



Diversity in Cambodia

- **Global Diversity in Education: Cultivating Culturally Inclusive Mindsets**

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Welcome

Title:
Global Diversity in Education:
Cultivating Culturally Inclusive Mindsets

All of us in the academy and in the culture as a whole are called to renew our minds if we are to transform educational institutions - and society - so that the way we live, teach, and work can reflect our joy in cultural diversity, our passion for justice, and our love of freedom. - Bell Hooks

We are excited for you to join us in our journey of committing to addressing the complex challenges of inclusion in higher education institutes, particularly with regard to cultural identity. As cultural diversity in classrooms is increasing, representing both a challenge and an opportunity for educators, this e-course addresses the design of learning experiences that not only respect but also value and celebrate the cultural diversity of students, preparing them to operate effectively in a globalised world. Answering the call of the Leave No One Behind transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we thank VLIR-UOS for the opportunity to collaborate with global partners to share experiences, expertise, challenges, and critical and diverse views. This e-course and its community of practice is part of a focus on lifelong learning, growing and building a professional community dedicated to inspire and empower each other in making sure our teaching becomes more culturally responsive and inclusive, and supporting students who cross our paths and who trust our institutes to provide an environment where they can be themselves while striving for their highest potential in order to thrive in their personal and (future) professional lives, and in the world at large. We strive to succeed more and more in this through culturally responsive teaching practices. This pedagogy is based on the belief that cultural diversity is an asset to be celebrated and leveraged in the classroom, and that students will perform better academically when they see themselves and their cultures reflected in the curriculum as it helps students connect on a more personal level, and which can lead to increased motivation and engagement while developing a more positive school culture and sense of belonging among students. (Routledge, 2023)

Next to the exploration of theory, methodologies, good practices; the of sharing successful and challenging experiences in the field of intercultural learning, a fundamental part of the e-course will be reflecting on one's own teaching identity, teaching practices, and the development of critical skills to constantly evaluate and adapt teaching strategies. Participants will enhance their skills in designing teaching materials that are flexible and adaptable to different cultural and linguistic contexts, and work to implement strategies that are fair and representative of student diversity.



UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED
SCIENCES AND ARTS



Objectives

Title:

Global Diversity in Education: Cultivating Culturally Inclusive Mindsets

E-COURSE OBJECTIVES

Enhancing culturally responsive teaching competencies in teacher trainers.



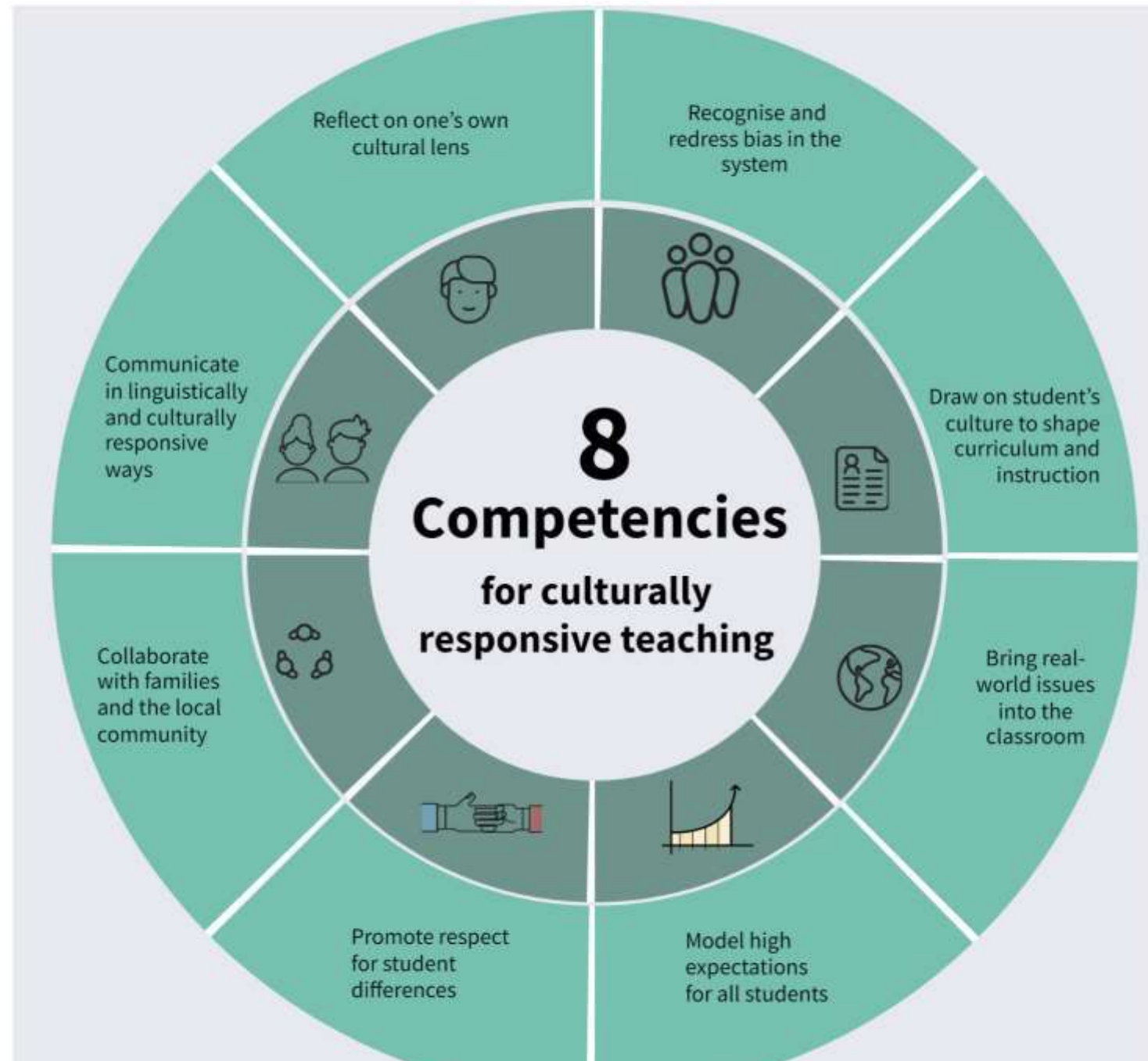
Eight Competencies for Culturally Responsive Teaching by New America shared under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 international license
<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/culturally-responsive-teaching-competencies>

