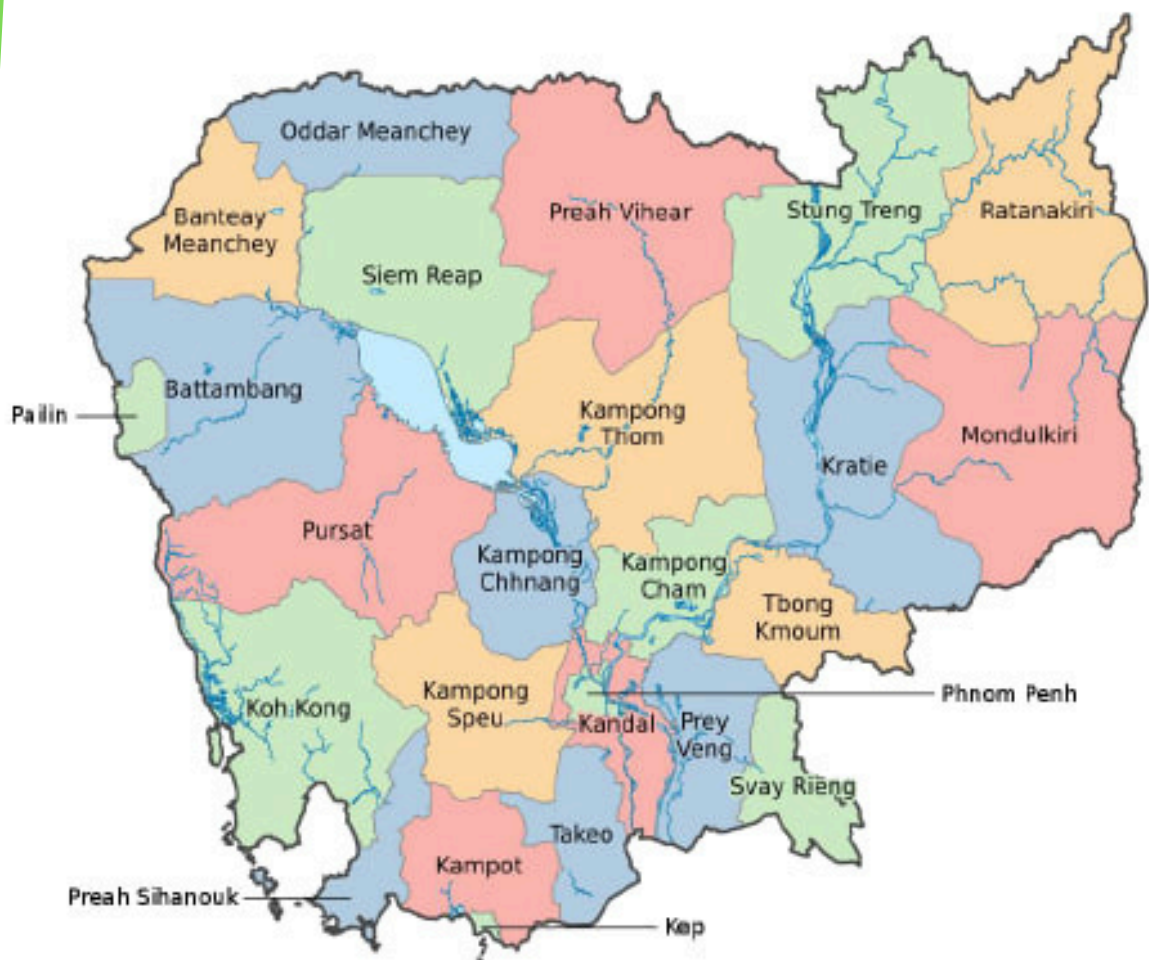


CSO Mapping Report

On Program Intervention for the Education Sector
2026 – 2030



May 2026

**NGO Education Partnership (NEP)
Second Edition**

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Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

The NGO Education Partnership (NEP) is a membership-based organization that facilitates a strong and coordinated civil society network in Cambodia's education sector. NEP supports dialogue, collaboration, and partnership among key stakeholders to enhance the quality, equity, and accessibility of education. With 120-member organizations in 2026, NEP plays a central role in strengthening cooperation among Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working in education and in ensuring that their voices are represented in policy dialogue and decision-making processes with the Royal Government of Cambodia and development partners. NEP's overarching goal is to contribute to equitable and timely access to quality education for all learners in Cambodia, through active engagement in policy development, advocacy, and sector coordination. NEP extends its sincere appreciation to member organizations that participated in the 2026–2030 CSO Mapping survey and provided valuable inputs to this report. Their contributions were essential in generating a comprehensive understanding of current trends, priorities, and challenges within Cambodia's education CSO landscape.

NEP also extends its sincere gratitude to Ms. Laura Wiesinger and Luzia Kochling, International Volunteer at DVV International Cambodia, for their valuable contributions of time and expertise. Her support in revising the questionnaire, assisting with data processing, and contributing to the development of this CSO mapping report significantly strengthened the quality, accuracy, and overall relevance of the study.

This report presents an update to the 2024 CSO mapping. Survey data was collected from December 2025 to the end of February 2026. Developments that have occurred after the survey's closing date may already be affecting the operational context for CSOs and could impact the continued relevance of some findings presented here, especially regarding the annual budget plans.

This mapping was produced with the financial support of Education Out Loud. Its contents were gathered and developed based on data collection with member organizations and the NEP team and do not necessarily reflect the views of funding partners Oxfam Denmark and GPE.

Abbreviations

Child Rights Coalition Cambodia	CRC
Civil Society Organization	CSO
Coalition of Partnership in Democratic Development	CPDD
Continuous Professional Development	CPD
<i>Cooperation Committee for Cambodia</i>	CCC
Daily Subsistence Allowance	DSA
District of Education, Youth and Sport	DoE
Early Childhood Care and Development	ECCD
Early Grade Mathematics Assessments	EGMA
Early Grade Reading Assessment	EGRA
Education Out Loud	EOL
Education Sector Working Group	ESWG
European Chamber of Commerce in Cambodia	EUCHAM
Foreign Non-Governmental Organizations	FNGO
Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	GESI
Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion	GEDSI
Gender-Based Violence	GBV
Gender-Responsive Pedagogy	GRP
Global Partnership for Education	GPE
International Non-Governmental Organization	INGO
International Organization	IO
Kampuchea Action to Promote Education	KAPE
Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices	KAP
Local Non-Governmental Organization	LNGO
Local Organizations	LO
Minimum Proficiency Levels	MPL
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport	MoEYS
Ministry of Women's Affairs	MoWA
Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning	MEAL
National Institute for Special Education	NISE
NGO Education Partnership	NEP
Ordinary Educational Violence	OEV
Passerelles numériques Cambodia	PNC
Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment	PSEAH
Provincial Education Sector Working Group	PESWG
Provincial of Education, Youth and Sport	PoE
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	SRHR
Technical and Vocational Education and Training	TVET
The American Chamber of Commerce in Cambodia Association	AmCham
Universal Design for Learning	UDL
Working Group on Education and Disability	WGED

Executive Summary

This report presents an updated mapping of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engaged in Cambodia's education sector for the period 2026–2030, building on the 2024 baseline conducted by the NGO Education Partnership (NEP). It provides an analysis of CSO program directions, funding trends, thematic priorities, geographic coverage, capacity gaps, and collaboration patterns, situating civil society engagement within Cambodia's broader education reform agenda. A total of 34 organizations participated in the survey, all of which are NEP members. The findings show that CSOs continue to play a critical bridging role between national education policies and community-level implementation. However, the sector is currently experiencing shifts in funding, uneven program distribution, and persistent capacity constraints that may affect future sustainability.

