Cambodia Sustainable Development Goal 4 Mid-Term Review

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

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European Union Delegation to Cambodia
Sverige
GPE Transforming Education
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unicef for every child

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1: Cambodia - Socio-Economic Context

Overview

On 21 May 2015, the Incheon Declaration was adopted by the global education community at the World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea (ROK). More than 1,600 participants from 160 countries, including 120 Ministers and other high-level delegates, attended the event. The declaration reaffirmed the commitment to universal education that was made in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 and Dakar, Senegal in 2000. The declaration also set a new vision for education for 2030: "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all." This vision is part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by the 70th United Nations General Assembly in September 2015. The agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), one of which is SDG 4 on education. The SDG4-Education 2030 Agenda is a holistic, inclusive, aspirational and universally relevant framework that covers all levels and types of education. It goes beyond the six Education for All (EFA) goals and emphasizes not only access but also learning outcomes that are inclusive, equitable, effective and relevant throughout life.

The year 2023 marks the halfway point in our journey towards fulfilling the Education 2030 Agenda. To assess how far we have come and what we need to do next, the Asia-Pacific region will conduct a Midterm Review of SDG 4. This was confirmed by the participants of the recent APREMC-II. The Midterm Review (MTR) will measure the progress made by Member States in the region towards achieving SDG 4 targets and indicator, and other education-related SDG indicators at the national and regional levels since 2015. It will also identify good practices, lessons learned and prospects for education, with the aim of renewing and strengthening country commitments to SDG 4. Moreover, the review will examine the existing and emerging challenges and opportunities for education in the post-pandemic context. It will help design an effective learning recovery for all and a thorough transformation of education and its systems.

Demographic Context

Cambodia has a total land mass of 181,035 km2 and is bordered by Thailand to the northwest, Laos to the northeast, Vietnam to the east, and the Gulf of Thailand to the southwest. The population is estimated at 15.5 million of whom approximately 6.1 million are situated in urban areas and 9.4 million in rural areas.

Table 1 Population and Growth Rate, 2018 & 2019.

Region	Total Population		Annual Growth Rate (%)	
	2008	2019	1998-2008	2008-2019
Total	13,395,682	15,552,211	1.5	1.4
Urban	2,614,027	6,135,194	2	7.8

Rural	10,781,655	9,417,017	1.3	-1.2

Source: National Institute of Statistics data, 2022.

Cambodia is a relatively homogenous country, with the Khmer ethnicity making up 95.7% of the population. Around 4.3% of the country's population consists of ethnic minority groups who are based in five north-eastern provinces. There are an estimated 17 minority language groups[1] with more than 200,000 native language speakers.

Cambodia has, over the last 20 years, witnessed a profound change in all aspects of society. The country has gone from post-conflict status to a situation where it provides peace-keeping troops to UN missions around the world. Cambodia has been rebuilding itself after suffering from the brutal rule of the Khmer Rouge (1975-1979), after which it was plagued by a civil war that polarized societies and lasted for 10 years (1979-1991). The country has made great strides in reducing poverty through economic reforms and social protection policies that benefit the poor. Poverty reduction has been particularly successful in rural areas, where the poverty rate declined from 47.8% in 2007 to 13.5% in 2014. Nevertheless, around 4.5 million people risk falling back into poverty when socioeconomic and natural shocks occur.[2] Furthermore, multi-dimensional poverty has fallen less quickly than monetary poverty. The national multidimensional child poverty rate was 48% in 2017, with children in rural areas being significantly more deprived in at least three dimensions (54%) than children in urban areas (12%).

As exhibited in Table 2, Cambodia has a young population: 29.4% is aged 0–14. However, the youth population is declining while the population over 60 is increasing. Furthermore, the urban population of Cambodia grew rapidly from 2008 to 2019. This was mainly due to the reclassification of many rural communes as urban areas in 2019. Phnom Penh became increasingly the dominant urban center in Cambodia because of its large geographic size and its increasing economic influence on the nearby provinces.[3]

Table 2 Population by Age Group and Locality, 2008 & 2019.

Age Structure and Sex Ratio	2008			2019		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
0-14	33.7	25.4	35.7	29.4	25.6	31.8
15-59	60.0	69.1	57.8	61.7	66.2	58.9
60 +	6.3	5.5	6.5	8.9	8.2	9.3
Overall Age Dependency Ratio 15 - 59	66.8	44.8	73.1	62	51.2	69.9
Median Age	22	24	21	27	28	26

[1] The largest of these language groups are Kuy, Tampuen, Jarai, Bunong and Kreung.
[2] The World Bank in Cambodia: Overview.
[3] All data from General Population Census of Cambodia 2019, National Institute of Statistics, April 2022

Sex Ratio	94.7	92.4	95.3	94.9	95.3	94.6

Source: National Institute of Statistics data, 2022.

The Cambodian Education Landscape

Education holds a critical level of importance within Cambodia's medium-term development agenda. With the aim for Cambodia to reach upper-middle-income status by 2030 and high-income status by 2050 as spelled out in the Pentagon Strategy, education is prioritized to drive quality improvements to human resources and to underpin economic growth. A core strategy of Cambodia's development agenda is to drive development by leveraging the country's demographic dividend provided by its young population, which accounts for 40 per cent of the population.

The education system in Cambodia comprises: three years of pre-school education for children aged 3-5 years; six years of primary school for children aged 6-11 years; three years of lower secondary education for children aged 12-14 years; and three years of upper secondary school for children aged 15-17 years. Completion of senior secondary education enables students to proceed to higher education, subject to passing final exams. According to the National Education Law in 2007, basic education in Cambodia is defined as nine years of education (Grades 1 to 9).

Many primary schools have early childhood education (ECE) centres within them. Most secondary schools are separate for lower and upper grades, but some have both. There are also a few ECE centres that are not attached to any primary school, and some basic schools that span both primary and lower secondary. Some schools do not offer complete cycles either because they are new or because they are in remote areas where the demand for certain grade levels is low.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) is responsible for the administration and development of the education, youth and sports sectors in response to the needs of Cambodia's socio-economic and cultural development. The ministry has developed seven sub-sectors (Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, Secondary and Technical Education, Higher Education, Non-formal Education, Youth Development, Physical Education and Sports) to support the country with tailor-made strategies and focus on policy implementation across the country. To improve the quality, transparency, equity, and accountability of services, MoEYS is undergoing a process of decentralization and de-concentration of functions and resources intended to strengthen local institutions' autonomy and accountability.

The current Education Strategic Plan 2019–2023 sets two main policy priorities for the education sector in the medium-term: ensure inclusive and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; and ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels. The plan also outlines the education reforms that will be implemented during this period, such as teacher and school principal development, school inspection, student learning assessment using standardized testing, school-based management, and curriculum and textbook

development. These reforms are essential for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the education sector in Cambodia.

Cambodia has adopted a roadmap for the localization of education SDGs, in which clear indicators and targets have been established. Importantly, these localized SDG indicators and targets are integrated within the new Education Strategic Plan 2024-2028.

The current education policy environment in Cambodia is favourable to reform, in large part due to the progressive leadership of the current Minister of Education, Youth and Sport. The Minister is acutely aware that national economic ambition depends on the provision of equitable, inclusive, quality and relevant learning for Cambodia's youth.

Chapter 2 – Adaptation and Implementation of SDG 4 In Cambodia

Governance and Legal Framework

Cambodia's National Constitution of 1993 guarantees the right to education for all citizens and assigns the State the duty of ensuring quality education at all levels. According to Article 65, the State shall take necessary measures to provide equal access to education for all citizens. Article 66 outlines the main principles of the education system and states that the State shall establish a uniform and standardized education system throughout the country that shall respect the principles of educational freedom and equality and ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to earn a living. In line with the Constitution, Cambodia's Education Law enacted in December 2007 states that every citizen has the right to free public education for at least nine years. The government of Cambodia acknowledges that education is a fundamental human right and plays a vital role in the holistic development of its citizens. Cambodia also ratified the international convention on the rights of the child and persons with disabilities in 1992 and 2012 respectively.

The public education system in Cambodia comprises four levels: (a) preschool education, which lasts for three years; (b) primary education, which covers six years from grade 1 to grade 6; secondary education, which consists of three years of lower-secondary (grade 7 to grade 9) and three years of upper-secondary (grade 10 to grade 12); and (d) higher education, which includes four years of undergraduate education, two years of master's education, and three to six years of doctoral education. The system also offers non-formal education programmes that focus mainly on adult literacy, post-literacy and equivalency to formal education. Additionally, there are various technical, vocational and skills development programmes that operate under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MoLVT).

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) is the main authority that manages the education sector in Cambodia. It has 7 Directorates-General and 37-line departments at the central level, and 25 provincial education departments and 208 district education offices at the sub-national level. The country has about 13,000 educational institutions, including pre-schools, primary and secondary schools. There are also 23 teacher-training colleges and over 121 public and private higher education institutions.

The MoEYS is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring education policies, plans and programmes. The Provincial/Municipal Offices of Education (POEs) support the MoEYS in carrying out education policies and programmes, preparing and submitting development plans, providing data and statistics, and managing education staff. The District Offices of Education (DOEs) play a key role in ensuring the execution of education policies and programmes. School directors are in charge of preparing strategic school development plans, annual operational plans

and overseeing the daily school operations. The education sector is mainly funded by the central government budget, however, there are also other sources of funding, such as non-governmental funding, foreign loans, technical assistance and grants, official development assistance and local revenues generated by each school community and the school. The percentage of GDP allocated to education was 2.76% in 2023. The proportion of the national budget dedicated to education has gradually decreased from 14.6% in 2018 to 10.3% in 2023 according to national education budget outturns.

SDG 4 Policies and Implementation Strategies

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) of Cambodia has developed the Cambodia SDG 4 Education 2030 Roadmap to guide the transformation of its education sector and achieve its vision of becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050. The roadmap aligns with the global call for action on SDG 4 and reflects Cambodia's development priorities. It outlines the main goals and strategies for improving education quality and access for all from a lifelong learning perspective. The roadmap further outlines the implementation framework and addresses the potential opportunities and challenges that may arise throughout the implementation period. UNESCO provided technical assistance to MoEYS in preparing the document through the CapEd Programme, which supports member states in strengthening their national capacities to reach their SDG 4 targets. The document covers all levels of education and all SDG 4 targets in a holistic sector-wide approach.

The roadmap is based on several exercises that analysed the education sector in Cambodia. These include the EFA Review, which evaluated the progress and challenges of EFA and education-MDG in 2014-2015, and the Rapid Education Sector Analysis in 2016, which examined the education sector's performance with the help of IIEP-UNESCO and UNICEF. The roadmap also incorporates existing policy documents and frameworks MoEYS such as the teacher policy, the curriculum framework of general and technical education, and the Master plans for the development of human resources in higher education. Moreover, the Roadmap considers the long-term development visions of other national policy documents, such as the Industrial Development Policy 2015-2025 and TVET Policy 2017-2025. The roadmap synthesizes these key policy documents to provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for education development.

The roadmap identified the policy priorities of the Royal Government of Cambodia in the education sector for the period 2018- 2030. It also provides the results to be achieved under each priority and a set of strategies has been detailed for each result. In preparing the roadmap, consultations were held with relevant stakeholders and the SDG 4 targets were reviewed in line with relevant education policies and programmes to determine five policy goals for 2030:

I. **Priority 1**: All girls and boys have access to quality ECCE and pre-primary education and complete free, equitable and quality basic education (primary and lower-secondary) with relevant and effective learning outcomes.
II. **Priority 2**: All girls and boys complete upper-secondary education with relevant and learning outcomes and a substantial number of youths have increased access to affordable and quality technical and vocational education.
III. **Priority 3**: Ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.
IV. **Priority 4**: All youth and adults achieve literacy and numeracy and learners in all age groups have increased life-long learning opportunities.
V. **Priority 5**: Governance and management of education improves at all levels.

The pandemic arose early on in the implementation of the roadmap and created unprecedented challenges to the education system. Notably, the pandemic forced Cambodian schools to shut down for more than half of the official school calendar for two consecutive years. Instead of face-to-face teaching, students had to learn remotely. This raised worries about "learning loss", wherein students' achievement levels after the pandemic are lower than what they would have been before the pandemic. These worries are more serious in countries like Cambodia, where students' performance in language and mathematics were already low according to national (EQAD, 2017), regional (UNICEF & SEAMEO, 2020) and international (OECD & MoEYS, 2018) assessments.

The Education Strategic Plan Mid-term Review 2021

A Mid-Term review of the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 was conducted in 2021. The review identified key challenges and successes in the implementation of the ESP and highlight areas that needed immediate action in order to meet relevant targets. In line with the findings of the MTR, MoEYS devised new policy recommendations to be applied from 2022 onwards in order to ensure more sustained progress towards ESP targets. MoEYS also took the review opportunity to adjust two medium-term policy objectives listed within the ESP and to plan four stages of Education Priority Strategy Reforms (ESP MTR, 2021);

Medium-term policy objectives:

(i) Policy 1: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all, youth development and sport improvement.
(ii) Policy 2: Strengthen institutional capacity to ensure effective leadership and management of education officials at all levels.

