



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

REPORT

Prepared by:
NGO Education Partnership

2025





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Theme: Building Impactful Partnership in Education Sector

8 April 2025 | Factory Phnom Penh

I. Introduction

The **NGO Education Partnership (NEP) Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2025** marked a significant milestone in the life of the network, bringing together members, partners, and key stakeholders in Cambodia’s education sector. This year’s AGM was especially important, as it included several pivotal moments that will shape the future of NEP and its collective impact. Notably, the AGM featured the election of new Board members, reflecting NEP’s commitment to inclusive governance and fresh leadership. Another key highlight was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NEP and one of its active members, TDSO, launching the innovative Greenspots Project aimed at promoting climate-resilient schools. The meeting also facilitated a review and approval of NEP’s Charter of Operation, reinforcing transparency and accountability within the coalition. Concluding the day was a high-level panel discussion on Enhancing Synergy Between NGOs and Development Partners, where representatives from the EU, ADB, Aide et Action, KAPE, and CCC shared insights into strategic priorities, partnership dynamics, and funding perspectives. This dialogue set the tone for future collaboration in transforming Cambodia’s education landscape.

II. Open Remarks by Mrs. Hun Boramey, NEP Chair of the Board

Mrs. Hun Boramey, NEP Board Chair, opened the AGM by warmly welcoming all members and partners. In her speech, she emphasized that the AGM was not only a reflection of past accomplishments but also a moment to reignite collective commitment to inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all Cambodians. She acknowledged the financial challenges faced, including reduced funding from USAID, and commended the resilience of NEP and its members.

Mrs. Boramey described NEP as more than a network—it is a movement powered by solidarity, advocacy, and collaboration. She called upon all members to continue supporting and expanding NEP’s reach by nominating new members and sharing NEP’s mission with like-minded organizations. “NEP is your platform. It is your voice. It is your home in the national education dialogue,” she affirmed. (See Annex 1)



III. Overview of NEP's 2024 Achievements and 2025 Projections — Presented by Leng Sreynich (NEP)

Sreynich, Membership and Advocacy Coordinator at NEP, delivered a presentation highlighting both the organization's achievements in 2024 and its strategic direction for the years ahead. She reflected on a year of continued growth and resilience, during which NEP sustained its diverse membership base of 78 organizations, led impactful advocacy campaigns, generated evidence to influence policy, and expanded its visibility through public engagement and communication efforts. Sreynich emphasized that NEP's work over the past year was made possible by strong collaboration among members, and she underscored the importance of maintaining this momentum. Looking ahead, she introduced NEP's Strategic Plan 2024–2028, which focuses on three core pillars: Partnership, Knowledge Sharing, and Evidence Generation. She outlined ambitious targets for 2025, including growing the network to 100 members, launching 10 Youth Education Champions, facilitating 8 training sessions, and producing 4 joint research studies and 4 policy briefs. Sreynich called on members to actively participate in achieving these goals, stressing that their collective effort is vital to shaping a more inclusive, equitable, and evidence-driven education system in Cambodia. (See Annex 2)

IV. Building Impactful Partnership: Introduction to Greenspots Project – Climate Resilient School and invitation to collective action _ Presented by Seng Sothea (NEP)

Sothea introduced the Greenspots Project, a collaborative initiative between NEP and Teacher Development Support Organization (TDSO), known for its expertise in English teacher training in public schools. This innovative project aims to equip Cambodian schools to better withstand the growing impacts of climate change while ensuring the continued delivery of quality, uninterrupted education.

Greenspots envisions safe, sustainable, and thriving learning environments that not only safeguard students but also promote climate awareness, environmental responsibility, and long-term community resilience. Sothea emphasized that Cambodian schools are increasingly vulnerable due to rising temperatures, unpredictable weather patterns, and fragile infrastructure, all of which threaten learning continuity and student well-being. In response, the project seeks to transform schools into climate-resilient spaces through a combination of infrastructure improvements, teacher capacity building, and community engagement.

The project also presents a unique opportunity for partnership and collaboration. Implementation partners are encouraged to contribute their local presence and expertise in community engagement and sustainable development. Technical partners can support with climate-resilient design and educational innovation, while funding partners can back specific project components, from infrastructure upgrades to teacher training and environmental awareness programs.



The session concluded with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony between NEP and TDSO, marking a strong commitment to climate-responsive education in Cambodia. Members were warmly invited to join the next phase of the project, which will be rolled out in Kampong Thom province. (See Annex 3)

V. Youth Education Champion: Engaging Young People in transforming Cambodian education system – Facilitated by Yoeng Kimheng (NEP)

Mr. Kimheng's presentation was delivered to showcase the outcomes and impact of the **Education Champion Youth Program**. It is a six-month program, providing young people with a meaningful opportunity to engage directly with advocacy, communication, and education policy work. The presentation outlined the key objectives and activities of the program, emphasizing how the selected youth, the course of the internship, the youth were involved in supporting campaigns for education reform, conducting research, organizing events, and amplifying the voices of students and communities through communication platforms. These engagements not only enriched NEP's work but also served as a powerful learning experience for the youth, helping them develop leadership, critical thinking, and advocacy skills.