In terms of program focus, CSO engagement is highly concentrated in foundational education areas. Primary Education and Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) remain dominant priorities, followed by strong investments in teacher training and capacity development. CSOs also actively support non-formal education, lower secondary education, and lifelong learning initiatives, particularly for out-of-school youth and vulnerable populations. However, higher education, special education, and multilingual education remain underrepresented, indicating important gaps in equity-focused programming.

Geographically, CSO interventions are unevenly distributed. Siem Reap, Kampot, Phnom Penh, and Battambang account for the highest concentration of activities, while remote provinces such as Mondulkiri, Pailin, and Preah Sihanouk receive minimal coverage. This pattern highlights both strategic targeting of high-need areas and persistent service gaps in hard-to-reach regions.

The main target group is children (68%). Many projects also specifically target vulnerable groups: 60% of projects focus on women and girls. Another 60% support children from disadvantaged families, 60% help children with special needs, and 56% assist those not in school. Despite this focus, inclusive education for children with disabilities and multilingual education for ethnic minorities remain limited in scale and specialization. Note that these percentages add up to more than 100% because many projects serve multiple groups at once.

The financial analysis shows that projected education budgets is expected to decline significantly from approximately USD 20.9 million in 2026 to USD 12.23 million in 2030, highlighting a substantial reduction in available funding over time. Compared to the 2025 baseline of USD 16.3 million (based on 2024 mapping data), the 2026 projection initially reflects an increase, but this is followed by a steady downward trend through 2030. This pattern suggests increasing funding uncertainty, widening disparities in financial capacity among organizations, and a heightened risk to the continuity and sustainability of education programs, particularly for those operating with limited budgets.

With regard to gender equality and inclusion, 70.59% of organizations report having comprehensive or at least partially relevant policies in place, and 73.53% are implementing gender-responsive programs. However, implementation gaps remain, particularly in disability inclusion, grievance mechanisms, and accommodation services. Resource constraints, limited technical expertise, and cultural barriers continue to hinder progress in inclusive education.

Regarding quality of education, most organizations (64.71%) measure learning outcomes, using a mix of standardized tools (EGRA/EGMA, MPL, KAP surveys) and internal monitoring systems. However, inconsistency in measurement approaches and limited technical capacity reduce comparability and system-wide learning.

Key challenges across the sector include limited and unstable funding, human resource shortages, weak institutional capacity, and structural barriers such as poor coordination, geographic isolation, and resistance to pedagogical reform. Capacity development needs are strongly focused on policy understanding, inclusive education, MEAL systems, digital skills, and resource mobilization.

Finally, collaboration remains a major strength of the sector. All organizations report active partnerships with government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and academic institutions. Networks such as NEP and sectoral working groups play a crucial role in strengthening coordination, improving knowledge sharing, and enhancing policy influence. However, barriers to participation remain for smaller and rural-based organizations due to financial and geographic constraints.

Overall, the findings highlight a CSO sector that is active, collaborative, and aligned with national education priorities, but increasingly challenged by funding pressures, uneven capacity, and persistent equity gaps. Strengthening coordination, improving inclusive education programming, and ensuring sustainable financing will be critical to enhancing CSO contributions to Cambodia's education system over the 2026–2030 period.

I. Introduction

Background

Building on the Civil Society Organization (CSO) Mapping conducted by NGO Education Partnership (NEP) in 2024, this report provides an updated analysis reflecting developments up to 2026-2030, highlighting recent developments regarding the funding trends, resource availability, overview of the current activities, thematic priorities, and needs of operational needs of CSOs, within Cambodia's education sector. It situates CSO engagement within the broader national context, including Cambodia's ongoing education reforms, efforts to strengthen human capital development, and the implementation of key national policies such as education strategic plans, digital transformation priorities, and commitments to inclusive and lifelong learning.

NEP continues to play a central coordinating role in the sector, supporting policy dialogue and advocacy, strengthening the capacity of its member organizations, and facilitating collaboration across its national CSO network. This role is particularly important in ensuring that civil society perspectives are reflected in education policy development and implementation processes in Cambodia.

As mentioned before, we would like to begin this report by noting that the achievement of objectives previously set is being particularly affected by the rapidly changing global and political situation, especially with regard to our annual budget plans. We ask that you keep this in mind as you read the report.

Mapping Objective

This CSO study, conducted by NEP, aims to map the planned education-related programs of CSOs in Cambodia for the period 2026 – 2030. It seeks to identify key interventions, institutional capacities, human and financial resources, and capacity gaps, especially highlighting areas related to gender equality and inclusive education. The findings will support NEP, its members, and broader civil society actors to strengthen coordination, enhance collaboration, and improve the overall effectiveness of education sector interventions in Cambodia.

Methodology

This CSO mapping update was conducted using the KoboToolbox online survey platform, consistent with the methodology applied in the 2024 mapping. The survey was distributed in December 2025 to NEP member organizations via email and remained open until February 2026. To increase participation, the survey link was additionally shared through relevant Telegram groups in mid-January 2026. While participation was open to both NEP members and non-members, most respondents were affiliated with NEP member organizations due to the primary dissemination channels.

The collected data were structured into the following thematic areas: CSO profiles and organizational types, Program interventions and target beneficiary groups, Human Resources and Financial Capacity, Gender Equality and Inclusion, key Challenges and Capacity Development needs, Collaboration and networking with NEP and other stakeholders, and CSO recommendations to NEP.

Limitations

This mapping is subject to several limitations. First, the survey was conducted in English, which may have limited participation among organizations with lower English proficiency. Second, the response rate was relatively low, likely influenced by year-end workloads and

organizational reporting cycles. Third, the sample is not fully representative of all education CSOs in Cambodia, as it primarily reflects NEP's network.

This report is intended to provide an overview of CSO program directions, target areas, beneficiary groups, indicative budget ranges, capacity strengths and shortcomings, as well as planned research activities. It is designed to support coordination and potential collaboration among organizations with aligned priorities. However, it does not assess the effectiveness or impact of individual organizations' interventions, nor does it represent all CSOs operating in Cambodia's education sector.

II. Findings and Analysis

1. Participating CSOs

As a national education coalition, NGO Education Partnership (NEP) invited both member and non-member organizations to participate in the survey. A total of 34 organizations responded, including 58.84% Local Non-Governmental Organizations (LNGOs), 41.16% International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). Notably, all participating organizations are members of NEP. The survey respondents were 29.41% women, including Executive Directors or Country Directors (64.71%), project Managers (14.71%), Staff Members (11.76%), Project Officer (2.94%), Project Coordinator (2.94%), and Program Manager (2.94%).

2. Ongoing Programs and Projects

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play a critical and increasingly strategic role in supporting the development of Cambodia's education system. As the country continues to advance its education reform agenda, particularly in improving learning outcomes, promoting inclusion, and strengthening system governance. CSOs have emerged as key actors bridging policy and practice. With a forward-looking perspective toward 2030, this analysis aims to provide an understanding of the distribution of CSO interventions across sub-sectors, thematic priorities, program approaches, and systemic contributions. It also identifies key gaps and opportunities to strengthen coordination, equity, and impact across the sector.

2.1 Landscape of CSO Engagement Across Education Sub-Sectors

The mapping data reveal broad, multi-layered engagement by CSOs. However, this engagement is not evenly distributed. Instead, it reflects the prioritization patterns shaped by national needs, donor funding trends, and historical programmatic focus.

According to the data, CSOs are most heavily concentrated in **Primary Education**, which emerges as the single largest area of intervention. This reflects the continued national emphasis on foundational learning, particularly literacy and numeracy in early grades. Closely linked to this is a strong presence in **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)**, indicating that CSOs recognize that learning begins at a very young age and that early interventions are critical to long-term educational success.

