft

**Fangyue Diana Bao**

Education policy in Cambodia: global transformation processes, IOs' influence and cultural spheres

CRC 1342 Social Policy Country Briefs, 41

Edited by Kerstin Martens, Dennis Niemann, Cherine Sabry and David Krogmann

Bremen: CRC 1342, 2024



SFB 1342 Globale Entwicklungsdynamiken von Sozialpolitik /  
CRC 1342 Global Dynamics of Social Policy

A04: Global developments in health care systems and long-term  
care as a new social risk

Contact: [crc-countrybrief@uni-bremen.de](mailto:crc-countrybrief@uni-bremen.de)

Postadresse / Postaddress:

Postfach 33 04 40, D - 28334 Bremen

Website:

<https://www.socialpolicydynamics.de>

[DOI <https://doi.org/10.26092/elib/3076>]

[ISSN 2700-4392]

Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

(DFG, German Research Foundation)

Projektnummer 374666841 – SFB 1342

Fangyue Diana Bao

Education policy in Cambodia:  
global transformation  
processes, IOs' influence  
and cultural spheres

CRC 1342  
No. 41

---

# EDUCATION POLICY IN CAMBODIA: GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES, IOs' INFLUENCE AND CULTURAL SPHERES

---

Fangyue Diana Bao\*

## Content

COUNTRY MAP .....	3
1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. THE CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA .....	4
a. History of Cambodia .....	4
b. History of Cambodia's Education .....	5
c. Current Structure of the Education System .....	6
d. Education Financing .....	7
3. INCLUSIVENESS AND GENEROSITY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM .....	9
a. National Policy .....	9
b. Specific Focus: Gender and Ethnicity .....	9
c. Challenges .....	10
4. INFLUENCES OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION .....	11
a. Religious and Cultural Influence: Buddhism .....	11
b. Impact of French Colonialism and Decolonization .....	12
c. Impact of the socialist phase .....	13
d. COVID-19 and distanced learning .....	13
5. INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL ACTORS/IOs .....	14
a. The Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) .....	14
b. International Financing .....	15
c. Forms of Collaboration .....	16
6. SYNTHESIS & SUMMARY OF RESULTS .....	17
7. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION .....	18
REFERENCES .....	19
APPENDIX .....	21

\* bao1@uni-bremen.de

## COUNTRY MAP



Source: <https://ontheworldmap.com/cambodia/> (Accessed June 5, 2024)

### 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Cambodia is a Southeast Asian country neighboring Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. By 2023, Cambodia's total population is 16.9 million and its annual GDP is 29.5 billion USD (World Bank 2024). As a lower middle-income country, Cambodia's GDP per capita is listed as No. 152 out of 191 countries and regions (IMF 2023). The capital of Cambodia is Phnom Penh (starred on the map, source: Google Maps). The official language of Cambodia is Khmer.

The country's written history can be traced back to the first century. Within the past two hundred years, the state encountered colonization, socialist ruling, and many other forms of external influence and experienced rounds of construction. It was a French colony between 1863 to 1953, with a brief period of Japanese occupation during World War II. Cambodia also experienced one of the most extreme killings since the Second World War. In 1975-79, the Khmer Rouge, the socialist regime in Cambodia, caused roughly 2 million deaths, which consisted of nearly one-third of the total population of the country at the time (University of Minnesota, n.d.). In the following ten years, there was continuous warfare. In 1993, the Kingdom of Cambodia re-established its order.

Since then, Cambodia started to rebuild its education system and has made notable progress. From almost no schools or teachers in the late 1980s, the country today has an adult literacy rate of 84% and a 110% primary school gross enrolment rate (World Bank 2022). 95% of children complete primary education, while female enrollment rate in primary and lower secondary levels is higher than male. The country has achieved impressive progress since reconstruction.

It is even more remarkable considering the boost of Cambodia's population – the population of Cambodia increased from 6 million in 1979 to 16.9 million in 2023, indicating a 166% growth rate in the past four decades (UN Population Fund 2024). Globally, 25% of the world population is under 15 years old and 10% is over 65 years old. But in Cambodia, around 30% of the total population in Cambodia is under the age of 14, and only

<sup>1</sup> The author thanks Maren Steinert and Duncan MacAulay for their support in writing this article, as well as Roy Karadag, Kressen Thyen, Michael Windzio, Fabian Besche-Truth, Helen Seitzer and Judith Albrecht for their helpful comments.



around 5% of the population is over 65 years old (UN Population Fund 2024). In other words, promoting Cambodia's education has been challenging in the past four decades, since the country has a higher proportion of the under-age population and a lower number of middle-age labor forces.

Nevertheless, despite the impressive progress demonstrated by the statistics, Cambodia still suffers from its lack of schools, qualified teachers, insufficient resources, and weak governance, which led to unsatisfying education attainment results (USAID 2019, Interviews 3 and 5 on Cambodia, 2024). In 2016, Cambodia participated in the Programme for International Student Assessment for Development (PISA-D), and then in 2021, Cambodia attended the large-scale PISA (OECD 2023), but Cambodia is listed bottom among all the participating countries and economies. Experts also report a mismatch between the "glamorous data" presented online and the de facto situations on the ground (Interviews 3, 4, and 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

Today, with a newly elected prime minister at the end of 2023 and a reformist minister of education, the state is undergoing education reforms, in the hope of strengthening its quality of labor by improving education quality and coverage. Some experts express their optimistic views about the future of the reform since the new prime minister has built a reputation of being practical and determined, while others remain critical because the government has been questioned for its weak governance for over two decades (Interviews 2,3 and 5 on Cambodia, 2024). Cambodia has achieved incredible improvements in reconstructing its education system, but the education quality and attainment are inadequate.

This research aims to understand the impact of international influences on Cambodia's national education policy. The paper will start with an overview of the current state and developments of education policy in Cambodia. It will then proceed to explain how processes such as decolonization, and the end of socialism are related to today's education. Finally, the paper will illustrate how international actors and external events influence education policy in Cambodia.

This case study is based on qualitative data gained from combining in-depth semi-structured interviews with documentary analysis. The data (including 18 government policy documents, 8 IO documents, and 5 reports) was analyzed using the qualitative content analysis method. Five experts are interviewed, including IO staff, Cambodian government advisors, local education project managers, and researchers. A visit to Cambodia also helped the author to understand the context and background of the country.

## 2. THE CURRENT STATE OF EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

### a. History of Cambodia

Cambodia is part of mainland Southeast Asia, along with Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, whereas Maritime Southeast Asia mainly comprises Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, and more islands. The region has thousands of years of history and Cambodia is no exception. The history of Cambodia fosters its distinctive language and culture, which allowed the people of Cambodia to keep their own national identity through being colonized, occupied, and changing regimes in the later centuries. The history of Cambodia explains why such a small Southeast Asian country remains relatively independent and distinctive in the face of global transformation.

Cambodia was once one of the most influential countries in Asia. It was first known as Phù Nam (or Funan Empire) from the first to the sixth century, which was seen as one of the most important states in Southeast Asia. Established in the 9th century, the Khmer (Cambodia) Empire had existed for more than six hundred years. At its peak, it took part of the land from Laos, Vietnam, and eastern Thailand, and stretched as far as southern China. The world-famous Angkor Wat temple complex was built during this period. By the 16th century, the state turned weak and sought help from stronger neighboring countries such as Siam (Thailand) and Vietnam.

Since the second half of the 19th century, Cambodia has been occupied, first by the French, and then by the Japanese. In 1863, Cambodia was colonized by France, marking the beginning of nearly a century of colonization. However, Cambodia was not the main target of France, since they considered Cambodia as only part of its greater Indo-China plan. Cambodia's neighboring country Vietnam, with more land and population, was the main target of France. Hence, French officials in Cambodia did not press for greater control over internal affairs in Cambodia until the late 1870s. In 1941, Japanese forces briefly occupied the component states of French Indochina while leaving the French in administrative control. After WWII, the French returned. Then, in 1953, after years of rebellions and political movements, Cambodia declared independence under Sihanouk. Nevertheless,

global conflicts still affect the country. During the Cold War, although it initially managed to remain neutral, Cambodia was drawn into the Vietnamese War, and its domestic politics were affected.

Over the next three decades, the country experienced a phase of civil wars and domestic chaos. In March 1970, General Lon Nol overthrew Sihanouk and established a Republic state, symbolizing the beginning of the Cambodian Civil War and the US Cambodian Campaign. In April 1975, the **Khmer Rouge**, a communist political group, allied with Sihanouk, captured Phnom Penh and declared the establishment of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Between 1975 and 1979, the Cambodian Genocide was an explosion of mass violence that saw between 1.5 and 3 million people killed at the hands of the Khmer Rouge (University of Minnesota, n.d.). In 1979, Vietnamese troops captured Phnom Penh and established the People's Republic of Kampuchea, bringing an end to the rule of the Khmer Rouge. Due to pressure from China, Vietnamese troops withdrew in Sep 1989. A free election was held under UN monitoring in 1993, marking the establishment of the new country. Since then, the state started to grow rapidly with support from the international community.

## b. History of Cambodia's Education

The different phases of Cambodian history are reflected in the development of its education system. The history of Cambodian education can be traced back to the first century. It began in the religious tradition, combining ideas from Hinduism and Buddhism. Cambodian culture is formed based on the joint influence of India, China, and Khmer-Mon cultures (Jin Su 2021, 18). Traditionally, Cambodian education took place in the Buddhist monasteries (Wats and pagodas) and was offered exclusively to the male population. The education involved basic literature, the foundation of religion, and skills for daily life, such as carpentry, artistry, craftwork, constructing, and playing instruments. The courses were taught in ancient Khmer and Sanskrit (Jin Su 2021, 20-25). During the peak of the Khmer Empire, two universities were constructed, under the administration of King Jayavarman VII's wife, Queen Andra Devy between 1181 and 1220 A.D. (Em et al. 2023, 144). At the time, Brahmanism was the national religion. The god of Brahman appears in all the former occasions. Children need to serve Brahman before entering religious school and receiving education. Different from a modern structure school system, the Buddhist schools did not have a fixed schedule or standardized curriculum, teaching was provided by the local monks and was organized in a flexible form.

It was the French who established a structured and modern school system in Cambodia. When the French arrived in the second half of the 19th century, Chandler (1991, 156) found that the French government did not interfere the Cambodian education during the first two decades of colonization. Starting from the beginning of the 20th century, the colonial government introduced the "French Modern Education System" and established Khmer French Schools. The French established the '6+4+2+1' model, which included six years of primary education, four years of lower secondary education, two years of upper secondary education with an examination, and the final year of upper secondary school (Em et al. 2003, 146). However, such an education only served the elite community. The coverage of the French education system was limited – almost all the students were French or Cambodians from aristocratic backgrounds. Some scholars believe that the French government prevented the majority of Cambodians from receiving education to secure their rule (Chandler 1991, 156, Clayton 1995, 2). By the end of the colonization, the French schools had rarely accepted ordinary Cambodian students. Still, it marked the beginning of Cambodia's modern education, and for the first time in history, girls had the opportunity to receive formal education. In the following fifty years, the Cambodians imitated the French school model, expanded it to the general education level, and opened four higher education institutions (Em et al. 2003, 147).

