

## EdTech in Cambodia: A Rapid Scan

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>BEEP</b>	Basic Equivalency Education Programme
<b>CDPF</b>	Capacity Development Partnership Fund
<b>CLCs</b>	Community Learning Centre
<b>D&amp;D</b>	Decentralisation and deconcentration
<b>ESP</b>	Education Strategic Plan
<b>ESWG</b>	Education Sector Working Group
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GII</b>	Gender Inequality Index
<b>GINI</b>	Gini Coefficient
<b>GNI</b>	Gross National Income
<b>GPE</b>	Global Partnership for Education
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunication Union
<b>LMS</b>	Learning management system
<b>MISTI</b>	Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology & Innovation
<b>MOEYS</b>	Ministry of Education Youth and Sports
<b>MOLVT</b>	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
<b>NFE</b>	Non-Formal Education
<b>NGS</b>	New Generation Schools
<b>NSDP</b>	National Strategic Development Plan
<b>OOSCY</b>	Out-of-School Children and Youth
<b>PFM</b>	Public Financial Management

<b>PTEC</b>	Phnom Penh Teacher Education College
<b>PTC</b>	Provincial Training Centres
<b>SBM</b>	School-Based Management
<b>SDC</b>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and vocational education and training
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Fund for Population Activities

## 1. About this scan

EdTech Hub country scans explore factors that enable and hinder the use of technology in education. These include policies, government leadership, private-sector partnerships, and digital infrastructure for education. The scans are intended to be comprehensive but are by no means exhaustive; nonetheless, we hope they will serve as a useful starting point for more in-depth discussions about opportunities and barriers in EdTech in specific countries, in this case, Cambodia.

This report was originally written in January 2024. It is based primarily on desk research, with quality assurance provided by a country expert — an Education Specialist with the UNICEF Cambodia office. Given how rapidly the educational technology landscape is evolving, EdTech Hub plans to provide periodic updates. [Table 1](#) below provides a summary of the status of EdTech in Cambodia at the time of writing.

**Table 1.** *Overview of EdTech in Cambodia*

<p><b>Policies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Policy Strategy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Education</i> (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2018a</a>).</li> <li>■ <i>Education Sector Plan 2019–2023</i> (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2019b</a>).</li> <li>■ <i>Cambodia Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework 2021–2035</i> (<a href="#">↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2021</a>).</li> <li>■ <i>Cambodia’s Science Technology and Innovation Roadmap 2030</i> (<a href="#">↑Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, 2021</a>).</li> <li>■ <i>Cambodia Digital Government Policy 2022–2035</i> (<a href="#">↑Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, 2022</a>).</li> <li>■ <i>EduTech Roadmap</i> (<a href="#">↑Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation &amp; National Council of Science Technology and Innovation, 2022</a>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ As of 2019, the government’s intensive electrification efforts have resulted in 84% of households in Cambodia having access to electricity.</li> <li>■ In 2019, only 50% of 3,594,031 households were reported to have internet access at home.</li> <li>■ The internet in Cambodia is primarily accessed through mobile-cellular networks.</li> <li>■ As of 2022, the government reported that cellular networks covered 100% of the population. Broadband penetration in Cambodia was low in 2022, with only 509,830 subscriptions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partners and initiatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cambodia has an emerging EdTech ecosystem with several interventions that were developed as a response to educational disruptions during the Covid-19 pandemic, several of which have remained active beyond the pandemic.</li> <li>■ Collaborations between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) and development partners have resulted in a number of EdTech initiatives in the country</li> </ul>



	(see <a href="#">Section 7</a> ).
<b>Out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Over 13% of primary-school-aged children in Cambodia are out of school.</li><li>■ Children from the richest households are more likely to complete all levels of education than their poorer peers. The urban–rural divide is also significant, with children in urban areas more likely to finish formal schooling.</li><li>■ Dropout rates increase with the level of education due to poverty, as well as sociocultural expectations for children to generate income or perform household chores, and poor academic performance.</li><li>■ Cambodia has formal and non-formal pathways to vocational education for OOSCY.</li><li>■ Some initiatives such as the Basic Equivalency Education Programme (BEEP) include online components to allow flexible learning opportunities for OOSCY.</li><li>■ Challenges to these interventions include capacity building for teachers and facilitators, as well as a lack of resources to establish lifelong learning centres.</li></ul>

**Girls' education**

- Cambodia ranks poorly among other countries in the Gender Inequality Index (144 out of 189). Social norms and cultural perceptions prevent girls from completing their education.
- Despite gender inequity, girls have higher rates of enrolment and lower rates of dropout when compared to boys.
- Notably, girls' dropout rates tend to increase at higher grade levels.
- MoEYS' gender mainstreaming strategic plan ([↑MoEYS, 2021b](#)) aims to address some of these barriers by developing interventions to increase girls' participation in schools. The plan also includes strategies to develop positive social attitudes towards girls' education.
- Room to Read and the Factory Literacy Programme ([↑UNESCO Office Phnom Penh, 2022](#)) are some examples of initiatives that support girls in staying in schools and offer them equivalency to pursue further education.

## 2. Country overview

Cambodia is a lower-middle-income country in Southeast Asia ([↑World Bank, no date](#)) with a budding EdTech ecosystem ([↑Ek & Vandenberg, 2022](#)). It is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).<sup>1</sup> The country is made up of 25 provinces, including the capital Phnom Penh, and three municipalities. Cambodia was reported to have a population of 16,944,826 people as of 2023, of which 49.5% were male and 50.5% were female ([↑World Bank, 2023b](#)). Approximately 96% of the population is of Khmer descent, with Chinese, Vietnamese, and other ethnicities constituting the remaining 4% ([↑Britannica, 2023](#)), hence making for a highly homogeneous society. Cambodians are primarily a rural population; as of 2022, only about 25% of the Cambodian population is reportedly settled in urban areas ([↑World Bank, 2022](#)). Phnom Penh is the country's largest metropolis with a population of 2,281,198 ([↑World Population Review, 2024](#)).

### 2.1. Socio-economic development

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In 2023, as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Cambodia had a real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of USD 30.94 billion in 2023 and a real GDP per capita of USD 1,920 ([↑IMF, 2023](#)). Cambodia's economic growth rate averaged about 7% per annum before the Covid-19 pandemic, with post-pandemic growth rates hovering around 5.2–5.3% ([↑Ek & Vandenberg, 2022](#)). Historically, the Cambodian economy has been fuelled by agriculture, fisheries, and forestry (primary sector), which made up 45% of the country's GDP in 1990 ([↑World Bank, 2021](#)). However, there has been increased economic diversification in recent years, with a growing industry sector (including construction)<sup>2</sup> contributing to 22% of the GDP in 2010 and 37% of the GDP in 2021 ([↑World Bank, 2021](#)). Such economic diversification illustrates the changing demands of skills and knowledge in the Cambodian economy. Notably, the informal sector forms a large part of Cambodia's economy, with about nine out of ten positions in non-agricultural employment reported to be informal in nature ([↑UNDP, 2023](#)).

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<sup>1</sup> Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam are ASEAN member states.

<sup>2</sup> Industry (including construction) is a measure used by the World Bank and comprises value added in mining, manufacturing (also reported as a separate subgroup), construction, electricity, water, and gas. See full definition of the World Bank's World Development Indicators for more details ([↑World Bank, no date](#)).