Education Priority Strategy Reforms:

- **Reform Strategy Phase 1:** Reform at the national level, focusing on five pillars: 1) Implementing teacher policy action plan; 2) Reviewing the curriculum, textbooks and improving the learning environment; 3) Implementation of inspections; 4) Strengthening national, regional and international assessments and examinations; and 5) Higher education reform.

- **Reform Strategy Phase 2:** Reform at the school level focuses on school-based management; the expansion of new generation schools, effective school management, secondary resource schools, network schools, and capacity development of school principals on school leadership and management.

- **Reform Strategy Phase 3:** Transforming Education System and Capacity Building focuses on institutional capacity building, comprehensive system management, financial management and auditing, human resource management, performance-based or result-based, and system-based approaches.

- **Reform Strategy Phase 4:** Human Resource Training for Digital Economy Focusing on 1) School reform, 2) Teacher development through teacher training institution reform, 3) Digital education, 4) Science and technology education, 5) Promotion of academic health, 6) youth and development to promote 21st Century Skills, 7) Establishment of the Center of Excellence in higher education institutions, 8) System building and capacity development and 9) Development of physical education and sport.

SDG 4 Support in Cambodia: Development partners and others

The combined efforts of the Cambodian government, development partners and other stakeholders, including civil society organizations, are helping Cambodia to make progress towards achieving SDG4. With continued support, Cambodia is well-positioned to reach its goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030. Development partners and other key education stakeholders are providing financial and technical assistance to help the country achieve this overarching goal.

Cambodia has a well-established sectoral dialogue mechanism known as the Joint Technical Working Group on Education (JTWG-Edu) which represents the Cambodia Local Education Group (LEG). This comprises representatives of MoEYS, including the minister, secretaries of state, under secretaries of state and technical department representatives, as well as NGO and development partner representatives who are also part of the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG). The Minister of Education, Youth and Sport chairs the LEG/JTWG, and UNICEF, as the

current chair of the ESWG, acts as vice-chair. The LEG/JTWG is a critical forum for all education stakeholders to meet on a regular basis, determine priorities, stay updated on the latest developments in the sector, and ensure harmonization of interventions. It also aims to promote effective partnership dialogue at the technical level for coordinating and mobilizing external resources and serves as final decision-making authority.

Meanwhile, the ESWG serves as the main platform to coordinate the work of development partners, including NGOs, on all issues related to education with the view to contribute to the successful implementation of the government's education strategies and to promote and monitor major policy and program reforms in the education sector.

The LEG/JTWG and the ESWG play an essential role in discussing and reviewing strategic education reform priorities and harmonizing the interventions provided by development partners and those laid out by the ministry. This national inclusive dialogue and coordination mechanism is being used to support the development of the new Education Strategic Plan (ESP2024-2028), which will chart the path toward fulfilling Royal Government of Cambodia's strategy and education goals and targets for SDG4. The mid-term review of the SDG4 benchmarks indicators has been undertaken in close consultation with the ministry and development partners, through the ESWG, to ensure full review of the key indicators.

The ministry, in close collaboration with the ESWG, has developed the Public Investment Programme (PIP) to capture all investment from development partners and stakeholders in the education sector. The PIP has been updated annually. Below are some programmes/projects from partners in the education sector.

Table 3 MoEYS Public Investment Programme, ESWG Member, as of 31 August 2023.

No	Donor	Programme/ Project Title	Education Sub-Sector/Thematic Areas	Duration	Total Budget (USD)
1.	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Loan 3427-CAM: Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Project (USESDP)	Upper Secondary Education (Access, Quality, Institutional Management)	2016-2022	$30,000,000
2.	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Loan 3720-CAM: Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Project (USESDP)	Upper Secondary Education (Teacher, Quality and Labor Market Relevance, and Institutional Capacity)	2018-2025	$35,000,000

3.	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Loan 4244-CAM: Science and Technology Project in Upper Secondary Education (STEP UP)	Upper Secondary Education (Equitable access to upper secondary education, Quality of STEM Teaching, and Institutional and School Leadership and Management)	2022-2027	$78,240,000
4.	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	PATA9178-CAM: Accelerating the Education Policy Reform in Cambodia	Secondary Education (Teacher Development, Policy)	2016-2021	$1,000,000
5.	UNICEF, GPE, USAID, EU, SIDA	Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) Phase II	All	2014-2017	$15,000,000
6.	UNICEF, GPE, USAID, EU, SIDA	Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) Phase III	All	2018-2026	$32,614,055
7.	European Union (EU)	Cambodia Education Sector Reform (ESRP) Contract 2018-2021 - Budget Support Component	Basic education (Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, & Lower-Secondary Education)	2018-203	$98,700,800
8.	European Union (EU)	Supporting commune councils and local communities' governance in mainstreaming pre-primary education and gender equality	Early Childhood Education	2020-2022	$1,036,358
9.	European Union (EU)	Strengthening Education & Employability in Kampuchean (SEEK)	Primary and Lower-Secondary Education	2020-2022	$1,121,600
10.	European Union (EU)	Capacity building in higher education projects financed under the Erasmus+ programme selected in 2018 (7 projects)	Higher education	2019-2021	$1,849,431
11.	European Union (EU)	Capacity building in higher education projects financed under the Erasmus+ programme selected in 2019 (10 projects)	Higher education	2020-2022	$2,970,721
12.	European Union (EU)	Capacity building in higher education projects financed under the Erasmus+ programme selected in 2020 (9 projects)	Higher education	2021-2023	$2,000,599
13.	European Union (EU)	Capacity building in higher education projects financed under the Erasmus+ programme selected in 2017 (four projects)	Higher education	2017-2020	$4,187,093

14.	European Union (EU)	Capacity building in higher education (CBHE) projects financed under the Erasmus+ programme selected in 2016 (eleven projects)	Higher education	2016-2019	$11,490,054
15.	European Union (EU)	Cambodia Education Sector Reform Contract 2018-2021 - Budget Support Component	Basic Education (Early Childhood, Primary, and Lower-Secondary Education)	2018-2021	$100,570,000
16.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	The Project for Establishing Foundation for Teacher Education College	Primary and Lower Secondary Education (Teacher Development)	2017-2022	$9,000,000
17.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	The Project for the Construction of Teacher Education Colleges	Teacher Development (Teacher Education Colleges)	2018-2020	$29,000,000
18.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	Long-term Training on Improving Quality of Basic Education	Teacher Development (Teacher Education Colleges)	2017-2025	$4,000,000
19.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)	Higher education	2021-ongoing	$54,000,000
20.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	The Project for Strengthening Engineering Education and Research for Industrial Development in Cambodia	Higher education (Teaching and Research Capacities)	2019-2024	$3,000,000
21.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	Project for Institutional Capacity Development of CJCC (Cambodia-Japan Cooperation Center) for a Center of Development and Networking for Business Human Resources	Higher education (Business Management)	2019-2022	$3,000,000
22.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	Project for Institutional Capacity Development of CJCC (Cambodia-Japan Cooperation Center) for a Center of Development and Networking for Business Human Resources Phase 2	Higher education (Business Management)	2022-2025	$2,600,000
23.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	Building Foundation for Implementation of "Learning through Plan and the Environment" based on the Cambodia Curriculum	Early Childhood Education (Teacher Development)	2020-2024	$1,000,000

24.	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	The project on "Physical Education for All" in Cambodia (Learning Quality Physical Education from Primary School to Upper Secondary School)	Physical Education (Teacher Development)	2021-2025	$1,000,000
25.	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	The Project for Establishment of Business Incubation System between Schools and Industry in Cambodia	Higher education (ICT and Start-up)	2019-2024	$7,910,000
26.	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	Home Grown School Feeding	Primary Education (Enrollment, attendance, nutrition, socio-economy)	2020-2024	$10,000,000
27.	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	Project for ICT Capacity Building of Lower Secondary Education in Cambodia	Secondary Education (Teacher training)	2021-2026	$7,000,000
28.	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	Project for Establishment of Environmental Engineering in RUPP to Foster the Human Resources of Higher Education in Cambodia	Higher education (Engineering)	2021-2026	$6,900,000
29.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/Global Partnership for Education (GPE)	Global Partnership for Education (GPE III) - Strengthening Teacher Education Programmes in Cambodia (STEPCam)	Primary Education (Teachers and Teacher Educators Development)	2018-2022	$14,400,000
30.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/Global Partnership for Education (GPE)	Global Partnership for Education (GPE) COVID-19 Accelerated Funding for Cambodia	Basic education (Emergency response and recovery)	2019-2022	$7,000,000
31.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	The project for increasing access to inclusive, equitable, relevant and quality early childhood and basic education that promotes lifelong learning, including in emergencies	All	2018-ongoing	$24,186,556

32.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	The project for increasing access to inclusive, equitable, relevant and quality early childhood and basic education that promotes lifelong learning, including in emergencies	Basic Education (Inclusive Education)	2018-2023	$2,400,000
33.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/SWEDEN	Quality and Inclusive Education Support Partnership		2019-2023	$8,363,520
34.	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/SWEDEN	Inclusive Education		2017-2019	$6,000,000
35.	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	All Children Reading-Cambodia	Early Childhood and Primary Education (Teacher and teacher educator development, curriculum, EGL, Inclusive Education)	2016-2021	$23,976,303
36.	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Integrated Early Childhood Development	Early Childhood Education (Policy, Planning, teacher development)	2020-2025	$15,000,000
37.	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Digital Workforce Development	Higher Education (Teacher development, Youth development, Assessment, quality assurance)	2021-2026	$15,000,000
38.	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Inclusive Primary Education Activity	Primary (Teacher and teacher educator development, curriculum, EGL, SBM, Inclusive Education)	2021-2026	$24,990,566
39.	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Scaling Up Refractive Error Services and Refining Financing Models for Eye Glasses Provision in Cambodia	Primary Education (School Health)	2021-2023	$2,107,102
40.	Belgium/VVOB	Strengthening early-grade Math through Inclusive, Level-appropriate Education (SMILE)	Primary Education (Teacher Development, EGM)	2022-2026	$5,000,000
41.	Belgium/VVOB	Strengthening Math Results and Teaching (SMART Programme) - Primary Education / TECs	Primary Education (Teacher Education Colleges)	2017-2021	$4,300,000
42.	World Bank	Secondary Education Improvement Project (P157858) 2017 - 2022	Secondary, Primary, and Early Childhood Education	2017-2022	$40,000,000

			(SBM, Teacher Development, Access, and Quality)		
43.	World Bank	Higher Education Improvement Project (P162971) - 2018-2024	Higher education (Higher Education and research)	2018-2024	$90,000,000
44.	World Bank	Cambodia General Education Improvement Project (P174335) 2022-2026	Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary Education (General Education, SBM, Teacher Development, Access, and Quality)	2022-2026	$69,250,000
45.	World Bank	Early Childhood Care and Development for Floating Villages Project (P146085) 2016-2019	Early Childhood Education	2016-2019	$2,790,000
46.	World Food Programme (WFP)/United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	Country Strategic Plan-Education Sector	Primary Education (School Feeding)	2019-2023	$55,880,138
47.	SWEDEN (SIDA)	Research Cooperation with RUPP		2019-2023	$10,000,000
48.	SWEDEN (SIDA)	School Operational Budget		2018-2021	$20,000,000
49.	SWEDEN (SIDA)	Career Guidance and Counselling		2019-2021	$2,700,000

Source: Public Investment Program, 2017-2023.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data to produce selected indicators has been collected from multiple sources including the Cambodia Socio-economic Census (CSES), the Education Management Information System (EMIS), and National Learning Assessments amongst others. A full list of sources for each indicator is presented in

Table ***4***. Further information regarding key data sources is detailed below:

- **The Cambodia Socio-economic Survey (CSES)** is a national household survey which utilize random selection to survey a sample of ten thousand households in the territory of the Kingdom of Cambodia. The CSES is conducted on a regular basis, generally every two years, with the most recent data point available being 2021. Data collection taking place during a

twelve-month period from February 2021 to January 2022, and accordingly, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic should be visible. In addition to the 2021, data from the CSES in 2015 and 2019 have been utilized to plot the evolution of indicators overtime. The economic disaggregation utilized in the analysis of certain indicators are derived from the five wealth-quintiles defined as part of the CSES analysis.

- **The Education Management Information System (EMIS)** data supports Cambodia's education sector with comprehensive, shared, accurate and up-to-date information and data for planning, resource allocation, monitoring and evaluation. Data in the EMIS is collected directly from school directors who self-report on a set list of data including total students, teachers, qualification levels of teachers and school infrastructure. Data from the EMIS databases are used in reports funded by both the Government of Cambodia and by ODA partners. An EMIS master plan for 2019-2023 was developed with a high-level goal of ensuring the provision of quality education information in a timely, cost-effective, and sustainable manner, at all administrative levels, and to support selected operational functions. In line with the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023, the EMIS has been supported by multiple development partners to foster capacity development and improve data quality.
- **The National Learning Assessment** is conducted periodically by the Education Quality Assurance Department (EQAD). The Assessment tests students on the proficiencies of reading and writing in the Khmer language, as well as mathematics and science proficiencies. Tests are periodically conducted for grade three, six, eight and eleven students on a rotating basis. Accordingly, data for each grade level is available on a four-year rotating cycle, with grade three students tested in 2016 and 2020 for example. These assessments allow decision-makers to assess, evaluate and formulate policies that are evidence-based and aligned with the needs of students.

