

Cambodia Country Report



សមាគមអ្នកអប់រំជាតិដើម្បីអភិវឌ្ឍន៍
National Educators Association For
Development



40TH ASEAN COUNCIL
OF TEACHERS + KOREA
CONVENTION

NAVIGATING OUR FUTURE

STEERED BY TEACHERS;
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22-25 OCTOBER 2026 · D'MARQUEE, SINGAPORE



Cambodia

- Cambodia is democracy , free and multiple party
- Population : 17 million
- 80% are farmers
- Land Squeres : 181 035 Km2
- Border: Vietnam , Lao ,and Thailand
- GDP: 52.38 Billion USD(2026)
- Capital GDP: 2,902 USD (2026)



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National Budget for Education

- The total national budget expenditure for 2026 is 10.2 billion, an increase of 7.8% compared to 2025. Of this, health and education expenditures are 1.88 billion, and national defense expenditures are 1.41 billion.



1-General Situation of Education

- Totally number of public schools 18,830 schools and kindergartens and total education staff 131,987 (teaching and non-teaching).
- Kindergartens: 8,607 Among these schools Cambodia have 8,334 kindergarten school in 1,664 communes (with 4,563 kindergarten are public, 3,083 are community and 688 are private) with 330,801 children among those 49.74% are girls.
- Primary schools: Cambodia has 8,067 Primary schools and 2,036,566 students with 49% are female.
- The finished rate of the basic education is 86.8% with 87.9% are female in national wide.



1-General Situation of Education

- Secondary schools: Cambodia has 1,340 schools, There are 662,106 students and 52.65% are females. Ministry of education have tried to set a declaration on (one commune one secondary school) and encourage all partners to implement this declaration as a result it remain only 80 commune among 1,664. in national wide which is not yet have secondary school.
- High schools: In the last school year Cambodia have 816 High schools with 360,617 students and 54.48% are females



1-General Situation of Education

- University: Total of 132 recognized Higher Education Institutions These institutions are split between 48 public institutions is focus on STEM, agriculture, public administration, and health sciences, and 84 private institutions is focus on business administration, foreign languages, IT, and international relations.

Among these 132 institutions, approximately 49 functions as major comprehensive universities (20 public and 29 private), while the remainder are classified as specialized institutes, polytechnics, and colleges.



1-General Situation of Education

- Cambodia now has informal education with 1318 classes and 1326 teachers including 439 are female teachers and 30 ,897 students including 20,103 female students.

- The drop out school

In Cambodia, primary school dropout rates dropped to 4.4% for the 2025–2026 academic year according to the MoEYS, down from 6.2% a decade prior. However, secondary levels remain high, with UNICEF Cambodia reporting a 15.5% dropout rate at the lower secondary level.

- Dropout Rates by Education Level

-Primary School: 4.4% dropout rate (2025–2026 data).

-Lower Secondary School: 15.5% dropout rate.

-Upper Secondary School: 13.7% dropout rate.

-Overall Children Out of School: Approximately 300,000 children and adolescents out of a total school-age population of 3 million.



1-General Situation of Education

- Key Causes for Leaving School
 - a-Poverty: Families facing economic hardship often pull children out of school to work or supplement household income. Through the National Institute of Statistic, UNDP and World Bank, Indicated that 17.8% of Cambodian people are living under the poverty line but NGOs and civil society said the number of the poor people are higher than this.
 - b-Migration: Seasonal or border migration leads to higher dropout rates in border and rural provinces.
 - c-Gender and Social Norms: Early marriage or family expectations impact girls, while economic pressures push adolescent boys toward labor.



1-General Situation of Education

- Key Causes for Leaving School

d-Teachers have forced the student to pay money for extra classes and documents or lesson sheets because teachers have got low salary. when the poor students have no money to pay for extra classes or documents they cannot get a good score like the rich students. So that they decided to drop out school.



2-The Situation of teachers in Cambodia

- Cambodia has approximately 125,597 education staff, managed under the MoEYS. This total covers public and formal education sectors spanning preschool, primary, and secondary levels, alongside administrative and support personnel.

Teachers and Professors: Over 93,000 active teaching staff make up the largest portion of this workforce.

Administrative and Support Staff: Includes national and sub-national office officials, contract staff, and literacy workers.



