



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PHNOM PENH

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AUSTRALIA TO POWER CAMBODIAN VILLAGES THROUGH RENEWABLE ENERGY MINI-GRIDS

As part of Australia's enhanced engagement in the Mekong sub-region, the Australian Embassy joined the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) today to launch a new landmark initiative to electrify villages in Cambodia that are not connected to the grid.

The new project will provide up to A\$2 million in grants over the next two years to stimulate private investment in renewable energy for locations that don't have access to an electricity grid.

Australia's new A\$232 million Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) will fund the project. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced the MAP in November 2020, in order to support economic integration and development in Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar.

The project document was signed by H.E. Ty Norin, Secretary of State, Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) after comprehensive consultations with Cambodia's Renewable Energy Technical Working Group, which includes representatives from MME, Electricite du Cambodge and the Electricity Authority of Cambodia.

"Bringing reliable and affordable electricity to all people in Cambodia is a priority for MME. This requires special attention from the Cambodian Government to bridge the gap and find innovative ways to accelerate access in off-grid areas. I appreciate the support from the Australian Government to electrify these areas with renewable energy mini-grids" said H.E. Ty Norin.

Australian Chargé d'Affaires Mr Luke Arnold said the project will support the Royal Government of Cambodia to deliver high quality, safe and affordable electricity to all Cambodians. By delivering renewable energy, the project will also contribute to Cambodia's climate change commitments.

"People who lack access to electricity will miss out on the benefits of Cambodia's rapid economic growth," said Mr Arnold. "Connecting communities to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy will transform lives, allowing people to start small businesses, access quality education and reach their full potential."

Mr Arnold also explained that the project's public-private model will trigger significant additional investment from the private sector, drive both technology and business model innovation, and ultimately to provide a blueprint for further off-grid electrification in Cambodia using renewable energy technologies.

The project is part of Australia's broader work to support Cambodia's energy transition, improving electricity access, strengthening reliability and reducing costs. Australia is also supporting Cambodia to develop a Renewable Energy Strategy and Assessment and strengthening links between Australian and Cambodian energy institutions.

Australia's flagship infrastructure program in Cambodia, Investing in Infrastructure (3i), will deliver the project. To date, 3i has stimulated investments that have connected more than 31,000 Cambodian households to the electricity grid.

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