Another prominent cluster of engagement is found in **Teacher Training and Capacity Building**. A significant number of organizations are actively supporting teacher professional development, both through formal training programs and ongoing in-service support. This aligns closely with broader system reform efforts that identify teacher quality as a central determinant of student learning outcomes.

CSOs also demonstrate substantial involvement in **Lower Secondary Education and Non-Formal Education**, highlighting efforts to address transition gaps, student retention, and alternative learning pathways. In parallel, the presence of CSOs in **Lifelong Learning and Vocational Training** reflects growing attention to skills development, employability, and the needs of out-of-school youth and adults.

In contrast, engagement is comparatively limited in **Higher Education, Special Education, and Multilingual Education**. These areas remain underrepresented despite their increasing importance in national policy discourse, suggesting potential gaps between strategic priorities and operational investment.

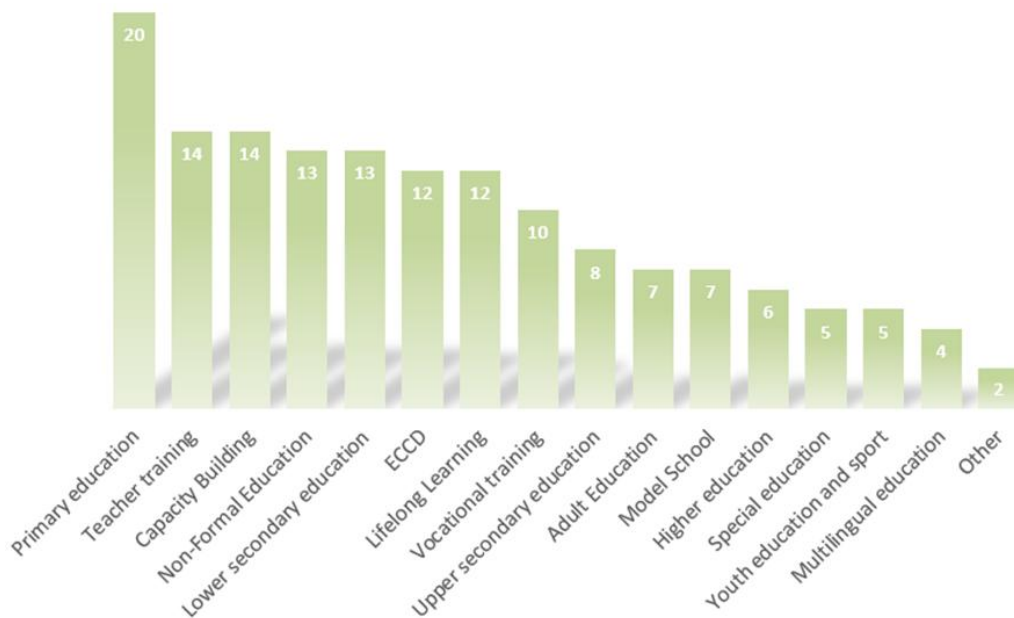


Chart 1: Number of NGOs working on each sub-sector of education

2.2 Target and Planned CSO Interventions

2.2.1 Target

Regarding target beneficiaries, children constitute the primary focus, with 68% organizations reporting interventions in this group. This is followed by 59% organizations targeting such as children from low-income households, girls and women, indigenous, ethnic minorities, and children with disabilities. A further 56% organizations focus on out-of-school children and youth, and adult learners. Additional priority groups include children with special needs (50% organizations), dropout students (47%), and ethnic minority children (35%). Smaller proportions of organizations target children with migration backgrounds (21%), as well as broader community groups such as farmers, community fisheries, vulnerable adults, teachers, and students in public primary and secondary education (21%).

Target Intervention

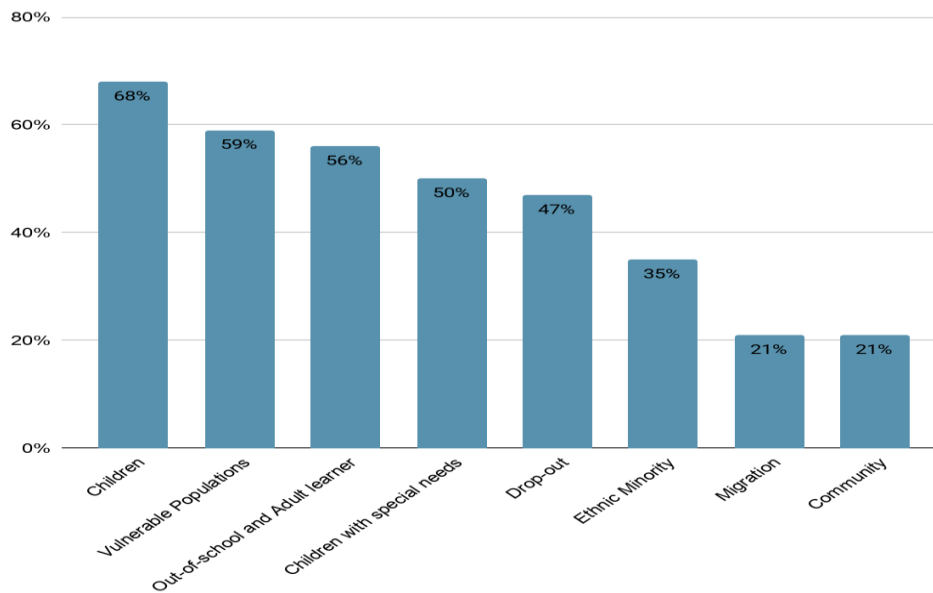


Chart 2: Target Interventions

2.2.2 Planned Interventions

In terms of planned program areas, primary education emerges as the most prominent sub-sector, with 59% organizations indicating planned interventions. Teacher training and capacity development are also key priorities, each addressed by 41% organizations. Non-formal education and lower secondary education are each targeted by 38% organizations, while Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and lifelong learning are each covered by 35% organizations. Additional areas of engagement include vocational training (29%), upper secondary education (24%), and both adult education and model schools (21% each). More specialized areas include special education and youth education and sports (15% each), as well as multilingual education (12%). A small number of organizations (6%) reported interventions in other cross-sectoral areas, including ear and hearing healthcare, public health education, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and gender-based violence (GBV).