Cambodia has a population of about 16.9 million people ([↑United Nations Fund for Population Activities \(UNFPA\), 2023](#)) and a labour force of approximately 8.8 million people ([↑UNDP, 2023](#)). An estimated 130,000 young people join the country's labour market annually ([↑UNDP, 2023](#)) and yet, the unemployment rates remain low, hovering around 1.2% according to the most recent Labour Force Survey<sup>3</sup> ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Planning, 2019](#)). The country ranks 146 on the Human Development Index (HDI). As of 2021, it has an HDI value of 0.593, which places it in the medium development category and ninth out of the ten ASEAN countries ([↑UNDP, 2024](#)). Additionally, estimates from 2019 to 2020 showed that 18% of the population is considered poor and lives below the poverty line of USD 2.70 per day ([↑World Bank, 2024](#)). Income inequality appears to be slowly declining, as indicated by the decrease in its GINI coefficient from 0.67 in 2010 to 0.58 in 2020<sup>4</sup> ([↑UNDP, 2023](#)). Such a decline might be a function of the country's economic transition from an agricultural to an industrial base ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Planning, 2021](#)).

### 2.1.1. Strategies for socio-economic development

Socio-economic development in Cambodia is designed around the development strategies laid out in the Pentagonal Strategy, which was launched in 2023 ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023](#)). This builds upon two former development strategies, the Triangular Strategy<sup>5</sup> and the Four-Phase Rectangular Strategy ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2018](#)), both of which were implemented over the past 25 years ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023](#)). Although these strategies position Cambodia towards socio-economic growth, they also play a crucial role in defining educational policies by determining priorities for skills development. The two most recent documents, the Rectangular Strategy and the Pentagonal Strategy, are discussed in more detail in [Figure 1](#) below.

**Figure 1.** *The Rectangular and Pentagonal Strategies*

**The Rectangular Strategy**, which was implemented across four phases, was based on growth, employment, equity, and efficiency as the main framework of the country's socio-economic development. The strategy was implemented between 2018 and 2023 and identified four priority areas for addressing social, economic, and human development challenges:

- capacity building and human resources development

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<sup>3</sup> Note that these are pre-Covid-19 pandemic statistics and might be outdated.

<sup>4</sup> GINI coefficient of 0 is perfect equality, while 1 is perfect inequality.

<sup>5</sup> A link to this document could not be found on the internet as of February 2024.

- development of physical infrastructure
- promotion of agricultural sector
- private sector development and employment

The National Strategic Development Plans (NSDP) 2014–2018 and 2019–2023 serve as important tools for the implementation of the Rectangular Strategy ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2019](#)).

**The Pentagonal Strategy** is designed to meet the Cambodia 2050 Vision of becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050 ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023](#)). The Cambodian government plans to implement the Pentagonal Strategy in five phases over the next 25 years. It was set in motion in 2024 with the first phase focusing on growth, employment, equity, efficiency, and sustainability (see [Annex 1](#) for more details).

### 2.1.2. Decentralisation efforts

Cambodia has undergone a series of decentralisation efforts since the early 2000s. Notably, good governance and decentralisation were a few of the core themes highlighted across the four phases of the Rectangular Strategy. There are three ongoing national decentralisation efforts: decentralisation and deconcentration (D&D), public financial management (PFM), and public administration ([↑World Bank, 2018](#)). D&D reforms aim to enhance service delivery through strengthening local democratic institutions and increasing citizen participation. PFM reforms focus on strengthening finance management processes at the central level to improve budget execution. Reforms to PA have focused on revising salary scales and ensuring simplified salary payment mechanisms ([↑World Bank, 2018](#)).

Following this trend of decentralisation, MoEYS included decentralisation and deconcentration in its reform agenda in the 2019–2023 Education Strategic Plan (ESP) ([↑MoEYS, 2019b](#)). The goal of the reform is to increase the autonomy and accountability of the sub-national and public institutions by transferring functions and resources ([↑MoEYS, 2019b](#)).

### 2.1.3. Political system overview

Cambodia is a constitutional monarchy,<sup>6</sup> with the King as its Head of State and a Prime Minister as the Head of Government. King Norodom Sihamoni has been the ruling monarch since 29 October 2004. Prime Minister Hun Manet was elected to the position in August 2023, succeeding his father, who had held the position of prime minister since 1985. Education

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<sup>6</sup> Cambodia has a bicameral parliament composed of a Senate and a National Assembly. The Senate consists of 62 seats with a 6-year term, and the National Assembly has 125 seats with a 5-year term.

strategies and plans are developed in alignment with election timelines and need to be endorsed by the elected political parties. The most recent election details at the time of writing are noted below:

### ■ **Senate Elections**

- Last held: February 2024
- Frequency: Every 6 years
- Next round: February 2030

### ■ **National Assembly**

- Last held: July 2023
- Frequency: Every 5 years
- Next round: 2028

### 3. Education system overview

Cambodia's education system has been traditionally centralised in nature, but has been undergoing decentralisation efforts since the early 2000s, along with the whole government. MoEYS manages educational affairs via directorate generals, departments, and offices at the national level, and the Provincial Office of Education and the District Office of Education at the sub-national level. According to the 2019–2023 ESP, the projected overall budget for education in 2023 was 5,256 billion Riels.<sup>7</sup> The education budget available from the government in 2023 was estimated to be 19.1% of the projected government expenditure, or approximately 4,925 billion Riels (↑MoEYS, 2023b).

Thus, there appears to be a financing gap that would have needed to be filled through external funds. Such financing gaps are one of several factors that have increasingly challenged MoEYS to consider more decentralised management styles, such as through the introduction of the School-Based Management System (SBM) (Figure 2). Accordingly, school directors and district education officers are being called on to take a more active role in school management and administration.

**Figure 2.** *Details on School-Based Management (SBM) in Cambodia*

To support the implementation of the School-Based Management (SBM) system, an SBM manual and implementation plan was developed and set for implementation between 2019–2023. The document serves as a resource to guide school leaders in implementing SBM programming in all schools. This includes, but is not limited to, creating school development plans, managing school operation funds, strengthening teacher knowledge and skills, planning and conducting learning assessments, and facilitating community engagement.

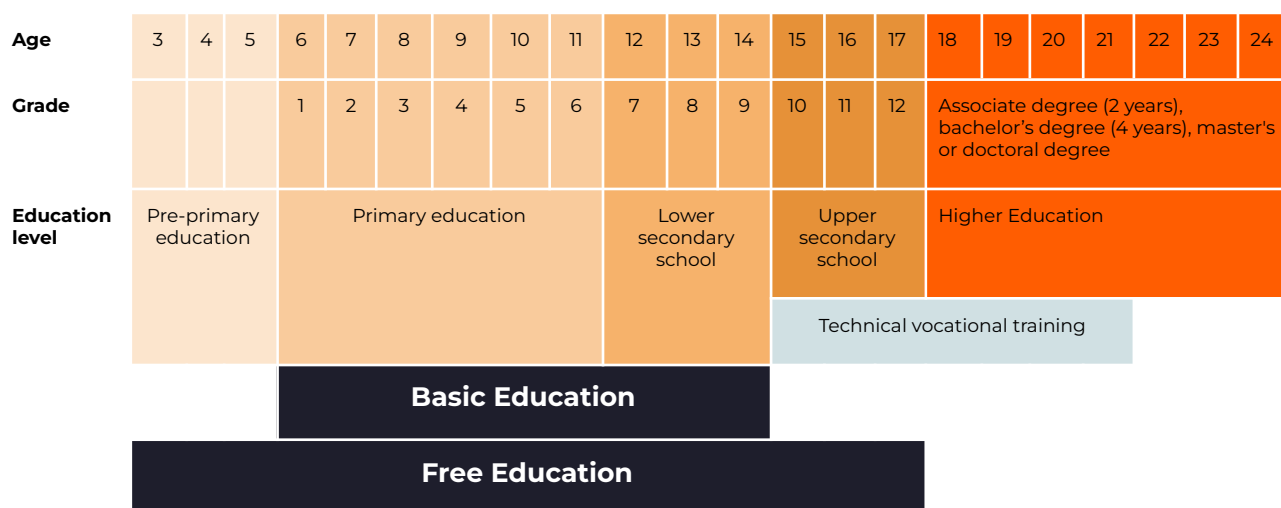
In 2021, in order to supplement the SBM manual, MoEYS introduced the School Community Strategy Manual. It aims to strengthen community engagement in all school activities, thus making sure that schools produce quality human capital that responds to the needs of the communities. The manual is designed for use by select facilitators to train local stakeholders about SBM principles. It includes structured session plans and handouts for facilitators to use when training school leaders, administrators, and other relevant stakeholders. A large proportion of MoEYS' annual budget was to be allocated for SBM to fund a series of activities, and resources are in the pipeline to support the successful roll-out of SBM (↑Bo, 2019)

<sup>7</sup> Riel is the currency of Cambodia.

