

NGO Education Partnership (NEP) in Cambodia

CSO SPOTLIGHT KEY MESSAGES ON SDG 4



CAMBODIA

Population:	Almost 15.6 million in 2019 (Ministry of Planning, 2020)
2021 Global Index Score:	64.54/100 (SDR 2021)
2021 Global Index Rank:	102/165 (SDR 2021)
SDG 4 Dashboard:	● Significant challenges remain (SDR 2021)
SDG 4 Trend:	➔ Stagnating (SDR 2021)
SDG 10 Dashboard:	● Significant challenges remain (SDR 2021)
2019 HDI Value/Rank:	0.594, 144 out of 189 (HDRO, 2020)
GNI per capita (PPP\$):	4,246 (HDRO, 2020)
Income Group:	Lower-Middle Income Status (WB, 2020)
Education Expenditure:	3.05% of the GDP (2019)
Secondary Net Enrolment:	Lower Secondary: 39.5% Upper Secondary: 22% (Ministry of Education, Youth, & Sport, 2021)
Literacy Rate (7 years & older):	Total: 88.5% Male: 91.1% Female: 86.2% (Ministry of Planning, 2020)

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been adopted in Cambodia and are being promoted by many government agencies, such as the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) and development actors such as UNDP Cambodia with the use of Accelerator Labs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning. Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and its targets aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. NGO Education Partnership (NEP) is a national coalition of CSOs which advocates with development partners and the MoEYS to promote the achievement of SDG4 in Cambodia.

There are many remaining challenges in the education sector in Cambodia, including (a) teacher deployment, (b) teacher quality and training, (c) equitable and inclusive access to quality education, (d) transition from primary to lower-secondary, (e) high drop-out rates, (f) quality education from pre-primary to tertiary education, (g) inclusive education for learners with disabilities, (i) non-formal education, and (j) technical and vocational education and training.

Globally, the COVID-19 outbreak has pushed 810 million children out of school. In Cambodia, more than 13,300 schools have been partly off and on, with some urban schools having closed longer than other rural schools since early 2020. On 16 March 2021, both public and private schools in Cambodia closed again, affecting about 3.2 million children. According to UNICEF¹, the scale of the crisis threatens to roll back years of progress and leave the most vulnerable deprived of social, essential, and educational services. UNDP² recently mentioned that Cambodia may have lost four years of gains in the human development index (HDI) due to impacts of the pandemic. In partial response to this concern, in a video address³ on May 6, 2020, the Minister of MoEYS, said: "I would like to appeal to parents, guardians and students to follow the radio broadcasting programs and facilitate full learning for your children."

A month after its launch, on June 18, 2021, the application called Onelink.to/moeysapp⁴ which consists of online lessons, worksheets, and other exercises for Grades 1 to 12 students, received 200,000 registrations from across Cambodia. However, while there has been a switch to use e-learning and other online interventions, many teachers, children, and other learners, especially those in rural and remote areas, have not had access to equipment, programmes, and training in using information and communications technology (ICT).

The Cambodian Royal Government has understood the importance of supporting and promoting achievement of SDG 4, which is significant for accomplishing other SDGs as well. Accordingly, it placed its teachers and others working in the education sector on the priority list to get the vaccination, making Cambodia only one of 17 countries to do so.⁵ As of mid July 2021, approximately 95 per cent of teachers across the country have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

Immediate recommendations to the government involve: (i) re-initiating the reopening of schools sooner in areas with higher vaccination levels, with proper health measures in place; (ii) while some initial steps have been made, there is a need to increase collaboration among the MoEYS and CSOs in the education sector, especially at the provincial level; (iii) conducting research to yield data on the extent and nature of the learning loss for learners; (iv) accelerating the provision of ICT equipment to teachers, learners, and parents, and the training of teachers in ICT skills to improve the quality of learning; (v) increase funding for the education sector, especially for vocational education and training for marginalised and vulnerable groups. •

- 1 Cambodia: The pandemic may have closed schools but learning never stops | Blog | Global Partnership for Education
- 2 (21) Cambodia, Covid-19, and Social Protection: Responses and Lessons Learned - YouTube
- 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dS1pQ2baWm8>
- 4 <http://onelink.to/moeysapp>
- 5 <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50835753/cambodia-among-17-countries-in-the-world-to-prioritise-vaccination-for-teachers/>



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