Table 4 Data Source of SDG 4 MTR Indicators

Indicator		Data Source
4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	*National Learning Assessment (NLA)*
4.1.2	Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.1.3	Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary education, lower secondary education)	*Education Management Information System (EMIS)*

4.1.4	Out-of-school rate (1 year before primary, primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.2.4	Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio in (a) pre-primary education and (b) early childhood educational development	*Education Management Information System (EMIS)*
4.2.N	Percentage of Grade 1 pupils with ECCE experience	*Education Management Information System (EMIS)*
4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.3.2	Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education by sex	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.3.3	Participation rate in technical-vocational programmes (15- to 24-year-olds) by sex	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.4.R	Percentage of students in tertiary education in STEM field	*Education Management Information System (EMIS)*
4.5.1	Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.6.2	Youth/adult literacy rate	*Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)*
4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment	*UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)*
4.a.1	Proportion of schools offering basic services	*Education Management Information System (EMIS)*

4.b.1	Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study	*UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)*
4.c.3	Percentage of teachers qualified according to national standards by education level and type of institution	*Education Management Information System (EMIS)*
1.a.2	Public education expenditure as 1) share of GDP and 2) share of total public expenditure	*Education Financial Management System*

While all data utilized in this report has been reviewed and validated, it is important to consider some data limitations. Notably, both the CSES and the NLAs are survey-based datasets, meaning that despite their best efforts to employ representative sampling techniques, they do not represent the entire population.

Little primary analysis of data was conducted as part of the production of this report. Rather, most indicators have been analysed in recent work produced by MoEYS or development partners. For example, relevant SDG 4 indicators covered in the CSES 2015 and 2019 were analysed in the UNICEF report Cambodia SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator Analysis 2023. An analysis of CSES 2021 data, covering education indicators, was produced by MoEYS and most figures based on EMIS data come from the MoEYS Education Congress Report 2023. Finally, it is important to note that this report is a descriptive, rather than causational analysis. Accordingly, it does not directly attribute trends to specific events, policies or interventions unless additional research has been conducted to establish this causation.

Chapter 3- Assessment by SDG 4 Indicators

SDG 4 Indicator Snapshot

Table 5 provides is a visual representation of the indicators considered as well as a high-level ranking of their levels of progress, with a detailed analysis of each indicator presented following the table.

The final column of the table represents the origin of each indicator, with the color representing each type or combination of multiple types. These include:

- **Global SDG 4 Indicators**: SDG 4 is organized around seven outcome targets and three means of implementation for a total of 10 targets. Each target is composed of varied number of indicators which were agreed upon in 2017 and are reviewed on an annual basis by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators. SDG 4 currently has 42 indicator arranged under the 10 targets of which a selection have been chosen for this MTR.
- **Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicators:** In 2020, UNESCO underlined the importance of setting relevant and realistic benchmarks for key SDG 4 indicators in order to facilitate accelerated progress and associated monitoring. In order to facilitate the benchmarking process, the Technical Cooperation Group responsible for development the SDG 4 monitoring framework proposed seven indicators from within the existing monitoring framework to serve as benchmark indicators. These indicators were selected for their internationally common policy relevance and data availability and facilitate a more targeted monitoring of SDG 4 progress.
- **Regional SDG 4 Benchmark Indicators:** In addition to global benchmark indicators, regions were also encouraged to select benchmark indicators that reflect the specific concerns and priorities of their respective regions. The Asia-Pacific region, of which Cambodia is a member, identified four additional regional benchmark indicators of which three overlap with existing SDG 4 global indicators and one is new.
- **National Indicators**: These indicators are solely national SDG 4 priorities that have been drawn from the national SDG roadmap and are tailor-made to evaluate the national context of Cambodia. These indicators have been included under the SDG target that most aligns and are followed by an N rather than a number.

Each indicator is considered in five categories:

- **Overall status**- This takes into consideration the past, current and predicted future performance of the indicator to evaluate the overall progress of the indicator.
- **Pre-COVID-19-** Progress is evaluated solely on the basis of progress before the COVID-19 pandemic (2020).

- **Post-COVID-19-** Progress is evaluated solely on the basis of progress that has happened after 2020
- **2025 benchmark-** This evaluation indicates if the indicator would meet the 2025 benchmarks set at baseline in 2015.
- **2030 benchmark-** This evaluation indicates if the indicator would meet the 2030 benchmarks set at baseline in 2015.

Progress on the evolution of each indicator has been ranked according to three levels reflected in three colors:

- **Green**- Good steady progress
- **Orange**- Stunted and/or slow progress
- **Red**- Declining negative progress

Table 5 SDG 4 Indicator Snapshot

Indicator			Level of Education	Overall status	Pre-COVID-19 trend (if applicable)	Post-COVID-19/ Current trend	2025 Benchmark	2030 benchmark	Indicator Type
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes									
4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	Reading	Grade 3			No data			Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator
			Grade 6						
			Grade 8		No data				
		Math	Grade 3			No data			
			Grade 6						
			Grade 8		No data				
4.1.2	Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)		Primary						Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator & National Indicator
			Lower secondary						
			Upper secondary						
4.1.3	Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary education, lower secondary education)		Primary						Global SDG 4 Indicator
			Lower secondary						
			Upper secondary						
4.1.4	Out-of-school rate (1 year before primary, primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)		Pre-primary				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator
			Primary						
			Lower secondary						

		Upper secondary						
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education								
4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	ECE						**Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator**
4.2.4	Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio in (a) pre-primary education and (b) early childhood educational development	ECE						**Global SDG 4 & National Indicator**
4.2.N	Percentage of Grade 1 pupils with ECCE experience	ECE						**National Indicator**
4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university								
4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex	Youth				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	**Global & Regional SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator**
		Adult				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	
4.3.2	Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education by sex	Teritiary Education						**Global & Regional SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator, National Indicator**
4.3.3	Participation rate in technical-vocational programmes (15- to 24-year-olds) by sex	Technical-Vocational training						**Global & Regional SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator, National Indicator**
4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship								
4.4.R	Percentage of students in tertiary education in STEM field	Teritiary Education						**Regional SDG 4 Benchmark Indcator**
4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations								
4.5.1	Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated	Gender Parity				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	**Global SDG 4 Indicator**
		Locality Parity				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	
		Wealth Parity				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	
4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy								
4.6.2	Youth / adult literacy rate	Youth				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	**Global SDG 4 Indicator**
		Adult						**Global & National SDG 4 Indicator**
4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development								
4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment	-	No data	No data		No bemch mark	No bemch mark	**Global SDG 4 Indicator**

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all								
4.a.1	Proportion of schools offering basic services	Primary				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	**Global SDG 4 Indicator**
		Secondary				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	
4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries								
4.b.1	Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study	All levels				No bemch mark	No bemch mark	**Global SDG 4 Indicator**
4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States								
4.c.3	Percentage of teachers qualified according to national standards by education level and type of institution	Pre-primary						**Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator**
		Primary						
		Lower secondary						
		Upper secondary						
1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions								
1.a.2	Public education expenditure 1) as share of GDP; and 2) as share of total public expenditure	(GDP)				No bemch mark		**Global SDG 4 Benchmark Indicator**
		(Public Expenditure)				No bemch mark		

SDG 4.1 - Free Primary & Secondary Education

SDG 4.1 Target- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

Indicator 4.1 addresses universal primary and secondary education completion as a necessary milestone on the road to sustainable development. In doing so it expands the scope of the Millennium Development Goal, from access to education, to the completion of at least 12 years of schooling. Moreover, it places a sharp focus on ensuring that learners acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for lifelong learning.

Indicator 4.1.1- Learning Proficiency

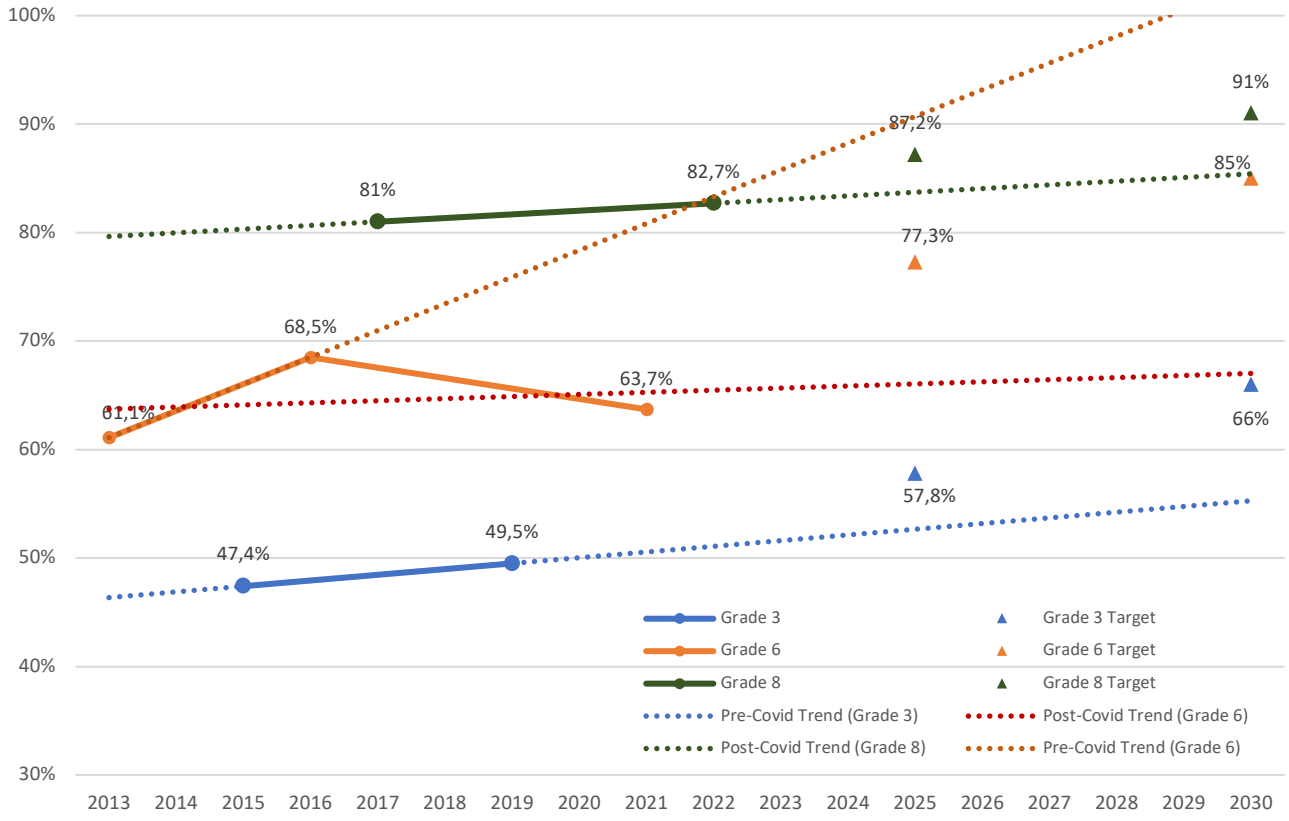
Indicator 4.1.1- Proportion of children and young people achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics

Indicator 4.1.1, the global indicator, reflects the main innovation of the SDG 4-Education 2030 Agenda, which places learning outcomes at the center of educational progress. The indicator tracks the proportion of children and young people who achieve at least a minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics. For Cambodia, the data presented below originates from the National Learning Assessment, which is a sample-based learning assessment conducted on a four-year rolling basis for students in grade four, eight and eleven. In this way, it must be noted that the base years differ for the different grade levels. For grade three, the available data points are from 2015 and 2019 while for grades six and eight, the available data points are from 2016/2021 and 2017/2022 respectively.

Reading proficiencies not on track to meet targets

Progress in reading proficiency has not been satisfactory and this indicator is not on track to meet 2030 targets. As a result of the varying comparable years, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are evidenced in varying proportion. For example, the grade three data is unable to capture the effects of the pandemic as the most recent data point is from 2019. Comparatively, with data collected in 2021 and 2022, results from grades six and eight would be able to capture any effects of the pandemic on learning outcomes.

Figure 1 Reading Proficiency Grades 3, 6 & 8 (2013-2022)



Source: National Learning Assessment (NLA) Report (2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022)

Grade three students showcase a slight upward trend from 47.4% demonstrating basic proficiency in 2015, to 49.5% in 2019. However, despite this positive pre-pandemic growth, the linear forecast indicates that grade three students would still not be meeting their 2025 or 2030 targets. Furthermore, without any data available from the pandemic and post-pandemic period, it is not well understood the potential learning losses the pandemic has had on grade three students. Post-pandemic trends will be analysed once the next round of grade 3 NLA results are released in 2024.

