

YOUTH'S EMPOWERMENT: EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & RIGHTS





WORKSHOP ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT:

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS PHNOM PENH, KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA, 27 FEB 2023





A. Agenda

Time	Agenda Items	
08:00-08:30	Participant Registration	
Opening Session		
08:30-08:45	Welcoming Remarks by Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi, MP Japan, Chair of AFPPD	
08:45-09:00	Opening Address by Hon. Kitisangahak Bendit Men Sam An, MP Cambodia, Deputy Prime Minister and Chair of CAPPD	
09:00-09:15	Photo Session, All participants	
09:15-09:30	Coffee break	

Panel 1: Better Future for All: Enhancing Youth with SRHR Understanding and Readiness (Health Risk/Health and Rights)

09:30-10:45	 Hon. Chesters, MP, Australia, case study 1 (online) Mrs. Kim Rottana, Director of National Maternal and Child Health Center, MoH, Cambodia
	 Hon. Raoul Danniel A Manuel, MP Philippines, case study 2
	 Dr. Var Chivorn, Executive Director of RHAC (IPPF representative in Cambodia)
	(15mns for each speaker)
	Moderated by H.E Dr. Sos Mosine, Member of Commission 8 of the National Assembly

Panel 2: Realizing Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Digital Transformation in Education for All

10:45-12:15	 Mr. Kim Sanh, Assistant to MoEYS Dr. Chey Chan Oeurn, Senior Researcher of Cambodia Development Center H.E. Mr. The Chhunhak, General Director of Gender Equality, MoWA Mr. Van Khema, Vice-President of Cambodian Academy of Digital Technology
	(15mns for each speaker)
	Moderated by H.E Math Seth, Member of Commission 7 of the National Assembly
12:15–13:45	Lunch Break
Session 3: Promoting Digital Inclusiveness for Youth Employability	

13:45-15:45	 Mrs Yim Pichmalika, Deputy General Director, MoLVT Mr. Felix Weidenkaff, Youth Employment Expert for the ILO's regional office for Asia and the Pacific (online) Hon. Dede Yusuf, MP Indonesia and Chair of Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD) (online) Ms. Khun Sophea, Country Program Coordinator of UN Women Mr. Hor Sothy, Researcher of CD-Center (15mns for each speaker) Moderated by Hon. Khoeng Nupheap, Member of Commission 8 of the National Assembly 	
15:45–16:00	Coffee Break	
Wrap-up and Closing		
16:00-16:45	 Remarks by Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, MP Thailand, AFPPD Secretary General (online) Closing speech by Hon. Hun Many, MP, Chair of Commission 7th 	

Remark: Participant list is attached at the end of this report.

B. Opening Remarks & Addresses

The workshop was welcomed by **Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi**, MP of Japan and Chair of AFPPD. Hon. Professor Takemi has mentioned that this workshop is part of national level activity of the AFPPD's National Committees. Youth empowerment is one of the key pillars that AFPPD has been working on. As a matter of fact, youth represented more than half of the world population, thus there is a need to ensure young people opportunity. Even though significant progress has been made, by promoting health care, education and employment, nearly half of the young people in the region facing economic insecurity, either unemployed or employed, structural barriers, including cultural norms, which harden by COVID 19 pandemic.

Hon. Professor Takemi highlighted that AFPPD has a vital role to address young people issues by encouraging member states to adopt related law and policy concerning, decent employment, leadership and entrepreneurship among young people. He continued that the political empowerment of young people will benefit policy and legislation to address emerging issues. Hon. Professor Takemi has echoed the substantial tools of ICPD and SDGs, which provide the frameworks to countries to institutionalize the policy and mechanism, measuring the progress in the field, continuing the collaboration to develop more comprehensive ground to address youth issue.

Hon. Men Sam An, Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia and President of CAPPD, opened up the workshop by highlighting on the significance of youth and marginalized group's awareness on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as a catalyst to prevent them from any health risks that could jeopardize their future development by any means i.e. progressive education, decent job, and other social contribution and impact. The advancement of digital technology in the 21st century also contributes to keep youth updated of what they deserve to be aware of, treated, and equipped with. In her speech, Hon. Deputy Prime Minister additionally stressed on the key elements of "National Policy on Cambodia's Youth Development 2022-2026" where four priorities are at core, including

(1) education, (2) health and welfare, (3) employment and opportunity, and (4) institutional participation and collaboration; all of which can be achieved via a wide variety of strategic promotion in such areas: youth volunteerism, entrepreneurship, and awareness on cultural, social, and environment aspects.

