

## CAMBODIA

### Country Summary of Higher Education

#### **Background:**

**Recent expansion of tertiary education sector:** The higher education system in Cambodia has been growing significantly in the last decade, particularly in the private sector. The first private HEI, Norton University, was established in 1996 in line with the government policy of public/private partnership and the number of private HEIs has grown rapidly since 2002. As of August 2007, there are 22 public and 40 private HEIs<sup>1</sup>. Total enrollment in both public and private Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) has increased dramatically from a little over 10,000 in 1997 to 97,524 in 2006<sup>2</sup>.

**Tertiary education system:** Cambodian higher education system consists of the academy, university, and an institute or independent school for those who have successfully completed Grade 12 in upper secondary school or an associate degree. The Royal Academy of Cambodia is the only academy in Cambodia, initially created for research. It offers advanced degree programs range from master's to doctoral degrees. University offers at least four faculties for bachelor's degree onward. An institute or independent school mainly offers training in a particular field, but not a wide range of research or training in multi-disciplinary subjects. Nine government ministries and agencies are providing higher education services in Cambodia.

**Quality assurance mechanisms:** The Accreditation Council of Cambodia (ACC) was established by Royal Decree in March 2003 to create a legal mechanism for administering the accreditation of higher education for all HEIs. Its main purposes are to ensure and promote academic quality, consistent with international standards, for greater effectiveness and to determine the organizational structure, roles, functions, and duties regarding the administration of the accreditation process. The Decree addresses that all HEIs in Cambodia must obtain accreditation status from the ACC in order to confer degrees, based on the following nine areas as major quality indicators at institutional level – 1) Mission; 2) Governing structure, management and planning; 3) Academic program; 4) Teaching staff; 5) Students and student services; 6) Learning resources; 7) Physical facilities; 8) Financial management and planning; 9) Dissemination of information.

**Government Strategy & Policy Reforms:** The Royal Government sets three key policy objectives for higher education in the Education Strategic Plan (ESP): (1) increased access and equity of enrollment opportunity to realize the Royal Government of Cambodia's pro-poor policy, (2) Quality assurance and improvement at both institutional and system levels, and (3) strengthened institutional management and development.

To meet the needs of the rapid higher education growth, the Department of Higher Education (DHE) within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has shifted its role as a control agent towards a provider of professional services in monitoring, analysis and policy formulation. As a result, the key roles of DHE are to: (1) develop policy and strategy for the higher education sector; (2) license HEIs for their operations; (3) assist HEIs to develop academic programs and management tools needed to help meet accreditation standards; (4) improve the quality and efficiency of higher education nationwide.

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<sup>1</sup> The Accreditation Committee of Cambodia for Higher Education

<sup>2</sup> The figure includes 92,340 undergraduate students and 5,184 post graduate students (not including the National Institute of Education.)

## Summary Data Table on Higher Education

Enrollment	Total Enrollment	97,524 (2006)
	% of Female	31% (2004)
	% of Private	58% (2006)
Gross Enrollment Rate	Total	3.0 (2004)
	Male	4.0 (2004)
	Female	2.0 (2004)
Student Teachers Ratios		
Teaching Staff	Total Number	3,605 (2004)
	% of Female	16% (2004)
	Teachers with Masters	2699 (2006)
	Teachers with Doctorate	416 (2006)
Gross Graduation Rates*	Total	2.9 (2004)
	Male	4.2 (2004)
	Female	1.7 (2004)
Total Public Expenditure on Education	% of GDP	2.0 (2004)
	% of Govt. Expenditure	
Total Public Expenditure on Higher Education	% of total education budget	
Number of Higher Education Institutions	Total	62
	Academy	1 (2007)
	Universities	35 (2007)
	Institute/independent school	26 (2007)
	Public	22 (2007)
	Private	40 (2007)

Source: The office of Statistics, Data and Information of the Department of Higher Education, Cambodia/Global Education Digest 2006, UNESCO

\* Number of graduates regardless of age in a given level or program expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical graduation age for that level or program

### Issues:

Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in HEIs in Cambodia is low by international standards.</li> <li>• Enrollment is concentrated in a few academic disciplines, such as business management.</li> </ul>
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current enrollment patterns show significant urban/rural and gender disparities.</li> </ul>
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient quality assurance systems have not been developed yet.</li> <li>• The low quality of many programs allows students to undertake multiple full-time degrees.</li> </ul>
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEIs produce more graduates than the economy can absorb and graduate skills are often not matched to the needs of the country.</li> </ul>
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low salaries and no direct government support for non-salary items are serious financial issues for public HEIs.</li> <li>• The government budget is not allocated to research activities in public HEIs.</li> </ul>
Governance/ Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As many as nine ministries and agencies as well as private institutions deliver higher education services with limited coordination at national policy level.</li> <li>• Management and staff appointments are generally made by the Government without transparent selection process.</li> <li>• Higher education sector faces a shortage of educational leaders, planners, and managers to fill the position of retiring senior educators.</li> <li>• Computerized management information system hasn't been established yet.</li> </ul>