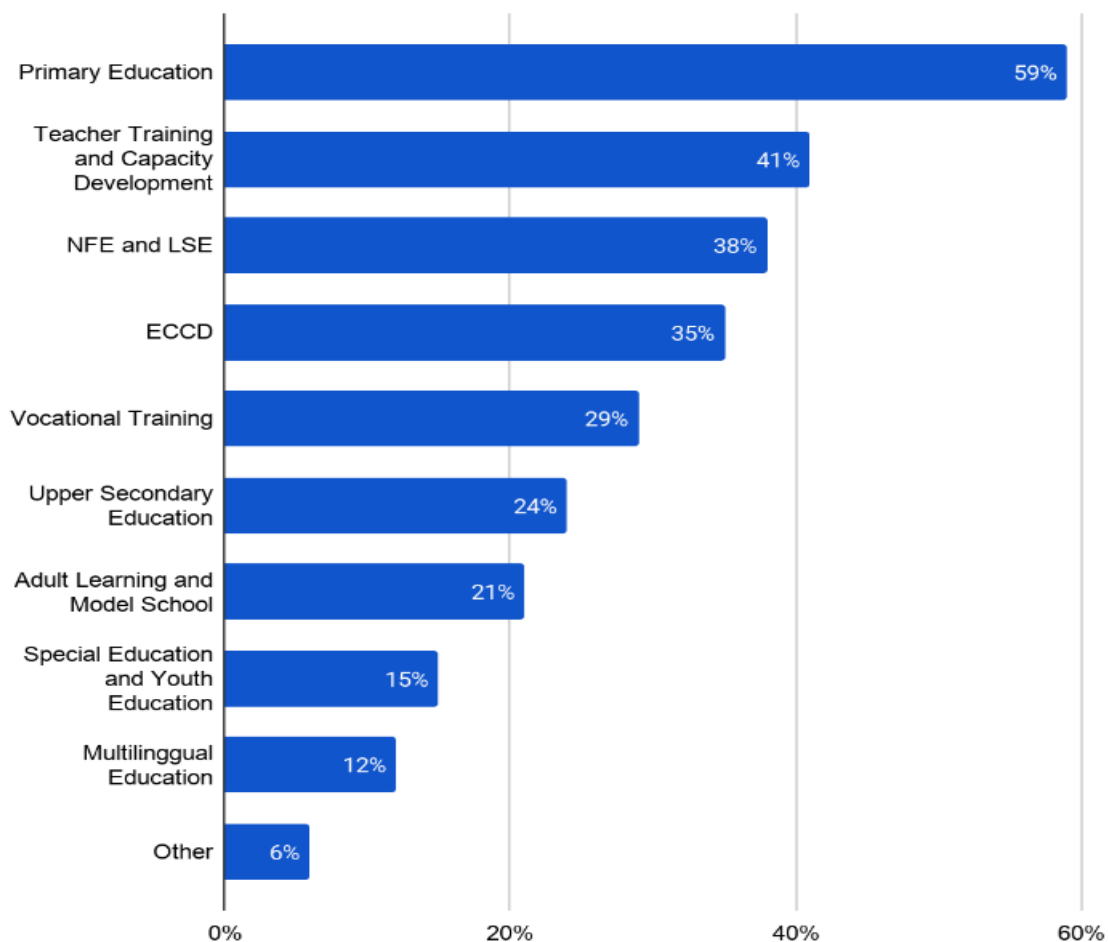


Chart 3: Upcoming Years Interventions Plan

2.2.3 Geographic Distribution and Spatial of CSO Interventions

The geographic distribution of CSO education interventions in Cambodia reveals a strategic yet uneven spatial pattern, reflecting both programmatic priorities and structural inequalities in access to education services.

With approximately 35% of all mapped activity and projects, Siem Reap emerges as the primary hub of CSO implementation, followed closely by Kampot at 32%. This high concentration suggests these provinces serve as key operational landscapes for civil society engagement, likely due to a combination of factors including high development needs, established NGO presence, and accessibility for program delivery.

A second tier of high engagement provinces includes Phnom Penh and Battambang, each accounting respectively for approximately 26% to 30% of the projects. Phnom Penh, as the capital city, plays a dual role: it is both a centre for coordination, policy engagement, and innovation, and a site for targeted interventions addressing urban education challenges. Battambang, on the other hand, reflects a strong provincial focus, likely linked to its demographic size and education needs.

At a moderate level of engagement, approximately 18% of projects are implemented in Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu, and Preah Vihear. These provinces represent

emerging areas of CSO presence, where interventions are expanding but not yet at the scale seen in leading provinces.

Further down the distribution, around 15% of projects are located in Oddar Meanchey, Ratanakiri, Takéo, Kratié, and Kandal, followed by approximately 12% in Prey Veng, Banteay Meanchey, Stung Treng, and Svay Rieng. These areas are often characterized by higher levels of geographic remoteness, socioeconomic vulnerability, and educational disadvantage, suggesting that CSO engagement, while present, may still be constrained by operational challenges such as infrastructure, accessibility, and resource limitations.

A smaller proportion, approximately 9% of projects, are implemented in Pursat, Koh Kong, and Kampong Chhnang, while only a minimal number of interventions are reported in Kep, Mondulkiri, Tboung Khmum, Preah Sihanouk, and Pailin. The limited presence in these provinces points to potential geographic gaps in service coverage, particularly in hard-to-reach or less densely populated areas.

Overall, CSO activities are distributed across both urban and rural contexts, with a notable concentration in Phnom Penh and selected high-priority provinces. However, a deeper analysis reveals that rural and remote areas remain a central focus of CSO intervention strategies. This rural emphasis reflects persistent disparities in access to quality education, including: 1). Limited school infrastructure, 2). Shortages of qualified teachers, and 3). Inadequate learning materials and support systems. In these contexts, CSOs often serve as frontline service providers, filling critical gaps that the public system cannot yet fully address. Their interventions are essential in ensuring that marginalized and underserved populations are not left behind.

At the same time, urban-based interventions—particularly in Phnom Penh—tend to focus more on system strengthening, innovation, and pilot initiatives. These may include: 1). Teacher training models, 2). Digital learning innovations, and 3). Policy engagement and research. Such initiatives often serve as testing grounds for scalable solutions, which can later be adapted and expanded to provincial and rural contexts.

Province	Percentage
Siem Reap	35%
Kampot	32%
Phnom Penh and Battambang	26% - 30%
Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu, Presh Vihear (each)	18%
Oddar Meanchey, Ratnakiri, Takeo, Kratie, Kandal (each)	15%
Prey Veng, Banteay Meanchey, Stung Treng, Svay Rieng (each)	12%
Pursat. Koh Kong, Kampong Chhnang (each)	9%
Kep, Mondulkiri, Tboung Khmum, Preah Sihanouk, and Pailin (each)	only a minimal number of interventions are reported

3. Thematic Patterns and Targets in CSO Interventions

A qualitative review of activity descriptions reveals several recurring themes that cut across sub-sectors. These themes provide insight into how CSOs conceptualize their role within the education ecosystem and where they perceive the most critical needs.

A. Emphasis on Teacher Professional Development

One of the most consistent and dominant themes is the focus on improving teaching quality. CSOs are actively engaged in delivering training programs that emphasize student-centred pedagogy, active learning methodologies, classroom management, and formative assessment practices. Many interventions go beyond one-off training sessions and include Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Mentoring, Coaching, and Peer Learning Mechanisms. This reflects a growing understanding that sustainable improvements in teaching require ongoing support rather than isolated capacity-building events.

The prominence of teacher development initiatives indicates strong alignment with national education priorities and highlights the role of CSOs as key partners in operationalizing teacher reform strategies at scale.

B. Strengthening Community Engagement and Local Ownership

Another major theme emerging from the data is the emphasis on Community and Parental Engagement. CSOs frequently implement activities designed to strengthen the relationship between schools and communities, including awareness campaigns, parent education programs, and community mobilization initiatives. These interventions are particularly prominent in rural and underserved areas, where barriers to education are often linked to socioeconomic factors, cultural norms, and limited awareness of the value of schooling. By engaging parents and local stakeholders, CSOs aim to create enabling environments that support student participation, retention, and learning.

This trend reflects a broader shift toward recognizing education as a shared responsibility, extending beyond formal institutions to include families and communities as active contributors to learning outcomes.

C. Focus on Equity and Student Support Mechanism

The dataset also highlights a strong commitment among CSOs to addressing issues of equity and access. Many organizations provide direct support to students, including scholarships, school supplies, and targeted assistance for vulnerable populations such as children from low-income families, ethnic minorities, and those at risk of dropping out. In addition, several CSOs implement remedial education and catch-up programs, particularly in response to learning losses associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs aim to bridge learning gaps and reintegrate students into the formal education system.

While these efforts are significant, the analysis suggests that inclusion is often approached through general support mechanisms rather than specialized, systematized interventions, particularly in relation to children with disabilities.