The education structure in Cambodia remained stable even after its independence from France. However, it was severely challenged by the socialist Khmer Rouge since its mass killings caused devastating damage to Cambodia's education. Teachers were killed during the genocide, and universities were closed down. During the civil wars that followed, the education system suffered a chronic crisis. Although the first civil war ended in 1979, another civil war and factional fighting persisted until 1996 when the remnants of the Khmer Rouge fell apart, and a coup de force against the Royalist Party in 1997 consolidated the position of the incumbent (Gottesman 2004). Education in Cambodia then experienced a lengthy reconstruction after the 1980s, experiencing gradual reconstruction from almost "nothing" (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024).

The 1993 Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia rebuilds the national education system. It lays down the right to education for all citizens (Art. 65). It is based on the principles of educational freedom and quality (Art. 66), free primary and secondary education, for at least nine years, is guaranteed by the constitutional document (Art. 68) and



is reaffirmed in the 2007 Education Law (Art. 31) (UNESCO 2021). It makes a strong commitment of the country to the Education for All (EFA) approach as acknowledged in Chapter VI, Articles 65 & 68 which stated:

The State shall provide free primary and secondary education to all citizens in public schools. Citizens shall receive education for at least nine years. The State shall protect and upgrade citizens' rights to quality education at all levels and shall take necessary steps for quality education to reach all citizens.

### c. Current Structure of the Education System

The population of Cambodia is 16.9 million (World Bank 2023), and 90% of the population is Khmer. The official language is Khmer, which is also the official language within the education system. Presently, the formal education structure of Cambodia is formulated in a 6+3+3 structure, which includes six years of primary education (Grade 1 to Grade 6), three years of lower secondary education (Grade 7 to Grade 9), and three years of upper secondary education (Grade 10 to Grade 12). The primary and lower secondary school, a total of nine years, are compulsory. In addition, there is at least one year for pre-school education (kindergarten) for children from 3 to below 6 years old, which is not part of the compulsory education.

According to the World Bank, the enrollment rate for primary education (% gross) is 110% in 2022 (World Bank 2023). However, it is noteworthy to point out that the definition of enrollment rate is "the ratio of students who have experienced Grade 1 education," which explains why the ratio is above 100% (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). Below are the key education indicators report on the dashboard of the UN Population Fund, which used net numbers.

**Table 1.** Key Indicators of Cambodia Education

Key Indicators	
Total Population	16.9 million (2023)
Official language	Khmer
Enrollment rate for primary education (% net)	87% (2022)
Enrollment rate for lower secondary education (% net)	82% (2022)
Enrollment rate for upper secondary education (% net)	56% (2022)
Gender parity index, total net enrolment rate, primary education	1 (2022)
Gender parity index, total net enrolment rate, lower secondary education	1.1 (2022)
Gender parity index, total net enrolment rate, upper secondary education	1.1 (2022)

Source: UN Population Fund 2024

The educational system is run by the Cambodian state, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). Education in Cambodia is guided by the five-year National Education Strategic Plan (ESP). The 2019-2023 ESP, which is currently implemented, focuses on two policy objectives: – First, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning; second, to ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels (MoEYS 2019). MoEYS developed eight core breakthrough indicators (CBI) to measure the progress toward the achievement of the above two objectives. According to the midterm review of the ESP, published in June 2022, even during the COVID-19 crisis, MoEYS managed to develop and implement education reforms in collaboration with development partners (MoEYS 2022). The details of CBI and the mid-term review of CBI can be found in Appendix 1.

Cambodia's education system is traditionally considered centralized, with full control under MoEYS. Still, in line with the objectives of the 2014–18 and the 2019-2023 national ESPs, decentralization has been taking place, with roles and responsibilities being transferred from the national level to sub-national councils, including the management tasks of the MoEYS. Introduced by a ministerial education policy advisor that is starting in 2024, the allocation of funds and recruitment of the local schools will be gradually transferred to local authorities from MoEYS (Interviews 3 and 5 on Cambodia, 2024). With this decentralization in mind, the ESP focused on strengthening the institutional capacity development of education staff (UNESCO 2021).

Private education exists at all levels and is run by the private sector. The private school enrollment rate was around 6% in 2019 (World Bank 2023). Most private schools offering pre-school education and general edu-



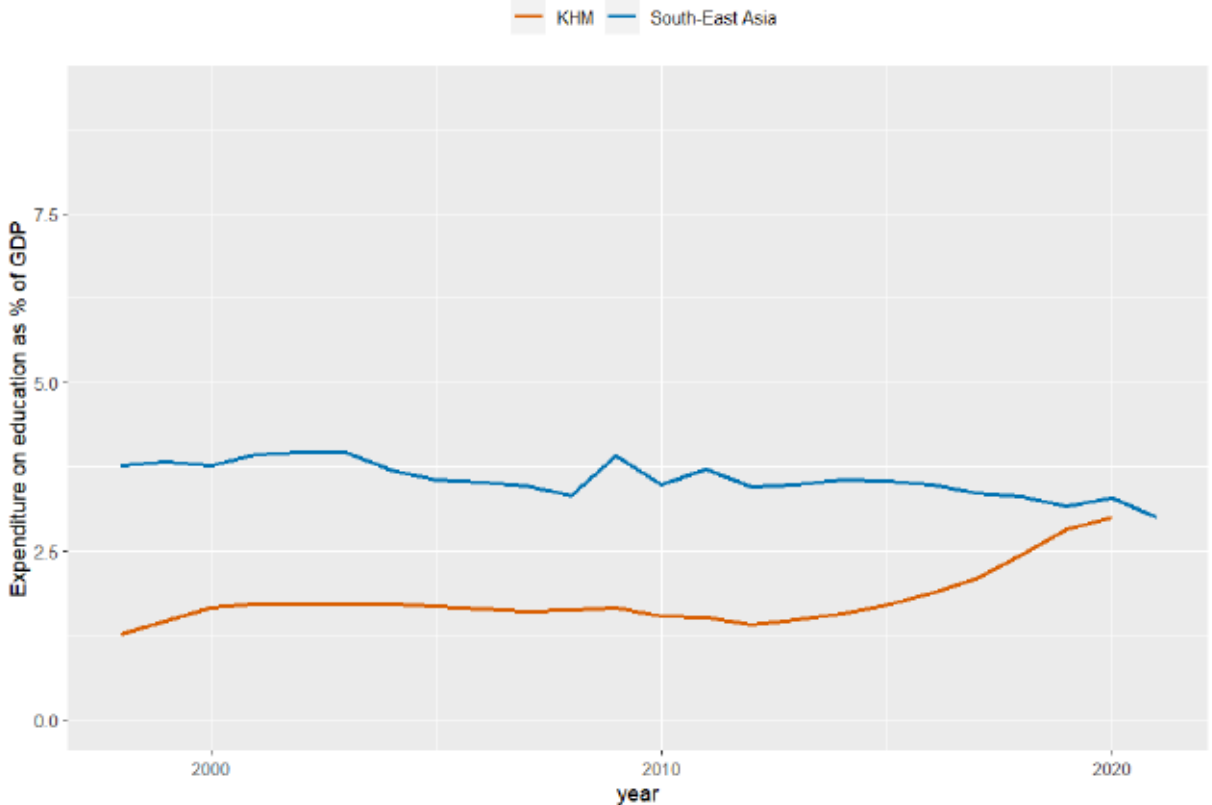
cation have been operated by communities of ethnic and religious minorities including Chinese, Muslim, French, English, and Vietnamese (USAID 2022). For instance, in 2021, there were 1307 private schools in Cambodia, which consisted of 1065 Khmer schools, 51 Chinese schools, and 33 Muslim schools (MoEYS 2011, originally in Khmer, translated by NEP). Private elite schools are accessible mainly in Phnom Penh, which are usually considered elite schools. Private schools are also available throughout the provinces of Cambodia (Interview 1 on Cambodia, 2023). Additionally, religious education remains present, which will be discussed further below.

Finally, it is noteworthy to mention that Cambodia is drafting its next ESP starting in 2024. It is believed that the new ESP will focus on improving school quality (Interviews 3 and 5 on Cambodia, 2024). A national school model will be proposed in mid-January of 2024, which will hold school leadership and administration accountable (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). The program will include an evaluation of school education quality and a systematic teacher training program. Since the teacher is the key to promoting education accessibility and quality; major programs such as formalizing teachers' professional education (Interview 3 on Cambodia, 2024). The new ESP will be outlined under the instruction of newly elected Prime Minister Hun Manet, who was elected in August of 2023. At the age of 46, he is perceived as a reformist and has made open speeches 2-3 times, covering various topics, such as education reforms (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). In addition, the current Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, started his service in 2013. He has also won a respectful reputation because he has initiated a series of programs, including promoting the anti-corruption movement, improving teacher professional training, and allocating education funds to the regional level to encourage decentralization (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). Hence, these two leaders would hopefully bring new opportunities for the development of Cambodia's education in the future.

d. Education Financing

Cambodia has limited public funding for education. Internationally, a benchmark for public education expenditure of 4% of GDP should be the aim to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal for education (SDG 4).

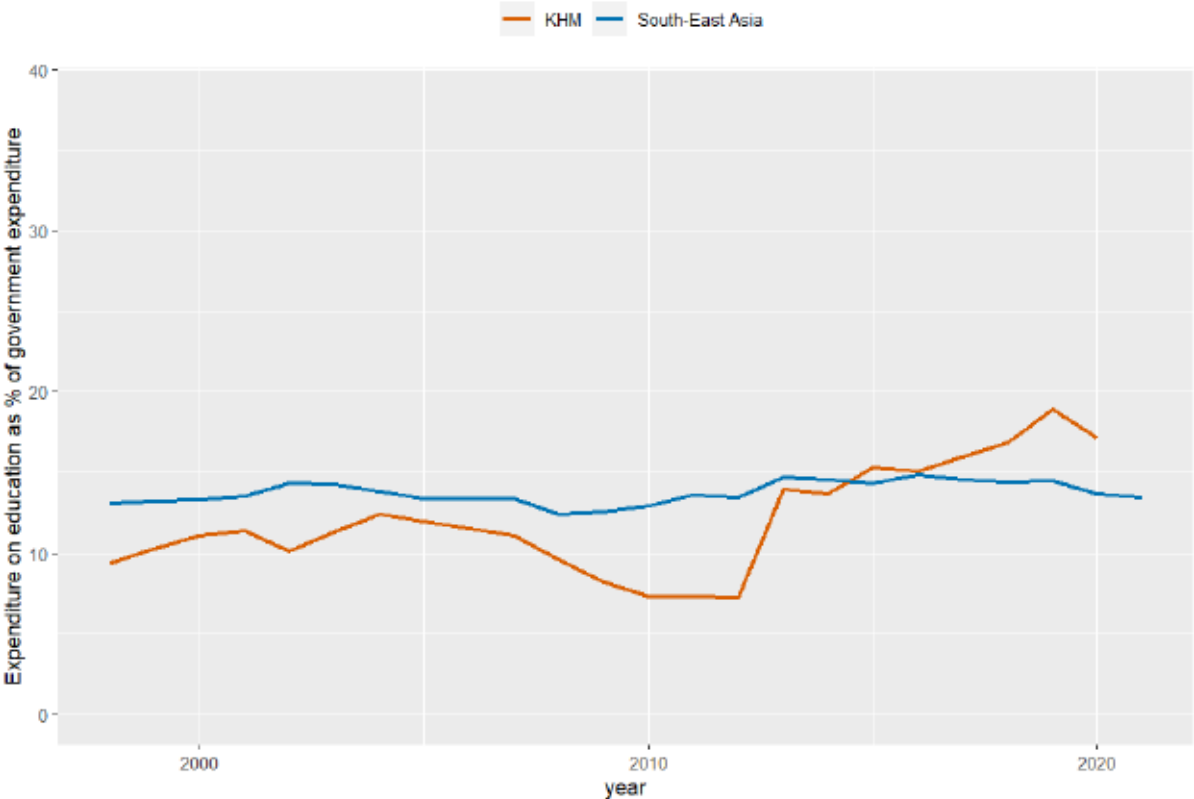
Figure 1. Government expenditure on education, total (% of GDP)



Source: World Bank 2023

However, Cambodia has failed to meet this standard. Before 2016, the government expenditure on education only consists of below 2% of the total GDP.