2-The Situation of teachers in Cambodia

Public School Teachers: Around 93,700 to 94,000 educators are employed by the government, serving in state-run kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools.

Private School Teachers: Approximately 14,000 to 15,000 teachers work in private institutions and international schools.

Higher Education: Over 16,000 professors and lecturers teach in tertiary education programs and universities.

Gender Ratio: Women account for roughly 52% of the general teaching workforce, though they are heavily concentrated in early childhood and primary education.

2-The Situation of teachers in Cambodia

Salary Breakdown by Education Level

Education Level	Public School Salary (Monthly)	Private / International Salary (Monthly)
Primary School	\$340 – \$370 (1.4M – 1.5M KHR)	\$700 – \$1,400+
Secondary School	\$360 – \$420 (1.5M – 1.7M KHR)	\$800 – \$1,600
High School	\$380 – \$480 (1.55M – 1.9M KHR)	\$1,000 – \$2,500+
University	\$450 – \$775+ (1.8M – 3.1M KHR)	\$1,200 – \$3,500+



2-The Situation of teachers in Cambodia

Public vs. Private: Public sector wages are strictly structured by the Ministry of Education based on seniority. Private schools set independent rates.

International Schools: Elite institutions in Phnom Penh offer western-scale salaries ranging from \$20,000 to \$55,000+ annually, often including housing and flights.

Hourly Tutoring: Many teachers supplement their income with private after-school tutoring, earning an extra \$10 to \$25 per hour.



3-FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A-For private sector

- In the private sector the rights and freedom of association was widely open, and these rights were guaranteed by the constitution, labor law, trade union law and ILO convention. Even though this right have guaranteed by the law but some of trade union leaders still challenges the discrimination from the employers and authority.

As of institutional data provided by the MoLVT, Cambodia has a total of 6,805 registered trade unions. This network breaks down hierarchically into 6,466 local unions, 284 union federations, and 42 union confederations. This multiplicity of union is just the opposite of CAMFEBA, the only one employer federation.



3-FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Hierarchical Breakdown of Labor Organizations

Organization Type	Registered Total	Primary Legal Definition & Role
Local (Enterprise) Unions	6,466	Formed directly at the grassroots factory or enterprise level by a minimum of 10 workers to manage immediate floor grievances.
Union Federations	284	Higher-level groups established by a coalition of at least 7 registered local unions to negotiate across sector-wide industries.
Union Confederations	42	National-level coalitions formed by at least 5 registered union federations to handle national labor policies.
Employer Associations	13	Separate organizations formed by a minimum of 9 distinct enterprises or businesses to legally represent the interests of management.



3-FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

B-Public sector (Teachers and Civil Servants)

- Freedom of association for teachers in Cambodia is legally recognized under international and national frameworks, but severely restricted in practice. Public school teachers face discrimination, and direct intimidation from state authorities if they attempt to organize independent association. as civil servants are explicitly excluded from the main protections of the country's Trade Union Law.

The Constitution guarantees freedom of association and trade union rights for all citizens.

Cambodia ratified ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association.

Government representatives have repeatedly promised that teachers hold full union rights.

The Trade Union Law (TUL) Exclusion and does not apply to civil servants and public school teachers, legally forcing them to organize under the more restrictive Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (LANGO). This heavily limits their collective



3-FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- public workers face immense legal and political barriers to forming independent labor organizations.

Governed by LANGO: This law requires burdensome government registration and mandates strict "political neutrality."

No Collective Bargaining: Public sector associations do not possess the legal right to engage in collective bargaining or organize legal strikes over wages and working conditions.

- Currently Cambodia, has 6 teachers associations and one civil servant association but only 2 association (NEAD and CITA) that very active to advocate for teachers and education, The other 4 is the association belong to MoEYS and some NGOs who are working in education sector.
- Cambodian government has adopted the demonstration and strike law and this law seem to strict the freedom of expression by defining place and number of people who join with demonstration.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

- Cambodia faces major education challenges, including low school completion rates, poor learning outcomes in rural areas, and a severe lack of science and computer labs. Though primary enrollment has grown, upper secondary completion remains near 28%, and many students lack basic reading and mathematic skills.