### 3.1. Education system and statistics

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, an academic school year in Cambodia has run from January to the end of November. However, the 2023/2024 school year began in December 2023, thus illustrating some flexibility and uncertainty around school calendars. As illustrated in [Figure 3](#) below, basic education in Cambodia spans Grade 1 to Grade 9, and free education is provided from pre-primary education up to the end of upper secondary education (Grade 12). After completing nine years of basic education, students can either continue to upper secondary education or enter secondary-level vocational training programmes. After completing upper secondary education, students may either enrol in university or enter vocational training.

**Figure 3.** Illustration of Cambodia's education system



**Figure 4.** Educational progression for students in Cambodia

#### Pre-primary education

- Students in Cambodia have access to three years of pre-primary education.
- Students attend pre-primary school between the ages of 3 and 5.
- Pre-primary education, although not considered a part of basic education, is provided free of charge across the country.
- There are various types of pre-primary education options, such as public, private, and community pre-primary schools.
- In the 2022–2023 academic year, 64.8% of the country's five-year-old population was enrolled in pre-primary schools ([MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

#### Primary education

- Primary education in Cambodia spans six years and is usually offered to students between the ages of 6 and 11.
- Primary education is considered part of basic education and is provided free of charge across the country.



- In the 2022–2023 academic year, total net school enrolment was highest for primary education, which had an enrolment rate of 95.8% (↑[MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

#### **Lower-secondary education**

- Basic education in Cambodia also includes three years of lower-secondary education (Grades 7–9).
- In the 2022–2023 academic year, lower-secondary education enrolment increased from 68.5% in 2021–2022 to 83.7% in 2022–2023, and, notably, dropout rates were highest for lower secondary levels, at 16.6% (↑[MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

#### **Upper-secondary education**

- After completing lower secondary education, students can either continue to upper-secondary education or enter secondary-level vocational training programmes. Upper-secondary education consists of three years of schooling across Grades 10–12.
- In the 2022–2023 academic year, upper secondary education saw an increase in enrolment from 31.35% in 2021 to 41.2% in 2022–2023 (↑[MoEYS, 2023b](#)).
- It was reported that since 2017, over 100,00 students have sat for the Upper Secondary Diploma Exam every year, with female candidates consistently comprising 50% or more of the candidates (↑[MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

#### **Higher education and vocational training**

- In Cambodia, after completing upper secondary education, students may either enrol in university or enter vocational training.
- In the 2021–2022 academic year, 206,893 students were reportedly enrolled in higher education institutions.<sup>8</sup> Of these students, 97,235 were female (↑[MoEYS, 2023b](#)).
- Over the same period, 3,294 enrolments were reported across the country's 18 general and technical high schools (↑[MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

Enrolment rates were reported to be higher for girls across all levels of education; the gender parity ratio<sup>9</sup> between 2010 and 2022 was 1 for primary education and 1.1 for lower and upper secondary schools (↑[UNFPA, 2023](#)). [Table 2](#) below presents relevant education data in greater detail.

<sup>8</sup> This includes associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.

<sup>9</sup> Ratio of female to male values of total net enrolment rate.

**Table 2.** Education data as reported by MoEYS (†2023b)

Education level	Details	Enrolment rate (%) (2022–2032)	Completion rate (%) (2022–2023)	Dropout rate (%) (2021–2022)
Primary education	<b>Total</b>	<b>95.8</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>7.2</b>
	Male	95.5	85.3	8.6
	Female	95.9	89.4	5.7
Lower secondary education	<b>Total</b>	<b>83.7</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>16.6</b>
	Male	81.4	51.0	16.9
	Female	85.9	60.4	16.3
Upper secondary school	<b>Total</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<i>Not available</i>	<i>18.5<sup>10</sup></i>
	Male	36.5	<i>Not available</i>	<i>19.2<sup>11</sup></i>
	Female	46.1	<i>Not available</i>	<i>17.9<sup>12</sup></i>

As illustrated in Table 3 below, the number of schools and education institutions (privately, public-, and community-owned) has been increasing steadily, from 14,852 in the 2013–2014 academic year to 18,830 in the 2022–2023 academic year (†MoEYS, 2023b). Additionally, the number of higher education institutions increased from 110 in the academic year 2013–2014 to 132 in the academic year 2021–2022. Although public schools constitute the majority, private schools have been increasing in number over the years and account for just under half of upper secondary schools in the country (†MoEYS, 2023b). This illustrates the rapid growth of education in Cambodia in recent years, driven primarily by the country's vision of becoming a high-income country by 2050 (†MoEYS, 2023b).

<sup>10</sup> Retrieved from Public Education Statistics and Indicators (†MoEYS, 2022).

<sup>11</sup> Retrieved from Public Education Statistics and Indicators (†MoEYS, 2022).

<sup>12</sup> Retrieved from Public Education Statistics and Indicators (†MoEYS, 2022).

**Table 3.** Data on the number of schools and education institutions in 2022–2023, as reported by MoEYS ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#))

Type of school / education institution <sup>13</sup>	Number in 2022–2023
Kindergarten	8607
Primary schools	8067
Lower secondary schools	1340
Upper secondary schools	816
General and technical high schools	19
Higher education institutions	132

### 3.1.1. Teachers

The *Teacher Policy Action Plan* for 2024–2030, which focuses on education leadership and management as well as teacher education and identity, highlights the importance of digitisation ([↑MoEYS, 2023a](#)). Digital education and the use of technology for education management feature prominently as a cross-cutting theme across the document, along with elements of assuring education quality and aligning teaching with 21st-century skills. Additionally, through the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), which is a multi-stakeholder partnership that includes MoEYS, the European Union (EU), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), USAID, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and UNICEF, a continuous teacher development programme was rolled out between 2021 and 2023 focused on building digital competencies and was delivered using a blended approach ([↑VVOB, 2023](#)).<sup>14</sup>

In the 2022–2023 school year, MoEYS reported 94,690 teaching staff, 50,714 of whom were female ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)). Notably, many teachers are reported to teach multiple grades and work double shifts. In 2022–2023, there were 9,255 double-shift and double-class teachers and 2,606 multigrade teachers ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

<sup>13</sup> Includes privately, public-, and community-owned schools / educational institutions.

<sup>14</sup> Blended approaches combine online educational materials and online interaction with traditional face-to-face classroom methods. VVOB is the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance.

Approximately 5,000 new teachers are trained every year ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)). As such, there has been a slow but steady decline in the student–teacher ratio over the past few years, with the exception of the upper secondary level ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)). However, it is important to note that due to teacher shortages, contract teachers are hired on an annual basis. In the 2022–2023 school year, 15,071 contract teachers were hired by MoEYS ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)).

**Table 4.** *Student–teacher ratios reported by MoEYS* ([↑2023b](#))

Level of education	Student–teacher ratio <sup>15</sup> (2022–2023)
Primary education	39.9
Lower secondary school	23.1
Upper secondary school	23.6

### 3.1.2. Policies and strategies

For the past 25 years, education sector development and planning has been primarily informed by the goals set forth in the Rectangular Strategy for Development ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023](#)). With the introduction of the Pentagonal Strategy for Development, future education strategies will be aligned with the priorities set forth in these documents ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023](#)). An initial scan revealed numerous education-related policies and strategies in Cambodia. The strategy documents are helpful in highlighting the context and anticipated growth and development of the education sector and the related priorities and initiatives. Documents more directly related to EdTech are discussed in more detail in [Section 7](#). [Table 5](#) below, lists some of the available strategies and policies related to education in Cambodia,<sup>16</sup> particularly those focusing on marginalised learners.

