



វិទ្យាស្ថានបណ្តុះបណ្តាល និង ស្រាវជ្រាវដើម្បីអភិវឌ្ឍន៍កម្ពុជា

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“Cambodia needs more and better teachers”, says a CDRI working paper released today

“The shortage of trained teachers at all levels of education but particularly at the primary level is the single most important constraint on narrowing the country’s skill gap”, argues a Working Paper entitled “Cambodia’s Skill Gap: An Anatomy of Issues and Policy Options”, published by the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) .

The paper that has been released today “is the first of a series of policy research studies that will be brought out by CDRI as part of a multi-year research programme on *Skill Development and Education Reforms for a Middle Income Cambodia*”, said Larry Strange, Executive Director of CDRI.

“The clearest and perhaps the single most important indicator of teacher shortage in Cambodia is the very high pupil-teacher ratios in schools, especially at the primary level”, said the paper. Cambodia’s pupil-teacher ratio for primary schools is the highest among ASEAN countries. At 46, the ratio is nearly twice that of Laos (27) and Myanmar (28), and two and half times that of Vietnam (20). “Indeed, Cambodia’s primary pupil-teacher ratio is the 16th highest in the world and the highest among countries outside of Africa”, the paper notes.

In addition to the shortage in numbers, inadequate educational qualifications and lack of teacher training seem to cut across the country’s entire education system, lowering national standards and translating into significant learning gaps for students. The country, therefore, needs not only more but also better teachers, emphasises Srinivasa Madhur, Director of Research, CDRI, and the author of the paper.

The paper urges policymakers to implement a strategy of teacher development that has three interconnected elements—prepare them well (better pre-service and in-service training), pay them well (better remuneration package), and make them perform (better teaching and learning).

To enhance the effectiveness of the teacher development strategy in providing quality education, the paper suggests a set of enabling measures—adequate preparation of children through early childhood development and pre-schooling, regular review and update of the curriculum, continuous improvement of the teaching pedagogy, local community involvement especially parent involvement in school management, and a significant shaping up and scaling up of the country’s fragmented TVET system.

The paper concludes by emphasising the importance of political commitment at the highest level as the precondition to enable the country to build a modern education system that will provide Cambodia’s youth the foundation for continuous learning and skill development. Mere “tinkering” with policies is not an option: a major overhaul is necessary. In rethinking the country’s education system, effective implementation of reforms and the concomitant institutional changes are critical. Clear vision and strong educational leadership are a *sine qua non* for that.

The full report is currently available in English only and can be accessed through the CDRI website at: www.cdri.org.kh and www.facebook.com/cdricambodia. The author can be contacted at srini@cdri.org.kh, telephone 023 881384 / 023 881701 / 012 867278, facsimile 023 880 734.