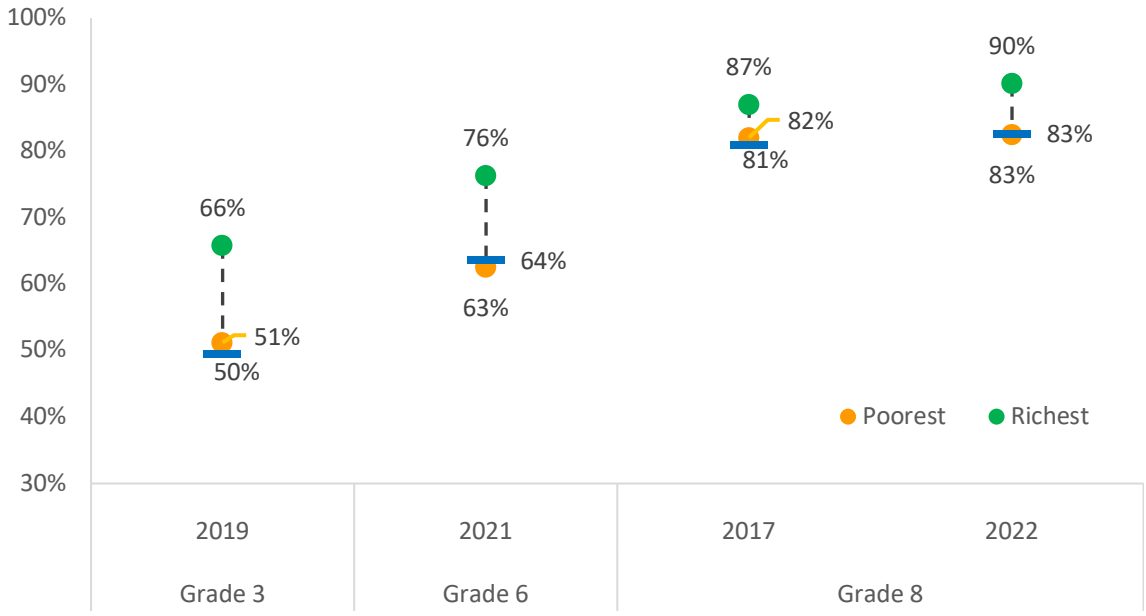
Grade six students showcase a downward trend from 68.5% demonstrating basic proficiency in 2016 to 63.7% in 2021. It must be noted that the results from 2021 may have been the worst hit by the pandemic. Without any significant improvement in the coming years, the linear forecast indicates that the 2025 and 2030 benchmarks will not be met. However, the progress from 2013 to 2016 showed an encouraging upward trend with more than a 7% increase in proficiency in the span of 3 years. This pre-COVID-19 trend was very encouraging and was on track to meet the 2025 and 2030 benchmarks.

Grade eight students showcase a slight improvement from 81% demonstrating basic proficiency in 2017 to 82.7% in 2022 despite the COVID-19 pandemic between the two data points. Despite this positive progress, continuing at the current rate, grade eight students would still not meet the benchmarks set for 2025 and 2030.

Economic characteristics strongest determinant of learning outcomes

When considering various student characteristics including locality, gender and wealth quintile in terms of reading proficiencies, the greatest gap is observed between those in the richest and poorest wealth quintiles. The average proportion of students reaching minimum proficiencies in reading are 16, 14 and eight percentage points higher for grade 3, 6and 8respectively. Overtime these gaps are seen to have remained stable and have widened for grade eight students.

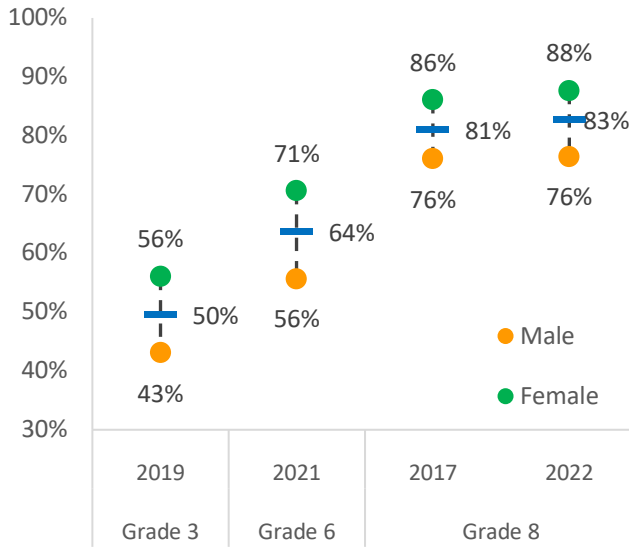
Figure 2 Reading Proficiency by Wealth Quintile, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2017-2022).



Source: National Learning Assessment Report (2017, 2019, 2021, 2022).

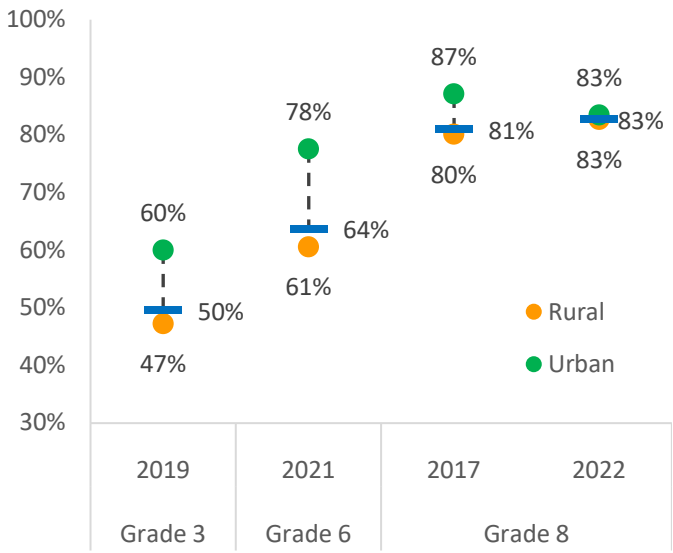
Furthermore, data indicates that females consistently perform better than their male counterparts in all grades with 10-15 percentage point difference, with this trend persisting over time. Considering locality, the national averages are heavily skewed against the rural population who perform considerably worse than the urban population, particularly for grades 3 and 6. At the expense of lower urban student performance, the rural/urban gap has narrowed from 2017 to 2022 for grade 8 students.

Figure 3 Reading Proficiency by Gender, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2017-2022).



Source: Source: National Learning Assessment Report, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022.

Figure 4 Reading Proficiency by Locality, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2017-2022).

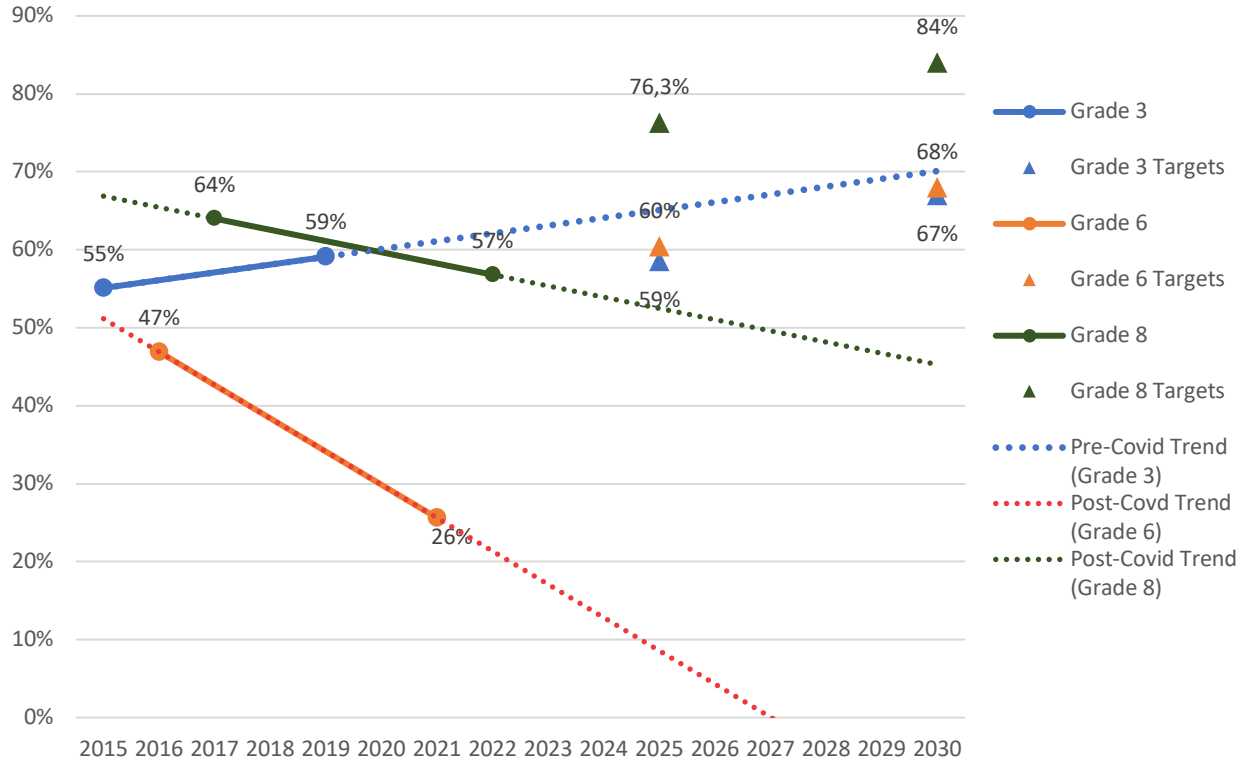


Source: National Learning Assessment Report, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2022.

Student proficiencies in math are generally declining

In analyzing the math proficiency of different grades, a major challenge is the missing data point for grade six students from 2013. The absence of this data point meant that, unlike reading proficiency, it was not possible to analyze the pre COVID-19 trend for grade 6 students in math.

Figure 5 Figure 5 Math Proficiency, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2015-2022).



Source: National Learning Assessment (NLA) Report (2015, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022)

For grade three, the proportion of students meeting minimum math proficiencies has improved from 55% in 2015 to 59% in 2019. However, it must be kept in mind that these data points do not include any effects of the pandemic. If the rate of progress between 2015 and 2019 continued, Cambodia would achieve its 2025 and 2030 benchmarks comfortably. The next round of the grade 3 NLA to be conducted in 2024 will indicate if this positive trend will continue after the pandemic.

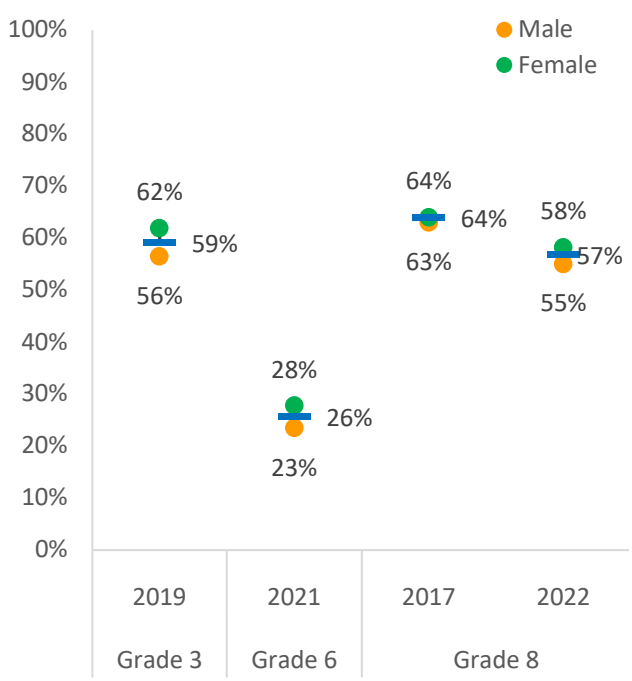
For grade six, the proportion of students meeting minimum math proficiencies has declined from 47% in 2016 to 26% in 2021. This decline is likely linked to learning loss related to school closures during the pandemic. Without pre-2016 data available it is impossible to predict whether the pre-COVID-19 trend was on track to meet 2025 and 2030 goals, with the current trend far off.

For grade eight students, proficiencies have decreased from 64% in 2017 to 57% in 2022, likely also as a result of the pandemic. Similarly to grade six, it is impossible to predict whether pre-pandemic trends were on track to meet goals as the data is not available, with current trends showing a decline not in line with targets.

Economic disparities most prevalent in math proficiencies

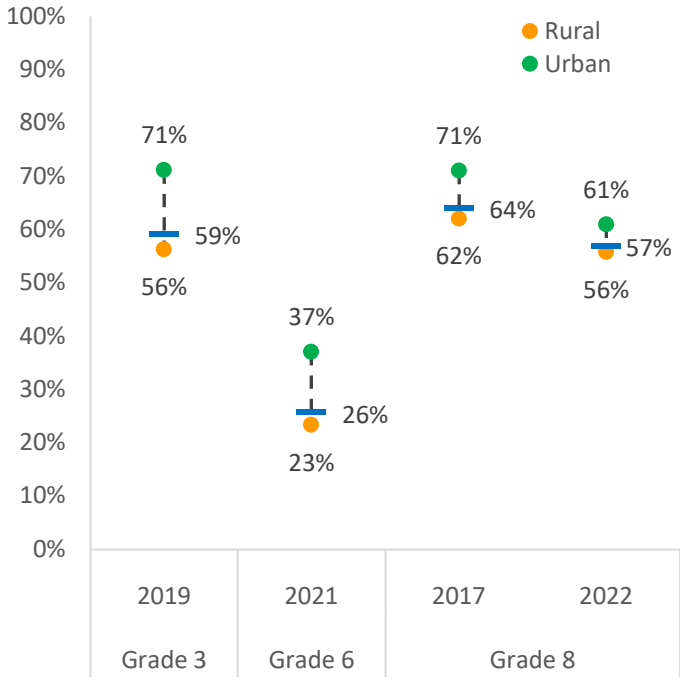
Analyzing the disparities between gender, location and wealth quintiles, similar patterns to that of the reading proficiency metrics are observed. In terms of gender, it is found that females consistently perform better than males in all grades over all data points, although the differences are not as large as with reading proficiency. Between 2017 and 2022, the national average for grade 8 math proficiency declined (64.4% to 56.8%) and the gender disparity widened. Comparing rural and urban populations, it is again found that the urban population perform better than the rural population across all grades. The gaps are relatively large, particularly among grade 3 and 6 students at around 14 percentage points. The greatest disparities in math proficiency are observed between the poorest and richest populations with the gaps ranging from 12 percentage points for grade 8 to 18 percentage points for both grades 3 and 6.