<sup>15</sup> Number of students in public schools at given level / number of teachers in public schools at given level.

<sup>16</sup> This is not an exhaustive list and only includes documents with recent implementation periods and that were openly accessible online.

**Table 5.** Education-related policies, strategies, and frameworks

Policy document	Details
<p><i>Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2019–2023</i> (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2019b</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The country’s ESP was designed around the Rectangular Strategy of the Royal Government of Cambodia (recently redesigned to be the Pentagon strategy).</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2019–2023</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>Focused on two key midterm policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policy 1: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</li> <li>■ Policy 2: Ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels.</li> </ul> <p>The ESP is centred around activities aimed at improving teacher professional development and various education reforms such as higher education reform and improving assessment and curricula.</p>
<p><i>Cambodia Education Roadmap 2030 (Sustainable Development Goal [SDG] 4)</i> (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2019a</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The roadmap provides the overarching framework for a long-term, holistic, sector-wide approach to the development and delivery of education services. It sets priorities and strategies for achieving these targets.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2019–2030</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The overarching goal of this document is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The document is highly comprehensive and covers the need to ensure school enrolment, retention, and completion, while also focusing on the needs and opportunities for technical education and adult learning.</p>

Policy document	Details
<p><i>Cambodia Secondary Education Blueprint 2030</i> (↑<a href="#">MoEYS, 2021a</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The blueprint for the secondary education sector in Cambodia was developed in alignment with the objectives of the <i>Cambodian SDG4 Education Roadmap 2030</i> and the <i>Education Strategic Plan 2019–2023</i>. The blueprint outlines key activities and goals for secondary education to successfully operationalise the expectations set out in the two aforementioned documents.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2021–2030</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The document prioritises access to and quality of secondary education and outlines various priorities for improving these metrics. The blueprint focuses on aligning Cambodia’s curriculum with 21st-century skills and providing support and resources for effective teaching and learning. There is a strong focus on building and diversifying technical vocational education and better developing post-secondary linkages with the labour market. There is also considerable emphasis on the need to streamline and enhance school management and leadership.</p>
<p><i>Policy on Inclusive Education 2018</i> (↑<a href="#">MoEYS, 2018b</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>In 2008, MoEYS developed a <i>Policy on Education for Children with Disabilities</i>, which was subsequently revised in 2018 to be the <i>Policy on Inclusive Education</i>. This policy is stated to be operationalised through the development of medium- and long-term action plans by MoEYS. An <a href="#">Action Plan on Inclusive Education</a><sup>17</sup> was developed for the implementation of this policy and covers the period between 2019 and 2023.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2018 onwards</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The goal of the <i>Policy on Inclusive Education</i> is to educate all persons with special needs to have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to contribute to society's development.</p>

<sup>17</sup> See

[https://data.opendevdevelopmentcambodia.net/laws\\_record/action-plan-on-inclusive-education-2019-2023#:~:text=Published%20by%3A%20Open%20Development%20Cambodia,and%20promote%20lifelong%20learning%20opportunities](https://data.opendevdevelopmentcambodia.net/laws_record/action-plan-on-inclusive-education-2019-2023#:~:text=Published%20by%3A%20Open%20Development%20Cambodia,and%20promote%20lifelong%20learning%20opportunities). Retrieved 2 May 2024.

Policy document	Details
	<p>The objectives of the document centre on adequately identifying and supporting students with special education needs. It also aims to ensure access to and quality of inclusive education offerings, working to build the capacity of teachers providing inclusive education, and building awareness of the topic.</p>
<p><i>National Policy on Lifelong Learning 2018</i> (<a href="#">↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2018</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>Cambodia's <i>National Policy on Lifelong Learning</i> was developed to enhance human resource development as the country works towards becoming a lower-middle-income country by 2030 and an upper-middle-income country by 2050. The document states that the implementation of this policy is to be led by a national committee for lifelong learning.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2018 onwards</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The policy aims to provide and support people at all points of life by providing multiple learning pathways that align with opportunities for gainful employment opportunities and other forms of income generation.</p>
<p><i>Policy on Higher Education Vision 2030</i> (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2014</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>Cambodia's <i>Policy on Higher Education Vision 2030</i> was developed to guide the development of an effective governance system and mechanism for higher education.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2014–2030</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The primary goal of a strong governance system and mechanism would be to ensure that qualified students have opportunities to access quality higher education programmes which respond to the evolving socio-economic and labour market needs.</p>
<p><i>Gender Mainstreaming Plan in Education</i></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This document builds on the <i>Gender Mainstreaming Plan in Education</i> from 2016 to 2020. Its goal is to ensure that</p>

Policy document	Details
<p>2021–2023 (↑<a href="#">MoEYS, 2021b</a>)</p>	<p>all children and adults have equal access to learning opportunities. It places particular emphasis on ensuring equal benefits in terms of enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes across all levels and contexts.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2021–2023</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The plan is designed to eliminate gender disparities, with particular emphasis on ensuring equal access to quality education at all levels. It takes a multi-stakeholder approach and considers the role of players beyond government in championing women’s empowerment in various forms.</p>
<p><i>Non-formal Education National Action Plan 2008–2015</i> (↑<a href="#">MoEYS, 2008</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The <i>Non-Formal Education (NFE) National Action Plan</i> is primarily focused on identifying systems and mechanisms to effectively provide high-quality and accessible educational opportunities to disadvantaged populations such as out-of-school children, ethnic minority children and youth, and uneducated adults across the country.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2008–2015</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The ‘action plan’ provides a strategic approach to implementing and building awareness about programmes covering the following areas: functional literacy, continuing education, post-literacy, re-entry, equivalency, income generation, and quality of life improvement.</p>
<p><i>Multilingual Education Action Plan</i> (↑<a href="#">MoEYS, 2019c</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This document was developed by MoEYS in collaboration with development partners as a response to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Sustainable Development Goal 4, Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, National Policy on the Development of Indigenous Peoples, Education Law, and Education Strategic Plan 2019–2023.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2019–2023</i></p>



Policy document	Details
	<p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The document was developed with the primary aim of ensuring that all children from indigenous communities have access to inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.</p>
<p><i>National Action Plan for Early Childhood Care and Education</i> (<a href="#">UNICEF, 2022</a>)</p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The plan follows the previous plan covering 2014 to 2018 and is a five-year inter-ministerial collaborative effort aimed at ensuring that all children under the age of six in Cambodia have access to care and development services. There is a particular focus on disadvantaged, vulnerable, and poor children.</p> <p><i>Implementation period: 2022–2026</i></p> <p><b>Key objectives</b></p> <p>The plan sets out five key priorities for the coming five years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providing opportunities for quality, equitable, and inclusive early childhood education</li> <li>■ Promoting early childhood health and care</li> <li>■ Providing adequate nutrition to women and young children</li> <li>■ Ensuring safety and security of young children</li> <li>■ Providing responsive care, protection, and development for young children</li> </ul>

## 3.2. MoEYS education reforms

Between 2013 and 2023, MoEYS designed and implemented various reforms. The reforms were rolled out in four phases, with each phase building upon the previous ones. Reforms have focused on a few key themes, such as education management, teacher professional development, foundational numeracy and literacy, curricular alignment with and promotion of 21st-century skills, sports education, and higher education (see [Appendix 2](#) for more details).