High Dropout Rates: Many students leave school early; completion drops from 84% in primary school down to 52% at lower secondary and 28% at upper secondary levels.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

Rural Disadvantage: Remote areas suffer from poor school infrastructure, water and sanitation shortages, and a lack of qualified teachers.

Low Learning Proficiency: National assessments show many students fall below basic skill levels in Khmer reading and mathematics.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

- Resource and System Shortages
 - Inadequate Facilities: Public schools often lack libraries, computers, and science laboratories required for modern STEM education.
 - Teacher Constraints: Low pay and limited professional development lead to an over-reliance on private tutoring ("shadow education") that disadvantages poorer families.
 - Underfunding: Public spending on education has lagged behind recommended targets relative to GDP growth.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

- Marginalized Groups
 - Disabilities: Children with disabilities face extremely high out-of-school rates due to limited inclusive infrastructure and trained special-needs staff.
 - Ethnic Minorities: Children from minority communities complete primary school at rates well below the national average.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

- There is a shortage of teachers in rural areas, but it exceeds teachers in urban. Teachers in remote area teach many hours, but urban teachers teach few or no hours
- The teacher does not have sufficient freedom to join their professional organization.
- Teachers' salaries are not yet sufficient to support their livelihoods.
- society does not value teachers because of low teachers' salaries



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

- Benefits for volunteer teachers teaching in remote areas are limited.

Insufficient educational equipment, lack of classrooms, study materials, some school no electricity, no internet, and no clean water.

. The number of students per class is up to 70 students.

Cooperation between teachers and parents of students is not yet good.

. Limited knowledge of technology

.The living conditions of teachers and students are still very difficult.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

Female students drop out school and go to work at garment factories

- Teachers have forced the student to pay money for extra classes and documents or lesson sheets because teachers have got low salary. when the poor students have no money to pay for extra classes or documents they cannot get a good score like the rich students. So that they decided to drop out school.

Some teachers have done business in class like sell the toys, school materials, cakes or candy, specially the teachers in primary school.



4-Challenges of Teachers and Education

- Teacher Shortages: Despite the large workforce, the country faces an acute shortage. MoEYS estimates a remaining nationwide deficit of approximately 30,000 teachers, with the most urgent demands hitting primary schools and rural communities.



Good Governance In Education

In Cambodia there are 4 level administrative hierarchy set by law on education :

- National/Central level(MoEYS)
- Provincial/Municipal level
- District level
- Education institution level(schools and university)
- Currently government have Decentralized teachers to the community monitoring



Good Governance In Education

The MoEYS have set up the principal of good governance in education :

- Transparency: with information about budgets, policies, recruitment, and school .
- Accountability School leaders and education authorities are responsible for their decisions and use of resources.
- Participation Involve teachers, students, parents, communities, and education stakeholders in decision-making.
- Equity & inclusion Ensure disadvantaged students and communities have fair access to quality education.
- Rule of law Apply education laws, regulations, and procedures fairly and consistently.
- Efficiency Use public resources effectively to improve learning outcomes.
- Responsiveness Respond promptly to problems affecting teachers, students, and schools.
- Integrity Prevent corruption, conflicts of interest, discrimination, and misuse of resources.

Good governance should not be limited to school administrators. Teachers are important stakeholders in education governance. In Cambodia is not yet transparency, Specially no transparency of using resources and funds



6-Recommendations

To increase salary to teachers and more allowance for teachers that volunteer go to teach in far or rural area.

Give public workers with freedom of association and rights for collective bargaining.

Stop discrimination and stop threatening teachers who join association

Government should facilitate process of registration association.

To promote the social dialogue and collective negotiation for public workers

Increase classes inline with the number of students



7-CONCLUSION

- We appreciated MoEYS has tried to set the strategy plan to develop and improve the quality of education and promotion education for all (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- More drop out school because of poverty and corruption. Presently NGOs and teacher representative have more concerned on the education quality
- For the freedom of association and human rights, even if Cambodia has legal framework and regulations to guarantee this freedom but in reality, these regulations seem to open widely only for private sector and sometime unions is still challenging with the process of registration because of corruption. And the law enforcement is still limited specially for public sector (teachers and civil servants).
- The public sector no right to form union and no right for collective bargaining and some of them have interference by authority when they were participated in association.
- The demonstration and strike law, trade union and NGOs law seem to strict the freedom of association and human rights.

Thank You For Your Attention



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