Figure 6 Math Proficiency by Gender, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2017-2022).



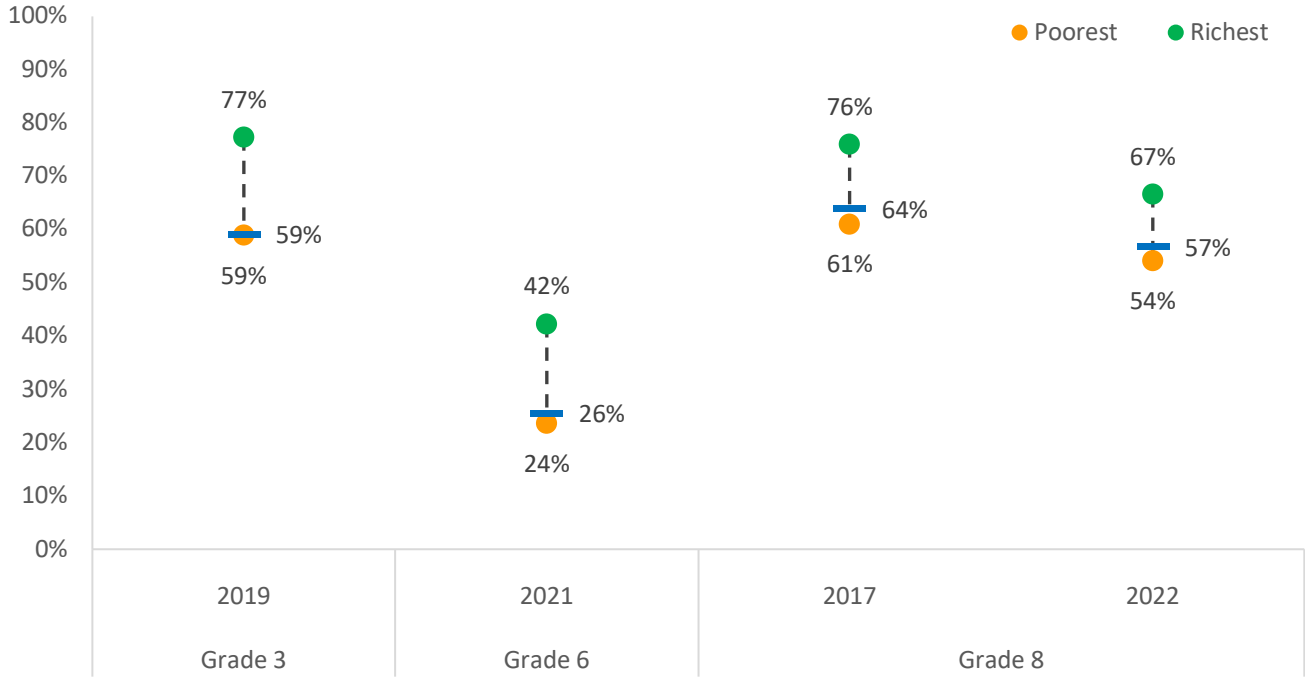
Source: National Learning Assessment Report (2017, 2019, 2021, 2022)

Figure 7 Math Proficiency by Locality, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2017-2022).



Source: National Learning Assessment Report (2017, 2019, 2021, 2022)

Figure 8 Math Proficiency by Wealth Quintile, Grade 3, 6 & 8 (2017-2022).



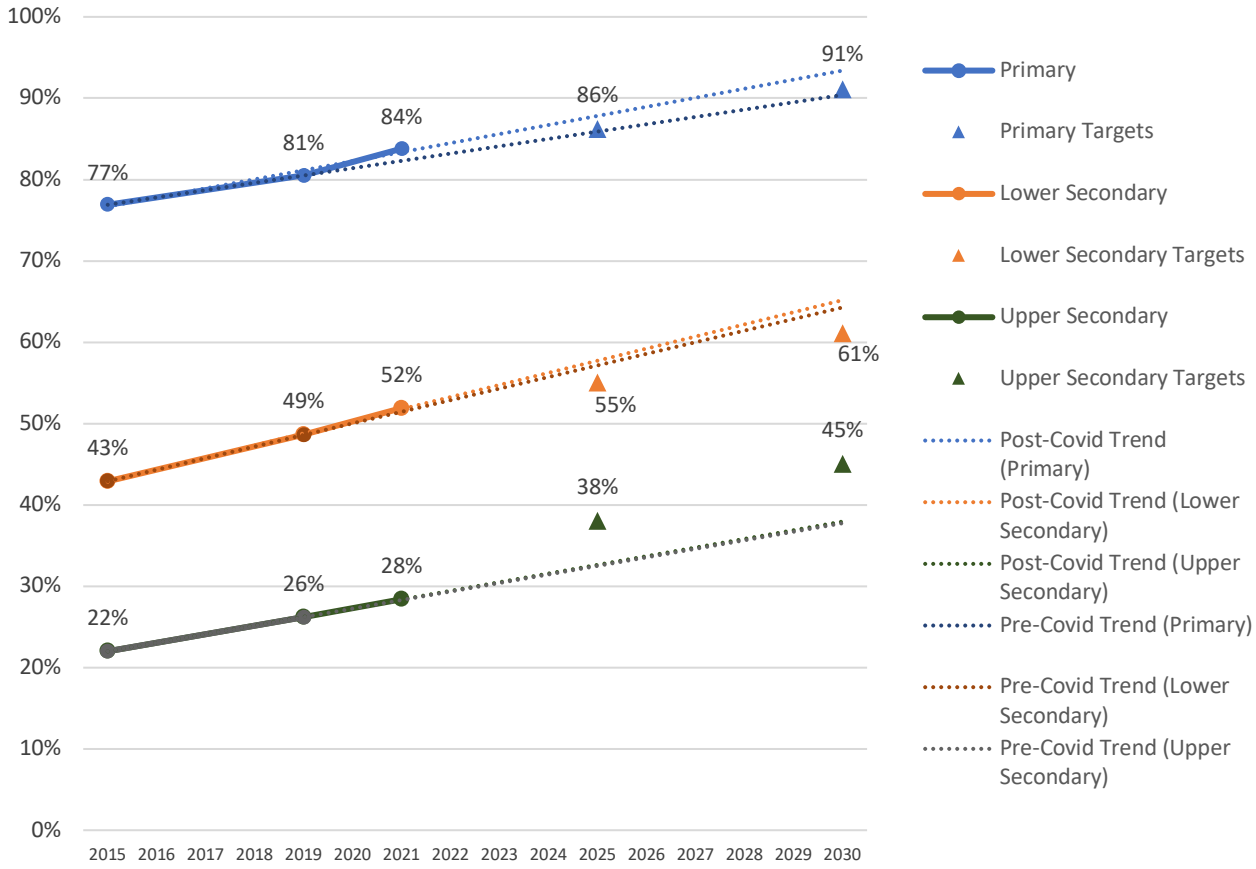
Source: National Learning Assessment Report (2017, 2019, 2021, 2022)

Indicator 4.1.2- School Completion Rate

Indicator 4.1.2- Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)

Indicator 4.1.2 monitors the extent to which children and youth enroll in and complete a cycle of education from primary to upper secondary. According to the definition by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), a completion rate at or near 100% indicates that most or all children and adolescents have completed a level of education by the time they are 3 to 5 years older than the official age of entry into the last grade of the given level of education. A low completion rate indicates low or delayed entry into a given level of education, high drop-out, high repetition, late completion, or a combination of these factors.

Figure 9 Completion rate by Level of Education (2015-2021).



Source: CSES data, 2021.

Completion rates on track to meet targets

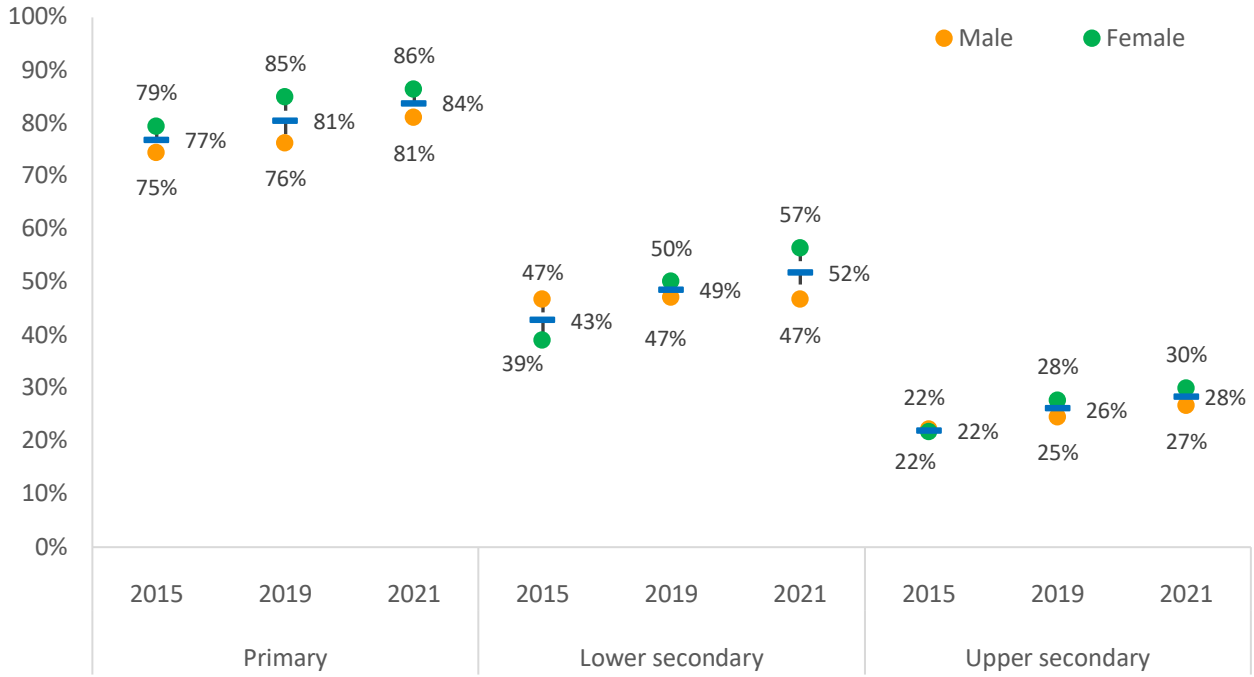
Having started at 76.9%, 42.9% and 22.0% respectively in 2015, there has been steady and considerable progress in completion rates up to 2021, when the latest data are available. Over the past seven years, the upper secondary completion rate has recorded the least percentage point increase at 6.4%. Based on the current trend, primary and lower secondary completion rates are expected to meet their respective targets by 2030. However, the progress of the upper secondary completion rate requires further acceleration to meet its 2025 and 2030 targets.