An Education Champion Youth representative provided testimony and his interest in this program. In his remarks, the representative expressed sincere appreciation for the opportunity to be part of the program. He spoke passionately about how the experience deepened their understanding of Cambodia's education challenges and inspired them to stay engaged in the sector. The youth shared how they gained in policy researching, knowledge, skills, and teamwork. He hopes to carry forward in their academic and professional journeys. This reflected the spirit of youth empowerment and affirmed the value of investing in young changemakers. After the presentation, the Board of Directors of NEP was invited to formally present certificates to the Education Champion Youths who successfully completed the program as a public recognition of their contributions and commitment to improving education in Cambodia.

VI. Board Member Election – Guided by Mr. Mark Desmaele, Member of the Board

Mark facilitated the live election of new NEP Board members through a paper ballot process, guided by the principle of *one vote per member organization*. According to NEP's governance requirements, the Board should consist of at least seven members, but as of this AGM, only four candidates were nominated. Therefore, all members were encouraged to cast their vote. They could vote for one, two, three, or all four candidates, depending on their preferences. To be elected, each candidate needed to receive at least 50% of the total votes cast.

The nominated candidates were:

- Ms. Kakada Ngeth, Program Director, Epic Arts
- Ms. Kirsty Milev, Program Quality Director, World Vision International, Cambodia
- Ms. Rojanet Ty, Country Representative, VSO Cambodia



- Mr. Samnang Long, Program Manager, Sunshine Cambodia Organization

Prior to the voting, two candidates briefly addressed the assembly. Ms. Rojanet Ty expressed her enthusiasm for joining the Board, highlighting her extensive experience in inclusive education, social accountability, gender equality, and volunteering, and reaffirming her commitment to contribute meaningfully to NEP’s mission. Mr. Samnang Long shared that he was honored to be nominated, bringing over 20 years of experience in the education sector. He emphasized his dedication to support NEP’s advocacy work with the government and voiced hope that, in the next 5 to 10 years, Cambodia’s education system would see tangible improvement.

Following the voting process, all four candidates received the required majority, each securing more than 50% of the total votes cast. Ms. Kakada Ngeth received 20 votes, Ms. Kirsty Milev received 23 votes, Ms. Rojanet Ty received 24 votes, and Mr. Samnang Long received 22 votes. As a result, all four were officially elected to serve as members of the NEP Board of Directors.

(See Annex 5)

VII. Approve on the review NEP’s Charter of Operation by Mr. Khieu Chetra, Executive Director (NEP)

During the session, participants were presented with the proposed amendments to NEP’s Charter of Operations. The Executive Director, Mr. Chetra, briefly outlined the key changes and the rationale behind the revisions, ensuring members had the opportunity to review and raise questions. Following the discussion, members voted to approve the updated Charter. The revised Charter reflects NEP’s ongoing commitment to good governance, transparency, and organizational accountability. Please see the track changes in the document for details of the suggested amendments via the [link](#).

VIII. Panel Discussion on Enhancing Synergy Between NGOs and Development Partners: Strategic Priorities of Development Partners (DPs) in Education Sector and Funding Perspective

Over the past two decades, Cambodia has made remarkable progress in expanding access to education, with strong commitments from the government and support from development partners, NGOs, and communities. However, critical challenges remain—particularly in ensuring quality, equity, relevance, and resilience in education systems.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and deepened many existing gaps—especially for marginalized children—and underscored the need for more inclusive, flexible, and future-oriented education systems. Meanwhile, global shifts like digital transformation, climate change, and demographic changes are forcing us to rethink what education systems should deliver, and



how. Donors and development partners play a central role in shaping education policy and investment priorities. But for truly transformative change, strategic collaboration is needed across sectors and actors—including government, civil society, INGOs, local NGOs, and development partners.

This panel is an opportunity to align visions, identify synergies, and explore how we can move from fragmented efforts to a more coordinated, transformative approach to education in Cambodia.

Today's panel brings together key stakeholders:

- The European Union and Asian Development Bank, major donors shaping policy directions and financing.
- Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC), representing civil society's voice and coordination.
- Aide et Action and KAPE, two organizations working closely at the grassroots level on innovation and inclusion in education.

Question: Aide et Action works extensively through partnership with local NGOs. How do you plan to work differently with local NGOs to fundamentally shift these partnerships from reliance to genuine self-sufficiency, ensuring local organizations not only survive but thrive independently in education delivery once your support concludes?