Thus, a list of recommendations are provided for consideration to continue the discussions, exchanges of experiences, and sharing of best practices among Asia-Pacific MPs, with the theme of this workshop serving as an ongoing process of the AFPPD's mission. Some of which include: (1) the necessity to embrace digital technology mechanism to leverage dynamic cooperation for youth and marginal group's development; (2) the reflection from the seminar's outputs to apply for the basis of policy and legal instrument that responds best to the local context; and (3) the calling for continuous collaboration of concerned legislative institutions to promote parliamentary role in overseeing the Executives' policy implementation, particularly on youth's education, employment and SRHR.

C. Panel Discussions

• Panel 1: Better Future for All: Enhancing Youth with SRHR Understanding and Readiness (Health Risk/Health and Rights)



Speakers:

- Hon. Chesters, MP, Australia, case study 1 (online)
- Mrs. Kim Rottana, Director of National Maternal and Child Health Center, MoH, Cambodia
- Hon. Raoul Danniel A Manuel, MP Philippines, case study 2

Topic:

Better Future for All: Enhancing Youth with SRHR Understanding and Readiness (Health Risk/Health and Rights) Dr. Var Chivorn, Executive Director of RHAC (IPPF representative in Cambodia)

Moderator:

 Hon. Sos Mousine, Member of Commission 8 of the National Assembly

Mrs. Dr. Rottana KIM, Head of National Center for Maternal and Child Health (NCMCH) took the floor by stressing on indicators concerning Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health; one of which is the trend in "use, need, and demand for family planning". Results showed that there has been an improvement record of "met-need family planning" due to moder contraceptive over the years reported (2000-2022). Another remark has proved the higher education women (aged 15-19) would get, the less likelihood they have to face unwanted pregnancy. This signifies a strong relationship of "Level of Education" and "Pregnancy". To address the issues, the NCMCH provides a range of services, including but not limited to, (1) counselling on STDs & family planning; (2) strengthening quality of Youth Friendly Sexual and Reproductive Service (YFS), particularly vulnerable group; (3) trainings on medical service providers in terms of youth's sexual reproductive health (SRH), amongst others.

Honorable Chesters, MP of Australian Parliament shared the platform by giving remark on the comprehensive sexual education's critical role to prevent sexual abuse. Challenges behind sexual reproductive health could not be ignored, and thus requiring appropriate strategies for all groups, particularly for men health through various means i.e. campaigns for same sex acceptance. She recognized the importance of SRHR issues in improving the SRHR well-being of youth. He addressed the idea that schools should strengthen the SRHR education program through the inclusion of the Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) program into the school curriculum. The Australian government is providing funds to assist many programs in the country. At the national level, policy and national plans educate young groups. At the local level, it depends on the schools' capacity to implement the programs that require a long-term time frame. Australia intends to provide a vaccination program to protect children's health. CSE programs are indeed aided in their implementation around the world, but there are numerous challenges to effective CSE implementation, particularly in remote areas. CSE empowers young people to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Honorable Raoul Danniel, MP from the Philippines brought in crucial data regarding sexual reproductive health in the country, followed by consequences and available solutions to cope with the matter. The seminar was informed that during the five-year period study (2017-2022), amongst the Pilipino youth ageing 15-19, one third had sex whilst 18% of them not use any forms of protection. In other comparative surveys for 2016 and 2020, there was an increasing trend of young women aged 10-14 years old, giving birth with the rate of 3.7% (in 2016) and 5% (in 2020). Adolescent pregnancy is also in increasing pattern. The consequences of this incidence (adolescent pregnancy) reflected a heavy burden at the expense of economics standpoint. For instance, 33 M peso of yearly income were spent on the cause. To address the problem, "POLICY Solutions" were put in place; one of which was "Reproductive Health Law- RH Law", that embraces such substances as: family planning, health advice, education, information and capacity building. From the "Education perspective angle of RH Law", for example, curriculum were developed by the public key actors and

were brought about to be implemented in private schools. "Access to family planning" prevents unplanned pregnancy by restricting the decision to require written consent from parents. Honorable Emanuel provided his last message on the necessity of various consideration to be placed at the forefront of actions and programs. Those included: National Program of Action and Investment plan, Information and Service Delivery Network, Youth Investment Program; some of which shall be worth structured and funded not just from the state but from local programs and making it broadly available i.e. education not just for students, but also for out-of-schools folks.