**Figure 5.** *Details on New Generation Schools*

As part of the education reforms, MoEYS rolled out the implementation of New Generation Schools (NGS) vis-à-vis the Child Friendly School Programme (↑Kampuchea Action to Promote Education, 2024). NGSs were launched by MoEYS as part of the second phase of the education reforms in 2015. They are intended to be a way of piloting and developing a new administrative framework for schools that encourages educational investments related to 21st-century skills development. NGSs focus on creating a learning environment conducive to developing 21st-century skills and will eventually be used as a model for developing autonomous public schools across the country. Since their conception in 2016, NGS have continued to receive financial support from MoEYS totalling about USD 11.072 million and an additional USD 1.18 million from private foundations (↑New Generation Schools, 2022). Public-private partnerships play a major role in the management of NGS. As of 2022, NGSs are present in five provinces: Phnom Penh, Kampong Cham, Kandal, Kampong Speu, and Svay Rieng, and cover all levels of education (primary, secondary, and tertiary). NGS have 7,970 students enrolled, including 4,113 girls. Over 440 teachers are engaged with NGSs across the various provinces and grade levels (↑New Generation Schools, 2022).

## 4. Out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY)

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics ([↑World Bank, 2023a](#)), over 13% (253,273) of primary-school-aged children in Cambodia are out of school.

**Table 6.** *Completion and transition rates for children across education levels* ([↑UNESCO, 2020c](#))

Level of education	% (2020)
Primary school completion	79%
Transition to lower secondary school	88%
Lower secondary school completion	46%
Upper secondary school completion	22%

Dropout rates tend to increase as students advance academically; only 7.2% of students dropped out of primary school according to public education statistics and Indicators for 2021–2022 ([↑MoEYS, 2022](#)) but the percentage of dropouts jumped to 16.6% and 18.5% for lower and upper secondary schools respectively. Across all levels, children from the richest households are more likely to transition to higher grades in schooling than those from the poorest households ([↑UNESCO, 2020c](#)).

**Figure 6.** *Factors contributing to dropout rates*

The urban–rural divide is significant, with children from urban areas more likely to finish schooling at all levels compared to their peers from rural areas, reflecting the challenges faced by rural children in accessing quality education ([↑UNESCO, 2020c](#)). In rural areas, dropout rates are higher, as children in those areas are more likely than their urban counterparts to join the workforce early. In areas where farming is common, children also leave school to work on subsistence or commercial farms; this is especially common in communities in Kratie and Battambang ([↑UNICEF, 2020](#)).

At the secondary level, being unable to afford schooling is a major contributing factor to higher dropout rates for both boys and girls. Adolescent boys leave school to earn an income, while girls are expected to look after their younger siblings. Boys are also reported to be more prone to peer pressure to drop out of school ([↑UNICEF, 2020](#)).

Finally, poor academic performance, which can contribute to low self-esteem, also leads many children to leave school. This is a key concern for children with disabilities and children from ethnic minorities ([↑UNICEF, 2020](#)).

Despite the efforts of MoYES and other stakeholders in developing programmes and initiatives that incentivise learners to continue with their education, inevitably there are students who drop out of the formal schooling system or are unable to attend school. The education system in Cambodia addresses the learning needs of such students through educational programmes (especially equivalency programmes)<sup>18</sup> and opportunities to pursue vocational education and training.

## 4.1. Vocational education and training pathways

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Cambodia has two approaches to vocational education and training: formal and non-formal pathways. Lifelong education is encouraged in the country, as is apparent from the development of Cambodia's *National Policy on Lifelong Learning* ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2018](#)). [Table 7](#) below summarises the different vocational and training pathways available for OOSCY.

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<sup>18</sup> As per UNESCO, Equivalency programmes are alternative education programmes that offer the same learning opportunities as the formal system in alignment with the national curriculum and certification ([↑UNESCO, 2006](#)).

**Table 7.** Vocational education and training pathways for OOSCY

Pathways	Description	Implementers
<b>Formal pathways (i.e. leading to certification)</b>	<p><b>Formal vocational training:</b> Students can choose to opt for vocational education after they complete lower secondary school (<a href="#">†UNESCO, 2020b</a>).</p> <p>Those who drop out of school without completing formal education can attend non-formal literacy and life-skills programmes, enabling them to enrol in vocational training programmes offered by various institutions. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) offers successive certification courses in a variety of areas such as computer technology, electronics, and agricultural mechanics.</p> <p>Vocational diplomas are offered at post-secondary levels, and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes at undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate levels.</p>	<p>Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS)</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)</p>
<b>Non-formal pathways</b>	<p><b>Literacy and life skills:</b> MoEYS plays a role in literacy and life skills training programmes through the non-formal education department, while MoLVT carries out a similar role through the development of technical skills and ensuring employment and entrepreneurship pathways (<a href="#">†SEA-VET, no date</a>).</p>	<p>Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS)</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)</p>
	<p><b>Apprenticeships:</b> Cambodia provides non-formal pathways for TVET through various organisations and small businesses in the form of apprenticeships. The skills included in the TVET opportunities include but are not limited to, agriculture, craft, literacy, and computer education, all with a focus on monetisation and being used to provide a source of income.</p> <p><b>Community Learning Centres (CLCs):</b> MoYES provides learning opportunities to OOSCY through CLCs across the country. These centres operate under MoEYS' Women's Development Centres.</p>	<p>Provincial Training Centres (PTC)</p> <p>Vocational Training Centres (VTC)</p>

## 4.2. Educational programmes for OOSCY

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Given the significant barriers to formal education for children in the country, a number of organisations are trying to improve the quality of education and access to it.

MoEYS' Education Strategic Plan (2019–2023) also emphasises ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. The document underscores the importance of providing alternatives to formal education, often referred to as equivalency programmes, for OOSCY and increasing access to and strengthening non-formal education (NFE) programmes. In general, opportunities for OOSCY to enrol in equivalency programmes which allow them to complete lower secondary education have improved over the past decade due to distance learning opportunities and the opening of classes in prisons ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)). [Table 8](#) below, provides a summary of the educational programmes available to OOSCY.

**Table 8.** Educational programmes for OOSCY

Programmes	Details	
<b>Formal educational intervention</b>	<p>Focused on providing access to quality primary education for out-of-school children since 2014. Phase 2 of this programme is being implemented by the Cambodian Consortium for Out of School Children (CCOOSC) (<a href="#">↑Education Above All, 2021</a>).</p> <p>They aim to provide education to 116,396 marginalised OOSCY through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ensuring equitable access</li> <li>■ improving the quality of education</li> <li>■ providing capacity building for teachers and other stakeholders</li> <li>■ engaging in enrolment and advocacy campaigns, with interventions being tailored to each community's needs</li> </ul>	Educate A Child (EAC) in collaboration with Aide et Action (AEA)
<b>Basic Education Equivalency Programme (BEEP)</b>	<p>BEEP was launched in 2018 with the aim of providing OOSCY over the age of 14 with basic education equivalency and opportunities to develop life skills through free and flexible online learning. It allows OOSCY to pursue education and skills development at their own pace without impacting their employment. Upon completion of the programme, students can get Grade-9-equivalent certification and can then enrol in TVET institutes or technical high schools under the auspices of MoLVT and MoEYS, respectively (<a href="#">↑UNESCO, 2023a</a>).</p> <p>There are currently 26 learning centres in 15 provinces across Cambodia where learners can get access to the internet, tablets, and computers along with support from the facilitators at these centres. There are plans to expand the programme by rolling out BEEP nationwide, increasing capacity-building for the facilitators, and improving access for learners with disabilities.</p>	MoEYS in collaboration with MoLVT and UNESCO
<b>e-Learning centre</b>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>MoEYS has invested in creating an e-learning centre where OOSCY can access online resources for independent study (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2023b</a>).</p>	MoEYS
<b>Lower Secondary Equivalency Programme for Non-Formal Education</b>	<p>MoEYS has advocated for distance learning to provide learners with access to literacy programmes since it is seen as a bridge to career and further education (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2023b</a>).</p> <p>For instance, the Lower Secondary Equivalency Programme for Non-Formal Education incorporates distance education, thus allowing OOSCYs to study at their own pace (<a href="#">↑MoEYS, 2023b</a>).</p>	MoEYS

### 4.3. Gaps in non-formal education

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Some of these interventions demonstrate recognition of the need to include technology in education to reach OOSCY and provide flexible learning options. However, based on the literature reviewed for this section, there is very little evidence to suggest that programmes which include an online learning component are more successful at reducing the number of OOSCY or improving learning outcomes than traditional educational methods. Lack of access to the internet at home may be one factor which limits the potential benefits of technology in education — in 2019, only 50% of households reported having access ([↑International Telecommunications Union \(ITU\), 2023](#)). On this front, the urban–rural divide is particularly significant, as only 30% of rural households report having internet access at home compared with 50% of urban households in 2017 ([↑ITU, 2023](#)). Programmes and initiatives such as BEEP and MoEYS’ e-learning centre can help to overcome these types of accessibility challenges, but they may need to further build facilitators’ capacities.