Answer:

At AEA, we place strong value on collaboration with local, international, sub-national, and national associations. Currently, we work with over 40 partners, supported by a portfolio of nearly USD 10 million, with the European Union being one of our key supporters for the past 10 consecutive years. Looking ahead, our approach focuses on four key components: Capacity building – We prioritize strengthening the capacities of our local partners, including communities and private sector actors, who are critical in supporting children's education. We also support umbrella organizations to help them continue serving and empowering their member organizations. Improving access and quality of education – We invest in making education both more accessible and more relevant, ensuring children not only attend school but receive quality learning experiences. Linking education with employment – We are increasingly working to connect education with future job opportunities, helping learners transition from school to work with the skills they need.

Question: Learning from your experience, how can multi-lateral donors better support capacity-building for local organizations?

Answer:



From my experience working in seven different countries, I can say that Cambodian CSOs—especially those in the education sector—demonstrate strong capacity and relatively well-structured systems. Significant investment in capacity-building has already been made by both multilateral organizations like the UN and bilateral donors such as the EU, US, and France. However, in the current context, it is increasingly important for CSOs to become more specialized. We are in a time where deep expertise in a specific area is not only valuable but necessary. CSOs must focus on building and demonstrating specialized knowledge—whether it's in inclusive education, policy advocacy, early childhood care, or another key area. To be very direct: you need to have a clear and strong focus. When your organization becomes known for its expertise in a specific field, it becomes more likely to be recognized and sought after—by the private sector, ministries, and both bilateral and multilateral donors. In today's environment, we must turn challenges into opportunities by sharpening our focus. This is how CSOs can truly show their value and unique advantage.

Question: CCC serves as a vital umbrella organization that coordinates and strengthens collaboration among civil society organizations working on development initiatives throughout Cambodia. In your perspective, how can civil society organizations play a more strategic role in shaping education priorities and ensuring that donor investments lead to inclusive and transformative outcomes – especially for the most marginalized children"?

Answer:

As a coalition of 199 member organizations working across various sectors, CCC believes that while our areas of focus may differ, we are united by a common goal: national development. At the heart of this development is human development and the strengthening of human resources—a goal that requires the active participation and contribution of all stakeholders. At CCC, we contribute by actively engaging in policy dialogue. To meet Cambodia's 2030 human capital goals, civil society must be a part of the government's transformation agenda. In this process, NGOs and CSOs serve as the demand side, pushing for the effective and inclusive implementation of policies, while the government represents the supply side, providing services and systems. Ultimately, CCC's strategic role is to support its members in amplifying their voices, enhancing their collaboration, and advocating for inclusive, rights-based education policies

Question to ADB, EU, Aid de Action and KAPE – What practical steps can donors and NGOs take to enhance collaboration leading to inclusive and high-quality education in Cambodia?

Answer:



ADB: In the education sector, NEP plays a vital role as a coordinating platform that bridges development partners, civil society, and government counterparts. NEP functions both as an advocate and a watchdog, helping to ensure accountability and alignment across stakeholders. We are witnessing transformations across sectors, both public and private. As Flora from the EU mentioned, meaningful development requires transformation; otherwise, we risk falling behind and failing to respond to the evolving needs of the sector.

EU: There is a strong need for focused dialogue and coordination. The EU encourages continued engagement from civil society organizations (CSOs), whose presence is critical to ensuring that development efforts are grounded in community needs. Umbrella organizations like NEP are essential in amplifying diverse voices and fostering inclusive, coordinated action.

CCC: CSOs play a key role in monitoring the implementation of education policies and ensuring their effectiveness. As we shift from grant-based to loan-based development models, voluntary participation and strategic engagement from civil society become even more important. Strengthening collaboration between CSOs and development partners is essential in this new context.

AEA: There are three practical steps development partners can take. First, identify and support the specific strengths and skills of local NGOs and CSOs. Second, invest more in reaching out-of-school children—currently, if 20% of Cambodian children remain out of school, our collective progress is at risk. Third, we need to mobilize more resources and promote genuine collaboration among CSOs. Often, CSOs present a united front but end up competing for funding. Through umbrella organizations like NEP, we can pool resources, reduce fragmentation, and work together more strategically.

KAPE: To achieve sustainability and inclusivity, it's important that NGOs begin to shape themselves, especially in light of funding pressures such as those experienced with USAID's withdrawal. Over the past 30 years, Cambodia has benefited from substantial external funding, but it is time for organizations to re-evaluate their alignment and resilience. At KAPE, we no longer accept all grants—only those that align with our core mission and values. If funding ends and an organization loses its direction, its long-term impact is compromised. True sustainability comes from clarity of purpose, not just access to funding.

