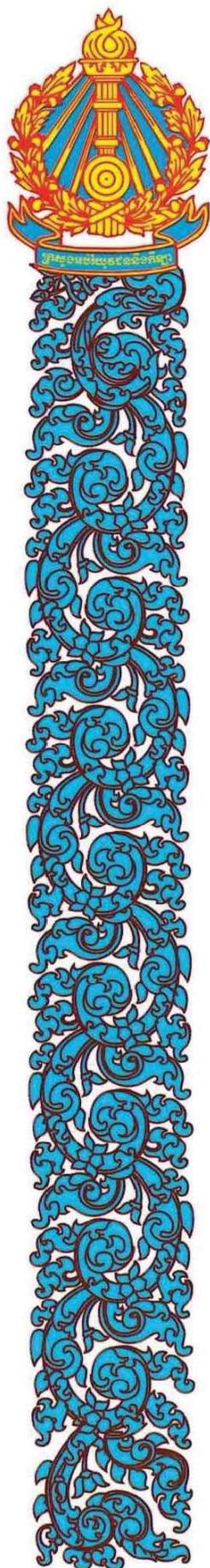


**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**



Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

**Policy
on
Higher Education Vision 2030**

April 2014

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Preface

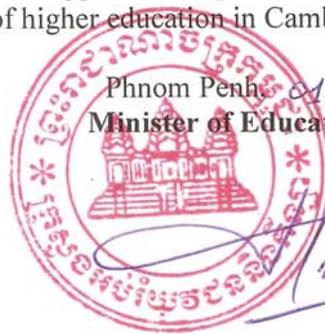
Higher Education plays an important role in human resource development and it is a key sub-sector contributing to socio-economic development of each nation. Realizing this value, the Royal Government of Cambodia has regarded Higher Education as an important sub-sector for developing human capital which enables the development of Cambodia towards high-middle income country and high income country in the future. This far-sighted vision of the Royal Government is clearly reflected in the Rectangular Strategies-Phase III. Linking to the Strategies, many reforms are being carried out to improve quality of, and equitable access to, higher education so as to produce graduates who will become both economically competitive and socially responsible.

Globalization and regional integration have significant impacts on all sectors of Cambodian economy; therefore, higher education development needs to adapt and conform to global and regional trends. Responding to this context, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has formulated Cambodian Higher Education Vision 2030 aiming at identifying long-term direction and clear roadmap for development of this sub-sector.

Cambodian Higher Education Vision 2030 will ensure comprehensive equity and access for students, efficient and smooth coordination and management of higher education, necessary mechanisms to support higher education system, and development of human resources who will contribute fully to national development. This policy document also lists down key Strategies and Action Plan for successful implementation of the Vision.

The Ministry wishes to thank any individuals and institutions involved in developing this document.

The Ministry strongly hopes that all concerned institutions, development partners and stakeholders continue to contribute to and support the implementation of the Vision to ensure its success in strengthening the quality of higher education in Cambodia.



Phnom Penh, 01 April, 2014
Minister of Education, Youth and Sport

Dr. HANG CHUON NARON

1. Introduction

According to the classical economics, physical capital is the foundation for economic growth. But in this globalised economy and the progress of science and technology, economic growth does not rely solely on physical capital, knowledge supplements physical capital as the source of present and future wealth and prosperity. As knowledge becomes the most critical assets, so does higher education. In addition to its direct role in promoting economic development, higher education is central to the development of active citizenship. Higher education also plays a crucial role in informing public and policy maker on matters of cultural, social, political and economic importance.

The experience from some of the East and Southeast Asian countries indicate that progress of education and training at higher education level plays a critical role in developing their nation, especially in the industry sector through the establishment of the linkage between qualified and relevant higher education curriculum and industry sector.

In Cambodia, the development to higher education sector after the end of colonialism met serious challenges, especially during civil war and Khmer Rouge period where education was totally abolished. During the 1980s and early 1990s, Cambodia did not initially prioritize higher education as it sought to rebuild its education system. The focus was on consolidation of basic education provision.