Equity concerns remain prevalent, and are observed to be worsening for some groups

Considering completion by gender, female students are more slightly likely to complete their relevant education cycle than their male counterparts. The gap in completion rates between males and females has increased, particularly at the secondary levels, indicating boys continue to be at higher risk of dropping out in their education trajectory. In terms of geographical

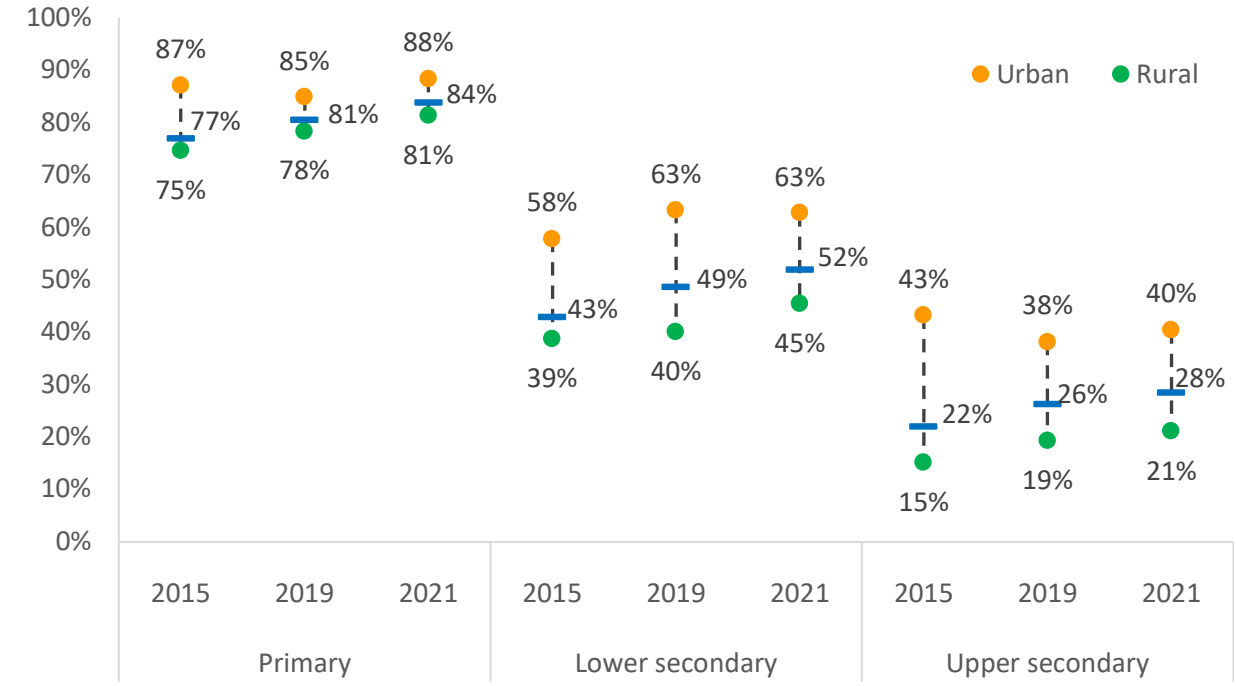
disparities, while school completion rates are significantly higher among urban populations than rural populations, particularly at the secondary levels, the gap has been narrowing over the past seven years at all levels.

Figure 10 School Completion Rate by Educational Level and Gender, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019, 2021..

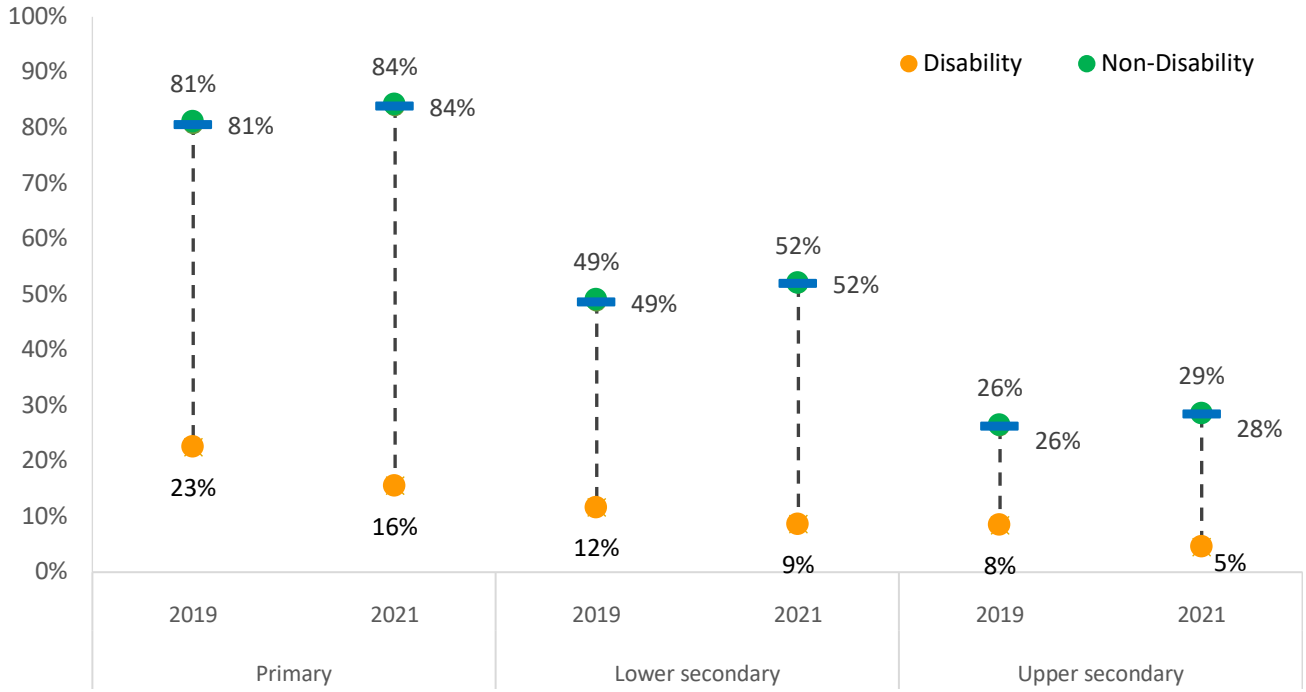
Figure 11 School Completion Rate by Educational Level and Locality, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Comparing the completion rates between students with disabilities and the student without disabilities is hampered by the absence of disability data from the 2015 CSES. As such, when examining the trend between 2019 and 2021, it is found that the disparity between the two groups has grown at all levels of education. While the sample size for children with disabilities is small in CSES, and thus, the margin of error is large, the data indicate that there have been decreases in school completion rates among children with disabilities between 2019 and 2021, while completion rates among children without disabilities show increases.

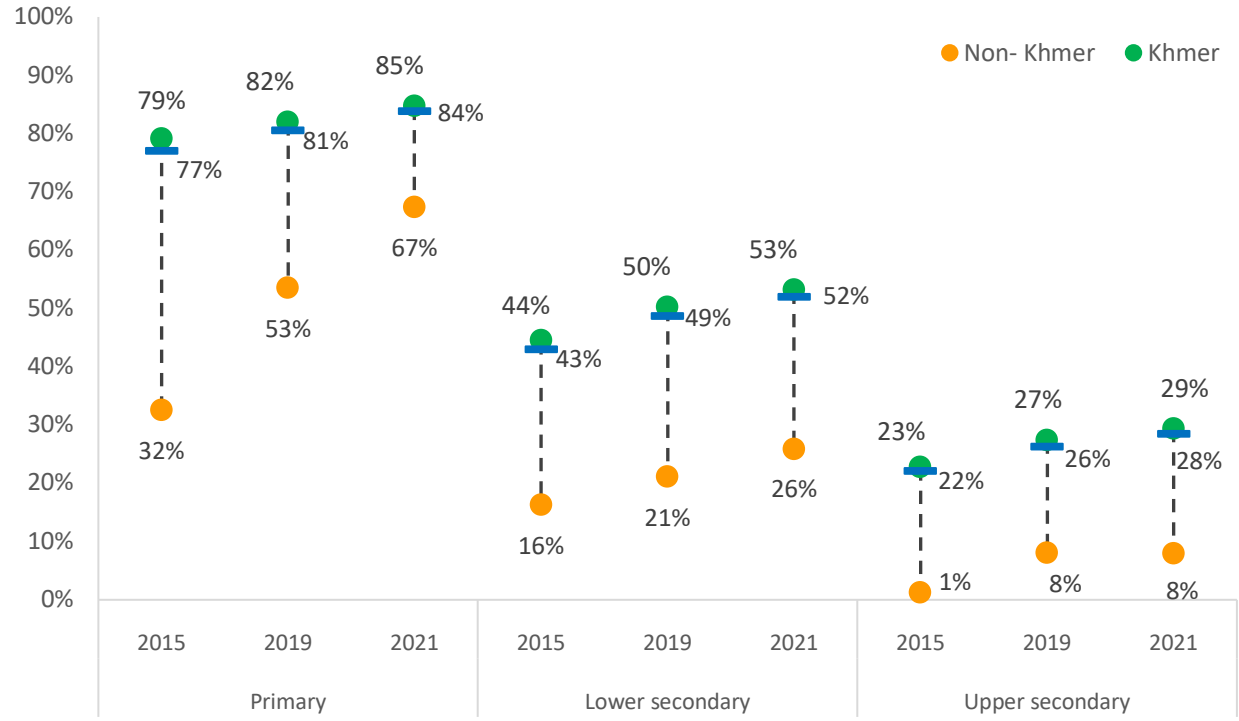
Figure 12 School Completion Rate by Educational Level and Disability Status, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, (2015, 2019, 2021).

Since 2015, the disparity between Khmer and non-Khmer students at the primary level has declined. Notably, the proportion of non-Khmer students completing primary education doubled from 32.4% in 2015 to 67.3% in 2021. On the other hand, even though the total completion rates for lower and lower secondary education have increased steadily, the gaps between Khmer and non-Khmer students in upper secondary have remained almost unchanged, demonstrating continued barriers for non-Khmer students in accessing the highest levels of education.

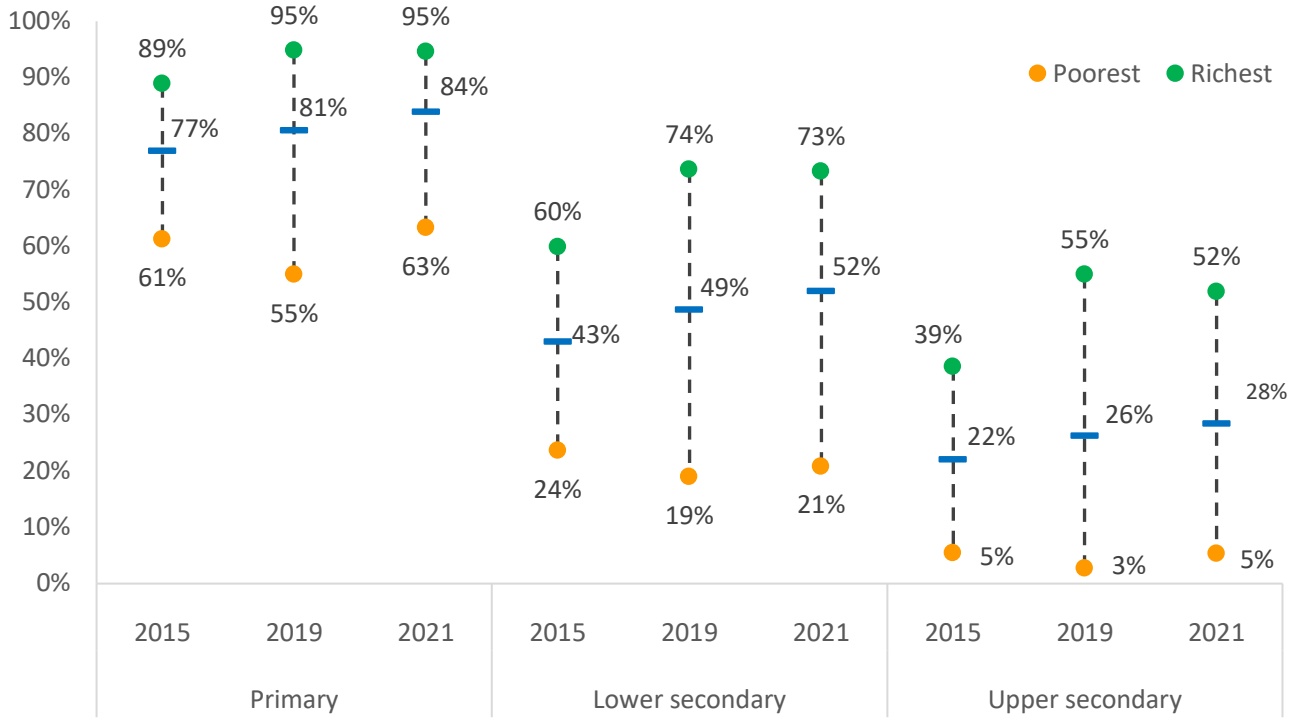
Figure 13 School Completion Rate by Educational Level and Indigeneity, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, (2015, 2019, 2021).

In terms of economic disparities, the gaps between the richest and the poorest populations have grown larger at all levels of education. Completion rates for all three levels of education have largely increased for the top wealth quintile, whereas almost no change is observed for the bottom quintile.

Figure 14 School Completion Rate by Educational Level and Wealth Quintile, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, (2015, 2019, 2021).

