

NEWSLETTER SECOND QUARTER 2018

Policy Pulse, formerly known as Reform Inventory Initiative, is an initiative of the Asia Foundation to bridge the information gap between the Cambodian government at the ministerial level and the general public through providing a platform whereby information on policy reforms at the Ministerial level are collected, inventoried, validated, and shared. Policy Pulse is intended to be a window for current information and insight on the government's progress on reform and serve as the basis for the review process that will be employed to identify and publicize the top reforms each year.

Policy Pulse Newsletter is a new medium created to provide the public with recent updates regarding recent policy developments in Cambodia.



During the second quarter of 2018, there have been a number of recent and notable policy developments in Cambodia. Below highlights some of those developments across the ministries.



The Policy Pulse held its first Policy Talk on “Safety in Route for Garment Workers” on June 22, 2018 at the Asia Foundation. Two guest speakers were invited, including H.E. Min Meanvey, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, and Mr. Kim Pagna, Country Director of the AIP Foundation. The talk engaged more than 30 people from various institutions. Photo: The Asia Foundation.

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries opens the Agriculture and Food Product Lab to assure quality and food safety of the products, by issuing license to verify quality and safety of foods produced in Cambodia. The quality and safety check will follow national standard, ASEAN standard, and standard of importing countries. ([Ministry's Facebook Post on April 20, 2018](#))



Farmers are working in a paddy field. Photo: The Asia Foundation

The Organic Food Law comprising of 60 articles is being drafted and reviewed by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to control the quality of organic food in order to build trust with markets and consumers. It is foreseen that the law will reduce the cost and raise production to meet market needs. Currently, organic products cost about 50 per cent more than regular domestic and imported vegetables owing to a shortage of producers and low production. ([The Nation, May 26, 2018](#))

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has secured a \$90 million loan without interest from the World Bank to reform higher education sector in Cambodia. This six-year project aims to improve access to and quality of education and research, strengthen the governance of higher education institutions, expand universities in Battambang and Svay Rieng provinces, build dormitories in Phnom Penh, and others. ([Phnom Penh Post, April 30, 2018](#))



A small school library. Photo: The Asia Foundation

The Accreditation Committee of Cambodia issued Accreditation Standard for Doctoral Degree in Cambodia, aiming to improve education quality and to ensure that PhDs are equipped with knowledge and research skill and capable to compete with others, regionally and internationally. ([Ministry's Facebook Post](#))

Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment established Sang Rukhavoan Wildlife Sanctuary in Oddar Meanchey Province, covering 30,254 hectares of land. According to the Sub-decree dated April 5, the establishment is to protect wildlife, ecosystems, biodiversity and natural resources, and will contribute to the reduction of climate change and natural disasters. ([Khmer Times, April 11, 2018](#))

Ministry of Industry and Handicraft

The Ministry of Industry and Handicraft announced tax incentives—a two-year break on tax revenue—for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that register with the ministry. In addition to tax incentives, the ministry will provide training programs for MSMEs' employees and facilitate their access to market research. The decision was made to bring more business into the regulatory fold. ([Khmer Times, May 8, 2018](#))



Staff are packaging fish sauce in a small factory before delivery. Photo: The Asia Foundation

Ministry of Interior

The amendment on the Law on Nationality has been passed. The amendment on the law aims to manage the nationality process more effectively, to ensure citizens' rights, and to ensure national security and benefit. The law also illustrates the jurisdiction on the rights to obtain Cambodian nationality through birth, adoption, marriage, nationalization, and the rights to give up Cambodian nationality. ([Radio France Internationale, May 11, 2018](#))



A young student is walking to a nearby school. Photo: The Asia Foundation

The Ministry of Interior is drafting law on Population Density, Identification and Population Density Statistics to ensure the registration of births, deaths, marriages and other population density-related data in Cambodia. The primary goals of the draft are to create the legal conditions necessary to establish a reliable and effective system to identifying every Cambodian living in the country and to conduct a census for planning purposes. ([Phnom Penh Post, June 27, 2018](#))

Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training plans to set up a committee to deal with issues for garment workers whose employers or owners fled the country without paying them. The committee comprises of other relevant ministries. ([Khmer Times, April 11, 2018](#))



Garment workers are having lunch in a canteen inside a factory in Cambodia/ Photo: ILO/ Better Factories Cambodia

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training will carry out three measures to tackle various incidents at factory, including regular inspection at factories to ensure law enforcement, strengthening measurements on health and work safety, and conducting training with workers. During the first four months of 2018, there were about 400 cases that involved with fainting due to polluted environment. ([Thmey Thmey, May 7, 2018](#))

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Ministry of Mines and Energy

An amendment on the Law on Mineral Resources Management and Exploitation was passed to regulate mining sector and punish offenders. The new amendment entitles the Ministry of Mines and Energy to establish its own judicial police force to enforce the law. The amendment followed the recent closure of nearly 30 illegal gold mining operations in Monduliri province as officials from Ministry of Mines and Energy and Ministry of Environment carried out a compliance push in the wake of the Kratie poisoning case. Since 2017, mining companies have been screened and licenses have been reduced from 150 licenses in 2013 to 60 licenses 2017. ([Khmer Times, June 12, 2018](#))

Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation

A new juvenile detention center will be built on two hectares of land in Kandal Stung district, Kandal Province to reduce overcrowding in the prison and to separate minor from adult prisoners. The center will provide education and rehabilitation program. At the moment, there are about 1,400 minors in prisons across the country. ([Khmer Times, June 27, 2018](#))

The Policy Pulse's advisory groups include representatives from the American Chamber of Commerce in Cambodia, the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace, Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency, the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia, the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, DFDL, the European Chamber of Commerce in Cambodia, GIZ, JICA Cambodia Office, Mekong Strategic Partners, the NGO Education Partnership, the NGO Forum on Cambodia, OXFAM, PACT, the Reproductive and Child Health Alliance, Transparency International Cambodia, the United Nations Children's Fund, University Research Company, LLC, and other experts from bilateral agencies, multilateral institutions, NGOs and the private sector.



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