According to the *Education Congress Report* by MoEYS ([↑MoEYS, 2023b](#)), other challenges faced by the non-formal education sector include the capacity of non-formal education officials and teachers with the use of technology and adult teaching methods, as well as insufficient resources to transform community centres into lifelong learning centres.



## 5. Girls' education

In 2020, Cambodia was ranked 144 out of 189 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII) ([↑UNESCO, 2023b](#)). The GI provides insights into gender disparities in health, empowerment, and the labour market. Despite considerable efforts over the past 25 years to advance the circumstances of women in Cambodia, gender inequality issues remain a major and continuing challenge. Social norms and beliefs that restrict women's participation and give them less value and power than men are still pervasive, thus creating barriers to women's equal participation in the cultural, economic, and political life of the country and hindering inclusive and sustainable development in Cambodia. Additionally, women's participation in the political and economic decision-making process at the national and household levels remains unequal and limited. This is evident in the disproportionately small number of women in decision-making roles in the country's legislative institutions and in public administration, both at national and subnational levels. As of 2021, women occupy 21.6% of seats in the national parliament despite comprising 51.8% of the labour force ([↑UNDP, 2023](#)).

The rate of OOSCY among girls is slightly lower than that of boys, with 14% of girls and 16% of boys being out of school ([↑MoEYS, 2022](#)). Dropout rates for boys, at 8.6% for primary and 19.2% at upper secondary school, are higher than for girls, at 5.7% and 17.9% respectively. A study found that boys between the ages of 14 and 16 are expected to pursue employment since there are more opportunities available to them than girls at these ages ([↑UNICEF, 2020](#)). On the whole, however, girls are disadvantaged in terms of formal schooling, paid employment, and access to technology and services. For example, the vastly unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work reflects society's restrictive gender norms, with women doing, on average, 90% of household duties, which often prevents them from completing their education. These inequities are further evidenced in rural communities, where girls' education is not valued as highly as boys' and they are not taught life skills ([↑UNESCO, 2023b](#)).

MoEYS has attempted to address these barriers in its gender mainstreaming strategic plan 2021–2025 ([↑MoEYS, 2021b](#)). Some of the interventions included are:

- creating schools near homes to reduce transportation costs and address safety concerns
- focusing on providing female teachers, especially in primary schools

- providing reproductive health education
- developing girls' career counselling programmes in schools
- providing life skills education at secondary school levels.

Development partners have also provided additional support to help address the barriers to and inequities of girls' education. For example, UNESCO's Room to Read initiative, which is implemented in partnership with MoEYS, currently runs in five provinces and 40 secondary schools across Cambodia with more than 6,000 girls participating in the programmes. It aims to support girls in Grades 7–12 in overcoming barriers to education and teaching them life skills through mentoring sessions with local women ([↑UNESCO, 2023b](#)). In another instance, UNESCO partnered with MoEYS in 2016 to launch the Factory Literacy Programme (FLP). This programme was designed to support girls and women working in factories ([↑UNESCO, 2020a](#)) by providing those who were unable to complete their primary education with literacy and mathematics education, financial literacy training, and reproductive health education. Completing the four-month programme certified by MoEYS allowed the workers to further pursue education at formal or non-formal educational institutions.

## 6. ICT infrastructure and access

The internet in Cambodia is primarily accessed through cellular networks, with 100% of the population reportedly covered by cellular networks in 2022 ([ITU, 2023](#)). However, broadband penetration in Cambodia was low in 2022 with only 509,830 subscriptions. Similarly, only 50% of households reported that they had internet access at home in 2019 ([ITU, 2023](#)). Additionally, there appears to be a rural–urban divide when it comes to technological infrastructure and access, with only 30% of rural households reportedly having internet access at home in 2017 compared to 50% of urban households ([ITU, 2023](#)). See [Table 9](#) below for a detailed breakdown.

**Table 9.** *Internet access in Cambodia as a percentage of population*

Indicator	Percentage of population in Cambodia
<b>Network coverage<sup>19</sup></b>	
Population covered by a mobile-cellular network (2022)	100%
Population covered by at least a 3G mobile network (2022)	92%
Population covered by at least a 4G mobile network (2022)	92%
<b>Access to internet at home<sup>20</sup></b>	
Households with internet access at home (2019)	45.4%
Households with internet access at home, urban (2019)	56.4%
Households with internet access at home, rural (2019)	38.8%
<b>Access to electricity at home<sup>21</sup></b>	
Households with access to electricity (2019)	84%
Households with access to electricity, urban (2019)	87%
Households with access to electricity, rural (2019)	76%

As of 2019, 84% of households in Cambodia have access to electricity. Most households (79.6%) are connected to the electricity grid, while the rest get their electricity supply through a combination of power from the electricity

<sup>19</sup> These are statistics published on the Digital Development Dashboard from the [ITU \(2023\)](#), with the latest update in July 2023.

<sup>20</sup> Data is as per the most recent census data as captured in the 2019 General Population Census Report ([Royal Government of Cambodia, 2020](#)).

<sup>21</sup> Data is as per the most recent census data as captured in the 2019 General Population Census Report ([Royal Government of Cambodia, 2020](#)).

grid and at-home generators ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2020](#)). These numbers are a considerable increase from 2008 when electricity penetration stood at 26.4% of households overall ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2020](#)). The increase is a result of the government’s highly successful electrification programme. However, the remaining households still requiring access to electricity are reportedly located in off-grid villages, home to Cambodia’s most vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities ([↑UNDP, 2022](#)).

## 6.1. Device ownership and usage

Data from the most recent General Population Census Report ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2020](#)) indicates that only 8% of households reported owning a computer. Mobile phone ownership is much higher at 91.9% of the population, with little difference between urban (94.8%) and rural (90.2%) ownership. Radio penetration is low at 16%, compared to 67.5% of households owning televisions.

**Table 10.** *Device ownership in Cambodia* ([↑Royal Government of Cambodia, 2020](#))

Device	Population owning device (%)	Urban population owning device (%)	Rural population owning device (%)
Radio	16.2%	14.2%	17.4%
Television	67.5%	77.4%	61.7%
Mobile phone	91.9%	94.8%	90.2%
Computer	8%	15.2%	3.7%

## 6.2. Barriers

The cost of information and communications technology (ICT) remains one of the key barriers to the successful utilisation of EdTech in Cambodia. When compared to neighbouring countries, the cost of accessing ICT as a percentage of the Gross National Income (GNI) is relatively high. The breakdown of relative costs is illustrated in [Table 11](#) below.