D. Expansion of Non-Formal and Lifelong Learning Opportunities

A notable feature of the CSO landscape is the strong presence of programs focused on non-formal education and lifelong learning. These include adult literacy classes, community learning centres, and flexible education programs for out-of-school youth. Such initiatives are critical in a context where many individuals have missed out on formal education opportunities. CSOs play a key role in providing second-chance learning pathways, contributing to broader goals of social inclusion, economic participation, and human capital development.

This area of engagement also reflects alignment with Cambodia’s national lifelong learning policy and growing recognition of the need for continuous learning across the life course.

E. Skills Development and Youth Employability

Closely related to lifelong learning is the focus on technical and vocational education and training (TVET). CSOs are increasingly involved in delivering skills training programs that aim to improve youth employability and support the transition from education to work.

These programs often include components such as entrepreneurship training, career guidance, and partnerships with local industries. The emphasis on skills development reflects broader economic trends and the need to equip young people with competencies relevant to a changing labor market.

F. Contributions to System Strengthening and Policy Engagement

Beyond service delivery, many CSOs are actively engaged in system-level interventions, including capacity building for education officials, support for school management, and participation in policy dialogue processes.

These activities demonstrate the evolving role of CSOs as partners in governance and reform, contributing not only to program implementation but also to shaping policies and strengthening institutional capacity.

4. Program Activities

Responses to the question about program activities in each selected sector encompass the interventions of the working groups/sectors of the 34 organizations participating in the survey. The responses cover activities, locations, and program types across more than 15 education sectors.

Sector	Key Activities Identified (Standardized)	Primary Provinces /Locations Mentioned
ECCD (Early Childhood)	Teacher training (Smart Start!), curriculum support, infrastructure (classrooms/playgrounds), child-friendly spaces, nutrition/snacks, oral health, parenting workshops, inclusive education.	Kampot, Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, Kandal, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap (Prison), Kompong Thom
Primary Education	Early grade reading/math, life skills, teacher training, infrastructure/WASH, library support, scholarships, financial literacy, inclusive classes, Multilingual Education (MLE).	Pursat, Ratanakiri, O'Chum, Vern Sai, O'Yadao, Borkeo, Taveng, Kampot, Kratie, Battambang, Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Cham
Lower Secondary	Digital/ICT skills, life skills, GBV prevention, drug/alcohol education, scholarships, inclusive education, and child protection.	Siem Reap, Pursat, Ratanakiri, Kratie, 8 provinces (Inclusive Program)
Upper Secondary	Life skills, scholarships (focus on girls), Dream Management Program, mental health, IT training prep, and career guidance.	Siem Reap, Phnom Penh (Dangkor, Sen Sok), Pursat, Nationwide (PNC outreach)

Higher Education	IT training (PNC 2-year Associate Degree), scholarships for girls/disabled students, soft skills, university prep, vocational pathways.	Phnom Penh (Training Center), Siem Reap, Nationwide outreach
Vocational Training	Motorcycle repair, sewing, hairdressing, salon, IT/computer, food processing (pickled cabbage, jam, soy), agriculture, and disability-focused skills.	Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey (Prison), Kandal, Takeo, Pursat, Phnom Penh, Kampot, Bokor, Techou
Special Education	Inclusive classes, barrier-free infrastructure, teacher training (deaf/special needs), screening/identification, and rehabilitation support.	Kampot, Takeo, Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, Phnom Penh, 8 provinces (Inclusive Program)
Multilingual Ed (MLE)	Indigenous language instruction (Tampuan, Kreung, Brao, Kavet, Jarai), Khmer language prep for ethnic Vietnamese, MLE teacher training.	Ratanakiri, Stung Treng, O'Chum, Vern Sai, Borkeo, Taveng, O'Yadao
Non-Formal Education, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education	Literacy education, English language, and computer skills; parenting education, child clubs, and community learning centers; as well as integrated skills development for all ages, including vocational training for dropouts and refresher courses, life and soft skills, financial literacy, sustainable (non-chemical) agriculture, community gardening, and gender/SRHR education.	Kampong Speu, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Phnom Penh, Ratanakiri, Takeo, Kampot, Pursat, Preah Vihear, and Steung Treng
Youth Ed & Sport	Peace sport programs, youth councils (AYRG), environmental activities, child rights, leadership.	Samroang, Soeng Communes (Takeo), Pursat, Nationwide
Teacher Training	In-service training, mentoring/coaching, cluster-based models, leadership training, inclusive pedagogy, English methodology.	Siem Reap, Kampong Thom, Pursat, Preah Vihear, Steung Treng, 7 target provinces, Nationwide
Model Schools	Infrastructure improvement, library development, STEM, school-based management, community engagement.	Pursat, Kampong Thom, Takeo, 7 target provinces, Techou, Bokor
Capacity Building	GEDSI training, disaster risk reduction, leadership, soft skills, financial literacy, community structures.	Ratanakiri, Pursat, Takeo, Nationwide
Other Activities	Ear/hearing health (All Ears Cambodia), sexual education, SRHR, SGBV prevention, environmental conservation.	Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Kratie, Battambang, Pursat, Preah Vihear, Steung Treng

4.2.5 Key Gaps and Challenges

Despite the breadth of CSO engagement, several important gaps emerge from the analysis.

First, there is limited involvement in higher education, suggesting that this sub-sector remains largely outside the scope of civil society engagement. This may reflect structural barriers, funding limitations, or a perception that higher education falls primarily within the domain of government and private institutions.

Second, special and inclusive education is significantly underrepresented. While many CSOs target vulnerable populations, relatively few provide specialized services for children with disabilities or develop inclusive education models aligned with national policies.

Third, multilingual education receives minimal attention, despite its importance in supporting ethnic minority communities. This suggests a need for greater investment in culturally and linguistically responsive education approaches.

Finally, the data points to a degree of fragmentation in CSO interventions, with many programs operating at a localized or project-based level. While these initiatives can be highly impactful, their scalability and integration into national systems remain limited.

III. Financial Capacity

The financial data reported by participating NGOs indicate that budget planning and projections vary across organizations and over time, reflecting differences in organizational size, funding sources, and program focus. The estimated education program budgets for the period 2026–2030 are presented below, based on data collected up to February 2026. It is important to note that, given the rapidly evolving global and national context, recent developments may already be influencing the operational and financial outlook of participating organizations.

Overall, the projected total budget for education programming shows a declining trend over the five years. In 2026, the estimated total budget is approximately USD 20.9 million. This decreases significantly to around USD 14.6 million in 2027, representing the most substantial drop. From 2027 onwards, the budget is projected to gradually decline, reaching approximately USD 12.23 million by 2030.

At the organizational level, financial capacity varies considerably. In 2026, six organizations reported annual budgets below USD 50,000. However, compared to findings from the 2024 mapping, there is evidence of increased financial capacity among some organizations. Out of the 34 participating NGOs, several reported planned budgets ranging between USD 100,000 and USD 200,000. Additionally, three organizations indicated planned expenditures exceeding USD 2 million.

These findings highlight both the diversity in financial capacity across CSOs and the broader trend of anticipated funding constraints, which may have implications for the scale and sustainability of education interventions in Cambodia.