To complement on the session, Mr. Chivorn VAR, Executive Director of Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia (RHAC) recalled on various policies in favor of supporting reproductive health and rights (SRHR), to combat sexual violence. For instance, National Population Policy, National Youth Policy, and Sectorial Strategies. These strategic documentations are supportive of CSE (Comprehensive Sexual Education), abortion, and SGBV (Sexual and gender-based violence). Mr. Var stressed that to put the strategic plan at work, awareness raising is utmost important to first ascertain that the population need to understand the crucial attachment of the issue so that the law can be initiated. Such modalities may include comprehensive sexual education, prepping adolescent family planning to avoid unwanted pregnancy. This makes sense to have effective control on population growth. Additionally, increasing the number of Public Health Facilities Trained in YFS and SGBV shall be leveraged as the current trend is unfavorably low as shown in MoH Report 2019.

He added that there is a room for improvement by expanding the comprehensive national policy and strategies to support the implementation and to enable youth-community participation. All health centers shall also have youth-engaged perspective. Last but note least, M&E plays an predominant role in improving the quality of the program.

Panel 2: Realizing Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Digital Transformation in Education for All



Speakers:

- Mr. Kim Sanh, Assistant to MoEYS
- H.E. Mr. The Chhunhak, General Director of Gender Equality
- Dr. Chey Chan Oeurn, Senior Researcher of Cambodia Development Center
- Mr. Van Khema, Vice-President of Cambodian Academy of Digital Technology

Moderator:

 H.E Math Seth, Member of Commission 7 of the National Assembly

Topic:

Realizing Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Digital Transformation in Education for All

The panel began with remark of representative from Ministry of Women Affairs, H.E. The Chhunhak. He expressed that the encouragement of women in digital inclusion can significantly strengthen the rate of women's employability. Furthermore, the national strategic plan 2050 prioritized human resource development and stated that women are the backbone of the economy. Women's digital inclusion, such as the capacity of ITCs, digital entrepreneurship, and education, leads to the efficient inclusiveness of social development in the digitalized social-economic context. In 2021, the RGC's

digital economy policy aims to close the gender digital divide and alleviate the digital human resource shortage in Cambodia. Furthermore, women are highly prioritized in the digital economy development agenda, yet their digital capacity is very limited, which constrains them in the new normal of the digital economic environment. With digital evolution, various digital technology advancement provide answers to humans' problems. Gender perspective was also been able to benefit from such changes. FinTech, for example, helped gender in term of financial inclusion and thereby narrowing gender gap. Such initiative as "Women in Digital Adaption" promoted gender and inclusive development. Concerned polity set 2030 with a commitment for STEM education by aiming for: 50% of graduate students would be STEM-oriented; amongst them, 40% would be women. "Increasing the number of female researchers" and "Expanding knowledge of digitalization to women in Micro and SMEs" were also amongst the visions for digital transformation for inclusive, equitable and quality education Cambodia would like to attain.

Dr. Chey Chan Oeurn, Senior Researcher at Cambodia Development Center, provided that digital transformation in education enhances students' digital capacity development through digital tool usage and digital learning experiences. The digital transformation of education takes place in three stages: the campus environment, learning methods, and teaching methods. The digital transformation in education has some advantages, such as experimentation and feedback, wide resource access, automation and efficiency, and life skill development. At the HEI level, transformation of existing teaching and learning models is critical for long-term survival and competitive position. While Cambodia has 2 main prioritized and potential transformation frameworks, which are Microsoft-based and Google-based, five main challenges for such transformation include: 1-Prioritization: transformation take place only for the priority; 2-Decentralized Decision-making; 3- Human are resisting to changes; 4- Gaps in Tech-Talent Pool; and 5- Narrow view of ROI.

Mr. Kim Sanh, Assistant to Ministry of Education Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) presented the contribution of MoEYS to accelerate the relevant cause of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4), on "Quality, Equitable and Inclusive Lifelong Learning" with "Roadmap for Education" by integrating digital approach into the curriculum. Some examples include distant and e-learning broadcasted in public and cable TV channels, social media platforms, apps, and MoEYS' E-Center homepage. Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) is also under pilot implementation for grade 5-12 at some selected schools whilst broadening the availability via digital channel like YouTube. This mechanism helps keep education being in reliable, responsive and inclusive standing point during the Covid-19 pandemic where schools were unfortunately shut down.

Cambodia's Academy for Digital Transformation (CADT)'s Vice President, Mr. Khema VAN, also shard perspectives on how education in the 21st century shall be transformed. Having understood the paradigm that online method (which gained momentum in the digital influx) would lead to certain loss in practicality, CADT ascertained to equip at least 60% of its curriculum for practical experience, with the support of LAB. A wide variety of software designs were employed to ensure maximum result learning and teaching experience. Those included: Learning Management System (LMS) to track the progress of participation; Content Management System (CMS) to serve as platform of searching for useful contents/lessons for students (videos, clips, documentations...etc); LAB to avail simulation with the support of software (i.e. software installation with simulation scenario).