Since the late 1990s, an increase in the number of graduates from general education has led to an increased demand for higher education. To cope with this demand, a policy initiative was introduced, based on the principle of public private partnership. Under this policy, the first private higher education institution (HEI) was established in 1997. Since then, the number of private universities has increased substantially, especially since mid-2000, reaching 64 by 2014. Fee-paying classes were also introduced into the public HEIs. As result, the higher education landscape in Cambodia has transformed itself dramatically; moving from elite to mass access to higher education. The number of public HEIs increased from 8 in 1997 to 39 in 2014 and the number of students in higher education increased from nearly 10,000 in the early 1990s to more than 200,000 in 2013.

An analysis of the current situation in higher education reveals an alarming mismatch between education and employment. According to various reports, the areas of study that are popular among Cambodian university students are social sciences and business related major. Only a small percentage of students are studying science, engineering and agriculture; areas of study considered to be key skills to foster the growth of the Cambodian economy. Further, there are concerns about the quality of higher education provision across the country.

Furthermore, recent changes in the socio-economic structure, industrial expansion program, the intensification of ASEAN integration process and the introduction of Cambodia Vision 2030 demands a reform in higher education, both quality and relevancy improvement and expanding the coverage to ensure that young people are equipped with necessary skill to improve their living standards and contribute to the national development. Within this context, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has created a vision for the long term development of the higher education sub-sector in line with Cambodia vision 2030.

2. Vision

To build a quality higher education system that develops human resource with excellent knowledge, skills and moral values in order to work and live within the era of globalization and knowledge-based society.

3. Goals

To develop a good governance system and higher education mechanisms that ensure qualified students have an opportunity to access quality higher education programs which respond to the needs of socio-economic development and labour market.

4. Objectives

- 4.1. Create a comprehensive equity and access program that ensures all qualified students have the opportunity to study at HEIs and complete a quality program.
- 4.2. Develop relevant curricula that provide students with excellent knowledge and skills that help them contribute fully to national development and labour market needs.
- 4.3. Improve quality of learning, teaching and research systems to provide students with knowledge and skills needed in the labour market and contribute to national development.
- 4.4. Develop a governance system, mechanisms and policies for higher education which enhance the quality of management and performance of higher education institutions and other relevant institutions.

5. Strategies

5.1. Ensure that qualified students have opportunity to access higher education, irrespective of their social or economic position.

- 5.1.1. Ensure that the upper secondary education curriculum and examination system identifies students qualified to study in higher education;
- 5.1.2. Expand equitable access to higher education for qualified students including the poor, women, remote-area and students with disabilities through the national scholarship program;
- 5.1.3. Strengthen the capacity of the Department of Higher Education responsible for delivering and monitoring the programs that facilitate the entry of the poor, women, remote-area students and students with disabilities into Cambodian HE.

5.2. Ensure that all HEIs provide students with quality academic programs designed to meet national needs and priorities.

- 5.2.1. Create a comprehensive scholarship program to support all qualified but financially constrained students;
- 5.2.2. Expand programs in science, technology, engineering, creative arts and mathematics to meet the national development strategy goals and objectives.

5.3. Ensure that Cambodian higher education system maximizes opportunity for qualified students to access to lifelong learning and professional development.