For this e-course, with focus on mindset and keeping in mind where most of our current influence in education lies, we will not discuss the collaboration with families and local communities.





8 Competencies



Diversity Models



Diversity models

In the pursuit of fostering culturally responsive learning environments, adherence to an egalitarian ethos is imperative. This necessitates a commitment to ensuring equitable opportunities that extend beyond merely equalizing initial starting positions. Within the classroom setting, three primary paradigms emerge for addressing cultural disparities among students: Assimilation, Color Blindness, and Pluralism.

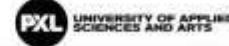
Assimilation

The assimilation paradigm is characterized by the attenuation of ethnic disparities, wherein educators supposedly adopt a stance of neutrality while covertly enforcing conformity to the majority's values. Under this model, students are expected to align their behaviors and conduct with a predetermined norm, often resulting in the suppression of cultural expressions such as religious symbols, observance of culturally specific holidays, or adherence to unique customs and rituals. Research demonstrates that assimilationist approaches pose a threat to students' sense of identity and self-worth, ultimately impeding their educational attainment.

Color Blindness

The color-blind approach entails a disregard for inherent differences among students, asserting that ethnic distinctions hold no relevance within educational contexts. However, in practice, both educators and students inevitably perceive and respond to racial and cultural disparities, albeit often subconsciously. While there may be instances where ignoring ethnic disparities proves beneficial—such as when such distinctions are inconsequential or when students prefer not to discuss their cultural backgrounds—adopting color blindness as a pervasive pedagogical strategy yields adverse consequences. This includes the exacerbation of explicit and implicit racial biases, the obfuscation of discriminatory behaviors, and the exacerbation of educational inequities.

Pluralism In contrast, a pluralistic approach epitomizes an egalitarian stance within a culturally responsive learning environment. Educators embracing pluralism actively acknowledge and valorize ethnic diversity (and similarities) among students. A pluralistic educational environment accentuates not only cultural disparities but also emphasizes the cultivation of connections, dialogues, and a shared sense of belonging predicated on flexible and evolving cultural identities. The adoption of pluralism engenders manifold benefits, including enhanced learning opportunities, academic performance, self-perception, identity formation, and a heightened sense of belonging within the classroom community. Curious about how you can create a pluralistic environment? We invite you to explore this with us through the following e-course. (These descriptions are based on the definitions according to Agirdag's model (2020).





About Cambodia

Population

- 17,121,847 inhabitants (2024).

Official Language

- Khmer

People

- The Khmer represent 85.4% of Cambodians. Just 7.4% are Vietnamese; 3.5% are Cham; 3.2% Chinese; 0.2% are Kui; 0.2% are Mnong. The Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese generally live in the Central Plains; Cham, Kui, the Mnong and other ancient people occupy the mountainous areas.
- The 2019 Cambodia Population Census revealing that 689,532 people aged five and up have a disability, including approximately 37,500 children aged five to fourteen.
- In 2019, the total number of children with disabilities in Cambodia was roughly 45,000 in primary schools and almost 7,000 in secondary schools (MoEYS, 2021b).