Indicator 4.1.3- Gross Intake ratio to the last grade

Indicator 4.1.3- Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education)

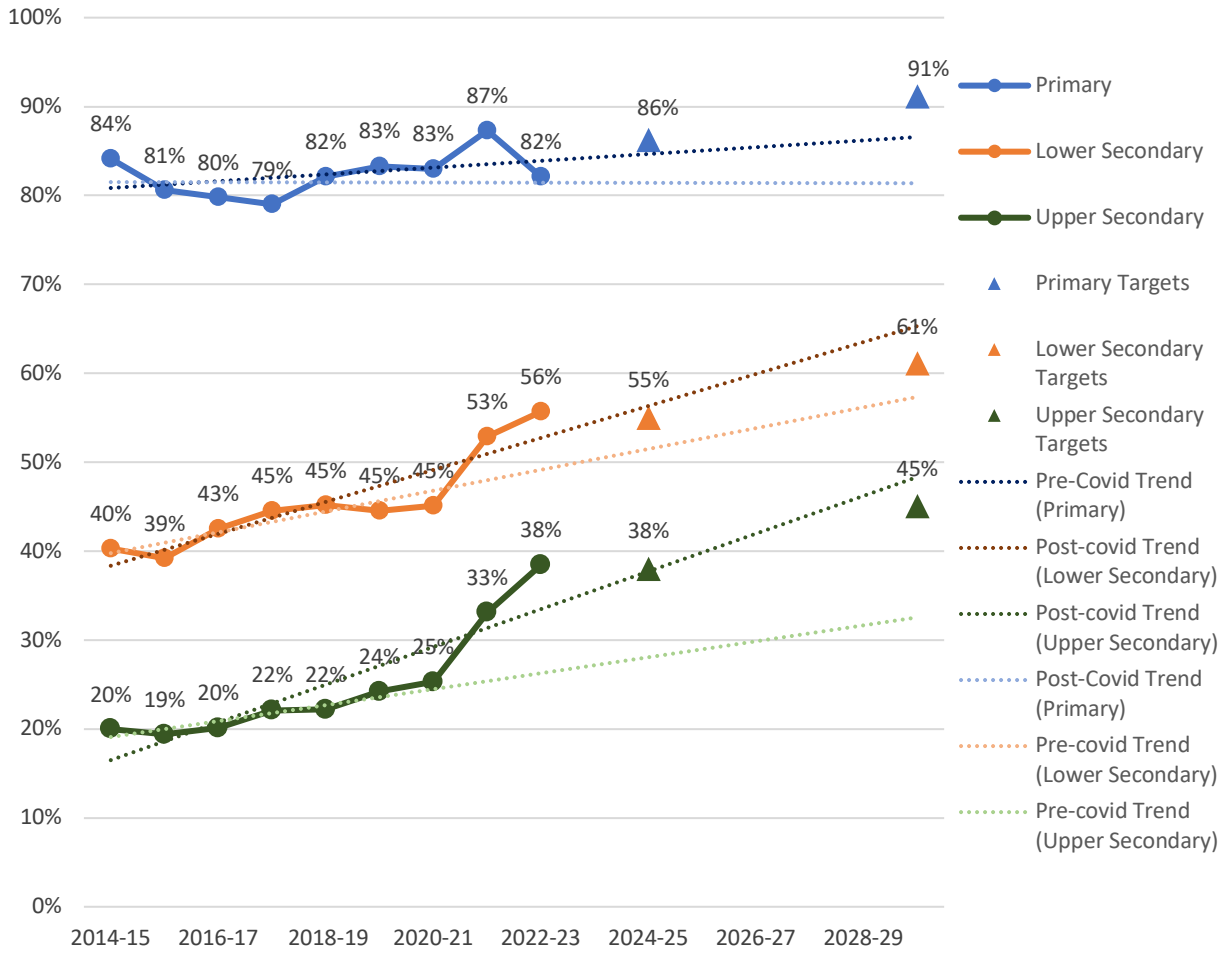
Indicator 4.1.3, gross intake ratio to the last grade, is a proxy measure of primary or secondary completion generated based on administrative data such as EMIS. It assumes that pupils entering the last grade for the first time will eventually complete the grade and the given level of education.

Variable impacts of COVID-19 on retention by education level

At the primary level, following some declining trends between 2014 and 2016, the gross intake ratio progressed positively from 2017 until it reached its peak in 2021. However, there was a dip from 87.3% in 2021 to 82.1% in 2022. This trend could be attributed to the pandemic, which saw many students not return following periods of school closure. Even if pre-COVID-19 trends were to continue, the indicator would not meet the 2030 benchmark, despite meeting the 2025 benchmark.

At the lower and upper secondary levels, overall upward trends are observed with a significant acceleration over the past three years. If the recent trend continues, it is forecasted that Cambodia would achieve both 2025 and 2030 targets at both lower and upper secondary levels. However, caution is needed for the recent steep increase in this indicator, as it may be due in part to the automatic grade promotion exercised in many secondary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this way, while primary completion was negatively affected by the pandemic, secondary completion saw an increase as a result of the automatic promotion policy. Examining pre-COVID-19 trends, before the implementation of this policy, trends for upper and lower secondary both fall short of meeting 2025 and 2030 targets.

Figure 15 Gross Intake Ratio to the Final Year by Education Cycle, 2014/15-2022/23.



Source: EMIS data, 2014/15-2022/23.

Indicator 4.1.4- Out-of-school rate

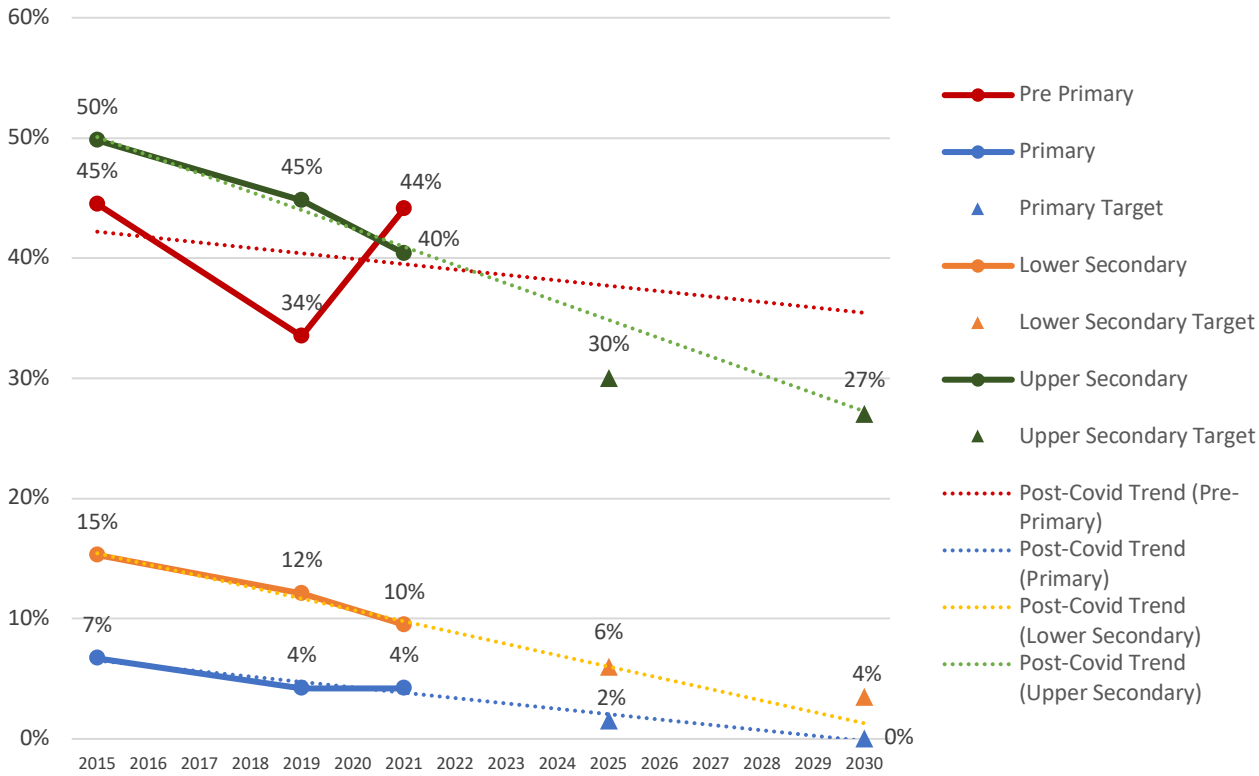
Indicator 4.1.4- Out-of-school rate (1 year before primary, primary education, lower secondary education, and upper secondary education)

Indicator 4.1.4 indicates the out-of-school rate for students at four different levels of education, pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary. The out-of-school rate represents the proportion of children of the official school going age, which in Cambodia is 3-5 years-old for pre-primary, 6-11 for primary, 12-14 for lower secondary and 15-17 for upper secondary, that are not enrolled in any level of education.

Nearly all primary-aged children are in-school

Overall, the out-of-school rates show downward trends, with primary education on track to reach 100% coverage by 2030. An exception is the significant increase in pre-primary out-of-school rates from 34% in 2019 to 44% 2021. This may be attributed to the pandemic as it was observed that parents may have been more fearful to reenroll younger children who were more vulnerable to the virus and who were the last cohort to be vaccinated. At the other levels of education, the out-of-school rates have been steadily decreasing since 2015 and are on track to meet the 2025 and 2030 targets.

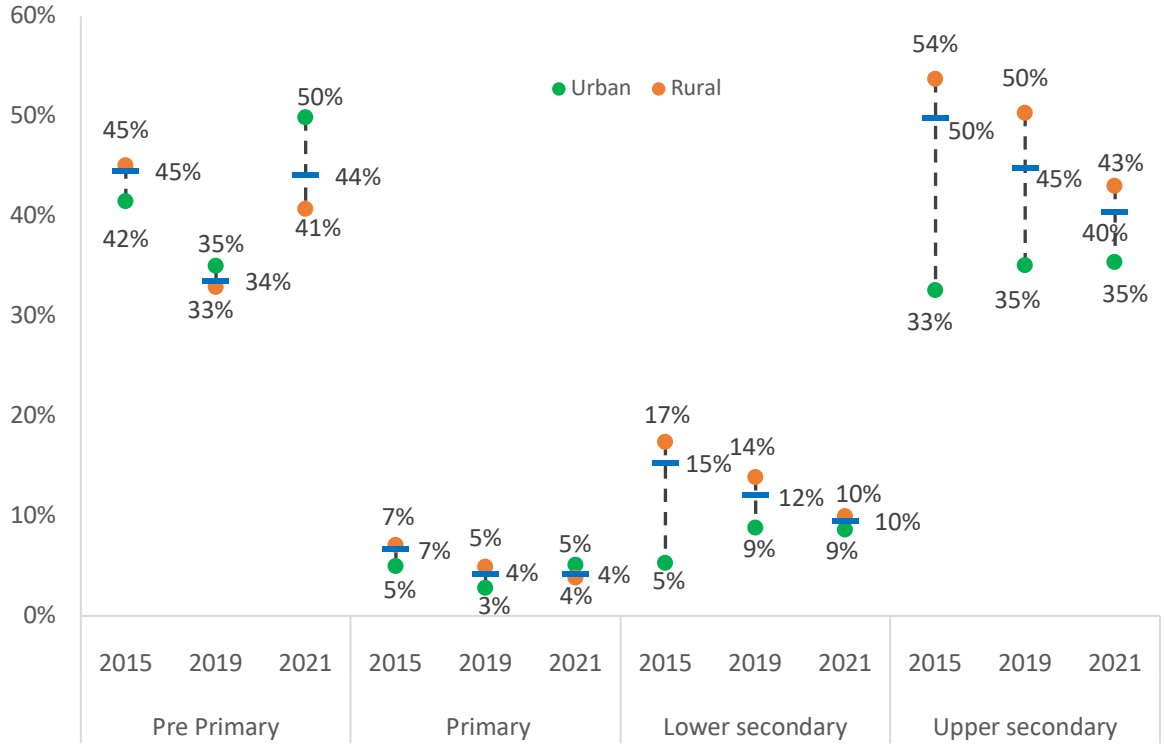
Figure 16 Out of School Rate by Education Level, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019, 2021.

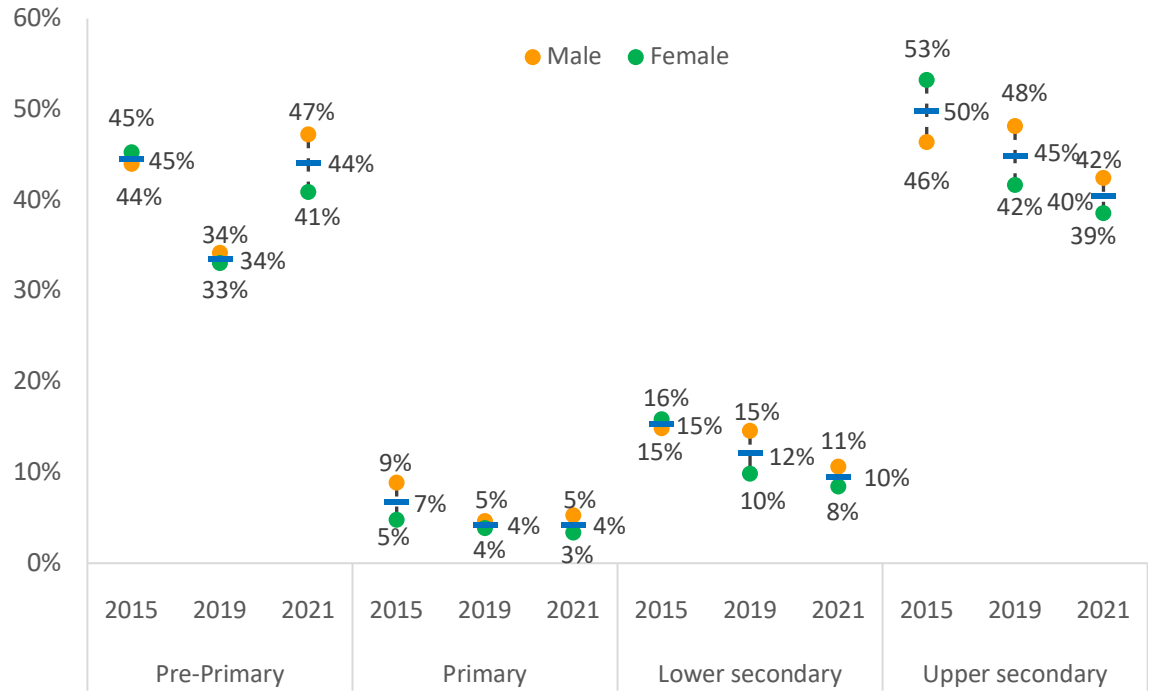
The disparity analysis of the out-of-school rates indicate that after the pandemic, urban and rural gaps have been significantly narrowing at lower and upper secondary levels while they have widened slightly at the pre-primary level. Additionally, disparities according to locality are relatively limited across the lower levels, with the most significant gap of 8 percentage points observed in upper secondary. Similarly, disparities according to gender are also limited across education levels, while non-Khmer populations are observed to have higher out-of-school rates than Khmer populations at all levels except pre-primary.

