



Micro-Policy Intervention

CONTEMPORARY POLICY DISCUSSION IN CAMBODIA



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FUTURE
FORUM

Chapter 1 | Introduction

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The primary objective of Policy Lab has been to create a platform which will motivate, train, mentor, and promote Cambodian youth in critical, systematic, creative, and equity-oriented policy making. It is the conceptualisation of Future Forum; Cambodia's primary independent public-policy think-tank, founded by OU Virak in 2015.

Our Vision is of a just, democratic, dynamic, and prosperous Cambodia shaped by the needs of its people. To make that vision a reality, our mission is to nurture a community of young thinkers, develop positive policy solutions and engender critical debate.

We employ evidence-based policy debate, analysis, and recommendations to inspire Cambodian people (especially youth) to achieve democratic, political, and socio-economic change that will benefit all people of Cambodia. By adopting a measured, analytical, and considered approach, we identify underlying policy recommendations to help shape Cambodia's discourse, and rather than simply identifying problems, we adopt a solution-oriented approach, and use research to equip key decision-makers with detailed, specific, constructive policy solutions to Cambodia's issues.



It is within this vision that Policy Lab was formed. Drawing on Future Forums national network of policy makers and researchers, young policy researchers and analysts were invited to participate in a four-month training program to develop their insights into critical policy contributions.

Specifically, Policy Lab was designed to develop a considered and critical policy culture in Cambodia through engagement with, and connections between, multiple levels of Cambodian civil society, working towards equitable development through policy conception and implementation. By engaging mentors from existing civil society organizations, the Policy Lab initiative can embed the program more deeply and ensure maximum sustainable impact and engagement.

This program has an express commitment to open dialogue, mutual respect, blue sky thinking, and foresighting; with a structured commitment to gender and social equity models. However, rather than simply transplanting a foreign best practice model - the programs in-built feedback mechanisms work to ensure an organic process of program development that both respects and actively facilitates modes of dialogue, discussion, and interaction that draw upon the unique culture, norms, and informal institutions that define the Cambodian civil society space. Accordingly, Policy lab provides an opportunity to sow the seeds of dialogue and civic participation will grow utilising Future Forum's established network.

The program commenced in August 2019 with the nationwide recruitment of thirty young policy analysts. Successful applicants were subsequently invited to participate in a four-day training retreat in Kirirom. The primary objective of the retreat was to provide an intensive training schedule around policy needs identification, conceptualisation, and analysis. In addition, the retreat provided a valuable platform for community building, collaboration, and knowledge exchange.

Following the retreat, our young analysts underwent a three-month process of editorial training and support towards the production of their policy contributions. This collection represents the outcome of their hard-work, insight, and development.



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