- 5.3.1. HEIs are licensed to operate only if they can demonstrate having appropriate infrastructure, human resources, financial strength, management structures, development plans, and internal quality assurance processes that ensure high quality program delivery to students.
 - 5.3.2. Build HEIs' capacity to meet national standards on governance and management based on regional and international guidelines.
 - 5.3.3. Develop minimum standards to make Cambodian undergraduate and postgraduate programs comparable with regional and international standards.
- 5.4. Ensure that HEIs develop quality assurance systems to meet national accreditation standards and allow full participation in the global system of quality-assured higher education.**
- 5.4.1. Develop a targeted plan to enhance professional skills for all Accreditation Committee of Cambodia staff to ensure that quality assurance processes applied to Cambodian HEIs are consistent with regional and international standards.
 - 5.4.2. Promote twinning and exchange arrangements with foreign universities of good standing in order to help improve staff capacity, learning, teaching, and research.
- 5.5. Ensure that academic staff and students, especially postgraduates, contribute to improving the research and development culture in Cambodia to serve national development needs.**
- 5.5.1. Encourage all HEIs and faculty members to develop research and consultancy services that strengthen and benefit Cambodian culture, identified national skills needs and development priorities.
 - 5.5.2. Develop a comprehensive staff professional and career development scheme that encourages excellence in learning, teaching, research, and management.
- 5.6. Ensure that all graduates are equipped with knowledge and skills that allow them to contribute fully to national development in a rapidly changing environment.**
- 5.6.1. HEIs will ensure that all program development should include critical thinking, analytical and leadership skills.
 - 5.6.2. HEIs will ensure that courses and skills development programs within the curriculum of all departments, will include practical applications which relate to market needs.
 - 5.6.3. HEIs will include credit-based lifelong continuing education programs among their course offerings for both personal and professional development.
- 5.7. Ensure that all programs are developed in conjunction with analysis of national training provision and skill needs.**
- 5.7.1. Strengthen planning, financing, monitoring, review and reporting systems in higher education;
 - 5.7.2. Develop a plan to improve governance and management in the higher education sector;
 - 5.7.3. Develop a plan for the creation of a "model" university in Cambodia which operates autonomously and with high quality.
- 5.8. Ensure that relevant ministries and agencies coordinate and collaborate to maximise the impact of HE on Cambodia's economic, industrial, commercial, agricultural, social and cultural development.**

- 5.8.1. Ensure that Governing Boards have responsibility for the overall performance of public and private HEIs, must reflect the interests of all stakeholders and link their HEIs to relevant industrial, professional and national bodies.
- 5.8.2. Ensure the management and governance of the Cambodian higher education system and of individual HEIs meet regional and international standards.

6. Action Plan

To achieve the above mentioned strategies, there will be a number of activities as follows:

6.1. Organizational Structure

To enable the management and implementation of the policy, three levels of organizational structure are required: The Supreme National Council of Education; a Higher Education Technical Working Group Committee; and Implementing Ministries/Agencies/Institutes/ *Parents and Students*/ Development Partners. The detailed responsibilities of each level are described below:

6.1.2. The Supreme National Council of Education

The Supreme National Council of Education, based on the Education Law - Article 5, has the following responsibilities:

- A. Propose long-term education policy & strategies aimed at meeting social & economic development needs of the Royal Government;
- B. Overall assessment of education, technical & professional training carried out in Cambodia;
- C. Seek resources for education.

6.1.2. Technical Working Group on Higher Education (TWG-HE)

The HETWG has as its primary responsibility the promotion of aid effectiveness and development partnerships in support of the achievement of higher education policy. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport chairs the HETWG.

6.1.3. Implementing Ministries and Institutes

6.1.3.1. The Ministry of Education Youth and Sport

The Ministry of Education Youth and Sport has the critical role of coordination among relevant ministries, government agencies, higher education institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners to translate in a collaborative manner the Policy on the Vision for Higher Education 2030 into a Higher Education Strategic Plan and Action Plan and provide an enabling environment for the implementation of both plans.

6.1.3.2. Higher Education Institutions

Higher Education Institutions have responsibilities as follows:

- A. Develop the HEI mission, strategic plan and capacity development plan consistent with the HE Strategic Plan and Action Plan;
- B. Establish internal quality assurance mechanisms and conduct regular internal self-assessment of the management and programmes according to regulations and guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport;
- C. Submit self-assessment reports to ACC for accreditation. Strengthen the monitoring system within the HE Monitoring Framework, prepare annual progress reports and submit them to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport;

- D. Participate in the HE Annual Operational Planning and Review process;
- E. Strengthen financial management and procurement systems within the HEI assuring the proper use of all resources to improve the quality of programmes offered;
- F. Strengthen organizational governance and human resources management and ensure sufficient capacity to use the authority given under the HEI autonomy and accountability framework;
- G. Build twinning programmes or networks with HEIs abroad and collaborate with the private sector;
- H. Promote research activities that a) support improvement in the quality of teaching and learning; b) address priority subjects c) solve local development issues d) lead to increased economic growth.