**Table 11.** ICT prices as a percentage of national GNI in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Singapore (↑ITU, 2023)

ICT Prices	Cambodia	Vietnam	Singapore
Fixed broadband basket as a % of GNI per capita. (2021)	12.1%	3.5%	0.8%
Mobile data and voice basket (high consumption) as a % of GNI per capita. (2021)	11.7%	2.9%	0.3%
Mobile data and voice basket (low consumption) as a % of GNI per capita. (2021)	5.2%	1.9%	0.3%
Mobile cellular basket as a % of GNI per capita. (2021)	4.9%	1.8%	0.3%
Mobile broadband basket as a % of GNI per capita. (2021)	2.4%	0.5%	0.2%

Another barrier of note is the level of ICT skills among the Cambodian population. When compared to Southeast Asian neighbours such as Vietnam and Singapore, the level of ICT skills was found to be sparse (↑ITU, 2023). Table 12 illustrates the reported level of ICT skills across the three countries.

**Table 12.** Percentage of individuals across different ICT skill levels as outlined by ITU in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Singapore (↑ITU, 2023)

ICT skill levels <sup>22</sup>	Cambodia	Vietnam	Singapore
Individuals with basic skills as % of population (2017)	29%	19%	66%
Individuals with standard skills % of population (2017)	3%	13%	45%
Individuals with advanced skills % of population (2017)	0%	1%	11%

<sup>22</sup>Skill level definitions used by ITU (↑ 2023):

- **Basic skills:** the ability to perform the following computer-based activities: copying or moving a file or folder; using copy and paste tools to duplicate or move information within a document; sending e-mails with attached files; and transferring files between a computer and other devices.
- **Standard skills:** the ability to perform the following computer-based activities: using basic arithmetic formulae in a spreadsheet; connecting and installing new devices; creating electronic presentations with presentation software; and finding, downloading, installing, and configuring software.
- **Advanced skills:** the ability to write a computer programme using a specialised programming language.

## 7. Key EdTech stakeholders and initiatives

### 7.1. Stakeholders

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Cambodia's policy environment supports the digitisation of education. Over the years, various government stakeholders have actively supported digitisation efforts in Cambodia through the development of a range of policy and strategic documents. This is presented in more detail in [Table 13](#) below. However, it is important to note that the existence of a strong policy environment for digitisation and EdTech does not necessarily result in a robust EdTech environment. It is essential to consider the policy environment along with activities and initiatives taking place on the ground.

**Table 13.** *EdTech stakeholders in Cambodia*

Ministry / Agency	Role
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoEYS is committed to enhancing teaching and learning through the use of digital technology as evidenced by the ministry's development of the <i>Policy Strategy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Education</i> as well as the focus on digital education in other strategic documents developed by the ministry (<a href="#">†MoEYS, 2018a</a>).</li> <li>In addition to developing strategic documents, MoEYS also allocates budget and coordinates with implementing partners to realise the goals set out in the various documents.</li> </ul>
Supreme National Economic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Supreme National Economic Council developed the <i>Cambodia Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework 2021–2035</i>, which sets out a long-term vision to build a vibrant digital economy and society through digital adoption and transformation across all sectors (<a href="#">†Royal Government of Cambodia, 2021</a>).</li> </ul>
Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation (MISTI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In alignment with the <i>Cambodia Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework 2021–2035</i>, the <a href="#">†MISTI (2021)</a> developed <i>Cambodia's Science Technology and Innovation Roadmap 2030</i> to serve as a short- and medium-term guideline for government agencies and relevant authorities to become a digital society.</li> <li>More specifically to education, MISTI also developed the EduTech Roadmap in 2022 to focus on EdTech and its development in Cambodia (<a href="#">†MISTI &amp; National Council of Science Technology and Innovation, 2022</a>).</li> </ul>
Non-governmental agencies and development partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EdTech initiatives have also received support from development partners such as UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, EU, USAID, SIDA, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), GPE, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), World Education, Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and Kampuchea Action to Promote Education (KAPE) to name a few.</li> <li>These stakeholders provide support either as technical partners or as funders for programme implementation.</li> </ul>
Private sector partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private sector players in Cambodia also play a significant role in supporting EdTech usage.</li> <li>One such partner has been Metfone who partnered with MoEYS to roll out a Student Information System (SIS).</li> </ul>

## EdTech Hub

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Ministry / Agency	Role
Education Sector Working Group (ESWG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="618 218 2051 323">■ The ESWG is a community of development partners, private sector partners, and NGOs contributing significantly to the education sector. It Provides:- a platform for policy dialogue and coordination within development partners and civil society.</li><li data-bbox="618 331 2051 408">■ Guidance and coordinated support for the implementation of the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and Education Strategic Plan (ESP).</li></ul>



## 7.2. Initiatives

Over the years, there has been an increasing focus on digital education in Cambodia. The government, development partners, and private stakeholders have all played a role in building the EdTech ecosystem in Cambodia and as a result, a number of EdTech initiatives are currently active in the country. [Table 14](#) below presents a sample<sup>23</sup> of such initiatives in the country.

**Table 14.** *EdTech initiatives and implementing partners in Cambodia*<sup>24</sup>

Initiative	Type of EdTech used	Implementing partners	Description
<b>BEEP</b> <sup>25</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> OOSCY, with plans to expand to include learners with disabilities	Web-based digital learning platform	MoEYS, MoLVT, UNESCO	Provides flexible online education to OOSCY to complete basic education equivalent to Grade 9. The programme is targeted at children aged 14 and older, who can pursue skills education at TVET institutes or technical high schools upon completion of the programme. Learners who do not have access to online education can go to BEEP learning centres.
<b>STEPCam</b> <sup>26</sup> <b>Access:</b> NA <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Blended INSET (in-service training) programme	UNESCO, MoEYS, funded by GPE	Programme to improve teaching quality and strengthen pedagogical approaches.

<sup>23</sup> Initiatives were included on the basis of searchability on public web sources and demonstrated use of technology or focus on developing technology skills.

<sup>24</sup> Although informed by various sources, a primary resource for this table was the Cambodia Digital Education Inventory developed by World Education ([World Education, no date](#)).

<sup>25</sup> <https://beep.moeys.gov.kh> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/strengthening-teacher-education-programme-cambodia?hub=66944> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

Initiative	Type of EdTech used	Implementing partners	Description
<b>Factory Literacy Programme</b> <sup>27</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> Girls, women	Digital learning platform with videos	UNESCO, MoEYS	Provides workers in garment factories, especially women and girls aged 15 and above, with basic functional literacy skills and empowers them to better understand their rights.
<b>TVET E-Learning</b> <sup>28</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, web-based materials	MoLVT, funded by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	Cross-platform learning application which focuses on TVET.
<b>MOEYS E-Learning</b> <sup>29</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Learning management system (LMS)	MoEYS	LMS built using Moodle to host and deliver e-learning courses.
<b>Let's Read</b> <sup>30</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> Auditory-impaired users	Mobile app, website	The Asia Foundation	A digital library of local language books across 15 categories, including but not limited to science, folktales, arts, and music (not exclusive to Cambodia). It is hosted on a website designed for use by those with auditory impairments.
<b>Wolfram One</b> <sup>31</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, Desktop app, website	Wolfram Research	Programme to support computational thinking and STEM projects for students and teachers across Cambodia.

<sup>27</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000385193> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.tvet-elearning.com/home> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>29</sup> <https://elearning.moeys.gov.kh/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.letsreadasia.org/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.wolfram.com/wolfram-one/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

Initiative	Type of EdTech used	Implementing partners	Description
<b>Tesdopi</b> <sup>32</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free with paid features <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app	Edemy Co.,Ltd·Ltd	Tool to help high school students in Cambodia excel in maths and science.
<b>Rean Aan</b> <sup>33</sup> <b>Access:</b> Paid <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Website, Mobile app, offline access	Rean Aan	Digital reading platform for children under the age of 12.
<b>Duraseksa</b> <sup>34</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> OOSCY	Mobile app, website	Centre for Digital and Distance Education under MoEYS	Platform for digital and distance learning created during the Covid-19 pandemic. Contains videos and exercises across various grade levels and also provides videos for non-formal education, youth development, and teacher training.
<b>Sangapac</b> <sup>35</sup> <b>Access:</b> Paid <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Website	Sangapac Anuwat	Website developed in alignment with MoEYS textbooks for digital learning in Khmer, maths, and science subjects.
<b>Wiki TV</b> <sup>36</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, website	POSCAR Cambodia, Co. LTD	Developed in response to the learning challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic, with live-streamed teachers delivering lessons. The recorded lessons are also available online.