Question: Adapting to New Funding Trends and Ensuring CSO Resilience

In the Cambodian context, what should CSOs be prepared to adapt to given the new funding trends? As experienced development actors, what recommendations would you give to CSOs who see the importance of their work and do not want to give up, especially as they continue to complement the government's efforts?

We've heard important points today—transformation, specialization, shaping, competition for grants, overlapping work. In this increasingly competitive funding environment, how can



local NGOs/CSOs stay resilient, access funding, and continue filling gaps in education policy implementation?

Answer:

EU:

While we can't predict the future, we do see a decline in traditional funding from Western countries to Cambodia. Many of those donors are now redirecting their support to countries closer to Europe. Cambodia has long been privileged to receive external funding, such as from GPE in education. However, we now need to prepare for change in how we work and collaborate. In other countries, organizations with similar values are starting to merge—two, three, or even four organizations—to share operational costs like administration and office space. Moreover, the private sector is growing and plays an increasingly important role, especially in digital technology and communication. CSOs should engage them through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), not for profit-making, but as a meaningful contribution to society. Moving forward, merging, specializing, and partnering with the private sector are key to keeping the good work going.

ADB:

To stay relevant, CSOs must identify and build on their core strengths—especially those that are useful to the government and private sector. That's why governments often allow CSOs to provide certain services. For example, the government recognizes that in transforming public schools into "New Generation Schools," CSOs like KAPE can deliver more efficiently and effectively.

ADB provides competitive grants open to NGOs, government agencies, and private entities alike—whichever can demonstrate the best solution. We must also reflect on how government capacity has grown—some officials now hold degrees from top institutions like Harvard. So the question is: Have we, as CSOs, also developed ourselves? There's still a gap in areas like advocacy and outreach, which CSOs are strong at. That's where we should continue to focus and grow.

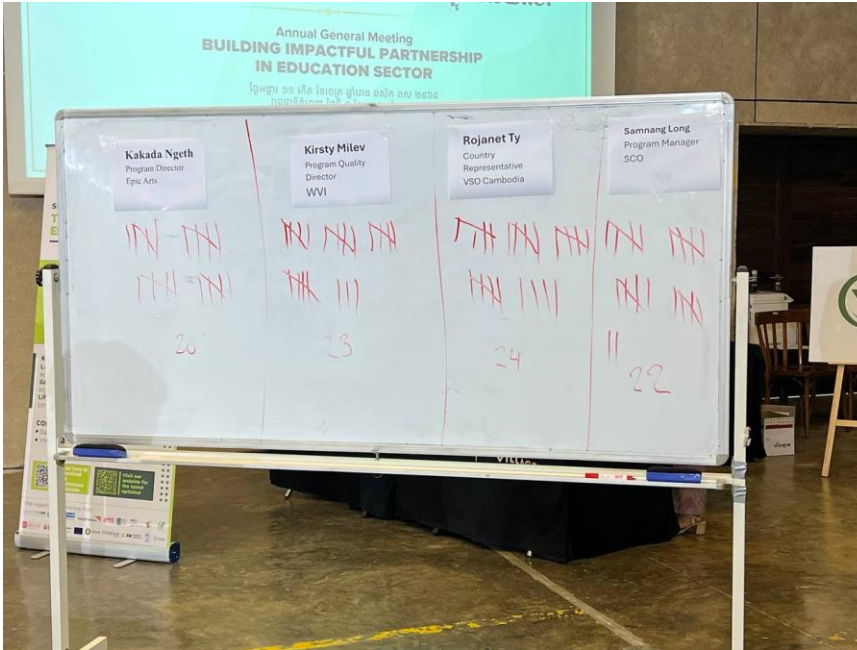
Aide et Action (AEA):

If **merging** isn't possible, CSOs should at least consider forming alliances to share resources and reduce costs. We must also build internal skills in areas like impact measurement and compliance—without these, donors won't fund us. These are the areas many CSOs still lack, and improving them is essential to stay competitive.



Annex

- Annex 1: Opening Remarks of Mrs. Hun Boramey, NEP Chair of the Board (Link: [Speech for NEP Board of Directors _ AGM KH.pdf](#))
- Annex 2: Overview of NEP's 2024 Achievements and 2025 Projections — Presented by Leng Sreynich (NEP) (Link: [NEP _ 2024-2025.pdf](#))
- Annex 3: Building Impactful Partnership: Introduction to Greenspots Project – Climate Resilient School and invitation to collective action _ Presented by Seng Sothea (NEP)
- Annex 5: Board Member Election – Guided by Mr. Mark Desmaele, Member of the Board (Link: [Profile.docx](#))



- Annex : Photo (Link: [Day 2](#))