6.1.3.3. The Accreditation Committee of Cambodia

The Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC) has responsibilities as follows:

- A. Establish and implement the progress of higher education accreditation systems;
- B. Coordinate with the relevant ministries in the development and implementation of accreditation systems;
- C. Conduct external assessments of the performance of HEIs against minimum standards and post the results of the external assessments on its website for public information;
- D. Participate as a member of the Higher Education Sub-sector Working Group.

6.1.3.4. Parents and Students

Parents and Students have the right to actively and fully express their concerns about higher education in order to improve the quality of programme provision. They have the right to receive academic information and records from relevant academic institutions.

6.1.3.5. Development Partners including Civil Society Organizations

Development Partners including Civil Society Organizations provide technical and financial support for the implementation of the HE Strategic Plan and Action Plan. They are also members of the Higher Education Sub-sector Working Group.

6.2. Legal Framework

The Education Law provides comprehensive legal provisions for the higher education sub-sector. The implementation of the National Policy on Vision for Higher Education 2030 into action should follow all of those legal provisions including the development of a HE Strategic Plan, a HE Action Plan, rules, regulations, principles, implementation policies and procedures.

6.3. Financial Support

The development of the higher education sub-sector requires sufficient financial resources and effective use of those resources to enable the implementation of the Policy and HE Strategic Plan. In the current context of financial constraint, the higher education sub-sector needs to put emphasis on key innovative interventions within the next five years which call for more effective use of financial resources. Those interventions could include:

- A. Strengthening HEIs autonomy, accountability and financial management systems assuring the resources for high quality provision of higher education programmes. This intervention not only increases student enrolment in higher education but increases institutional revenues and produces skilled graduates;
- B. Strengthen research, innovation capacity and activities that will have a direct effect on the capability of graduates to enter into the ever-changing labour market as well as

generate financial resources for the HEI from development partners and the private sector. The findings of such research and innovation activities will also contribute to economic growth;

- C. Strengthen higher education systems in planning; regulating and supporting HEI development; governance; monitoring and review; financial management and reporting.
- D. Build higher education capacity to generate more financial resources from public income, development partners, and civil society organizations.

6.4. Capacity Development

Effective implementation of the Policy on Higher Education Vision 2030 requires qualified human resources in the fields of leadership and management, teaching and research, planning, and data analysis.

6.5. Project Implementation

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport will consult with the Ministry of Economy and Finance to develop higher education investment projects within the framework of the Policy on Vision for Higher Education 2030. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is responsible for the oversight of project management and implementation.

6.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure this policy will be successfully implemented, it is necessary to have a monitoring and evaluation system that focuses on achievement of:

- Measurable targets and strategies in the higher education strategic plan;
- Performance Indicators in the higher education strategic plan;
- Results against targets.

7. CONCLUSION

The achievement and consolidation of an effective primary and secondary education sub-sector, the shift in economic structure and labour market need together with the need for regional and global integration urged the Cambodian government to revisit its higher education sub-sector. Within this context, higher education was given more priority in ESP 2014-2018 compared with its ESP predecessors. The new priority given to the higher education sub-sector is also in line with “Human Resource Development” strategy, one of the four pillars of the Royal Government Rectangular Strategy III. To enable the implementation of the Policy on Vision for Higher Education 2030, the Royal Government of Cambodia ensures implementation of the following tasks:

- Establishment of Supreme National Council of Education;
- Establishment of a HE Technical Working Group and Secretariat;
- Approval of the National Policy on Vision for Higher Education 2030 followed by the development of a HE Strategic Plan and Action Plan 2014-2018.

Concerned ministries, government agencies, higher education institutions, and development partners, including civil society organizations, shall contribute to the dissemination of the National Policy on Vision for Higher Education 2030 and implement the HE Strategic Plan and Action Plan 2014-2018.