Figure 2. Government expenditure on education, total (% of government expenditure)



Source: World Bank 2023

In 2014, the new minister at MoEYS “projected a strong commitment to offering high-quality educational service to all Cambodians” and took a “bold reform” in increasing the educational budget (UNICEF 2023, 7). The Minister of MoEYS, Dr. Hangchuon Naron, the previous minister of the Ministry of Economics and Finance, started his service in 2013. Since then, he brought more funds for education and initiated a series of programs, including promoting the anti-corruption movement, improving teacher professional training, and allocating education funds to the regional level to encourage decentralization (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). The appropriation of funds to MoEYS increased from 2.47% of GDP in 2015 to 3.38% in 2020. However, it began to lose traction in 2021 and 2022 due to the pandemic. A similar pattern could be found in the government expenditure on education (see below), which also indicates a dramatic financial boost since 2013. In 2012, only 7% of government expenditure was allocated to education, and in 2013, this number increased to 14%.

Cambodia’s GDP per capita ranked lower compared to other Southeast Asian countries. Among all the ASEAN countries, Cambodia ranked 9 out of 10, with only Myanmar, the state with constant warfare, below. With limited public funding for education, the state relies heavily on external funding provided by international development partners, which leads to the result of a “donor-driven” model (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). The details of international financing will be explained in Part IV of this paper.

### 3. INCLUSIVENESS AND GENEROSITY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

#### a. National Policy

In 1993, Cambodia started to rebuild its education system. Since then, the country has gone through a series of education reforms and has always listed education inclusion as its primary objective. Today, the two main focuses of its education system are still inclusion and quality.

The World Declaration on Education for All (WCEFA) was announced in 1990 that Cambodia was part of the program. As promised at the 1990 Education for All Conference, UNESCO, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the World Bank have all played an important role in assisting Cambodia in national reconstruction and rehabilitation. As Dy and Ninomiya (2023, 8) point out:

Essentially, Cambodia found itself lost in the middle of nowhere while seeking socioeconomic development in the late 1980s. The UNESCO's framework in universalizing Basic Education (with its emphasis on achieving poverty alleviation in the near future) has become a topic of concern at the highest levels since the late 1990s.

As stated in the history of Cambodia's education, the 1993 Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia guarantees the right to education for all citizens, which builds the foundation for education inclusion in Cambodia. In 2003, the Royal Government of Cambodia announced the Education for All National Plan, which contains the Government's policy and strategic framework for action for basic education. The document explains the statistics on education inclusion, the challenges it faces, and the resources it needs. It highlights the role of development donors and partners in objective setting and collaboration (MoEYS 2003). EFA has been the key item of policy-borrowing and the main objective of education policy since then.

Moreover, MoEYS has announced its strategic plan for every five years, which lists a detailed action plan on education inclusion, which covers aspects of education inclusion, such as gender disparity, minorities and disadvantaged families. In the Education Strategic Plan 2006–2010, 2011–2014, 2014–2018, and 2019–2023, the inclusion of education has been continuously listed as primary tasks. The ESP has been considered as the guidance for MoEYS and education partners at all levels.

Nevertheless, considering Cambodia was recovering from a state of conflict and most of the education facilities were damaged in the late 1980s, the Cambodian government first utilized its resources to rebuild schools and to provide sufficient classrooms and teaching facilities to ensure their children would have access to education. The focus of national policy shifted from building education capacity, and providing education infrastructure in the 1990s and 2000s to promoting education quality and equal opportunities in the 2010s and beyond.

Furthermore, there are education policies that are designated to education inclusion. For instance, the 2007 Child Friendly School Policy aims to ensure schooling access to children affected by difficult circumstances, such as poor children, girls, orphans, victims of domestic violence, children belonging to ethnic minorities, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and other disadvantaged children.

Along with the line, the 2016 New Generation Schools Policy intended to create new standards of accountability and governance to increase the quality of education. Offering all Cambodian children and youth equal education opportunities, regardless of social status, geography, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, and physical form, is one of the objectives outlined in the 2014–18 and 2019–2023 ESPs.

#### b. Specific Focus: Gender and Ethnicity

**Gender disparity** has been a major concern of the MoEYS. Gender has been mainstreamed in policies and plans in education and has been targeted in specific documents, such as the 2011–15 Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan and the Strategy for Gender Equity in TVET 2014–18. The 2014–18 Gender Strategic Plan aims to increase women and girls' access to education and vocational training, particularly women from vulnerable groups, such as the aged, poor and disabled, ethnic minorities, and those living with HIV, by raising awareness through scholarships and other financial assistance mechanisms, and by promoting gender-responsive social attitudes. The 2018 Policy on Inclusive Education includes a specific focus on inclusive, equitable, and quality education for girls and women with special needs. To ensure their enrolment and retention in schools, it intends



to provide targeted scholarships, organize awareness activities, and take appropriate measures to ensure a safe school environment.

Statistically, Cambodia has achieved great improvement in diminishing gender disparity, particularly in elementary and middle school education. The literacy rate of youth females is 96.5%, higher than the 95.4% literacy rate of youth males (World Bank 2023). In the lower secondary school level, the female completion rate is 67%, significantly higher than the male completion rate of 57%. However, especially in the higher education period, the gender difference is increasing. The number of female students in high school decreases, and in higher education, female students only consist of 40%. The gender parity index of school enrollment in tertiary (gross) level is 0.88. In vocational and management schools, the number of female students is lower than males.

### *Ethnic and linguistic groups and indigenous groups*

Improving the literacy rate and language education is another major concern. The 2007 Education Law aims to provide lifelong education to encourage the knowledge and protection of national cultures and languages (Art. 2). The official language of teaching and learning is Khmer and private schools are also requested to include it in their education programs. The medium of instruction for ethnic and linguistic minorities is determined by the Ministry of Education (Art. 24).

Within the legal framework, a Bilingual Education Commission developed formal guidelines in 2010 on the Implementation of the Bilingual Education Program for Indigenous Children in the Highland Provinces, and in 2013 on the Identification of Language for Learners of Khmer Nationality and Ethnic Minority Origin. After a pilot project in 2002, the MoEYS implemented multilingual education (MLE) in primary schools with the support of UNICEF and Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) International, later extending it to pre-primary schools.

With the endorsement of a National Policy for Ethnic Minorities Development in 2008, the MoEYS launched the 2014–18 Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP). The MENAP aimed to ensure inclusive access to ethnic minority girls and boys by promoting capacity building of education officials, providing teaching and learning materials, expanding education infrastructures, and converting community schools to state schools. Ethnic minority learners can access preschool and the first three years of primary school in their mother tongue, namely Tumpoun, Kroeng, Ponorng, Kouy, Kroal, Kavet, Kachok, Laotian and Prao. In 2015 and 2016, MENAP was implemented in 18 districts in 5 target provinces, including Ratanakiri, Stung Treng, Mondulkiri, Preah Vihear, and Kratie, reaching 4 state pre-schools and 80 community preschools.

Building upon the previous action plan, the 2019–23 Multilingual Education Action Plan intends to include Charai as an indigenous language, expanding the project to six languages and reaching out to more children in preschool, and primary and literacy MLE students. The objectives are not only to improve access to inclusive and equitable quality MLE but also to promote the participation of local indigenous communities in school management committees and the development of mother tongue teaching and learning materials.

### c. Challenges

Although the statistics around inclusion have greatly improved, the quality of education is the biggest challenge faced in today's Cambodia, which still suffers from a scarcity of teachers, educational facilities, and resources, among others obstacles. While MoEYS has introduced rigorous reforms to the national curriculum, teacher training, and school governance, Cambodia still struggles to maintain national, equitable student learning outcomes. Recent assessments show that only 32% of male third graders are proficient in Khmer literacy, compared to 48% of their female peers. Meanwhile, only 8% of 15-year-old students achieved the minimum level of reading proficiency, while just 10% achieved minimum proficiency in mathematics. Drop-out rates in secondary schools remain high (USAID 2022).

Weak governance is the hidden obstacle that hinders the further development of education. "The cheating system was developed for the Grade 12 exam (the college entrance examination): people paid the teachers. Teachers got paid. It was a win-win. Teachers, students, and parents did not take teaching seriously" (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). Cheating caused by corruption has been a long-lasting issue, a pain to the whole system, not only in the field of education.



Another aspect of weak governance is the lack of accountability. “School principals, even teachers, will not be fired if they are not doing their jobs” (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). The reasons behind this are complex, including party politics, lack of evaluation system, and lack of transparency. As a result, people do not trust government policies. Although the MoEYS has initiated numerous programs to improve education inclusion and quality, the outcome of these programs is questionable – the situation is certainly improving, but not efficiently (Interviews 4 and 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

Lacking qualified teachers is another problem, and it is related to the corruption issue, which indirectly leads to people’s negative perception of education. “It is very difficult to change senior teachers. In their mindset, teaching is an easy job. Many of them have several jobs... They are supposed to work 8 hours a day, but they indeed only work for 4 hours” (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). In other words, some teachers consider teaching as an easy job that does not need to be fully engaged.

Furthermore, poverty appears to be one of the most significant reasons that impede children from receiving formal education, and it particularly affects secondary enrollment and completion. One challenge in the rural setting seems to be the distance to schools. “It was easier to get primary education, but [enrollment is] worse getting secondary... the distances [are] a challenge... The poorer the student, the household the student came from, fewer chances” (Interview 1 on Cambodia, 2023). Another interviewee indicates that “secondary education is a bigger problem because of the private payment. You know, in elementary school, one teacher can teach many subjects. But since secondary school, each subject has a teacher. Let’s say, 10 dollars for each teacher every semester, then there is a lot of money needed to pay for the family” (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). Another expert simply explained, “You just stay at school until you can work” (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

Nevertheless, such a perception is questionable. For example, another study by No et al. (2016, 215) indicates that economic status, child labor, and parents’ aspirations had no significant effect on the school dropout rate during the basic education period in rural Cambodia. The dropout rate increased significantly with the divorce of parents, relationship with friends, and late school entry of students in grades 1-4, and with grade repetition and relative academic achievement of those in grades 4-9. These factors are related to people’s confidence in the value of education.

It is not simply poverty that caused children’s dropout, because absolute poverty in education can be overcome. As a director from an NGO explains, “Money is a significant reason leading to the drop-outs at lower secondary school level, but we can find solutions. I think it depends on soft skills to make it work, so it is not the main issue. People’s commitment and motivation to send their children to school is more important” (Interview 3 on Cambodia, 2024). With development programs and external support, it is possible to buy supplies for school, but it is harder to ensure the children would not leave the school.