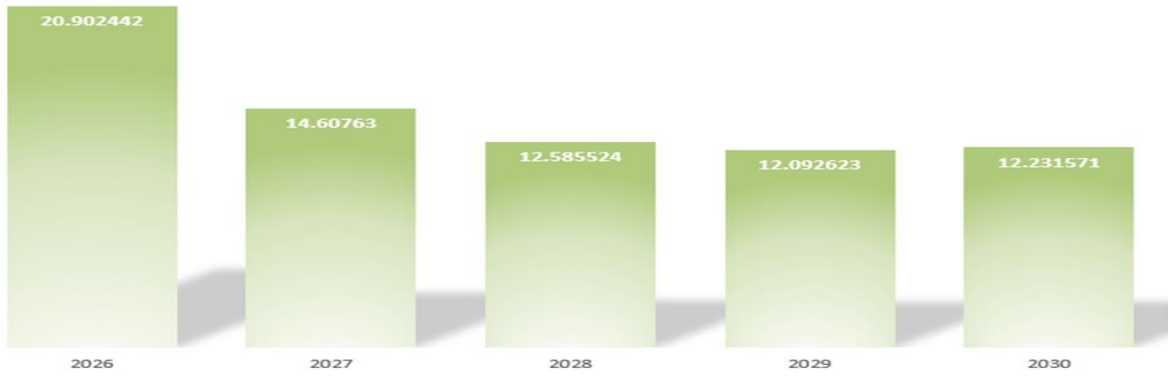
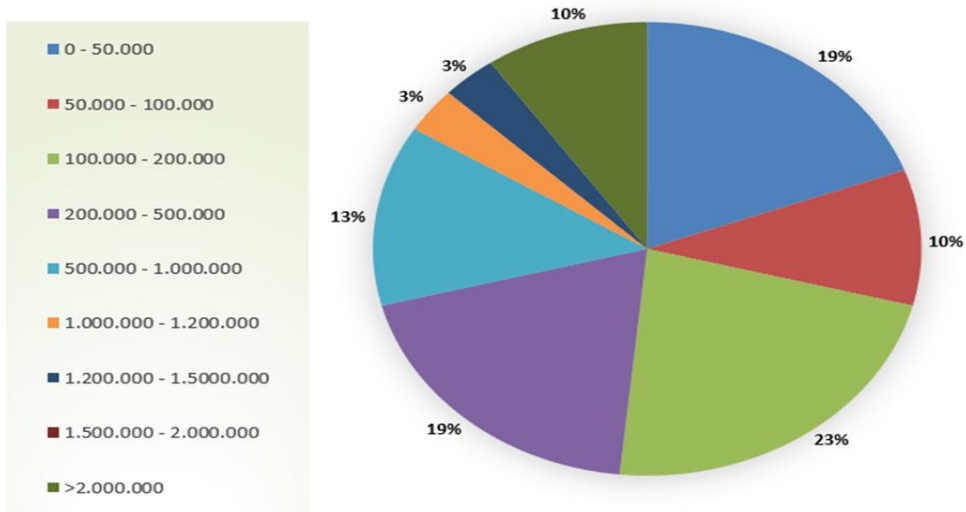
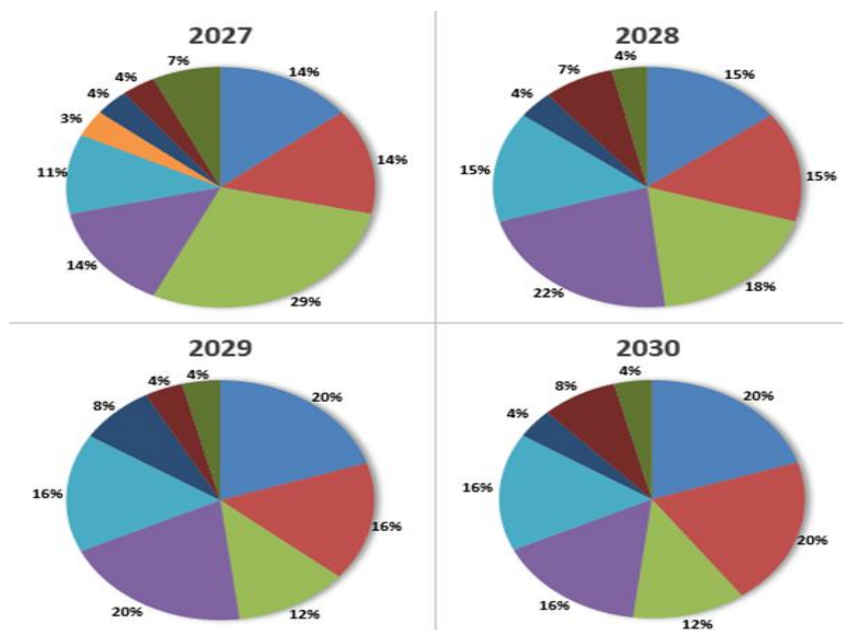


Chart: Budget trends estimation from 2026-2023



Estimated budget allocation 2026



Development of Expenditure Volume 2026 – 2030

IV. Gender and Inclusion

1. Initiatives and programs on Gender Equality and Inclusive Education

Among all organizations surveyed, 71% reported having policies or programs promoting gender equality and inclusive education; 12% reported none; 9% reported partial implementation; and 6% did not provide further details. Of those with policies, 47% of organizations have both gender equality and inclusive education frameworks, 21% focus specifically on gender equality, and only 3% focus specifically on inclusive education.

Programs under gender equality frameworks commonly address women's leadership in climate change and disaster risk reduction, gender-responsive pedagogy in community preschools, and integrated literacy and gender initiatives. Organizations with both gender and inclusion policies adopt broader approaches, including Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) frameworks, safeguarding and PSEAH measures, teacher training on inclusive methodologies such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and targeted support for marginalized groups (girls, children with disabilities, and children from poor or remote households). Additional interventions include awareness-raising, gender-responsive WASH facilities, and financial support mechanisms such as scholarships.

One organization demonstrated a comprehensive model, including a 50% female enrolment target (currently 52%), rural outreach, full financial support (accommodation and living costs), mentoring, and gender-disaggregated monitoring. Organizations with partial policies are in the process of developing inclusive education frameworks, particularly focusing on adapted learning environments and disability awareness.

2. Gender Sensitivity in Educational Programs

Among the respondents, 73.53% organizations confirmed implementing gender-responsive programs, 17.65% reported no measures, and 8.82% indicated partial implementation. Most organizations apply established frameworks. Programs operate under the principle of "leaving no one behind," guided by gender-inclusive policies. Many cite Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) or a Child Well-being approach as cross-cutting themes. Structural mechanisms include gender focal points, checklists, and alignment with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) policies.

Operational strategies go beyond policy commitments. Many organizations actively promote female participation through targeted outreach, financial support (covering accommodation, meals, healthcare, and allowances), and recruitment strategies prioritizing disadvantaged girls. Some maintain a minimum 50% female enrolment target and ensure equal access to training opportunities. Measures to include students with disabilities are increasingly being considered.

At the classroom level, organizations emphasize teacher capacity development, inclusive and learner-centred methodologies, and the use of tools such as Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) observation grids. Curriculum adaptations include gender-sensitive content and life skills education promoting equality.

Safety is ensured through safeguarding and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) standards. Holistic support includes extracurricular clubs (sports, yoga, reading) and GBV prevention programs to reduce discrimination against women and girls with

disabilities. Initiatives also link education to economic empowerment and health services, while "Positive Parenting Training" modules address gender equality and violence reduction.

Data-driven approaches are central to tracking impact. Organizations use sex- and age-disaggregated data to inform programming. Needs assessments involve women, men, girls, and marginalized groups, utilizing tools like lesson observations and child functioning assessments. Impact is measured through gender-disaggregated data and employment indicators.

These organizations demonstrate high awareness of gender gaps and a strong motivation to resolve them. Approaches range from broad rights-based frameworks aligned with national lifelong learning policies to specific employability interventions supporting female economic inclusion.

Organizations that implement partially gender-responsive programs focus primarily on girls' access and empowerment but lack dedicated disability inclusion programs. Organizations that stated they did not offer gender-responsive programs did not provide any further details on this matter.