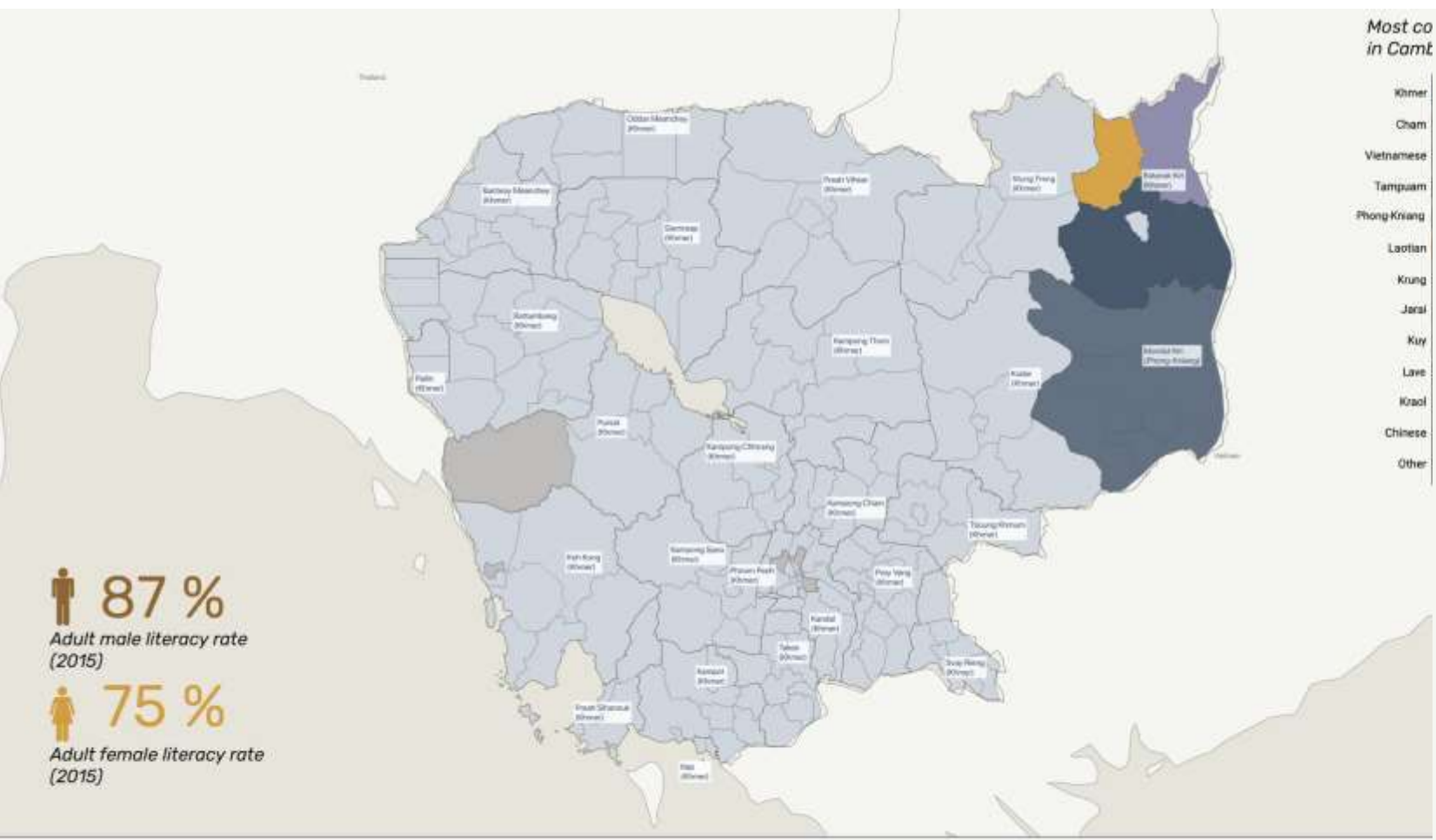
Religion

- Theravada Buddhism is the majority religion. This is the 'doctrine of the elders' – one of the oldest existing schools of Buddhism, based on the Pali Canon - the standard collection of scriptures. In this tradition, there are no supernatural intercessors, bodhisattvas, and monasticism is the preferred way of living. Hinduism was one of the Khmer Empire's official religions and Angkor reflects this – the holy temple of Angkor Wat is the largest Hindu temple in the world. The Cham are Muslim. Small Khmer and Vietnamese Catholic communities exist here and there are some minorities still practicing animist rituals.

<https://www.originaltravel.co.uk/travel-guide/cambodia/culture>



Languages Spoken in Cambodia



Most common primary languages spoken in Cambodia (% of population)

Khmer
Cham
Vietnamese
Tampuan
Phong-Kniang
Laotian
Kruing
Jarai
Kuy
Lave
Kraol
Chinese
Other

Most common primary languages spoken in Cambodia (% of population)



According to the 2013 Census of Cambodia, the country has 12 major languages. Khmer is the most widely spoken language in the country. French is still spoken as a second language by many older Cambodians, and is also the language of instruction in some schools and universities that are funded by the government of France. Since 1993, there has been a growing use of English, which has been replacing French as the main foreign language.

Languages Spoken in Cambodia



Do you know? There are 19 indigenous languages in Cambodia.

written by Surya Narayan • September 3, 2022 • 0 comment



The spoken languages reflect the diversity of the cultures.

In Cambodia, there are at least 19 indigenous languages. They can be divided roughly into the Austronesian language family, which includes the Jarai people, and the Mon-Khmer language family, which includes the Brao, Kreung, Tumpoun, Bunong, and Kui people.