Panel 3: Promoting Digital Inclusiveness for Youth Employability



Speakers:

- Mrs. Yim Pichmalika, Deputy General Director, Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training
- Mr. Felix Weidenkaff, Youth Employment Expert for the ILO's regional office for Asia and the Pacific
- Hon. Dede Yusuf, MP Indonesia and Chair Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD)
- Ms. Khun Sophea, Country Program Coordinator of UN Women
- Mr. Hor Sithy, Researcher and Member of Executive Committee, Cambodia Development Center

Moderator:

 Hon. Kheoung Nupheap, Member of Commission 8 of the National Assembly Topic:

Promoting Digital Inclusiveness for Youth Employability

The global pandemic and the rise of digital technology have an impact on people, especially young people at school and work. Coping with the pandemic on the one hand and embracing an inclusive digital economy and society on the other present significant challenges for both the government and people. Promoting youth digital inclusion is a crucial step toward enhancing youth capacity and capabilities in the workforce as well as contributing to the inclusive digital economy. SDG 8 includes the promotion of decent work for all and inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

During the panel, Mrs. Yim Pichmalika, Deputy General Director, Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, highlighted that the global education system has faced a sudden transformation in the 21st century, which has required the adaptation of new skills. Globalization places new demands on the educational system to foster innovation in the development of ITC capacity in order to compete regionally and globally. Skills requirements are continuously changing, which requires education reforms, especially technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Cambodia does require high-quality human resources to meet its 2030 and 2050 development goals, and the Ministry of Labor has played an important role in accelerating the country's industrialization. TVET Cambodia is providing vocational training programs that certify course takers as equivalent to standard education degrees (National Qualification Framework). TVET provides: (1) efficient skills for jobs to reduce poverty rates; (2) theoretical and practical studies with internship and employment opportunities; (3) multiple and flexible opportunities for long-lifetime skills development; and (4) a skilled labor force to strengthen the industrialization process.

Mr. Felix Weidenkaff, Youth Employment Expert for the ILO's regional office for Asia and the Pacific (Online), noticed that the impacts of COVD-19 across the Asia-Pacific produced an unequal impact and uneven recovery in the region. The COVID-19 and other crises exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities and gender disparities and negatively impacted the prospects of youth mainly through three channels. Firstly, the disruption in education and training Secondly, there are difficulties in transitioning from school to work and moving between jobs in a recession, and lastly, job disruption in the form of reduced working hours, reduced earnings, and job losses, along with deteriorating quality of employment.

- Digital transformation requires demand-and-supply policies to promote youth employment.
 Digitalization of TVET and skills systems requires integrated and systemic national strategies
 such as (1) digitalizing skills system governance; (2) anticipating, planning, and monitoring skills
 development; (3) digitalizing skills development, certification, and recognition; (4) digitalizing
 access to skills development and the labor market; and (5) digitalizing employability strategies.
- Policies for human-centered, job-rich recovery leveraging digitalization: (1) provide for a broad-based, job-rich recovery with decent work opportunities for all through integrated national employment policy responses; (2) strengthen national systems of employment services and national policies to provide quality employment services for workers and employers; (3) support quality education, training, and decent work for young people, to maximize their potential as a source of dynamism, talent, creativity, and innovation; (4) strengthen public and private investment in skills development and lifelong learning; and (5) leverage the opportunities of just digital and environmental transitions to advance decent work.

Hon. Dede Yusuf, MP Indonesia and Chair Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD) showed that the Indonesia Vision Pillars 2045 lay out 5 pillars, of which one is Human Resource Development and Science and Technology Mastery. The Indonesian government has established strategies to ensure an efficient demographic dividend, such as (1) improving people's well-being through education interventions, (2) ensuring equal access to education through a 12-year compulsory education program, (3) increasing access for senior high schoolers, (4) providing a pre-employment card to help college graduates find jobs, and (5) providing social protection for the aging population.

The Human Resource Development and Science and Technology toward Indonesian goal 2045 have 5 strategies in education: 1- Increase and equalize education infrastructure; 2- Community

roles in development; 3- Changing school and reading culture; 4- Vocational education; and 5- Entrepreneurship and a characteristic building.