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.tesdopi.com/en> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.reanaan.com/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.duraseksa.com/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.sangapac.com/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>36</sup> <https://wikitv.asia/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

Initiative	Type of EdTech used	Implementing partners	Description
<b>School Information System (SIS) Mobile Cambodia</b> <sup>37</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free for target users only <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, website	Metfone, built under the direction of MoEYS	Built in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to support teachers and principals in managing their classrooms and schools efficiently.
<b>OER Cambodia</b> <sup>38</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, website	MoEYS, funded by Asian Development Bank	An educational resource-sharing platform including resources for teachers and students.
<b>Khmer Academy</b> <sup>39</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, website	Korea Software HRD Center	An e-learning platform for knowledge sharing created in 2015. Most content is related to ICT subject matter and digital skills, with plans to expand to more topic areas.
<b>Khmer Rean An</b> <sup>40</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, offline access	Aide et Action Cambodia	A suite of four mobile apps (Khmer Rean An I, II, III, and IV) for younger children, it aims to make early grade reading entertaining and effective through animated graphics, audio, and games.
<b>Khmer Library</b> <sup>41</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app	Aide et Action Cambodia	Access to thousands of books in Khmer and foreign languages for Cambodian children, teenagers, and adults.

<sup>37</sup> <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=psctelecom.sismobie.cambodia&hl=en&gl=US> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>38</sup> <https://sala.moeys.gov.kh/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.khmeracademy.org/> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>40</sup> <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.aesai.khmerreanan&hl=en&gl=US> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>41</sup> <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=biz.bizsolution.khmerlibrary&hl=en&gl=US> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

Initiative	Type of EdTech used	Implementing partners	Description
<b>E-School Cambodia</b> <sup>42</sup> <b>Access:</b> Paid <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app, website	E-School Cambodia	Online platform to provide students with K-12 classes including general education, life skills, foreign languages, and computer literacy.
<b>MoEYS E-Learning App</b> <sup>43</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Mobile app	MoEYS, funded by Union of Cambodian Youth Federations (UYFC)	Self-directed learning platform focusing on developing quality education, equity, inclusive education, and lifelong learning.
<b>MoEYS CPD</b> <sup>44</sup> <b>Access:</b> Free <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Digital learning platform	MoEYS, funded under the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CPDF)	Digital learning platform for teacher professional development. It also includes guides and tutorials on developing digital learning content.
Phnom Penh Teacher Education College (PTEC) Intervention for Digital Education <b>Access:</b> Free for target users only <b>Focus on marginalised learners:</b> NA	Website	PTEC, funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and MoEYS	Online resources to promote digital education among teachers.

<sup>42</sup> <https://e-schoolcambodia.com/download> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>43</sup> <http://onelink.to/moeyesapp> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

<sup>44</sup> <https://cdp.moeys.gov.kh/?lang=en> Retrieved April 15, 2024.

## 8. Looking ahead

Although Cambodia reports a high number of school enrolments, concerns remain around the quality of education that learners have access to. According to the [World Bank \(2019\)](#), 51% of children in Cambodia at late primary age were found to lack proficiency in reading. Additionally, the first round of the PISA for Development assessment revealed low learning outcomes for secondary students, with only 10% of 15-year-olds demonstrating mathematical proficiency ([VVOB, 2023](#)). This, coupled with annual teacher shortages, present serious challenges to effective teaching and learning in the country.

As is evident from numerous strategic and policy documents discussed throughout this scan, digital education has been identified as a way to address such learning challenges. Although the EdTech ecosystem in Cambodia is steadily growing, challenges around digital literacy and access to digital learning infrastructure need to be addressed to ensure equitable access to quality education ([World Education, 2023](#)). Additionally, while several EdTech interventions are underway, bringing opportunities for Cambodia to leverage the potential of EdTech, silos caused by challenges in coordination and collaboration could run the risk of duplicative efforts and investments ([World Education, 2023](#)). Looking ahead, it will be important to enhance opportunities for implementing partners to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate more effectively when implementing EdTech initiatives.

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# Annex

## Annex 1: Priority areas of the Pentagonal Strategy

Priority area	Goals
Pentagon 1: Human Capital Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhancement of quality education, sports, science, and technology</li> <li>■ Technical skills training</li> <li>■ Improvement of people's health and well-being</li> <li>■ Strengthening of social protection system and food system</li> <li>■ Strengthening of quality of citizenship of a highly civilised society with morality, equity, and inclusiveness</li> </ul>
Pentagon 2: Economic Diversification and Competitive Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Development of key sectors and new sources of economic growth</li> <li>■ Enhancement of connectivity and efficiency in transportation, logistics, energy, water supply, and digital sectors</li> <li>■ Strengthening of efficiency and attractiveness of special economic zones</li> <li>■ Innovation of financing mechanisms and financial products to support investment</li> </ul>
Pentagon 3: Development of Private Sector and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Development of labour market</li> <li>■ Promotion of small and medium enterprises, startups, entrepreneurship, and development of informal economy</li> <li>■ Strengthening of public-private partnerships</li> <li>■ Promotion of competition</li> <li>■ Strengthening of banking system and non-banking financial sector</li> </ul>
Pentagon 4: Resilient, Sustainable, and Inclusive development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Optimisation of demographic dividends, strengthening of demographic resilience, and promotion of gender equality</li> <li>■ Sustainable management of natural resources, cultural heritages, and tourism</li> <li>■ Promotion of agriculture and rural development</li> <li>■ Strengthening of urban management and modernisation</li> <li>■ Ensuring environmental sustainability and readiness for responding to climate change, alongside the promotion of a</li> </ul>

	green economy
Pentagon 5: Development of Digital Economy and Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building digital government and digital citizens</li> <li>■ Development of digital economy, digital business, e-commerce, and digital innovation system</li> <li>■ Building and development of digital infrastructure</li> <li>■ Building trust in digital systems</li> <li>■ Development of financial technology</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Reform phases between 2013 and 2023)

### Phase 1 (2013–2015)

- Improving the quality of education
- Strengthening the management of education personnel
- Strengthening all exam types
- Reforming higher education
- Youth development in technical and soft skills
- Public financial management reform
- Physical education and sport reform
- Establishment of the education policy research unit

### Phase 2 (2015–2017)

- Public financial management
- Deployment of teachers
- Teacher Training Centre reforms
- Teacher qualification improvements
- Inspection work
- Assessment of academic results
- Grade 12 examination reform
- Curriculum and textbook reforms
- Constructing and renovating buildings
- Higher education evaluation
- Promoting sport
- Implementation of action plans on youth policy
- Technical education
- Establishment of New Generation Schools (see [Figure 5](#) for further details)
- Career orientation and principal training

### Phase 3 (2017–2022)

- Promoting early grade reading

- Early grade mathematics
- Increasing the number of good Khmer literature teachers for Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3
- Establishing a model school for early grade reading and mathematics
- Practising effective school management

Phase 4 (2022 onwards):

- School reforms
- Teacher development through teacher training institution reforms
- Digital education
- Science and technology education
- Promoting health studies
- Youth development to improve 21st-century skills
- The establishment of a centre of excellence in higher education
- System building and capacity development
- The development of physical education and sport