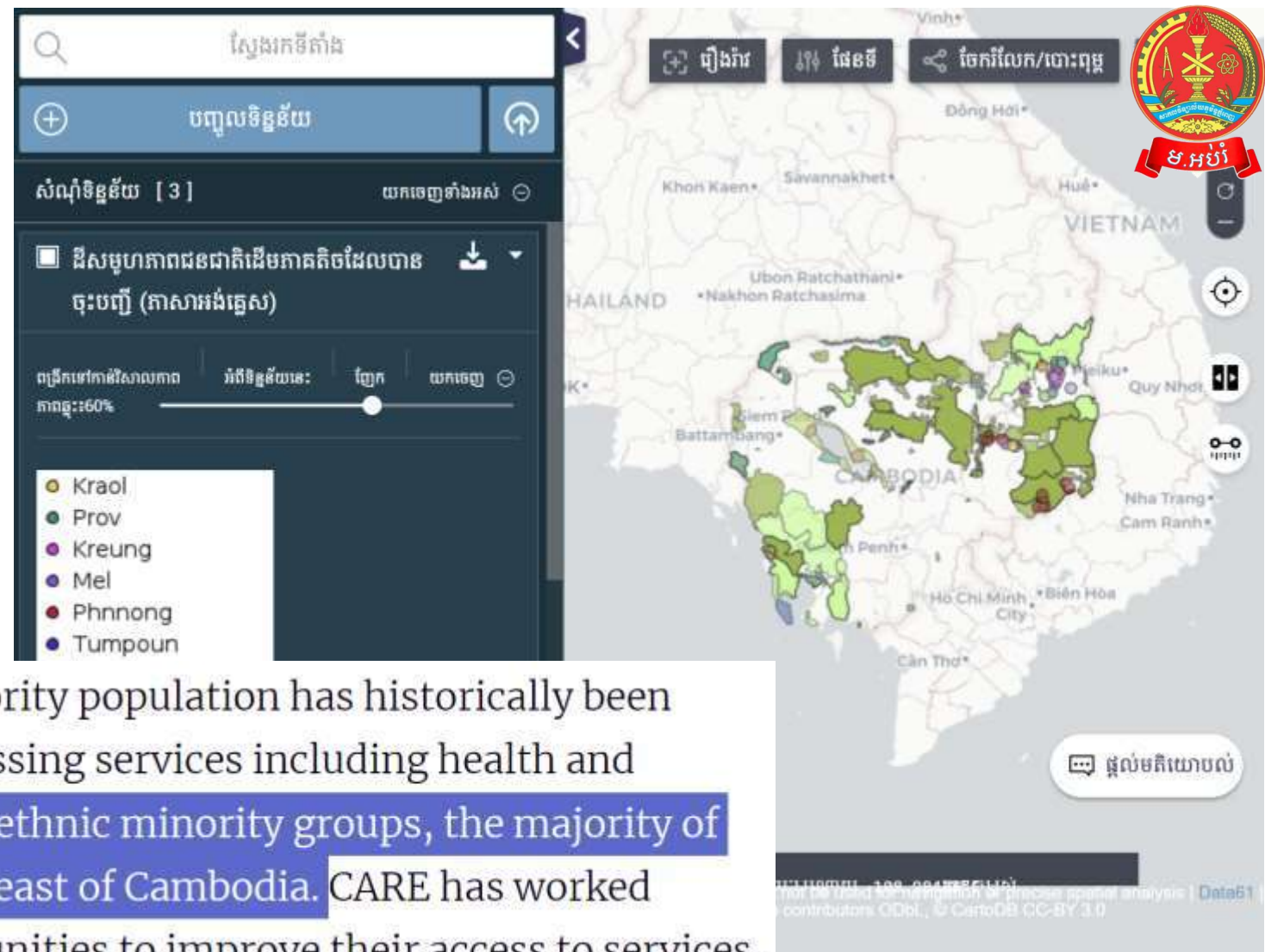
Some native languages are only spoken. Initiatives are already in place to allow indigenous students to receive an education in their native languages, allowing a larger number of them to complete high school and move on to further education.

Although there are more than a dozen languages spoken in Cambodia, Khmer is the only official language and is spoken by about 97% of the population.

Locations & Minorities in Cambodia

- Kraol
- Prov
- Krueng
- Mel
- Phnong
- Tumpoun
- Kavet
- Jarai

Cambodia's ethnic minority population has historically been marginalized from accessing services including health and education. There are 24 ethnic minority groups, the majority of which live in the north-east of Cambodia. CARE has worked extensively with communities to improve their access to services, construct and renovate school, buildings boarding houses and water, sanitation and hygiene facilitates. CARE has also worked to ensure families in villages are prioritizing girls' education equally to boys.





Languages Spoken in Cambodia

Table 1.1 Population by Mother Tongue by Sex: Urban/Rural, 2008

Mother Tongue	Total			Urban			Rural		
	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females
Total	13,395,682	6,516,054	6,879,628	2,614,027	1,255,570	1,358,457	10,781,655	5,260,484	5,521,171
Khmer	12,901,447	6,271,981	6,629,466	2,545,285	1,220,370	1,324,915	10,356,162	5,051,611	5,304,551
Vietnamese	72,775	36,857	35,918	30,289	15,178	15,111	42,486	21,679	20,807
Chinese	6,530	3,653	2,877	4,374	2,366	2,008	2,156	1,287	869
Lao	18,515	9,203	9,312	842	430	412	17,673	8,773	8,900
Thai	2,458	1,574	884	1,340	884	456	1,118	690	428
French	873	566	307	711	479	232	162	87	75
English	2,360	1,466	894	1,993	1,234	759	367	232	135
Korean	904	599	305	787	537	250	117	62	55
Japanese	396	239	157	319	194	125	77	45	32
Minority Languages	383,273	186,631	196,642	26,641	12,990	13,651	356,632	173,641	182,991
Others	6,151	3,285	2,866	1,446	908	538	4,705	2,377	2,328