Ms. Khun Sophea, Country Program Coordinator of UN Women, expressed that UNWOMEN focuses on three key priorities to advance gender quality and women's empowerment: (1) strengthening government capacity and accountability to integrate international norms and commitment to national legislative and regulatory frameworks; (2) ending violence against women by creating prevention and response measurements and strategies; and (3) enhancing gender responsiveness in climate change actions and disaster risk reduction. She stressed that sexual discrimination and gender inequality still exist in society, where women face social norms and cultural barriers. Social expectations that set limitations for women to be inferior to men and create an unfair distribution of household work and family care are a barrier to women's employment and can limit their community participation and leadership. On average, women do more than 90% of unpaid household work and family care. Overviews of the labor market show structural inequalities, with women over-represented in lower-paid, less-valued positions and under-represented in more senior and higher-paying roles. Differences in education and experience account for very little of the gender wage gap, with discrimination being the main factor.

To eradicate the mentioned challenges, she showed that changing gender norms requires comprehensive and sustained strategies that engage multiple stakeholders at all levels: households, communities, institutions, and governments. These include empowering girls and young women to be given the opportunity for training in STEM subjects (science, technology, and mathematics), which is key to closing the gap on the digital divide. In addition, harmful social norms that contribute to controlling women and girls' access to communications and technology also need to be tackled.

Mr. Hor Sithy, Researcher and Member of Executive Committee, Cambodia Development Center, highlighted the shifting landscape of digital jobs and skills in Asia and the Pacific region. The demand for digital skills is increasing, and the rise in demand for new hires with digital skills has been taking place for the last five years. Cambodia is estimated to have 50,000 digital talents, despite the fact that only 30% of the total population has basic digital literacy.

To promote digital inclusion for youth employability, Cambodia must pursue the following: (1) invest more in digital infrastructure; (2) provide digital skills training to young people; (3) encourage entrepreneurship and startup.

- The three "As" of digital infrastructure: availability, accessibility, and affordability.
- Digital Skills Training must enable people to obtain basic knowledge of digital literacy and skills relevant to the job market;
- Entrepreneurship and startup: promoting entrepreneurship can assist young people to develop their digital skills and create more job opportunities.

He also expressed that the Cambodia Development Center has been actively engaging in the promotion of digital human resource and digital skills development in Cambodia by conducting various scientific research and digitally relevant projects and programs with the aim of contributing to the development of the digital socio-economy of Cambodia.

D. Closing

Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, Senator from Thailand, Secretary General of AFPPD, noticed that the importance of adolescent and youth issues has brought the Workshop on Youth Empowerment: Education, Employment, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, where open discussions have provided the views and perspectives of professionals and academics from both the government and private sectors to address the challenges and pave the way for solutions on empowering youth. As one of the AFPPD's pillars is youth empowerment, the AFPPD is encouraging its member states to consider the progressive measures and reflect them in national policies and legislation. Moreover, AFPPD is grateful to CAPPD for organizing this workshop with fruitful results. Finally, His Excellency expressed gratitude to UNFPA and the Japan Trust Fund for their assistance and expressed a desire to organize more events in Asia and the Pacific in the future.

Hon. Hun Many, Chairman of Commission 7 of the National Assembly, emphasized the importance of empowering young people to unlock their full potential, which not only enables them to grow as a person, but also makes them an indispensable asset who is willing to contribute to the development of their society. Recognizing the significance of youth and their contributions, it is critical to prioritize their needs and development sectors for young people. His excellency urged that it is crucial for us to continue working collaboratively and inclusively across sectors to contribute to the needs of youth as well as the needs of youth protection for their future. He encourage AFPPD, relevant ministries, civil society organizations, and partners to further work together to tap on the challenges toward youth inclusion and dynamic development.

E. Recommendation

Drawing from the discussion, the following recommendations are made:

- Continue discussions, exchanges of experiences, and sharing of best practices among Asia-Pacific MPs, with the theme of this workshop serving as an ongoing process of the AFPPD's mission. Dialogue meetings or information technology mechanisms can help make the cooperation mechanism on the youth pillar more dynamic.
- ❖ Use the results of this workshop as a basis for designing legal instruments and policies appropriate to the context of each respective country, benefiting young people in particular, and to be used in the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.
- ❖ Urge the legislative body to continue strengthening the role of the National Assembly in monitoring the implementation of the Royal Government's policies, especially in education, employment, and youth health. Provide input, research reports, policy recommendations, and a forum for exchanging ideas, as was done in this workshop.
- Continue working collaboratively and inclusively across sectors to contribute to the needs of youth and their protection for the future. Encourage AFPPD, relevant ministries, civil society organizations, and partners to work together to address the challenges toward youth inclusion and dynamic development.

F. Photos







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