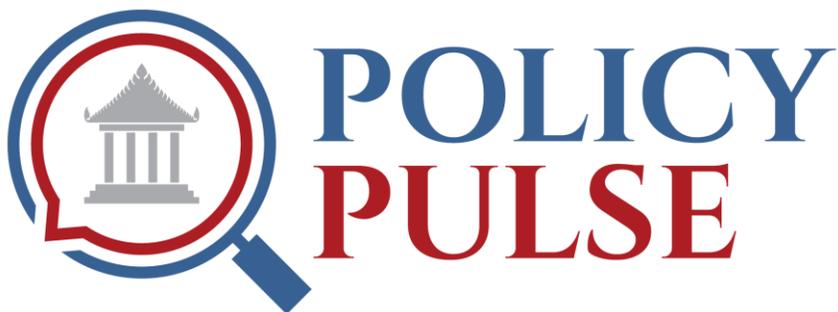


NEWSLETTER FOURTH QUARTER 2018

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 a 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 updates regarding recent policy developments in Cambodia.



During the fourth quarter of 2018, a number of developments across the Cambodia's ministries have been observed such as the discussion on draft Rubber Law, the draft law on the Management of Integrated Resorts and Commercial Gambling, the launch of bachelor's degree in teaching, the establishment of higher education social sciences and humanities research institute, the amendment on law on provincial and district council elections, a joint directive requiring all buildings to accommodate people with physical disabilities, the discussion on vehicle import standard, the launch of heavy truck driving center, the launch of groundwater monitoring system, the draft national policy on ecotourism, the launch of the Irrigated Agriculture Improvement Project to develop water resources, and others.



School buildings are built on concrete stilts to avoid being flooded during rainy season. Photo: The Asia Foundation

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has drafted Rubber Law, which comprises 11 chapters and 112 articles, aiming to ensure an efficient and transparent management of the sector, increase household income, and help protect the environment.

According to the draft law, businesses and investors need to apply for license before the operation. Owing to the General Department of Rubber, there are about 436,000 hectares of rubber plantation in Cambodia, and the sector is expected to export 220,000 tons of rubber in 2018. Rubber price saw a continuous drop this from \$2,200 in 2017 to \$1,260 per ton in 2018. ([Khmer Times, December 20, 2018](#))

Ministry of Economy and Finance

Law on the Management of Integrated Resorts and Commercial Gambling, which comprises 12 chapters and 113 articles, has been drafted to ensure the legality of the business operation, protection of the players, job creation, boosting tourism industry, and boosting tax revenues. ([Inside Asia Gaming, October 4, 2018](#)) The law will put Cambodia as a regional gaming and casino hub. The first gambling law was passed in 1996, banning minors from gambling, shutting down unlicensed establishments, prohibiting illegal games and restricting the import of gaming equipment. To date, approximately 105 casino licenses have been approved and 48 are operational. The casinos are mostly seen in Sihanoukville and along the borders with Thailand and Vietnam. ([The Edge Markets, October 3, 2018](#))

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

Bachelor's degree program in teaching will be launched in November and will be piloted with 500 primary school teachers in Phnom Penh and Battambang province. VVOB Cambodia is working with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to develop the curriculum from a two-year training program to a four-year program to produce reflective and critical teachers. The current practice is that students who finish secondary school can take entrance exam to receive two-year teacher training to become primary and lower secondary school teacher. ([Southeast Asia Globe, October 4, 2018](#))



A female teacher is standing in front of a school library. Photo: The Asia Foundation

The Royal University of Phnom Penh, the Royal University of Fine Arts, and the National Institute of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a higher education social science and humanities research institute that aims to be a hub for research in social sciences and humanities in Cambodia and provides students with access to high quality lessons in social sciences. ([Phnom Penh Post, December 19, 2018](#))

Ministry of Interior

The amendment on law on provincial and district council elections is being drafted to increase the number of council seats in response to current development, population growth, and administrative expansion to improve the work of each province and district. The next election for provincial and district council members will take place on May 26, 2019, and all 11,572 commune councilors will vote. There are 393 seats in Phnom Penh and 24 provinces, and 2,931 seats for all districts. ([Khmer Times, December 27, 2018](#))

Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

A Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences was signed to increase the ability of farmers and promote sustainable development between both countries. The farmers will be able to take short course training on how to grow their crops. ([Khmer Times, October 31, 2018](#))

Memorandum of Understanding was signed between two Cambodian associations—the Manpower Association of Cambodia and the Association of Cambodian Recruitment Agencies—and three Malaysian associations—the Malaysian Association of Foreign Workers Agencies, the Malaysia National Association of Employment Agencies, and the National Association of Human Resources Malaysia—to ensure the rights and safety of Cambodian migrant workers in Malaysia. ([Khmer Times, December 5, 2018](#))

Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction and Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation

A joint directive was issued directing all buildings to build infrastructure such as wheelchair ramps and allocating parking spaces to accommodate people with physical disabilities. The directive applies to train stations, airports, schools, public spaces, apartments, hotels, restaurants, factories and other private buildings. According to a recent report by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, there are 2,839 people with disabilities, including 1,478 severely disabled, who are employed in ministries and state institutions, and 3,055 are employed in 77 private companies. ([Khmer Times, December 28, 2019](#))

Ministry of Public Works and Transport

A set of standards on what kind of vehicles should be imported has been discussed between Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts and the Institute of Standards. The three institutions will explore ASEAN standardization to determine what kinds of vehicles Cambodia should use and should Cambodia apply international regulations. This effort aims to standardize the import of automobile to assure quality and safety for the end-user by 2023. Currently, Cambodia has imported about 45,000 both used and new vehicles, among which 4,000 are news cars. ([Khmer Times, October 18, 2018](#))

A heavy truck driving center was launched to provide driving course to students who are at least 24 years old and have valid car driving license. Aiming to reduce road accidents involving heavy vehicles, the course includes 30 theoretical lessons and 20 hours of practical driving. To date, there are about 226,000 registered trucks and about 134,000 drivers have licenses required to drive heavy vehicles. Every year, traffic accidents cost Cambodia approximately \$350 million. ([Khmer Times, November 1, 2018](#))

A \$63 million water treatment project was signed with South Korea's Dohwa Engineering Company to develop water treatment facility in Takhmao City, Kandal Province. The project includes the construction of a 16.3 kilometer drainage network and the repair of existing pumping stations. The facility could pump 29,952 cubic meters of water and is able to process 7,600 cubic meters waters per day. ([Khmer Times, December 27, 2018](#))



A few men are sitting on top of a heavy truck. Photo: The Asia Foundation

Ministry of Rural Development

A groundwater monitoring system has been launched to counter droughts in seven provinces and assure sustainable water management. Those provinces include Kampot, Kampong Speu, Kratie, Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Pursat, and Stung Treng. The system enables the government to develop plans to take measures with the data and information provided by the system. ([Khmer Times, November 16, 2018](#))

Ministry of Tourism

The draft national policy on ecotourism that aims to protect and conserve natural areas in Cambodia was approved by the Council of Ministers. The Ministry of Tourism is working with other relevant ministries to develop 56 potential tourism communities and ecotourism sites in 16 provinces. Currently, Cambodia has 400 entertainment venues and 56 licensed tourism and ecotourism communities. In 2017, Cambodia received 5.6 million international tourists and generated \$3.6 billion about 13 per cent of its GDP. This sector has created 620,000 jobs and thousands of indirect employments. ([Phnom Penh Post, November 20, 2018](#))

Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology

The \$135 million Irrigated Agriculture Improvement Project to develop water resources in Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kampot and Takeo was launched to modernize, rehabilitate and renovate irrigation systems to provide water to farmers in rural areas in those provinces. The project will construct 381.2 kilometers of concrete canals, 6.5 kilometers of concrete dams, 800 meters of a spillway, and irrigation systems to carry water to rice fields three times per year. ([Khmer Times, November 16, 2018](#))



A farmer is seen carrying rice seedlings to a paddy field. Photo: The Asia Foundation

Contact Us

The Asia Foundation - Cambodia

House No. 59

Oknha Peich (St 242)

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Tel: (855-23) 210 431

Email: policy.pulse@asiafoundation.org

www.asiafoundation.org

The Policy Pulse's advisory group includes 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.



The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region addresses five overarching goals—strengthen governance, empower women, expand economic opportunity, increase environmental resilience, and promote regional cooperation.