Table 1.2 Percentage Distribution of Population by Mother Tongue by Sex: Urban/Rural, 2008

Mother Tongue	Total			Urban			Rural		
	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Khmer	96.3	96.3	96.4	97.4	97.2	97.5	96.1	96.0	96.1
Vietnamese	0.5	0.6	0.5	1.2	1.2	1.1	0.4	0.4	0.4
Chinese	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lao	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.2
Thai	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
French	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
English	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Korean	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Japanese	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Minority Languages	2.9	2.9	2.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.3	3.3	3.3
Others	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0



Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia

Cambodia is home to 24 different indigenous peoples, who speak mostly Mon-Khmer or Austronesian languages, and constitute 3% of the national population with an estimated 250,000 to 400,000 individuals. The Indigenous territories include the forested plateaus and highlands of North-eastern Cambodia, approximately 25% of the national territory.

While not disaggregated in the national census, other data confirms that Cambodian Indigenous Peoples continue to face discrimination and coerced displacement from their lands that are extinguishing them as distinct groups. These patterns are driven by ongoing state and transnational corporate ventures for resource extraction/conversion (mainly timber, minerals, hydro and agribusiness), coupled with growing in-migration from other parts of the country.

Political framework for Indigenous Peoples

Cambodia voted in 2007 to adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples without reservation, and has ratified the CERD, CEDAW, and CRC. It has not assented to ILO Convention 169. During its last Universal Periodic Review (UPR) (2013), Cambodia accepted a recommendation that it "increase measures to tackle illegal land evictions [of] Indigenous People, and consider fortifying the legislative framework consistently with international standards." However, this has so far not led to actual remedy to the discrimination and land insecurity Indigenous Peoples continued to face to this day.

Main challenges for Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia

An Indigenous rights movement that began in the late 1990s continued to fight for their human rights; however, with deteriorating democratic freedoms and serious human rights violations, the ground on which the Indigenous rights movement exists has become more precarious. The repressive regime of Hun Sen and the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), which has ruled the country since 1985, has persisted on a path of corruption, human rights abuses and non-democratic rule. In 2020, the government continued to target the independent media, civic organizations, NGOs, individuals exercising their civil and political rights and the opposition, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), which was banned in 2017.

the Rights of Indigenous
Peoples without
Reservation

Ultimate Goal of Cambodian Education

- Full citizen
- Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes
- ICT, Literacy, Numeracy, Foreign Languages
- Communication and Team Work, Applying Knowledge and Skills, Critical Thinking Skills and Innovation
- Personal, Family and Social Development, Entrepreneurship and Leadership, Accountability, Physical Health, Mental Health

Department of Curriculum Development (2015)



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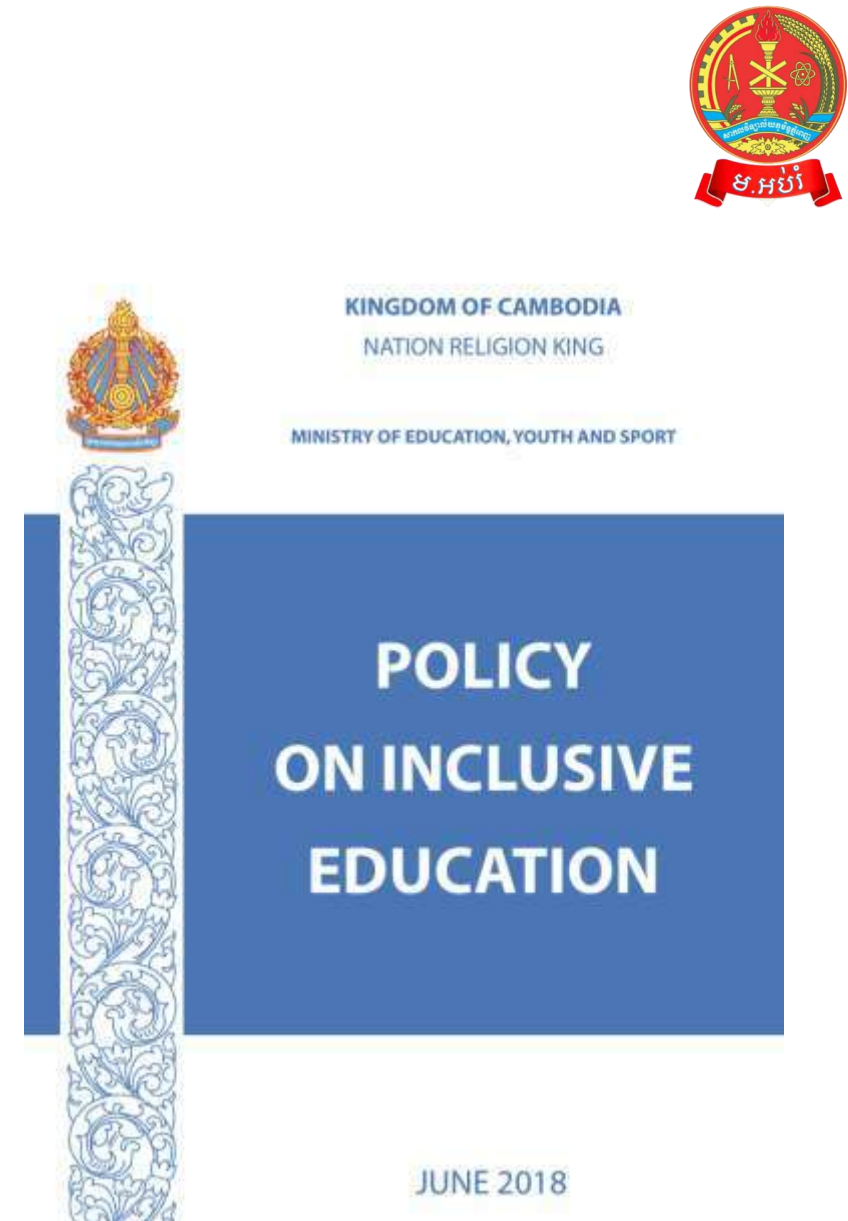
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Inclusive Education Policy in Cambodia

