



មូលនិធិភាពជាដៃគូសម្រាប់អភិវឌ្ឍសមត្ថភាពវិស័យអប់រំ (CDPF III)

Joint Press Release

Cambodia to assess student learning to strengthen post-COVID recovery efforts

Phnom Penh, 01 September 2022 – In June this year, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) started their participation in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a significant step towards understanding student learning outcomes, taking stock of what learners know, gauging the readiness of Cambodia’s youth for the future and orienting post-COVID-19 recovery efforts. The results are expected to be ready in early 2023.

Launched by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the PISA tests the ability of 15-year-old students to use their skills in and knowledge of reading, mathematics, and science to overcome real-life challenges. The results are then published by the OECD for all participation countries. Since its inception in 2000, the PISA has become a global standard in assessing school performance and progress, and has played an important role in shifting policy focus from education inputs to learning outcomes in government decision and policy making.

This is the first time Cambodia has participated in the programme. The initiative is led and partially funded by MoEYS with additional financial contribution from the multi-country Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), which consists of the European Union (EU), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

The PISA data will enable the MoEYS to target its interventions and identify how best to deliver quality education to all learners and help students recover from learning loss due to the pandemic. The recent analysis of the Grade 6 National Assessment, which was also supported by CDPF, clearly identified the severe learning loss suffered by students because of COVID-19-related school closures. Understanding children’s current learning levels help education sector stakeholders measure progress over time, but more importantly it provides evidence-based data for decision makers to better support schools, teachers and students, to direct and inform the path of learning recovery and ultimately to improve future teaching and learning.

The CDPF partners are supporting the MoEYS in all aspects of learning recovery, starting by reaching every child, getting them back into school and keeping them in school. A foundational learning programme in Early Grade Reading and Early Grade Mathematics is already being rolled out in 12 provinces, a crucial step towards helping Cambodian children increase their literacy and numeracy skills, upon which all further learning is built.

“Cambodia is very pleased to be part of this global assessment framework,” said His Excellency Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport. “We look forward to better understanding the learning levels of our students as it is critically important to ensure our interventions are correctly targeted. MoEYS is investing heavily in early grade learning, teacher upskilling and digital education, which will help us overcome the learning challenges caused by the COVID-related school closures.”



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“Quality data and research are critical for good policy-making. We can really tackle problems when we can define them clearly. Data - and especially research that is comparable across borders - help us understanding the issues better. To ensure public money is spent efficiently, we shall assess if the interventions and policies in place reach the results we expected. Again, data and evidence give us the power and help us decide if the proposed solution go to the right direction, so we spend money for results. The EU is proudly partnering with Cambodia in evidence-based policy-making”, said HE Carmen Moreno, European Union Ambassador in Cambodia.

“I’ve had the pleasure of following the steady progress of Cambodia’s education system reforms since 2013,” said Rebecca Black, USAID’s Acting Mission Director in Cambodia. “The PISA ideally complements the Early Grade Reading Assessments, which USAID has been carrying-out with Cambodia experts to monitor student learning in the primary grades. We are proud to be a partner on this important initiative to collect and use data transparently in the education sector.”

“We have seen the devastating impact that COVID-19 has had in deepening inequalities across the globe. Investing in education, and in particular taking appropriate and immediate action to address the severe learning loss felt by children as a result of COVID-related restrictions, is critical to arrest and reverse this trend. Equitable access to quality education plays a critical role in strengthening the development of human capital in Cambodia and ensuring that all children can build the essential knowledge, skills and abilities they need to shape their future in the years to come,” said Foroogh Foyouzat, UNICEF Representative in Cambodia.

Background

The Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) is a partnership between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in Cambodia (MoEYS), the European Union (EU), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and UNICEF. Through a pooled funding mechanism, the CDPF provides support to implement capacity development priorities in the education sector. The CDPF entered its third phase in 2018, which will continue until June 2023, supporting capacity building initiatives with approximately US\$32 million. This new phase builds on the successes of the previous two phases, implemented since 2011 for a total additional amount of US\$24 million.

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