

Cambodia



In Cambodia, The Asia Foundation programs equip youth for success in the future economy, engage policy actors in inclusive dialogues, and focus on improving public service delivery and regional development towards a prosperous Cambodia. The Foundation is committed to Cambodia's growth and development and has maintained in-country presence since 1993.

Project Highlights

Facilitated engagement between Cambodia's knowledge sector actors to increase evidence-based policymaking

Supported Cambodian research institutions and think tanks to produce diagnostic studies and research to engage in thoughtful and inclusive dialogue on policy issues, and support evidence-informed policy processes.

Tackled plastic waste

In Battambang and Phnom Penh, engaged communities, informal recyclers, schools, businesses, and government agencies – raised awareness and understanding of efficient PET bottle recycling. In Kratie, piloted a program to support the municipal government in developing a solid waste management plan to improve recycling and change community behaviours around plastic waste and consumption.

Engaged with community leaders and citizens on local budgets

In 24 communes across four Cambodian provinces, supported skills development for over 200 commune and district councilors through dialogue at the subnational and national level, engaging key policy actors responsible for leading the country's decentralization reform process.

2022 Snapshot



205 commune councilors trained in subnational development planning and budgeting, citizen engagement, and negotiation



1,689 engaged through 27 policy dialogues, provincial and national policy forums, and policy networking events



118 senior government officials trained on leadership and management with the MoEYS



Flagship Initiatives



Future workforce skilling

With support from USAID through the University of California Berkeley, the Foundation is working with university students, higher education institutions, and private sector partners to increase use of technology and digital skill building to create the future workforce. Through the Digital Workforce Development project, the Foundation manages scholarships for 74 students, created career centers, hosts an annual information technology conference, designed and manages an internship program, and provides employability skill trainings to career center staff and students to help them develop transferrable skills.

Diverse stakeholders for environmental action

The Asia Foundation engaged local partners in Kratie, a city on the Mekong River, to implement a pilot under the regional 3RproMar project, with support from GIZ. They collaborated to develop a solid waste management plan to help Kratie municipality reduce land-based waste leakage into marine environments, focusing on recycling, and shifting citizens' perceptions.

Inclusive and evidence-informed policymaking

To support policymakers with evidence-based and informed policy options, The Asia Foundation successfully implemented the first phase of the Ponlok Chomnes: Data and Dialogue for Development in Cambodia program, which supported research institutions and think tanks in Cambodia to produce research, host policy dialogues, and engage a wide range of policy stakeholders and knowledge sector actors. The She Thinks Network was launched—a first-of-its-kind women-led research network to promote gender equality in Cambodia's policy space. The program's second phase is supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Government leadership and management training

The Asia Foundation, with support from UNICEF, strengthened relations with the Cambodian government by providing leadership training opportunities and building skills for senior managers, in particular women in decision-making roles in government. The Foundation delivered a customized Leadership Professional Development Program for the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS).

Subnational governance engagement

The Asia Foundation, supported by New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, improved transparency and understanding of the local budgeting process. The project engaged 200+ elected commune councilors through training, cross-province exposure visits, gender budgeting, and door-to-door outreach, which enhanced trust at the local level.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives and expanding opportunities across Asia and the Pacific. Informed by decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region is focused on good governance, women's empowerment and gender equality, inclusive economic growth, environment and climate action, and regional and international relations.