To conclude, the challenges in improving education inclusion and quality appear to be complex and mixed, which intertwine people’s realistic concerns, their perception of education, and their confidence in government.

#### 4. INFLUENCES OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION

##### a. Religious and Cultural Influence: Buddhism

Buddhist culture plays a significant role in Cambodia’s education. Historically, ordinary Cambodians could receive an education in temples or wats. Today, although the majority of education is organized in modern formalized schools, religious schools still exist, and the monks are still opinion leaders among ordinary Cambodians, especially in rural areas.

Traditionally, Cambodia’s ancient and contemporary education both exist in the form of religion. Even today, Buddhist education is still supplementary to modern education. Ancient education was purely religious, even at the peak of the empire, education was still under religion as if education could only be realized religiously (Jin Su 2021, 20-35). In the history of Cambodian education, there is a special phenomenon that teachers are monks from different religious traditions. At different historical times, people believed in different streams of religion, but the form of education did not change drastically. Teachers are monks, and the students are also monks (Jin Su 2021, 20-35). At first, monks were not trained, but later, there were standardized requirements for the teachers. Throughout the history of Cambodia’s education, ancient temples were the center of learning, culture, and even art and exhibition. For thousands of years, no matter whether war or peace, change of regime, or revolts,

temples were the places that inherited the Khmer culture and education, ensuring the Khmer's art and culture were passed down to generations (Jin Su 2021, 236).

Religion still plays a role in modern education, since the Buddhist teaching schedule is flexible, education content is practical, relatively easy to participate in, no tuition, etc. It becomes a supplement to formal education. For children from modest backgrounds, they can work part-time and go to temples during their free time to receive informal education (Wang 2021, 57).

Today, there is a separate system of Buddhist education existing in Cambodia. As of March 2020, there were 974 Buddhist elementary schools, 116 Buddhist junior schools, 18 Buddhist high schools, and five Buddhist universities (Wang 2021, 56). There were 14,522 schools in the total of Cambodia in 2019 (OpenDevelopment 2021), therefore, the religious schools consist of around 7% of the total number of schools, roughly the same as the ratio of private schools. The degree from Buddhist schools is certified, and equivalent to the formal education system. Of these schools, 97 of them are in the cities, while 1,011 schools are in the rural areas, mostly in the temples (Wang 2021, 56). Most of the temple schools do not require tuition, students only need to work at the temple in exchange for education, board, and food (Wang 2021, 56). They are still a part of Cambodia's rural basic education, although people realize that modern schools today are significantly outnumbering Buddhist schools, causing the influence of Buddhist schools to diminish in recent decades (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

In addition, besides the Buddhist schools, the thoughts from Buddhism also influence Cambodia's educational system. For instance, Buddhism believes that man should treat all people equally, regardless of illness or body disadvantage. Thus, the Buddhist schools treated the handicapped children equally. Buddhism also believes that school education should be more caring and gentler, as Buddha cares for all (Wang 2021, 58). The Buddha is also the symbol of morality and values. The Buddhist school emphasizes morality education and highlights moral requirements. It gradually develops a system of nationalism. A local development officer said that in many rural areas, the monks are the spiritual leaders of the local community, who won the respect of people in the local village. As a result, the regional government and development organizations usually work with the temples, seeking support and understanding from the monks. "Their words are highly valued in the village: if they encourage the children to pursue higher education, it would greatly improve local education accessibility and attainment" (Interview 3 on Cambodia, 2024).

## b. Impact of French Colonialism and Decolonization

The impact of French Colonialism on Cambodia's education is limited – although the French established the first "modern school" by definition, the Khmer French Schools were not accessible to the local Cambodians. It was the Cambodian leaders who learned from the modern education system, and then established Cambodia's education system that later promoted nationwide.

The French arrived in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But for the first two decades of colonization, the French government did not interfere with Cambodian education (Chandler 1991, 156). This may be due to the fact that the French government only established a protectorate over Cambodia, whereas Napoleon III established French rule directly in Cochinchina (today's part of Vietnam) nearby (Thomson 1945, 313). As a protectorate, Cambodia still followed the old form of governance, and the French only served as the leaders without interfering the daily management. Before the French government, the country was ruled by Thailand, and education was neglected. For the local Cambodians, during this stage, education only happened quietly in the temple, dependent on funding from local villages (Jin Su 2021, 44).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the colonial government started to introduce the "French Modern Education System" and established **Khmer French Schools**. However, such an education only served the elite community. The coverage of the French education system was limited – almost all the students were French or had aristocratic backgrounds. Some scholars believe that the French government prevented the majority of Cambodians from receiving education to secure its ruling power (Chandler 1991, 156; Clayton 1995, 2). By the end of the colonization, the French schools had rarely accepted ordinary Cambodian students.

The French colonial government also tried to collaborate with the local religious education to reform Cambodia's traditional education. The French government planned to reform the traditional Buddhist schools, but it did not want to evoke unnecessary hostility with traditional religious education (Jin Su 2021, 44-65). Hence, the plan was not executed until 1908-09, when Mr. Baudouin and Mr. Menetrier started to collaborate with Buddhist



monks to reform traditional education based on two principles – respect the traditions of Buddhist education and add more learning subjects gradually (Jin Su 2021, 44-65).

The French control of power was weakened after WWII, and in 1953, under the leadership of King Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia became an independent state. The generals and leaders that followed Sihanouk and the leaders of the Cambodia People's Party (CPP) later became the new privileged class in the Cambodian society. Since then, many key positions of the government have been held by the descendants of the meritorious families, who contributed to the decolonization process. When asked about "the impact of decolonization on today's Cambodia education," one interviewee explained, "These leaders from the meritorious families are in higher positions in the ministry, but they are relatively slow in work" (Interview 3 on Cambodia, 2024). He implied that, compared to the younger and more reformist leaders in the ministry, these older leaders from privileged backgrounds react more slowly and deliberately.

### c. Impact of the socialist phase

There is no doubt that the socialist phase in Cambodia had a devastating effect on the country. As mentioned previously, this period caused a loss in lives, wealth, and development. Education is not an exception. The socialist Khmer Rouge caused massive damage to Cambodia's education infrastructure. Teachers were killed during the genocide and the universities were closed down. During the following civil wars, the education system suffered a chronic crisis. Although the civil war ended in 1979, civil war and factional fighting persisted until 1996 when the remnants of the Khmer Rouge fell apart and a coup against the Royalist Party in 1997 consolidated the position of the incumbent (Gottesman 2004).

Almost no schools were left and no teachers remained after the tragedy. One result, out of many, was a lack of talent in higher education and research. A World Bank staff recalls:

The tragedy of the Khmer Rouge definitely had an impact on education. Education is a cumulated social function. Students become adults, and it takes time. Think about that... 90% of resources vanished, and everything needs to be built from scratch. Damage was severe. Particularly in the higher education program, in which I worked with. There was no research capacity for years. There was a World Bank conference last year, and all the experts from China, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the Philippines, more than 50% are senior researchers. But the Cambodian scholars are 30-35 years old from universities in Europe, Japan, and America (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024).

A visit to the S21 prison museum in Phnom Penh suggests the education system back then was completely shut down. The middle school campus was transformed into a prison – classrooms were transformed into cells, and sports facilities were turned into instruments for torture. The history was so heavy that it took decades to finish justifications – Special Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia was established in 1997, and it took thirteen years to finish all the trials (UN News 2022).

Overall, there is limited literature that can be found on the influence of the Khmer Rouge on education. According to Jin (2021), the state was busy with reconstruction, and discussion of the period is generally not encouraged.

### d. COVID-19 and distanced learning

The pandemic was a severe challenge to Cambodia. The progress it made in education was fragile in front of such a global crisis. Promoting digitalization in education out of sudden was too heavy of a duty. One director at NGO Education Partnership (NEP) explained,

People were scared, no one knew what to do... Honestly, there is no one to blame to. We just didn't have the capacity. The families do not have enough devices, and the teachers were unable to use online teaching tools, the internet coverage was insufficient for many reasons... too many obstacles... (Interview 4 on Cambodia, 2024).

According to the "Cambodia Digital Landscape Report," it is very challenging to promote the use of distanced learning devices in Cambodia:

Across our qualitative and quantitative research methods, several key challenges and barriers emerged in advancing digital education in Cambodia across five main areas: digital infrastructure and access to the Internet, digital literacy levels of teachers, students, and parents, teachers' capacity for effective ICT integration, support needed for teachers' CPD and coordination across providers and stakeholders. The following sections will explore some of these top challenges in detail as well as existing assets, emerging initiatives, and/or promising practices to address them (World Education EdTech Center 2023, 15-20).

The mid-term ESP report also illustrates the state was facing severe challenges during the pandemic. MoEYS was unable to meet the original objectives of ESP during the beginning of the pandemic period, and most education performance indicators dropped due to lack of education resources and accessibility (MoEYS 2022). As one expert explains,

"The ministry tried to implement distanced learning, but I'd say, the government cannot do much. There were too many problems. Cannot have enough access, and people have to adapt themselves. There are some areas shifted to alternative learning. But most areas cannot." (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024)

During the pandemic, IOs try to play a role to help. For instance, UNESCO adopted a threefold strategy for Cambodia, including strengthening digital resources, constructing a learning platform, and creating digital monitoring programs to facilitate education intervention (Yin 2021). UNESCO and other development partners also provided learning resources, to ensure the availability of basic education, to provide continuing education via informal learning circumstances, and to improve learning conditions of the disadvantaged group. However, it was limited. The government, the Cambodian society, the schools and teachers, and the families all need time to learn to adapt to this new environment.

## 5. INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL ACTORS/IOs

Cambodia works closely with international actors in education. IOs work with the Cambodian government "at all levels, ministry, provincial, district, and even schools," and Cambodia's education policy is "donor-driven, they sent us documents and asked us to learn" (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

Regionally, Cambodia is a member of ASEAN as a Southeast Asian country. Globally, its politics and governance have been monitored by the United Nations since the 1990s.

Economically, Cambodia receives funds and loans from various organizations. These donor agencies include international governmental organizations such as UNESCO, World Bank, UNICEF, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and development agencies from specific countries such as USAID (USA), JICA (Japan), EC (European Commission), AUF (Austria), and Sida (Sweden). In addition, in 2016, Cambodia started to participate in the PISA test organized by OECD. Overall, Cambodia has maintained close collaboration with the international community on educational affairs.

### a. The Education Sector Working Group (ESWG)

Different from other countries where the IOs work separately, in Cambodia, the development partners work together. In 1999, various donor agencies and NGOs formed the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG). These organizations are referred to as "development partners" or "donors," and they were highly regarded by the Cambodian government.

Their active role can be found in the national policy documents by MoEYS, including Education for All, five-year ESP, and all kinds of evaluation and summary reports (MoEYS 2022, 2019, 2014, and more).