3. Grievance mechanisms for Discrimination and Harassment in education settings

A total of 24 organizations confirmed having mechanisms to address grievances related to discrimination or harassment, describing a combination of formal policies, reporting channels, and safeguard processes, while 2 reported partial system and 7 indicated none.

Most organizations have established a combination of Safeguarding, Child Protection, and PSEAH (Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment) policies aligned with national legislation and international frameworks such as the Anti-Discrimination in Cambodia Law and the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. Reporting mechanisms are confidential, and channels are available through both online and offline platforms, while others encouraged participants to raise concerns directly with trainers or management through verbal or written communication. Organizations emphasized structured response procedures, including survivor-centred approaches, referral pathways, and protection against retaliation. In cases involving legal violations, some engage relevant authorities while prioritizing the safety and consent of affected individuals. Preventive measures include training for educators and awareness campaigns, such as materials addressing Ordinary Educational Violence (OEV). However, gaps remain. More than 20% of the organizations lack a formalized or documented system, indicating inconsistencies between practice and policy. For example, one respondent noted they were working to promote an inclusive learning environment through adapted teaching methods, but did not specify a formal grievance mechanism. Another respondent states that their organisation doesn't explicitly have any explicit, written guidelines regarding complaints of discrimination or harassment that could be defined as a formal grievance system. Nevertheless, they show engagement in the well-being of their students. They describe how a dedicated team of educators provides ongoing social-educational support and guidance to students throughout their stay in the program. This suggests a gap between practice and documented policy in some instances, but it demonstrates that there is an awareness of and efforts to implement measures to protect marginalized groups, which in turn promotes the development of complaint systems.

4. Accommodation for students and staff with special needs or disabilities

Provision of accommodation for students and staff with disabilities remains limited. Among respondents, 17 organizations reported no such capacity, 10 confirmed they can provide accommodation, and 5 indicated partial support.

Organizations that responded positively reported to only offer accommodation at their facilities, while some others state to require a relative, parent, or carer to live with the student and also provide disability benefits (DSA). One organization states that it has four dormitories at secondary schools, accessible office spaces for staff, and guidelines for business travel..

Several organizations offer subsistence or conditional cash transfers to vulnerable and low-income families to reduce economic barriers to education and also distribute learning materials, clothing, bicycles, wheelchairs, and school uniforms. One organization has established clear guidelines for support services, learning environment adaptation, and training to ensure equal opportunities. This includes setting up additional support rooms and providing teaching materials or assistive technologies. A case was also mentioned in which a Prey Veng staff member stayed overnight free of charge in a specially designed room in the office.

The organizations that indicated they could provide some forms of accommodation reported that, for example, they offer financial support to visually impaired students during their higher education studies, provided their resources allow. They explained that this is part of appropriate measures for inclusive education. One organization stated that it offers individually tailored support and integrates this into its program planning. As an example, they cited a student who was able to access vocational training by being provided with an electric motorcycle to overcome his mobility limitations. Other organizations mentioned providing learning materials such as books, clothing, and bicycles, as well as transportation, instructional materials, and emergency aid for students in need. Some also stated that they provide general materials and equipment.

5. Use of Disaggregated Data

Of 32 organizations responding, 71% reported disaggregating data by gender and other indicators, while 15% do not, and 9% do so partially. Regarding the use of data for decision-making, 65% of 33 respondents confirmed utilization, 21% do not, and 12% reported partial use. This indicates a relatively strong foundation for evidence-based programming, though gaps remain in both data disaggregation and its practical application.

6. Key Challenges

Organizations face multiple barriers in promoting gender equality and inclusive education. The most frequently cited challenges are resource scarcity (74%), followed by a lack of trained staff or expertise (68%). Cultural and social norms remain a significant barrier (53%), and insufficient data or monitoring tools (47%). Resistance to change was noted by 27% of respondents, and 18% pointed to problems within existing policy frameworks.

Additional contextual challenges include difficulty reaching target groups and a lack of access to data on students in remote areas. Another described a challenge specific to the Cambodian context and observed unconscious gender stereotypes being shaped by social and familial norms. Although families often support girls' education, men are still frequently favored for leadership and decision-making positions, limiting women's leadership opportunities and

weakening the long-term impact of gender equality efforts. Other specific problems include a lack of policies and procedures, a general lack of awareness, and a particular shortage of professional development for teachers in community primary schools.

V. Quality of Education

1. Model School Context and Measurement of Learning Outcome

All organizations responded to the question on awareness of the Model School Concept, revealing varying levels of familiarity and engagement. A total of 38% respondents indicated that they are aware of and actively work with the concept; 29% organizations reported having heard of the concept but lacking sufficient understanding to explain it to colleagues. 18% of the respondents stated they are familiar with the concept and able to explain it; while 15% of the organizations reported no awareness.

Regarding a question if learning outcomes are being measured, 32 organizations answered this with "yes". Of these, 65% confirmed that they measure learning outcomes as part of their project evaluation processes. 24% reported that they do not measure learning outcomes at all, while 6% indicated partial implementation.

These findings suggest that while a majority of organizations integrate learning outcome measurement into their programming, a notable proportion still lacks systematic approaches or capacity in this area.

2. Methods for Measuring Learning Outcomes

A total of 24 organizations provided information on their approaches to measuring learning outcomes, showing a wide range of methods with varying levels of accuracy and standardization.

Several organizations use structured assessment tools and standardized frameworks, including annual assessments, the Minimum Proficiency Levels (MPL) system derived from the Global Proficiency Framework, baseline and endline surveys, Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) studies, and Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Assessments (EGRA and EGMA), often in coordination with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS).

Some organizations apply comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems that integrate learning indicators throughout the project cycle. These include impact, outcome, and program evaluations to support continuous tracking and adaptive management.

Other approaches include the use of exam results, school feedback, and internal reporting systems validated by the Provincial of Education, Youth and Sport (PoE) and the District of Education, Youth and Sport (DoE), which are also used to compare progress against Model School standards and assess student engagement and satisfaction.

Several organizations apply results-based approaches such as progress indicators, outcome mapping, and behavior change tracking to measure learning and development outcomes.

Continuous and classroom-based assessments are widely used, including baseline and final assessments, formative assessments, classroom observations, and participant feedback.

These are often complemented by monitoring of teacher development in areas such as pedagogy and subject knowledge, with regular data review to inform program adjustments.

In addition, some organizations conduct program reflections, external evaluations, and individualized learning plans with periodic progress reviews.

A few organizations measure learning outcomes through academic performance indicators such as grades, course completion, and progression at the school and university levels. Others use indirect indicators such as graduate employment rates and salaries, where standardized tools are not clearly defined.

Despite the diversity of approaches, several capacity and system-level challenges were identified. Some organizations reported limited experience or lack of formalized systems for measuring learning outcomes. Others rely on less structured or indirect methods due to the absence of standardized tools or clear measurement frameworks.

Overall, the findings highlight variation in technical capacity and measurement practice across organizations. While many combine quantitative and qualitative methods, inconsistencies remain in the use of standardized tools and systematic frameworks. This points to a need for strengthened capacity building, improved standardization, and better alignment with national education monitoring frameworks to ensure consistent and comparable measurement of learning outcomes across the sector.

VI. Main Challenges and Capacity Building Needs

1. Main Challenges in Implementing Work in the Education Sector

Out of 34 respondents, 33 provided responses on key challenges faced in implementing education sector activities.

The most frequently cited constraint was limited and insecure funding. Organizations reported insufficient budgets, inability to meet growing scholarship and grant demands, and limited financial support from local authorities to improve learning environments.