- Cambodia is striving to create an education system that caters to all learners, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances. This commitment is reflected in the **Policy on Inclusive Education**, adopted in 2018. This policy aims to dismantle barriers and ensure equitable access to quality education for all Cambodian students.





FORWARD

In the late 1970s, Cambodia's education system was completely destroyed. Later, through concerted efforts of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, with the support of development partners and international community, the education sector has significantly been enhanced. As result, many primary schools have been built to meet educational needs of learners within their localities. At the same time, even more lower-secondary schools have been established within commune level. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has developed and implemented Education Strategic Plan to ensure inclusive equitable and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In 2000, Special Education office was established and supervised by Primary Education Department which is responsible for delivering educational services to learners with disabilities, learners of ethnic minorities, learners of poor and disadvantaged economic backgrounds, and girls. In 2016, the office was upgraded to become the Special Education Department to deliver more inclusive education services to individuals with special needs, ranging from kindergarten to higher education level.

In 2008, the MoEYS developed a Policy on Education for Children with Disabilities, revised as the Policy on Inclusive Education in 2018. The revised Policy aims to equip individuals with special needs with knowledge, skills and attitude to become active citizens to live in a society of shared-prosperity. The revised Policy covers educational services from kindergarten to higher education level of public and private educational institutions. The Policy on Inclusive Education responds to regional and global educational trends while reflecting Cambodia's educational and cultural contexts.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport would like to convey sincere appreciation to all relevant ministries, institutions and development partners for continued support and cooperation in strengthening quality education services, particularly inclusive education services for individuals with special needs.



Phnom Penh, 25 June 2018
Minister of Education, Youth and Sport

Dr. HANG CHUON NARON

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2. VISION

All persons with special needs have rights to inclusive and equitable quality education and opportunities for life-long learning.

3. GOAL

The goal of the Policy on Inclusive Education is to educate all persons with special needs to have knowledge, skills and attitude so that they are able to contribute to the development of society.

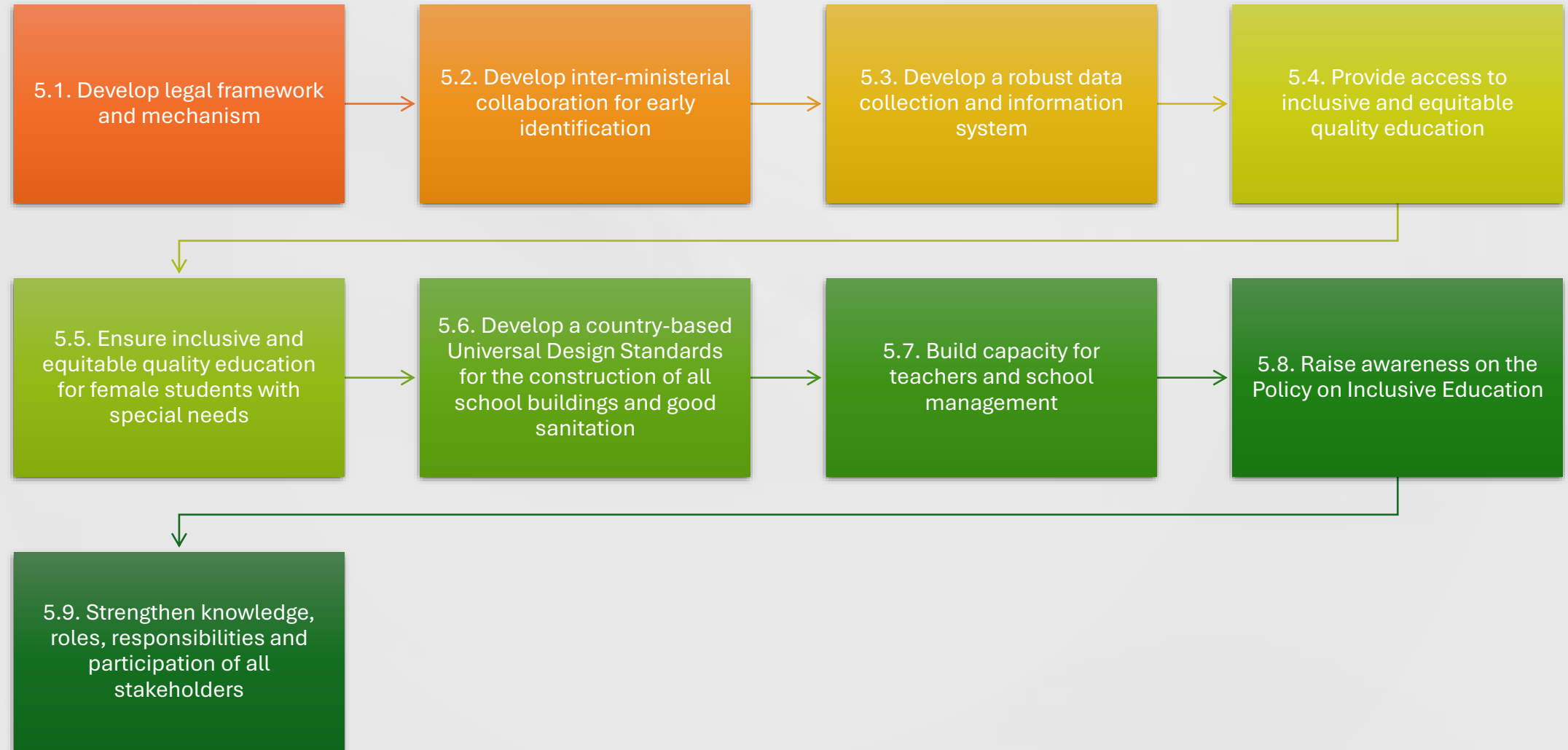
4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Policy on Inclusive Education are as the following:

