



**POLICY
PULSE**

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Policy Pulse is an initiative of The Asia Foundation, founded in 2015 and formerly known as the Reform Inventory Initiative. It aims to improve the public's understanding of important policy reforms in Cambodia through high-quality research. Policy Pulse promotes thoughtful and inclusive policy dialogue and analysis in order to establish a resource for evidence-based policy recommendations. It is a platform through which researchers and stakeholders can gather to organize policy forums at the national and provincial levels to disseminate research and facilitate broad policy discussions.

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

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Government Ministry Updates



Port in Sihanoukville. Photo: The Asia Foundation

Ministry of Commerce

The Ministry of Commerce launched the 4th version of the Cambodia Trade Integration Strategy (2019-2023) to outline how to diversify the economy and boost international trade. This new strategy focuses on strengthening Cambodia's competitiveness with the ultimate goal of helping Cambodia transition to a more stable and developed economy. This strategy is cross-sectoral and requires cooperation from all ministries to ensure that reforms are strategic and help to grow the economy. ([Khmer Times, May 6, 2019](#))

Ministry of Economy and Finance

The Ministry of Economy and Finance has established a National Committee for Cambodian Financial Stability with the goal of ensuring the stability of the Cambodian financial system. The Committee will also work to bolster the system against both internal and external shocks and will allow the government to respond to crises in a quickly and efficiently.

Additionally, the Ministry has established the Credit Bureau of Cambodia that will record and monitor companies' credit status to improve credit quality in the country. This Bureau will also work towards establishing a system to receive consumers' complaints and issue notices on illegal lending activities. ([Khmer Times, June 13, 2019](#))



Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has drafted the National Policy on School Health to improve the quality of education and to ensure that both learners and educators have access to resources ensuring good health and wellbeing. The policy outlines the importance of good physical, mental and spiritual health among students and teachers. The policy includes legal frameworks and mechanisms that address nutrition, hygiene and the supply of clean water, and an action plan to implement the policy. ([Phnom Penh Post, April 8, 2019](#))

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports will expand the Cha-Ching Money Smart Kids program in Cambodia with a goal to reach 150 schools across three provinces over the next three years. The program expects to benefit over 100,000 people, including students in grades 4 and 5 as well as their parents, teachers, and provincial education officials. The program focuses on equipping young students with financial literacy on money management skills through lessons on four basic financial concepts including earning, saving, spending and donation.

The Khmer Times describes the program: “Cha-Ching was first launched in Cambodia in 2014 through a partnership with major broadcaster CTN, which has since been airing Cha-Ching cartoons through its network. In August 2017, Prudence Foundation also partnered with Child Right Foundation to pilot the Cha-Ching Curriculum, providing teachers with structured lesson plans and training to help students learn key money management skills. The Cha-Ching lessons were delivered to 20 schools in Phnom Penh and Kandal province, reaching 725 students during the 2017/18 academic year.” ([Khmer Times, May 24, 2019](#))

Ministry of Handicraft and Industry

The Ministry of Handicraft and Industry is collaborating with a Chinese team to conduct a feasibility study to draft a master plan to guide the development of Sihanoukville in line with the government’s Industrial Development Policy (2015-2025) into a modern, green city. The study will provide an assessment and recommendations to turn Sihanoukville into an attractive investment destination and industrial hub. ([Khmer Times, May 23, 2019](#))

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health is planning to implement a modernized digital hospital system called “Peth Yoeung” at public hospitals. Patients will receive a medical ID card containing their personal medical records. The digital hospital system will enable Cambodia to build an effective health data management system that will benefit patients and help hospitals more easily access records. ([Khmer Times, April 22, 2019](#))



Ministry of Information

The Ministry of Information is drafting amendments to the 1995 Press Law to better align with what the government describes as the current reality and needs of Cambodia. The ministry will hold discussions with media organizations and other stakeholders to gather additional input to promote freedom of expression, press freedom, and the right to access information. The amendment will also obligate newspapers and TV and radio stations to publish corrections when they broadcast or publish factual errors as determined by the government. ([Phnom Penh Post, May 6, 2019](#))

Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior has issued a directive to prevent and better regulate transnational crimes in Cambodia, calling for the National Police and relevant authorities to take effective measures to fight all kinds of cross-border crimes. These include unauthorized tourism, drug trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking, illegal arms dealing, and cybercrime. The ministry aims to introduce regulations to bolster cooperation among the General Commissariat of National Police and the General Department of Immigration. These regulations will seek to improve cooperation in research, and to improve prevention and crackdowns at international checkpoints, seaports, and land borders. ([Phnom Penh Post, April 24, 2019](#))

The Ministry of Interior has drafted a Law on Public Order aimed at outlining certain aspects of public order in Cambodia. This law will examine similar laws in other countries and will address various issues, such as littering in parks or on streets, drunk driving, and noise pollution. The law will complement existing legal provisions. Since 1994, the government has issued sub-decrees on public order. ([Phnom Penh Post, May 30, 2019](#))

Ministry of Mines and Energy

The Ministry of Mines and Energy approved the Law on Petroleum and Petroleum Production Management. This new law is composed of nine chapters and 72 articles has been approved by the Council of Ministers. The law seeks to the development and sustainability of the oil industry in Cambodia and also increase transparency to bolster confidence. ([Khmer Times, April 8, 2019](#))

Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism is developing rules and regulations on Eco-Tourism aimed at Cambodia's coastal areas in response to the developing tourism sector. These regulations will outline policies for protecting the environment, practicing good governance, and promoting sustainability in the sector. ([Khmer Times, June 28, 2019](#))



Garment workers travel to work. Photo: The Asia Foundation

Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training has convened a discussion on the future of the labor market and work environment with labor experts from the government, unions, and UN representatives. The ministry encouraged young Cambodians to upgrade their knowledge and learn new skills to prepare for a changing labor market. The Khmer Times summarized an important topic discussed by the Minister: “According to a 2016 study by the International Labour Organisation, the top five Asean countries at risk of automation over the next two decades include Vietnam, with 70 percent of the workforce facing possible job losses, followed by Cambodia with 57 percent, Indonesia with 56 percent, the Philippines with 49 percent and Thailand with 44 percent.” ([Khmer Times, May 27, 2019](#))

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training released a booklet outlining strategies for promoting gender equality in the workforce and labor market. These strategies summarize those in the Strategic Plan for Gender Mainstreaming in the field of Labor and Vocational Training Phase IV for 2019-2023. These include providing training to strengthen the capacity of women’s rights groups, expanding knowledge on gender mainstreaming, monitoring how women are treated in the workplace at both the national and sub-national levels, and informing women about how to access social security and the social services provided by the National Employment Agency. ([Khmer Times, June 27, 2019](#))



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The Asia Foundation

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