ESWG has a regular meeting system and ensures the IOs divide their work of territory and field. ESWG meets monthly to share ideas, project documents, plans, assessments, and tasks, and discuss various topics and assistance requested by the MoEYS (Dy 2004). Through ESWG, these organizations adopted an alignment strategy and initiated a broader, policy-focused comprehensive sector-wide approach (Samith 2008). The education sector staff of these organizations work closely, coordinating their tasks and working focuses (Interviews 1 & 2 on Cambodia, 2024). The organizations work jointly and coordinate with each other to ensure each organization has its focus, and the division of labor does not overlap or interfere with each other (Interview 2 on Cambodia,



2024). For instance, in recent years, the World Bank shifted its focus from higher education to primary school, and ABD shifted from vocational education to upper secondary level (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). Through ESWG, they coordinate to avoid overlapping on their key themes in education. For instance, both UNICEF and the World Bank are deeply concerned about learning outcomes, but UNICEF focuses more on child rights and minority rights, while the World Bank spends more resources on supporting poor people and fighting corruption (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). In some extreme cases, within one school, the tasks could be divided by grades – Grades 1-3 belong to UNICEF, working on one theme, and Grades 4-6 belong to WB, working on another theme (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

Every two months, these IO representatives also meet with the high officials from the MoEYS of Cambodia and have policy dialogue on the key themes of education through the Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG). It was also established to decide on policy and strategy formulation or finalization and other related issues that are not able to be decided during the ESWG (Dy 2009, 126-7). The JTWG is composed of development partners and the government and is co-chaired by the Lead Donor Facilitator (Chair of the ESWG) and the Minister or a designated Secretary of State. The voices of development partners have been carefully heard and discussed by the Cambodian government. This is why almost all the education policy documents in Cambodia have English versions (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024).

## b. International Financing

Funding is the major reason why the ESWG and the organizations behind it have a voice in Cambodia's education affairs. As illustrated earlier, Cambodia has limited public funding on education, and the country's education mainly rely on the external funding sources. Samith wrote that "nearly half of the budget comes from the external support for the construction and development of the country" (Samith 2008, 5). The interviewee, who is a former UNESCO manager in Cambodia, also confirmed that all the funds from external sources should consist of around 40-50% of the education funds in Cambodia around 2010 (interview 1 on Cambodia, 2023).

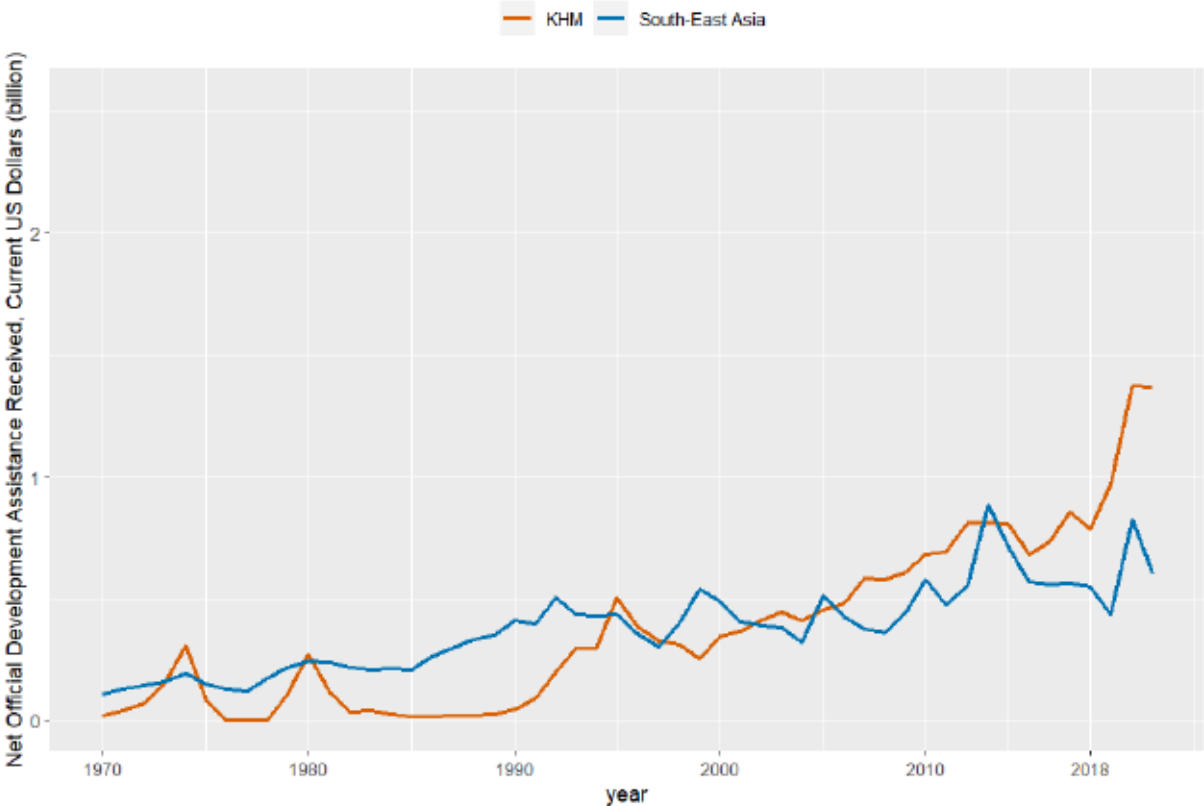
Reliance on the external budget has decreased in the past ten years, except during the COVID-19 epidemic period since the government gradually increased the education budget as indicated above. In 2024, a set of a budget of 990 million dollars will be added to the education budget for further education reforms (the Khmer Times 2023). The donors, on the other hand, are retrenching their input in Cambodia (Interviews 2, 3, 4 & 5, 2024). One director from an NGO heard the budget from development agencies would decrease due to the global economic recession and the new crises in other regions of the world such as the Russia - Ukraine War (Interview 4 on Cambodia, 2024). Today, external funding consists of around 10-15% of the education funds, as estimated by a WB staff (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024).

Nevertheless, the importance and influence of development partners on Cambodia's national education have not declined. One reason is that the decline of funding seems significant from the IO's perspective, but less obvious from the Cambodia perspective. "Yes, they are giving less money from their perspectives. But the general, they don't know" (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). More importantly, probably is because Cambodia relies heavily on the knowledge and advice provided by the IOs. For instance, the World Bank works closely with the industry, reflects the analysis of education development, and discusses with the ministry to provide analysis and knowledge to support (Interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). To the Cambodian government, improving the training of human capital has been the priority in its Pentagonal Strategy announced last year (Khmer Times 2023).

Additionally, not only in education, Cambodia overall relies on external aid and support to sustain the government. Besides aid that is designated to education, Cambodia received a tremendous amount of foreign aid from the international community. According to the World Bank (2023), in 2022, the net development assistance Cambodia received reached 1.55 billion US dollars. Cambodia's government spending in 2023 was 9.4 billion (Khmer Times 2022). Hence, these funds from the development partners are considered a major source of funding. A chart with a detailed breakdown of official development assistance received by Cambodia can be found in Appendix 2. It is noteworthy that such a statistic does not include aid from China. The exact number of aid from China to Cambodia is not publicly revealed, but the Chinese government declared itself to be the "biggest aid-providing country" of Cambodia, especially after Chinese President Xi announced the "Belt and Road Initiative" (Zhao 2023). The Chinese Ministry of Commerce published that the Chinese direct investment in Cambodia in 2021 is 470 million (Chinese Ministry of Commerce 2022).

In other words, international financing from external partners is so significant in the context of Cambodia that policymaking in Cambodia can be described as “donor-driven” in many areas. Education is not an exception.

Figure 3. Net Official Development Assistance Received, Current US Dollars



Source: World Bank 2023

c. Forms of Collaboration

Financing and expertise are the two main methods of support provided by the IOs to Cambodia. The organizations collaborate with the Cambodians at all levels. At the central level, the projects initiated by IOs will be co-signed with MoEYS and another ministry, usually the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Civil Servants (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). Besides working directly with the ministry at the central level, the development partners have their form of collaboration with local organizations, districts, and schools.

First, the donors channel their technical and financial support to education sectors to a number of local and international organizations that make up the NGO Education Partnership (NEP). According to the NEP website, it is a membership organization with 128 membership organizations (72 Local NGOs and 52 International NGOs). NEP’s mandate is to provide coordination and capacity development on sub-national and local levels and representation for its members on national platforms such as ESWG, sub-sector/thematic working groups (Early Childhood Care and Development, Primary Education, Non-Formal Education, and Inclusive Education), The COVID-19 Response and Continuous Learning Working Group, and Budget Working Group (education financing). NEP serves as the platform and connects the IOs with local organizations in similar fields of interest (Interview 4 on Cambodia, 2024). It works more closely at a community level to advocate and implement new concepts, policies, and strategies in the country at more provincial, district, and commune levels of the Cambodian administrative system.

Second, some donor organizations, such as UNICEF, JICA, and USAID, have implementation capacities themselves, whereas others, such as the World Bank and ADB, have limited local staff and choose to work closely with local governments. IOs implementing projects themselves have pros and cons. On the one hand, the organizations implementing by themselves usually have better outcomes because the projects’ processes and



results are directly controlled by the organizations themselves. On the other hand, however, these projects usually lack sustainability since the local institutions are not involved in the process and simply accept whatever is given to them (interview 2 on Cambodia, 2024). As Cambodia's special education advisor Dr. Dy writes,

Development partners in education are indispensable since their funding modality and implementing capacity are more flexible and responsive. Nevertheless, ownership by the government is much emphasized for sustainable development of the programs" (Dy 2009, 126-7).

It is noteworthy that IOs are working more closely with the local staff (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). For instance, UNICEF used to have local officers in Cambodia, even at most provincial levels, but now these officers are all closed.

Additionally, ASEAN as the regional IO is not directly involved in these development projects. Most of the time, it is "ceremonial" and "symbolic," facilitating governmental exchanges and events (Interview 5 on Cambodia, 2024). Occasionally, when the World Bank and ADB initiated joint projects that engaged several Southeast Asian countries including Laos and Myanmar, ASEAN would serve as the coordinator in between.

## 6. SYNTHESIS & SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Cambodia was rebuilt after the 1975-79 genocide by the socialist government Khmer Rouge. The tragedy caused millions of deaths and eliminated more than 90% of the educational facilities within the country. 2023 marked the 30th anniversary of Cambodia's first general free election after the (civil) war. In the past thirty years, Cambodia has achieved impressive progress in education inclusion and equality. The country suffered from almost no schools and teachers from the end of the 1980s to today, with a literacy rate of 84% and a gross elementary enrollment rate of 110% in 2022.

Similarly, the education system was rebuilt in the 1990s. The 1993 Constitution transformed its formal school system to 6+3+3, meaning six years of elementary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school. In 2003, the Cambodian government announced Education for All, which declared to be committed to improving education inclusion and quality. In addition, education inclusion has been the constant theme of education key objectives in every five-year Education Strategic Plan (ESP). Specific-focused policies were also made to support education inclusion in gender equality, minority rights, and more. Females have equal access to education as males and the enrollment rate of females during primary and lower secondary levels is higher than males. Programs were established for minority students speaking indigenous languages, and special educations were found for children with special needs (Interview 4 on Cambodia, 2024). Although resources have been scarce, the state has demonstrated strong determination and commitment to the issue, and NGOs and civil societies have been working together on the community level to improve educational inclusion.

However, despite the impressive statistical improvement in enrollment rate, completion rate, and literacy rate, it is difficult to provide full access to education for all. The problem mainly occurs at the secondary school level. It has been difficult to improve the completion rate of secondary school, and the quality of secondary school is also concerning. The reasons behind this are complex. According to the documents from the Cambodian government and international organizations, poverty, weak governance and people's perception of education are the main reasons. Poverty prevents children from poor families to afford costly secondary education. Weak governance leads to corruption. And people's view takes time to change, some of them do not treat education seriously, and some others do not agree that all children deserve to receive education.