- 4.1. To ensure early identification, assessment and timely intervention;
- 4.2. To provide access to inclusive and equitable quality education and life-long learning opportunities;
- 4.3. To build capacity and enhance professional development for all teachers as well as school management;
- 4.4. To raise awareness and promote participation.



Key Strategies



Inclusive Education Policy in Cambodia



Key Pillars of the Policy:

- **Emphasis on Equity and Access:** The policy prioritizes ensuring that all children, including those with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and from disadvantaged backgrounds, have equal opportunities to enroll and complete their education.
- **Curriculum Adjustments:** Recognizing diverse learning needs, the policy promotes the development of **flexible and adaptable curricula** that cater to different learning styles and abilities. This includes offering **individualized education plans** and differentiated instruction to cater to diverse learners within the same classroom.
- **Teacher Training and Support:** The policy underlines the importance of equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively teach in inclusive classrooms. This involves training in **differentiated instruction, disability awareness, and positive classroom management**, among other areas.



Inclusive Education Policy in Cambodia

Key Pillars of the Policy:

- **Community Engagement:** Building partnerships with families, communities, and civil society organizations is crucial for the success of inclusive education. The policy encourages collaboration to identify and address barriers faced by marginalized groups and ensure their active participation in the education system.
- **Accessibility and Infrastructure:** Creating a physically and socially accessible learning environment is essential. The policy emphasizes the need for accessible buildings, transportation, and learning materials, as well as promoting a positive school culture that embraces diversity and inclusion.



Inclusive Education Policy in Cambodia

Challenges and Opportunities:

- While the Policy on Inclusive Education presents a positive framework, translating its principles into practice remains a challenge. Limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and persisting societal stigma towards disability and diversity are some of the hurdles to overcome.
- Despite the challenges, Cambodia has witnessed encouraging progress. Increased enrollment rates for children with disabilities, expanded teacher training programs, and pilot projects implementing inclusive practices are promising indicators. Continued commitment from the government, collaboration with stakeholders, and sustained funding will be crucial for achieving the policy's vision.



Cambodia launches five-year plan to promote inclusive education



Svay Chrum Primary School students study in their classroom in Svay Reing province on May 19, 2023. Yousos Apdoulrashim

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, with support from UNICEF, has unveiled the Inclusive Education Action Plan 2024-2028, aiming to provide quality education to all children, including those with disabilities, representing a significant step towards fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment in Cambodia, according to a July 1 UNICEF press release.



Cambodia launches five-year plan to promote inclusive education

The plan will work to alter societal perceptions, promoting inclusiveness and preventing stigma and discrimination. It also aims to ensure that children with disabilities have access to necessary assistive technology and services.

It also highlights the importance of collaboration across different areas of government, NGOs, UN organisations and development partners (DPs) to create a supportive environment for these children.

“The EU believes that education for all is the key to unlocking the potential of Cambodian youth and is essential for reducing poverty and creating jobs in the country. Inclusive education for persons with disabilities provides equal opportunities and recognises the importance of their contribution to the sustainable development of the country,” said Koen Everaert, deputy head of cooperation for the EU Delegation to Cambodia.

USAID Cambodia Mission director Kerry Pelzman noted the integral role of inclusive education in their investments, highlighting the use of evidence and data to drive decision-making and ensure no child is left behind.

“USAID is proud of our partnership with the education ministry, the EU, UNICEF and other stakeholders to ensure quality education for all children with and without disabilities, particularly focusing on improving their literacy skills in mainstream and special schools,” she said.