Human resource constraints were also widely reported, particularly shortages of qualified teachers, librarians, and support staff, as well as staff turnover in target schools. Respondents further highlighted capacity gaps among educators and school leaders, including insufficient professional development for principals and school board members, and limited training in inclusive and special education.

Systemic and structural barriers were also identified. These include weak community and parent engagement mechanisms in remote areas, limited coordination at county level, delays in data and documentation from education authorities, and inconsistent implementation of existing guidelines. Resistance to pedagogical reforms, particularly student-centered approaches, was also noted.

Inclusion-related challenges were prominent, including persistent gender norms and stereotypes limiting participation and leadership, economic and logistical barriers for marginalized groups, and limited institutional capacity to support persons with disabilities in higher education and employment. One respondent highlighted difficulty in transitioning

inclusive education responsibilities to government systems due to resource constraints and weak policy implementation.

Additional challenges included geographic isolation, poor infrastructure, and climate-related disruptions (e.g., droughts and heavy rainfall affecting attendance), as well as safety concerns such as unsafe food sales in schools. Some organizations reported difficulties in accessing reliable data, understanding evolving policies, and complying with administrative requirements.

A detailed response from PNC Cambodia further highlighted challenges in scaling outreach to remote populations, identifying disadvantaged learners, reducing donor dependency through diversified funding, aligning curricula with labor market needs, and addressing the rural digital divide. Staff welfare issues, including salary disparities and limited cooperation with higher education authorities, were also noted.

2. Specific Capacity-Building Needs

Out of 34 respondents, 31 provided input on capacity-building needs. A small number reported no specific needs, citing sufficient existing staff capacity.

The most frequently identified need was training on education policies, including updates on national education reforms, contextual analysis of Cambodia's education system, and legal frameworks governing the sector. Technical training needs included inclusive education (particularly for children with special needs), Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), and improved pedagogical approaches for both ECCD and primary education.

Strong demand was also reported for strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) systems, particularly in data collection, analysis, and indicator tracking.

Resource mobilization and fundraising were key organizational needs, including grant writing, donor engagement, local fundraising strategies, and government co-financing mechanisms (e.g., teacher salary cost-sharing). Organizational development needs included budgeting, financial management, reporting, leadership development, human resource management, and compliance with government policies, including gender equality and child protection frameworks.

Digital capacity was another priority, particularly in the use of education technologies, learning management systems, and cybersecurity. Advocacy and policy influence skills were also highlighted, especially in relation to decentralization, community engagement, and education reform initiatives such as full-day schooling.

Additional needs included the development of inclusive education guidelines, training for parents and caregivers, and strengthened stakeholder partnerships. Specific responses highlighted the need for multilingual and inclusive education expertise, improved MEAL systems, and stronger financial and resource management. One respondent emphasized the need for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in clinical skills, project management, and finance. A few organizations cited general needs for additional resources and noted limited funding for staff capacity development.

VII. Collaboration and Networking

Partnerships

All 34 respondents reported active engagement in partnerships and collaborations with a wide range of actors across government, development partners, civil society, and academic institutions, reflecting a highly networked education sector in Cambodia.

At the government and international level, key partners include the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), UNICEF, World Food Programme (WFP), and the SBB Alliance (operating across Cambodia, Australia, Ireland, and the United Kingdom). These partnerships support alignment with national education priorities and broader development agendas. The organization respondents also reported extensive collaboration with national and international NGOs, coalitions, and networks. Frequently cited organizations include NEP, CCC, CRC-C, NGO Forum, CPDD, ActionAid Cambodia, KAPE, DVV International, Clear Cambodia, Chab Dai Organization, and many others working across education, child protection, disability inclusion, gender equality, and community development. In addition, engagement extends to thematic and regional networks such as ESWG/PESWG, WGED thematic groups, and various provincial education working groups.

Academic and training institutions are also important partners, including approximately 35 universities, provincial teacher training colleges, vocational training institutions, and universities such as those in Siem Reap. Respondents further noted collaboration with specialized institutions (e.g., NISE, CBL), private sector actors, banks, and international chambers of commerce (e.g., AMCHAM, EUCHAM), as well as more than 80 aid organizations, schools, and hospitals in some networks.

All respondents are members of NEP, and participation in broader coalitions is widespread. PESWG participation was reported across multiple provinces, including Phnom Penh (6), Siem Reap (6), Kampong Speu (5), Battambang (5), Ratanakiri (3), Kampong Thom (3), Kampong Cham (2), Kratié (2), Oddar Meanchey (2), Preah Vihear (2), Stung Treng (2), Takéo (2), and several other provinces with one respondent each (Tboung Khmum, Koh Kong, Mondulkiri, Banteay Meanchey, Kampong Speu, Prey Veng, Pursat, Svay Rieng, and Kandal).

Benefits of Network Engagement and Barriers to Participation

Out of 34 organizations, 25 described clear benefits of participating in networks and coalitions. Overall, networks were seen as essential platforms for strengthening collective action, improving coordination, and enhancing the quality and reach of education programs.

Key benefits include improved information and knowledge sharing, reduced duplication of efforts, and strengthened collaboration and partnerships. Respondents also highlighted increased access to technical expertise, resources, and capacity-building opportunities, as well as enhanced visibility, credibility, and policy influence. Networks were further valued for aligning organizational work with national education priorities and amplifying advocacy efforts.

Respondents emphasized that networks provide a critical mechanism for elevating grassroots and marginalized voices, including children with disabilities, to national policy discussions. Regular coordination meetings were also noted as important spaces for joint problem-solving, peer learning, and strengthening local actor participation in decision-making processes.

Overall, networks were widely viewed as improving program quality, sustainability, and institutional learning.

Seven organizations reported no participation in networks or coalitions. The main barriers included geographic and structural constraints, particularly the absence of provincial presence or staff to engage in subnational working groups.

Financial limitations were also cited, including insufficient budgets for participation. Additional reasons included reliance on partner-led implementation models, perception of limited sector relevance, early-stage organizational development, and engagement in alternative thematic networks that limit broader participation.

VIII. Conclusion

This updated CSO mapping for 2026–2030 confirms that CSOs remain key actors in Cambodia’s education sector, especially in foundational learning, inclusion, and community-level service delivery. They are closely aligned with national priorities, particularly in early childhood education, primary education, and teacher development, and continue to bridge gaps between policy and local implementation, especially in underserved areas. However, the sector is in transition. CSO activities are concentrated in primary education and selected provinces, with limited engagement in higher, special, and multilingual education. Rural and remote areas remain under-served despite higher needs, reflecting persistent equity gaps.

Sustainability is a growing concern. Expected declines in education funding and reliance on short-term projects limit long-term planning, scale, and system-level impact. This also constrains innovation in areas such as inclusion and learning assessment. Despite these constraints, CSOs show strong commitment to gender equality and social inclusion, with increasing integration of disability inclusion and safeguarding measures. However, gaps remain in specialized support, grievance mechanisms, and consistent implementation of inclusive frameworks. On learning outcomes, CSOs are increasingly using assessment tools and mixed methods, but lack of standardization limits data comparability and its use in national planning. Strengthening MEAL systems is therefore essential for evidence-based decision-making.

Collaboration remains a key strength, with strong engagement among government, development partners, and civil society through platforms like NEP and sector working groups. However, smaller and rural CSOs still face barriers to participation, highlighting the need for more inclusive coordination.

Overall, the mapping shows that CSOs are vital to advancing equity and education reform in Cambodia, but their impact is constrained by funding instability, uneven coverage, and capacity gaps. Strengthening coordination, inclusive programming, institutional capacity, and predictable financing will be critical for the 2026–2030 period.

IX. Annex

1. List of NGO
2. List of detailed program/activity

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