The influence of colonial history in Cambodia was less influential than neighboring countries. Although Cambodia has been a French colony for almost one century, the French government paid more attention to its neighboring countries such as Vietnam, and was less active in Cambodia. The French established the first modern school in Cambodia, but it was only available to French students and Cambodians from the royal family. It also collaborated with the Buddhists in reforming the traditional Buddhist schools in pagodas, but the program was limited in implementation.

Culturally, the Buddhist tradition has kept playing a significant role in Cambodia. Before the 19th century, education only happened in pagodas. People are taught by the monks to read and think. Today, although most children go to modern schools, Buddhist schools still have a presence, especially in rural areas. Monks are still

considered spiritual leaders and the embodiment of wisdom who play an active role in promoting education accessibility.

Internationally, Cambodia's progress made in the past thirty years has been closely related to the "development partners," including international organizations such as UNESCO, World Bank, UNICEF, and ADB, as well as development agencies such as USAID, JICA, EC, Sida, etc. The development partners form the Educational Sector Working Group (ESWG), coordinating the tasks among themselves, meeting with the ministry regularly, and offering policy advice and knowledge support to the country's development. The development partners have also provided funds and loans to the country, which consisted of around 40% of the education budget in 2010. In other words, the voice of ESWG was significant and influential in policymaking, at least during the first ten years of the 21st century. In the recent decade, however, MoEYS appeared to be more independent from the development partners; the government still works closely with the development partners and all the other advisory institutions, but it has a more coherent education strategy in improving teachers' quality and education performance.

## 7. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the development of Cambodia's education regarding the impact of historical global transformation and international influences on its national education policy. It also studied the inclusiveness and generosity of social groups in Cambodia. I argue that Cambodia's education system today is built upon the modern education model established by the French during the colonial period and is developed to combine with its cultural and religious traditions. The socialist regime caused heavy losses to the state and eliminated most of the education facilities. In the past three decades, with support and funds from the international community, Cambodia's education was reconstructed along with the international standards on education inclusion and generosity.

Few countries have experienced extreme genocide as Cambodia. Hence, regarding education inclusion and generosity, Cambodia had to rebuild the system from scratch. With the intervention of the international community, education policy regarding inclusion was announced at once in the 1993 constitution. Under the guidance of IOs, Cambodia established high standards in education inclusion and has improved greatly since the socialist regime, at least by statistics, but still not enough. The achievement in enrollment and literacy is so fragile that an accident could easily destroy it – during the pandemic, the enrolment rate and the completion rate both dropped dramatically, since the country lacks the capacity to adapt to the challenges. Weak governance, insufficient funding, and lack of qualified teachers and schools are the main reasons mentioned; but overall, "all the aspects have room to improve" (Interview 4 on Cambodia, 2024).

Finally, it is important to recognize that this study has limitations in understanding the local context. Since I cannot read Khmer, my research relies on English materials and English interviews. During the research process, I noticed that many of the Cambodian scholars who write and publish on Cambodia's education policy come from similar academic backgrounds and know each other. Through cross-checking with other Cambodian scholars, I realized that these scholars are most likely the state elites who work closely with international organizations. In other words, these national elites become the "brokers" who bridge the international organizations and the local circumstances. They serve as the "knowledge producers and interpreters" to both international communities and the local people. They have strong motivations to brush up on Cambodia's situation to win more support and recognition from the global society, which prevents me from understanding the *de facto* information on the ground.

Cambodia is still in the process of development and reconstruction, as the influence of global transformation continues to affect national education. Cambodia participated in the past two PISA tests, which raised discussion within the education circle. On the one hand, it symbolizes the country's determination to engage in the global education conversation. On the other hand, the results of the test were unsatisfying, which could lead to further education reforms domestically. Furthermore, the younger generation born after the socialist regime is gradually taking more important positions in government, schools, and society. They will become the hope of the country's education in the upcoming decade, as teachers, researchers, and officials. Global transformation and international influence continue to demonstrate their impact on Cambodia's education today.



## REFERENCES

- Ayres, David M. 2000. "Anatomy of a Crisis: Education, Development, and the State in Cambodia, 1953-1998." In *Anatomy of a Crisis*. University of Hawaii Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780824861445>.
- Ball, Jessica, and Mariam Smith. 2020. "Focusing on Actors in Context-Specific, Data-Informed Theories of Change to Increase Inclusion in Quality Basic Education Reforms." *Global Education Review* 7 (1): 20–40.
- Bray. 1999. *The Private Costs of Public Schooling: Household and Community Financing of Primary Education in Cambodia*. International Institute for Educational Planning-UNESCO. <https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/publication/private-costs-public-schooling-household-and-community-financing-primary-education?language=en>.
- "Cambodia: A Historical Overview." n.d. *Asia Society*. Accessed October 28, 2023. <https://asiasociety.org/education/cambodia-historical-overview>.
- "Cambodia Approves \$9.4 Billion for Government Spending." 2023. *Khmer Times*. October 29, 2023. <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501383281/cambodia-approves-9-4-billion-for-government-spending/>.
- Chandler, David P. n.d. "Cambodia: A Historical Overview." *Asia Society*. Accessed October 28, 2023. <https://asiasociety.org/education/cambodia-historical-overview>.
- Chandler, David P. 1991. *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution since 1945*. Yale University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt32bnqh>.
- Dy, Sideth. 2004. "Strategies and Policies for Basic Education in Cambodia: Historical Perspectives." *International Education Journal* 5 (January): 90–97.
- Dy, Sideth, and Akira Ninomiya. 2003. "Basic Education in Cambodia: The Impact of UNESCO on Policies in the 1990s." *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 11 (December). <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v11n48.2003>.
- "Education and Child Protection | Basic Page | Cambodia." 2022. *U.S. Agency for International Development*. August 8, 2022. <https://www.usaid.gov/cambodia/education>.
- Em, Sereyath, Somphors Khan, and Nel Nun. 2023. "Education System in Cambodia: A Brief Review from the Prehistoric Period to the Present, and an Education Strategic Plan for the Future." *FIRE Forum for International Research in Education* 7 (February): 141–64. <https://doi.org/10.32865/fire202273320>.
- Gottesman, Evan R. 2004. *Cambodia After the Khmer Rouge*. Yale University Press. <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/9780300105131/cambodia-after-the-khmer-rouge>.
- Heng, Kimkong, and Koemhong Sol. 2023. "Cambodia's Education System: New Developments and Persistent Challenges." In *Innovations and Challenges in Cambodian Education: Youth's Perspectives*, 1–19. Cambodian Education Forum.
- International Monetary Fund. 2023. "World Economic Outlook (October 2023) - GDP per Capita, Current Prices." 2023. <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/PPPPC@WEO>.
- Jin, Su. 2021. "The Study of Cambodia Education History." <https://doi.org/10.27035/d.cnki.ggxmc.2021.000006>
- Kalyanpur, Maya. 2011. "Paradigm and Paradox: Education for All and the Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 15 (10): 1053–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2011.555069>.
- "Launch of Inclusive Primary Education Activity | Cambodia | Press Releases." 2022. *U.S. Agency for International Development*. August 24, 2022. <https://www.usaid.gov/cambodia/press-releases/mar-23-2022-launch-inclusive-primary-education-activity>.
- McNamara, Vincent. 2015. "Cambodia: From Dependency to Sovereignty – Emerging National Leadership." *Journal of International and Comparative Education* 4 (October): 79–92. <https://doi.org/10.14425/00.8795>.
- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS). 2014. "Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018." *Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport*. Accessed September 25, 2023. [https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2015\\_02\\_cambodia\\_education\\_sector\\_plan.pdf](https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2015_02_cambodia_education_sector_plan.pdf).
- . 2018. "Policy on Inclusive Education." *Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport*. Accessed September 25, 2023. [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5940eb9a414fb5787b3436ac/t/5e3b131449b9d50287aa5b8f/1580929822677/Inclusive+Education+Policy\\_EN\\_2018.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5940eb9a414fb5787b3436ac/t/5e3b131449b9d50287aa5b8f/1580929822677/Inclusive+Education+Policy_EN_2018.pdf).
- . 2019. "Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023." *Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport*. Accessed September 25, 2023. [http://cdc-crd.gov.kh/en/twg-jmi/sector\\_strategy/ESP2019-2023\\_EN.pdf](http://cdc-crd.gov.kh/en/twg-jmi/sector_strategy/ESP2019-2023_EN.pdf).
- . 2021. "Mid-Term Review Report in 2021 of the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 and Projection to 2025." *Mid-Term Report*. Accessed January 11, 2024.
- . 2003. "Education for All: National Plan of Action, 2003-2015." *Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport*. Accessed September 25, 2023. [https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/cambodia\\_npa\\_efa\\_english.pdf](https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/cambodia_npa_efa_english.pdf)

- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Teacher Training Department. 2023. "Teacher Policy Action Plan 2024-2030." Accessed January 11, 2024.
- No, Fata, Kyoko Taniguchi, and Yukiko Hirakawa. 2016. "School Dropout at the Basic Education Level in Rural Cambodia: Identifying Its Causes through Longitudinal Survival Analysis." *International Journal of Educational Development* 49 (C): 215–24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2016.03.001>.
- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 2016. "PISA for Development Capacity Needs Analysis: Cambodia." OECD. Accessed September 5, 2023. <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa/Cambodia-Capacity-Needs-Analysis.pdf>.
- . 2023. "PISA 2022 Results: Preparing Students for a Changing World." OECD. December 5, 2023. Accessed September 5, 2023. <https://www.oecd.org/publication/pisa-2022-results/>.
- "OECD Data Explorer | Aid (ODA) Disbursements to Countries and Regions [DAC2A]." n.d. Accessed April 1, 2024. [https://data-explorer.oecd.org/vis?pg=0&bp=true&snb=17&tm=Cambodia%20ODA&df\[ds\]=dsDisseminateFinalDMZ&df\[id\]=DSD\\_DAC2%40DF\\_DAC2A&df\[ag\]=OECD.DCD.FSD&df\[vs\]=1.0&pd=%2C&dq=KHM.206.USD.Q&ly\[rw\]=RECIPIENT&ly\[d\]=TIME\\_PERIOD&to\[TIME\\_PERIOD\]=false&to=10&lom=LASTNPERIODS&vw=tb](https://data-explorer.oecd.org/vis?pg=0&bp=true&snb=17&tm=Cambodia%20ODA&df[ds]=dsDisseminateFinalDMZ&df[id]=DSD_DAC2%40DF_DAC2A&df[ag]=OECD.DCD.FSD&df[vs]=1.0&pd=%2C&dq=KHM.206.USD.Q&ly[rw]=RECIPIENT&ly[d]=TIME_PERIOD&to[TIME_PERIOD]=false&to=10&lom=LASTNPERIODS&vw=tb).
- Pellini, Arnaldo, and Kurt Bredenberg. 2015. "Basic Education Clusters in Cambodia: Looking at the Future While Learning from the Past." *Development in Practice* 25 (3): 419–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2015.1018138>.
- "Primary and Secondary Education." 2021. *OpenDevelopment Cambodia (ODC)*. June 21, 2021. <https://opendevdevelopmentcambodia.net/topics/primary-and-secondary-education/>.
- "Private Education Statistics & Indicators 2020-2021 – NGO Education Partnership." 2021. March 6, 2021. <https://nepcambodia.org/2021/03/06/private-education-statistics-indicators-2020-2021/>.
- Sitha, Chhinh, and Sideth Dy. 2009. "Education Reform Context and Process in Cambodia." *The Political Economy of Educational Reforms and Capacity Development in Southeast Asia* 13: 113-29. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9377-7\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9377-7_8).
- Thomson, R. Stanley. 1945. "The Establishment of the French Protectorate Over Cambodia." *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 4 (4): 313–40. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2049693>.
- UN News. 2022. "Cambodia: UN-backed tribunal ends with conviction upheld for last living Khmer Rouge leader." *UN News*. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127521>.
- UN Population Fund. n.d. "World Population Dashboard - Cambodia." *United Nations Population Fund*. Accessed April 1, 2024. <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/KH>.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 2020. "Global Education Monitoring Report 2020." UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373718>.
- . 2021. "Cambodia | INCLUSION | Education Profiles." 2021. UNESCO. <https://education-profiles.org/eastern-and-south-eastern-asia/cambodia/~inclusion>.
- UNICEF. 2023. "Education Budget Brief 2022 | UNICEF Cambodia." <https://www.unicef.org/cambodia/reports/education-budget-brief-2022>.
- University of Minnesota. n.d. "Cambodia: Holocaust and Genocide Studies." College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota. Accessed October 28, 2023. <https://cla.umn.edu/chgs/holocaust-genocide-education/resource-guides/cambodia>.
- USAID/Cambodia-All Children Learning. 2019. "USAID/Cambodia-All Children Learning QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT." USAID. September 18, 2019. [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00W4N8.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00W4N8.pdf).
- Wang, Yue. 2021. "The Influence of Buddhism to Cambodia's Education." *Overseas Buddhism* 6: 54–60. <https://doi.org/10.16805/j.cnki.11-1671/b.2021.0142>.
- World Bank. n.d.a. "Secondary Education Improvement Project." Text/HTML. *World Bank*. Accessed October 28, 2023. <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P157858>.
- . n.d.b. "World Bank Open Data." *World Bank Open Data*. Accessed October 28, 2023. <https://data.worldbank.org>.
- World Education EdTech Center. 2023. "Cambodia Digital Education Landscape Scan." <https://edtech.worlded.org/resource/cambodia-digital-education-landscape-scan/>.
- Yin, Yali, and Zaoming Ma. n.d. "Analysis of UNESCO's education aid program to Cambodia under COVID-19." *Journal of Gannan Normal University* 2021 (5): 69–75. <https://www.scholarmate.com/S/rtLH8e>.
- Zhao, Zhulan. 2023. "Belt and Road Initiative: 10 Year of Collaboration between China and Cambodia, a Paradigm of Global Collaboration." *Yunnan Academy of Social Science*. <http://www.skyyn.gov.cn/xsyj/zgsd/2943571794639168319>.

**Appendix 1.** The Performance of 8 Core Breakthrough Indicators (CBI) in the 2019-2023 National Education Strategic Plan (ESP)

CBIs	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Status
	2017-18	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		
<i>Policy 1: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</i>								
1. Percentage of five-year old children enrolled in any form of Early Childhood Education Program	58.0	59.3	58.1	60.6	62.9	61.9	61.1	→
<i>Male</i>	57.7	58.9	57.7	60.1	62	61.3	58.6	↓
<i>Female</i>	58.7	60.0	58.5	61.3	63.6	62.7	62.3	→
2. Completion rate in Primary education	82.7	83.4	82.1	84.1	88.2	84.8	87.4	↑
<i>Male</i>	79.1	80.3	78.2	81.5	84.1	82.6	83.4	↑
<i>Female</i>	86.4	87.3	86.0	88.2	92.7	89.2	91.6	↑
3. Completion rate in lower Secondary education	46.5	47.7	47.6	48.9	47.3	50.2	48.1	↓
<i>Male</i>	42.3	43.8	42.9	45.4	42.4	46.9	43.1	↓
<i>Female</i>	51.1	52.5	52.6	53.4	52.5	54.4	53.4	↓
4. Percentage of students achieving at “below basic proficiency level”								
<i>Khmer Reading</i>								
Grade 3	52.6 (2015)		50.5					
Grade 6	31.5					25.5	36.3	
Grade 8	18.9 (2017)							
Grade 11	20.5							
<i>Khmer Writing</i>								
Grade 3	64.8			58.8				
Grade 6	39.6					33.6	53.9	
Grade 8	71.0 (2017)							
Grade 11	58.9							
<i>Maths</i>								
Grade 3	44.9 (2015)		40.9	38.9				
Grade 6	53.2 (2016)					47.2	74.3	
Grade 8	36.3							
Grade 11	72.3							
<i>Physics</i>								
Grade 8	52.1 (2017)							
Grade 11	79.6 (2018)							



CBIs	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Status
	2017-18	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		
<i>Policy 1: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</i>								
5. % of Primary Teachers qualified according to national standard	72.06	74	62.3	75	79	76	75	→
6. Gross enrollment ratio (18-22) in higher education	11.6	12.4	11.6	13.3	12.0	14.2	13.3	↓
<i>Male</i>	13.2	14.3	13.2	15.5	12.2	16.6	15.5	↓
<i>Female</i>	11.3	11.6	11.3	12.0	11.8	12.3	11.9	→
7. Adult literacy rate (15-Above)	82.5	83.6	82.5	84.7	82.5	85.8	87.8	↑
<i>Policy 2: Ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels</i>								
8. Number of School principals trained in SBM (Annual, Primary and Secondary)	752	500	705	700	691	700	630	→

Source: Education Congress Report 2020–2021

Note: 'Status' colours: Green (on track/exceeded); yellow (constrained); red (off track)

## Appendix 2. Official Development Aid Received by Cambodia, from OECD data explorer

Aid (ODA) disbursements to countries and regions [DAC2A]											
Recipient: Cambodia											
Measure: Official development assistance (ODA), disbursements											
Price base: Constant prices											
Combined unit of measure: US dollar, Millions, 2021											
	Time period	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Donor</b>											
<b>Official donors</b>		807.7	812.42	769.18	811.7	933.71	827.75	1,043.29	1,436.87	1,367.05	1,685.55
- DAC countries		528.13	551.17	528.68	523.62	641.89	574.03	683.71	716.72	990.09	1,056.15
- Australia		65.53	76.83	57.74	67.85	64.23	57.17	50.42	44.94	78.22	70.25
- Austria		0.04	0.09	0.06	0.13	0.15	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.08	0.07
- Belgium		4.12	4.91	4.6	4.32	4.33	4.5	4.48	4.73	4.14	3.57
- Canada		9.69	3.74	4.79	6.1	2.75	3.16	3.36	3.56	2	2.79
- Czechia		1.27	1.26	1.74	2.11	1.9	1.56	2.19	2.27	2.04	1.95
- Denmark		1.42	0.4	0.3	0.07	1.45	0	0	2.59	2.17	2.86
- Finland		4.55	2.23	3.08	1.13	1.82	2.05	1.59	1.75	1.49	1.14
- France		21.12	59.94	75.48	32.81	102.94	71	200.42	90.24	111.5	43.19
- Germany		39.45	48.35	34.59	49.6	34.93	57.61	42.84	38.07	55.09	54.71
- Greece		0.01	0.01	0.01							
- Hungary		0.02	0.02	0.08	0.23	0.08	0.2	0.31	0.38	0.33	1.92
- Ireland		0.72	0.69	0.65	0.68	0.73	0.73	0.77	1.18	1.42	1.13
- Italy		1.16	0.32	0.46	0.88	0.62	0.51	0.52	0.28	0.29	7.84
- Japan		131.95	123.65	113.31	135.61	188.58	161.42	153.94	250.81	459	583.09
- Korea		65.2	70.45	70.39	57.15	65.74	56.78	74.94	98.26	113.08	138.48
- Lithuania								0	0	0	0
- Luxembourg		0.29	0.52	0.62	0.58	0.14	0.45	0.97	1.47	1.27	1.43
- Netherlands		0.01							0.15	0.15	0.04
- New Zealand		3.49	5.79	6.69	5.49	5.17	6.49	8.29	9.92	8.69	3.42
- Norway		20.96	6.91	7.8	8	6.99	6.35	4.32	5.53	4.71	4.4
- Poland		0.01	0.02	1.13	1.16	0.01	0	0.03	0.03	0.02	3.1
- Portugal			0								
- Slovak Republic		0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.03		0.02	0
- Spain		5.16	0.25	0.05	-4.54	-5.26	-17.02	-10.3	-10.08	-10.31	-6.44
- Sweden		36.39	36.73	27.45	34.49	37.54	27	28.15	28.75	23.55	16.05
- Switzerland		9.65	13.23	15.51	18.67	20.41	17.87	17.99	20.03	19.73	17.63
- United Kingdom		17.62	3.06	4.38	3.16	6.05	6.21	4.03	2.91	2.8	1.42
- United States		88.28	91.72	97.72	97.89	100.56	109.83	94.35	118.9	108.63	102.14
- Non-DAC countries		2.51	4.55	4.25	4.97	11.73	12.63	14.32	9.13	13.11	7.08
- Israel					0.09	0.05	0.21	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.04
- Kuwait					0.57						
- Malta										0	
- Qatar				0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02			0.96
- Romania							0			0	0
- Thailand		2.42	4.47	4.12	3.98	10.76	11.36	12.12	6.63	10.12	3.98
- Türkiye		0.06	0.08	0.12	0.14	0.36	0.02	0.13	0.17	0.12	0.29
- United Arab Emirates		0.03	0	0.01	0.01	0.19	0.34	0.16	1.13	0.94	0.51
- Multilateral organisations		277.06	256.7	256.25	283.11	280.1	241.1	345.26	711.01	363.85	622.32
- EU Institutions		30.54	54.57	52.8	72.82	57.92	95.13	72.27	147.92	105.62	84.66
- Regional Development Banks		139.76	68.87	93.36	136.33	110.67	64.74	126.67	406.24	123.79	181.41
- Asian Development Bank		139.76	68.87	93.36	136.15	110.67	64.74	126.67	406.16	123.79	179.91
- Asian Development Bank [AidB]		139.76	68.87	93.36	136.15	110.67	64.74	126.67	406.16	123.79	179.91
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank [AIIB]											1.31
- Islamic Development Bank [IsDB]					0.18				0.08		0.19
- United Nations		30.62	34.78	41.57	30.65	26.08	25.18	35.34	36.09	28.81	46.24
- COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund [UN COVID-19 MPTF]											-0.02
- Food and Agriculture Organisation [FAO]		1.62					0.46	0.6	0.51	0.64	0.53
- IFAD		4.1	13.69	16.76	10.62	8.92	10.09	15.65	21.61	12.17	30.03
- International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA]		0.3	0.46	0.56	0.44	0.66	0.65	0.43	0.32	0.29	1.03
- International Labour Organisation [ILO]		0.44	0.34	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.94	1.33	0.73	0.73	1.27
- Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund [Joint SDG Fund]										1.47	0.26
- UN Women										0.03	0.01
- UNAIDS		0.81	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.49	0.16	0.64			0.35
- UNDP		6.18	5.54	4.99	3.29	4.2	3.13	4.76	4.05	4.23	4.49
- UNFPA		4.41	3.84	3.66	2.73	1.96	1.74	2.49	2.59	2.4	3.06
- UNICEF		6.68	5.89	7.41	6.26	5.79	5.51	5.54	4.89	4.33	3.75
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO]									0	0	
- WFP		3.95	2.25	4.46	4.25	0.79	0.65	0.56	0.07	0.07	0.29
- WHO-Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan [SPRP]											0.11
- World Health Organisation [WHO]		2.13	2.04	2.09	1.68	2.77	1.88	3.33	1.32	2.34	1.2
- World Tourism Organisation [UNWTO]											0.04
- World Bank Group		23.51	29.08	-10.28	-8.15	0.75	7.05	48.35	77.43	63.33	258.15
- World Bank		23.51	29.08	-10.28	-8.15	0.75	7.05	48.35	77.43	63.33	258.15
- International Development Association [IDA]		23.51	29.08	-10.28	-8.15	0.75	7.05	48.35	77.43	63.33	258.15
- Other multilateral organisations		52.63	69.39	58.8	51.46	84.68	49	62.63	43.34	42.3	51.85
- Adaptation Fund				2.24	1.25		0.6	0.24			1.06
- Asian Forest Cooperation Organisation [AfriCO]											0.24
- Climate Investment Funds [CIF]		0.65	1.49	0.83		14.33	16.63	7.7	20.06	8.12	6.91
- Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization [GAVI]		7.99	5.59	16.18	12.41	12.14	7.99	21.56	8.81	6.72	7.03
- Global Environment Facility [GEF]		3.82	5.67	5.63	5.28	2.38	4.65	0.65	2.75	2.03	1.32
- Global Fund		40.38	48.21	27.27	26.49	36.5	17.95	25.65	15.18	27.33	32.25
- Global Green Growth Institute [GGGI]		0.57	0.23	0.54	1.02	1.29	1.17	0.52	0.44	0.19	0.21
- Green Climate Fund [GCF]					0.04		0.13	2.68		0.39	5.85
- Nordic Development Fund [NDF]		0.68	5.92	-0.23	1.84	1.36	-0.14	-0.3	0.1	-0.05	-0.14
- OPEC Fund for International Development [OPEC Fund]		-1.46	2.27	6.33	3.13	16.68	0.03	3.94	-4	-3.5	-1.83
<b>G7</b>		309.27	330.8	330.74	326.07	436.43	409.75	499.45	504.77	739.31	795.17
- Canada		9.69	3.74	4.79	6.1	2.75	3.16	3.36	3.56	2	2.79
- France		21.12	59.94	75.48	32.81	102.94	71	200.42	90.24	111.5	43.19
- Germany		39.45	48.35	34.59	49.6	34.93	57.61	42.84	38.07	55.09	54.71
- Italy		1.16	0.32	0.46	0.88	0.62	0.51	0.52	0.28	0.29	7.84
- Japan		131.95	123.65	113.31	135.61	188.58	161.42	153.94	250.81	459	583.09
- United Kingdom		17.62	3.06	4.38	3.16	6.05	6.21	4.03	2.91	2.8	1.42
- United States		88.28	91.72	97.72	97.89	100.56	109.83	94.35	118.9	108.63	102.14