The Inclusive Education Action Plan (IEAP) for 2024-2028, developed by MoEYS with support from UNICEF, aims to strengthen the education system and promote the rights of children with disabilities. The IEAP, set to launch in April 2024, marks a significant step forward in Cambodia's commitment to ensuring that every child, regardless of their abilities, has access to quality education and the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Dr Will Parks, UNICEF Cambodia Representative, emphasizes the plan's significance. "This plan is a major step forward in ensuring the rights of children with disabilities in Cambodia," he says. "It guarantees that no child, including those like Duong Chay, will be left behind in accessing quality education."



Inclusive Education in Cambodia

- *Schools in Cambodia are working to welcome students with disabilities. It's a tough job, but it's important for giving all students a fair chance.*
- <https://www.unicef.org/cambodia/stories/inclusive-education-cambodia-successes-and-challenges>



Table 7.1. *Number of students in special schools for the visually impaired*

	Number of classes	Male	Female	Total students
Phnom Penh	41	66	19	85
Kampong Cham	12	67	28	95
Battambang	13	28	6	34
Siem Reap	12	21	8	29
Total	78	182	61	243

Table 7.2. *Number of students in special schools for the hearing impaired*

	Number of classes	Male	Female	Total students
Phnom Penh	12	90	37	127
Kampong Cham	12	89	31	120
Battambang	13	66	30	96
Siem Reap	13	100	40	140
Total	50	345	138	483

According to Nishio (2019), there are currently five special education high schools in Cambodia, including in Phnom Penh Thmey, Chbar Ampov, Battambang, Siem Reap, and Kampong Cham provinces (see Tables 7.1 and 7.2). These special education schools cater to students who have visual or hearing impairments or those with intellectual disabilities (Nishio, 2019). Furthermore, MoEYS has recently established a national institute for special education, called the National Institute of Special Education, located in Khan Sen Sok, Phnom Penh, and transformed the Hands of Hope Center in Takhmao town into a public school with the support and funding of the Royal Government of Cambodia. In addition, teachers at the center also received the status of public teachers (Ou, 2021).

Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Cambodia: Progress, Challenges, and Ways Forward

Englalin Ek
Cambodian Education Forum
Phnom Penh, Cambodia



11 March, Siem Reap -- "I want to help people," signs seven-year-old Duong Chay, her hands painting her aspirations in the air against the canvas of silence. In a small farming village on the outskirts of the famed Angkor Wat temples, Chay dreams of becoming a doctor, despite facing the challenges of hearing impairment and autism.



"I want to be someone's support, just like my father was for me," she signs, her ambition to become a doctor fueled by a profound sense of responsibility.

Chay's mother, Nye Na, 40, has faced her own share of hardships.

"I've been unlucky with husbands," she laments. "My first husband died at home of untreated illness. The second husband died of battery electrocution while casting his net in the river." With her husband gone, Na bears the weight of providing for her three young daughters alone.



© UNICEF Cambodia/2024/Botumroath Keo Le Bun

In this class photo at Siem Reap Special Education High School, renowned for educating students with hearing and visual impairments, 2nd-grade teacher Sang Rathe stands proudly with his students. Duong Chay, standing in the middle row, joins her classmates in using sign language to express themselves and communicate effectively.



Despite these challenges, she finds hope in Chay's progress at school. "I'm so proud of my daughter," she exclaims. "The teacher tells me she's a good and an obedient student." Na vows to support Chay's education, dreaming of the day she will graduate high school and pave the way for a better life for them all.

Mrs. Sang Rathe, Chay's dedicated second-grade teacher, recalls the first day she met her student. "There was a calmness about her, a determination in her eyes that spoke volumes," she says. "It was like watching a flower bloom in slow motion, each petal a proof of her resilience."

Education for Ethnic Minorities

- A project by Care International (NGO)

Objective

- The Ethnic Minority Education Project aimed to increase student enrolment and retention rates in primary and lower secondary schools by improving the quality of education, school conditions and inclusive child- friendly learning environments, particularly for ethnic minority girls.





Education for Ethnic Minorities

Key activities (Care International Project)

- Construction of a boarding house and kitchens, equip solar panels as sources of energy
- Construction and renovation of toilets, well incinerator and hand-washing facilities
- Training of teachers on STEM, ICT in Education, sexual harassment, sexual reproductive health, gender-based violence, WASH and life skills
- Distribute science and technology equipment to schools
- Girls, Boys and Youth clubs training
- Develop 21st century skills and sexual reproductive health school curriculum
- Conduct training for girls and boys youth clubs, as well as new methodologies for teachers on career counselling, sports enhancement, the role of child and youth counsellors, information communication technology and sexual reproductive health.
- Provide sport training and materials to schools.



Education for Ethnic Minorities

“Digital Educational Resources in Indigenous Languages for Primary School Students” Project (by NGO Open Development Cambodia (ODC))

- Impact over 10,000 ethnic minority students across six provinces.
- Resulted in the creation of 90 digital forums and educational videos in five distinct minority languages, namely Bunong, Kavet, Kreung, Tampuan and Kuy.
- Since its inception, the project extended a helping hand to 12,500 students and 84 teachers. It also garnered substantial attention, with 45,000 views on digital forums hosted on YouTube and the ODC Facebook page and website.
- “This project seeks to address the language obstacles faced by primary education students belonging to Cambodia’s minority ethnic groups,” the ODC stated.



ODC launched the 'Digital Educational Resources in Indigenous Languages for Primary School Students' initiative on October 27. ODC



Thank you.