	Time period	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
DAC Members> Australia		65.53	76.83	57.74	67.85	64.23	57.17	50.42	44.94	78.22
DAC Members> Austria		0.04	0.09	0.06	0.13	0.15	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.08
DAC Members> Belgium		4.12	4.91	4.6	4.32	4.33	4.5	4.48	4.73	4.34
DAC Members> Canada		9.69	3.74	4.79	6.1	2.75	3.16	3.36	3.56	2
DAC Members> Czechia		1.27	1.26	1.74	2.11	1.9	1.56	2.19	2.27	2.04
DAC Members> Denmark		1.42	0.4	0.3	0.07	1.45	0		2.59	2.17
DAC Members> Finland		4.55	2.23	3.08	1.13	1.82	2.05	1.59	1.75	1.49
DAC Members> France		21.12	59.94	75.48	32.81	102.94	71	200.42	90.24	111.5
DAC Members> Germany		39.45	48.35	34.59	49.6	34.93	57.61	42.84	38.07	55.09
DAC Members> Greece		0.01	0.01	0.01						
DAC Members> Hungary			0.02	0.08	0.23	0.08	0.2	0.31	0.38	0.33
DAC Members> Ireland		0.72	0.69	0.65	0.68	0.73	0.73	0.77	1.18	1.42
DAC Members> Italy		1.16	0.32	0.46	0.88	0.62	0.51	0.52	0.28	0.29
DAC Members> Japan		131.95	123.65	113.31	135.61	188.58	161.42	153.94	250.81	459
DAC Members> Korea		65.2	70.45	70.39	57.15	65.74	56.78	74.94	98.26	113.08
DAC Members> Lithuania								0	0	0
DAC Members> Luxembourg		0.29	0.52	0.62	0.58	0.14	0.45	0.97	1.47	1.27
DAC Members> Netherlands		0.01							0.15	0.15
DAC Members> New Zealand		3.49	5.79	6.69	5.49	5.17	6.49	8.29	9.92	8.69
DAC Members> Norway		20.96	6.91	7.8	8	6.99	6.35	4.32	5.53	4.71
DAC Members> Poland		0.01	0.02	1.13	1.16	0.01	0	0.03	0.03	0.02
DAC Members> Portugal			0							
DAC Members> Slovak Republic		0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.03		0.02
DAC Members> Spain		5.16	0.25	0.05	-4.54	-5.26	-17.02	-10.3	-10.08	-10.31
DAC Members> Sweden		36.39	36.73	27.45	34.49	37.54	27	28.15	28.75	23.55
DAC Members> Switzerland		9.65	13.23	15.51	18.67	20.41	17.87	17.99	20.03	19.73
DAC Members> United Kingdom		17.62	3.06	4.38	3.16	6.05	6.21	4.03	2.91	2.8
DAC Members> United States		88.28	91.72	97.72	97.89	100.56	109.83	94.35	118.9	108.63
DAC Members> EU Institutions		30.54	54.57	52.8	72.82	57.92	95.13	72.27	147.92	105.62
DAC EU countries		115.75	155.78	150.34	123.69	181.41	148.74	272.07	161.86	193.24
- Austria		0.04	0.09	0.06	0.13	0.15	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.08
- Belgium		4.12	4.91	4.6	4.32	4.33	4.5	4.48	4.73	4.34
- Czechia		1.27	1.26	1.74	2.11	1.9	1.56	2.19	2.27	2.04
- Denmark		1.42	0.4	0.3	0.07	1.45	0		2.59	2.17
- Finland		4.55	2.23	3.08	1.13	1.82	2.05	1.59	1.75	1.49
- France		21.12	59.94	75.48	32.81	102.94	71	200.42	90.24	111.5
- Germany		39.45	48.35	34.59	49.6	34.93	57.61	42.84	38.07	55.09
- Greece		0.01	0.01	0.01						
- Hungary			0.02	0.08	0.23	0.08	0.2	0.31	0.38	0.33
- Ireland		0.72	0.69	0.65	0.68	0.73	0.73	0.77	1.18	1.42
- Italy		1.16	0.32	0.46	0.88	0.62	0.51	0.52	0.28	0.29
- Lithuania								0	0	0
- Luxembourg		0.29	0.52	0.62	0.58	0.14	0.45	0.97	1.47	1.27
- Netherlands		0.01							0.15	0.15
- Poland		0.01	0.02	1.13	1.16	0.01	0	0.03	0.03	0.02
- Portugal			0							
- Slovak Republic		0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.03		0.02
- Spain		5.16	0.25	0.05	-4.54	-5.26	-17.02	-10.3	-10.08	-10.31
- Sweden		36.39	36.73	27.45	34.49	37.54	27	28.15	28.75	23.55
DAC EU countries and EU Institutions		146.3	210.36	203.14	196.52	239.33	243.87	344.34	309.78	298.86
- Austria		0.04	0.09	0.06	0.13	0.15	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.08
- Belgium		4.12	4.91	4.6	4.32	4.33	4.5	4.48	4.73	4.34
- Czechia		1.27	1.26	1.74	2.11	1.9	1.56	2.19	2.27	2.04
- Denmark		1.42	0.4	0.3	0.07	1.45	0		2.59	2.17
- Finland		4.55	2.23	3.08	1.13	1.82	2.05	1.59	1.75	1.49
- France		21.12	59.94	75.48	32.81	102.94	71	200.42	90.24	111.5
- Germany		39.45	48.35	34.59	49.6	34.93	57.61	42.84	38.07	55.09
- Greece		0.01	0.01	0.01						
- Hungary			0.02	0.08	0.23	0.08	0.2	0.31	0.38	0.33
- Ireland		0.72	0.69	0.65	0.68	0.73	0.73	0.77	1.18	1.42
- Italy		1.16	0.32	0.46	0.88	0.62	0.51	0.52	0.28	0.29
- Lithuania								0	0	0
- Luxembourg		0.29	0.52	0.62	0.58	0.14	0.45	0.97	1.47	1.27
- Netherlands		0.01							0.15	0.15
- Poland		0.01	0.02	1.13	1.16	0.01	0	0.03	0.03	0.02
- Portugal			0							
- Slovak Republic		0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.03		0.02
- Spain		5.16	0.25	0.05	-4.54	-5.26	-17.02	-10.3	-10.08	-10.31
- Sweden		36.39	36.73	27.45	34.49	37.54	27	28.15	28.75	23.55
- EU Institutions		30.54	54.57	52.8	72.82	57.92	95.13	72.27	147.92	105.62
Private Donors		7.94	5.08	6.28	5.38	10.43	8.46	8.33	3.41	7.44
- Arcus Foundation					0.53	0.27	0.24		0.22	0.18
- Bezos Earth Fund										0.64
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation		7.29	4.89	6.1	2.33	1.51	2.96	1.6	0.72	2.55
- Bloomberg Family Foundation										
- Charly Projects Ltd (Comic Relief)		0.65				0.11	0.21	0.37	0.04	0
- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation						0.5				
- David and Lucille Packard Foundation						0.03		0.05		
- Ford Foundation							0.07	0.01	0.08	0.27
- H&M Foundation			0.18	0.18	0.14	0.95	0.85	0.83		
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation						2.33	0.13	0.11		
- La Caixa Banking Foundation									0.15	0.13
- Laudes Foundation					0.11		0.1	0.99	1.26	1.86
- Margaret A. Cargill Foundation					1.98	0.61	1.82	2.42	0.44	0.3
- McKnight Foundation							0.06	0.08		
- Oak Foundation							0.08			
- Open Society Foundations										0.1
- Rockefeller Foundation									0.05	0.02
- Susan T. Buffett Foundation						2.01	1.93	1.08		
- UBS Optimus Foundation								0.22	0.47	0.08
- Wellcome Trust								0.38		1.33
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation									0.04	
- World Diabetes Foundation					0.29	0.56				
- Postcode Lottery Group						1.55		0.15		
- Dutch Postcode Lottery						0.65				
- People's Postcode Lottery								0.15		
- Swedish Postcode Lottery						0.9				

Source: <https://data-explorer.oecd.org/>