Figure 17 Out of School Rate by Education Level and Locality, 2015-2021.



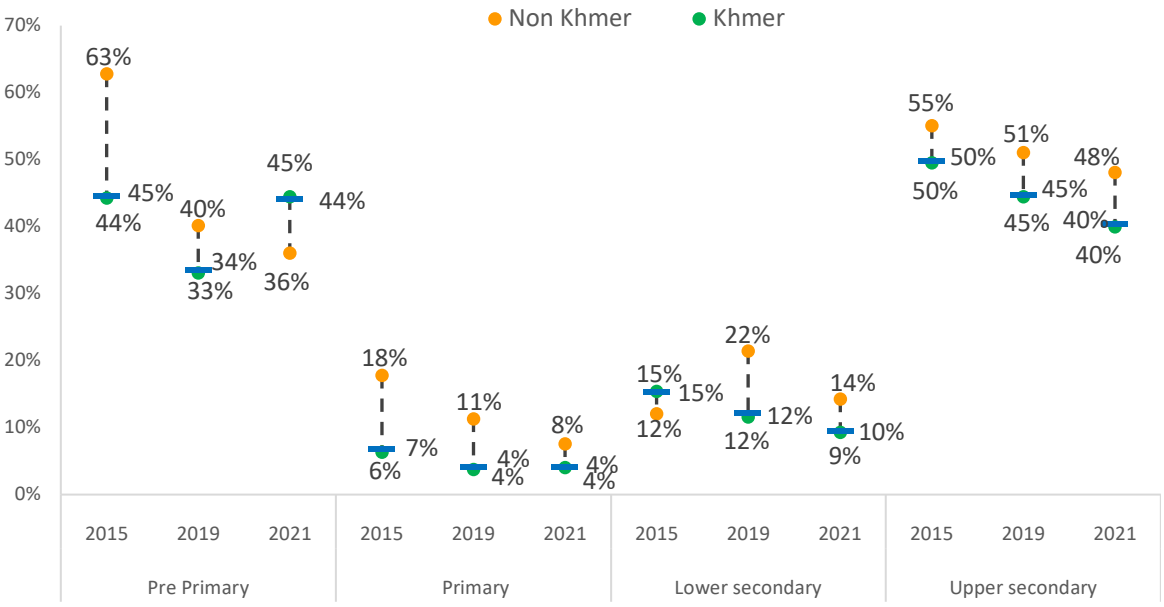
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 18 Out of School Rate by Education Level and Gender, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

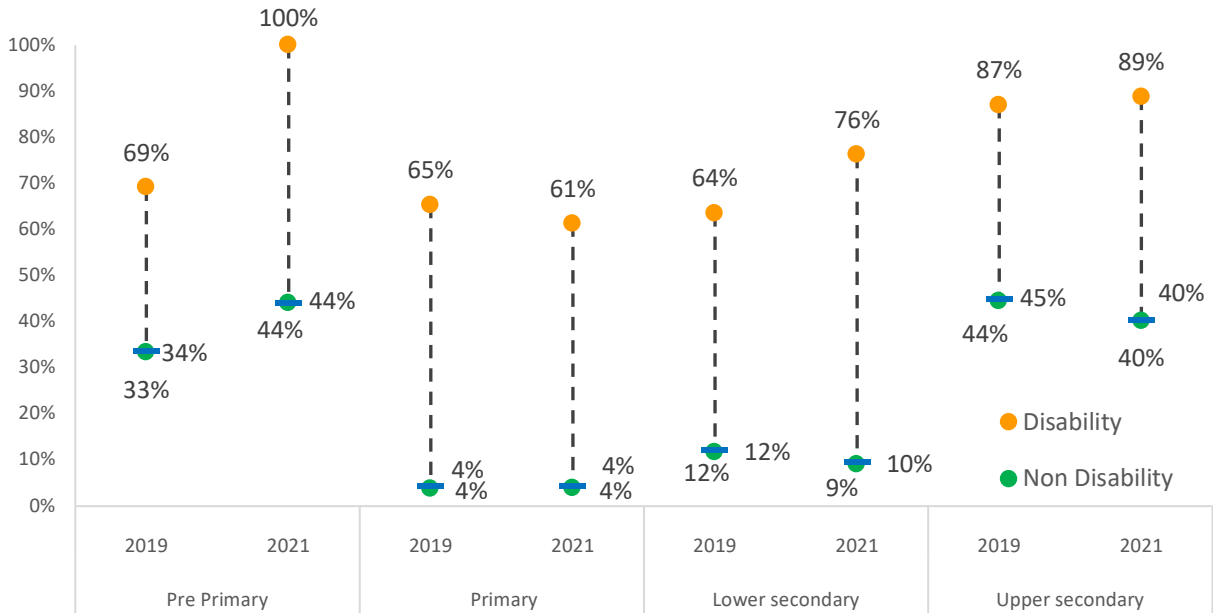
Figure 19 Out of School Rate by Education Level and Indigeneity, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

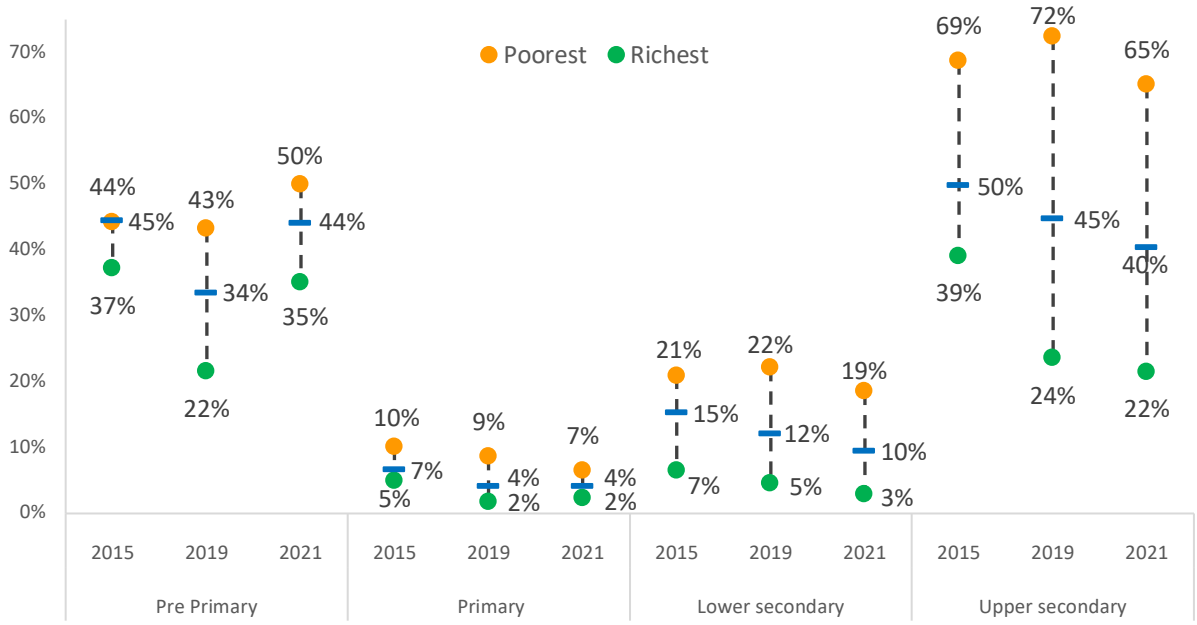
Disparities according to disability status and wealth quintile are observed to be the greatest, with children with disparities fifteen-times more likely to be out-of-school at the primary level than their non-disabled counterparts. These gaps have also been seen to grow over time, particularly at the secondary level, suggesting current efforts towards inclusive education are still falling short. The gap between out-of-school rates for the poorest and richest wealth quintile are largest at the pre-primary and upper secondary levels suggesting that it is these levels that continue to have the highest direct and indirect costs to access.

Figure 20 Out of School Rate by Education Level and Disability Status, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 21 Out of School Rate by Education Level and Wealth Quintile, 2015-2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

SDG 4.1- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Learning outcomes: Key Challenges

Student learning outcomes in both primary and secondary are concerningly low, with many students not demonstrating basic proficiency in math and reading. Furthermore, declining trends are observed for grade six and grade eight students in math and grade six students in reading and evidence has shown high-levels of learning loss as a result of school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. Progress in improving learning outcomes has been stalled by various challenges including weak and unqualified school leadership, a lack of community participation and outdated teaching practices related to an underqualified teaching workforce. Amongst school leaders, many are observed to be unqualified and untrained meaning they are unable to support their teachers in improving their teaching practices and further lack the skills to appropriately manage schools. Furthermore, loss of teaching hours is a persistent issue research citing that an average of five weeks out of a 38-week school year are lost, representing around 120-150 hours of learning per year. This has been related to teacher absenteeism, early school closure and unplanned/prolonged holidays. Additionally, parents and communities are observed to be not actively engaged in school communities, meaning they are not supporting children's' continued learning at home. Finally, while data regarding learning outcomes in early childhood education are not available, the low rate of participation in ECE (see benchmark 4.2) suggests that student lack school readiness which may impact on their learning achievement further down the line.

Teaching quality is a persistent challenge which is seen to negatively affect learning outcomes. While the proportion of teachers that are considered qualified according to national standards is relatively high (see indicator 4.c), many teachers are seen to lack pedagogical knowledge specific to their level of teaching. Additionally, teachers face multiple stressors including double shift teaching and multigrade lessons which can degrade the quality of education they offer in the classroom. Finally, materials to support learning including teachers guides and textbooks are limited in supply, with low-level of school-level financing further preventing schools from purchasing necessary materials to support improved learning.

Learning outcomes: Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Various policies and programmes have been and are currently being implemented in an aim to improve basic proficiencies in math and literacy as are detailed further in Annex 1. A major effort has been the introduction of the Early Grade Learning program with an aim to support the development of foundational mathematics and literacy skills, to thus improve learning outcomes throughout students schooling career. Thus far, the reading program has been rolled out in all primary schools in 19 provinces across the country and the maths program in all primary schools across eight provinces, with plans to expand this coverage. The EGL program is also accompanied by a comprehensive teacher mentoring system to support teaching practices in the classroom. MoEYS has also concentrated on improving the quality of core textbooks for Khmer, Mathematics and Social Studies to integrate student-centered pedagogies and ensure alignment with national learning assessments. Pre-service teacher training has also been targeted through the upgrading of teacher training colleges while multiple in-service teacher training opportunities have been provided including upgrading for unqualified staff.

Educational access and completion: Key Challenges

Cambodia has made great progress towards achieving SDG benchmark 4.1 notably in terms of improved completion across all levels of education, improved enrollment particularly in secondary, and a correspondingly decreasing out of school rate, despite interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this progress, inequalities in educational access and completion persist, with the greatest disparities observed between the poorest and richest wealth quintiles and between disabled and non-disabled students. This indicates that indirect and opportunity costs to education remain high, especially at the higher levels of education, and that ensuring learners with disabilities are incorporated into the mainstream system remains a significant challenge. An element which drives up opportunities costs for Cambodian youth in attending secondary education are the high rates of internal and external migration observed in the country, with secondary students often interrupting their studies in search of income-generating

opportunities elsewhere. Low retention can also be attributed to the low learning outcomes observed in indicator 4.1.1, which can reduce student's motivation to remain in school.

Educational access and completion: Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Since 2015, the RGC has enacted various policies and programs to integrate more students into the education system, particularly at the secondary level. The details of these can be found in Annex 1 and have included school feeding, inclusive education programming, multi-lingual education, re-enrollment programs and scholarship distribution. School feeding and scholarships are specific measures that have been put in place to address the economic disparities observed in educational access and retention, with plans to create a more efficient and targeted scholarship program under consideration. Development partners in collaboration with the RGC have also sought to improve the capacity of officials and institutions at national and sub-national levels to develop targeted policies to support under-represented groups such as ethnic minorities and disabled populations. Priorities moving forward include improving the relevance of education, particularly through the integration of local life skills and 21st century skills pedagogies, in order to improve student retention.

SDG 4.2- Equal access to quality pre-primary education

Target 4.2- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

Target 4.2 reaffirms the importance of laying a strong foundation for learning early on, through good quality, inclusive early childhood development, care and education. Target 4.2 recognizes that a holistic approach to early childhood education can unlock great development potential. Among the many benefits is the reduction in developmental delays, improved learning outcomes and the mitigation of disparities amongst disadvantaged groups. The selected target specifically emphasizes nurturing children to develop the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and physical capabilities through organized early-learning, that prepare them to participate in primary education and beyond.

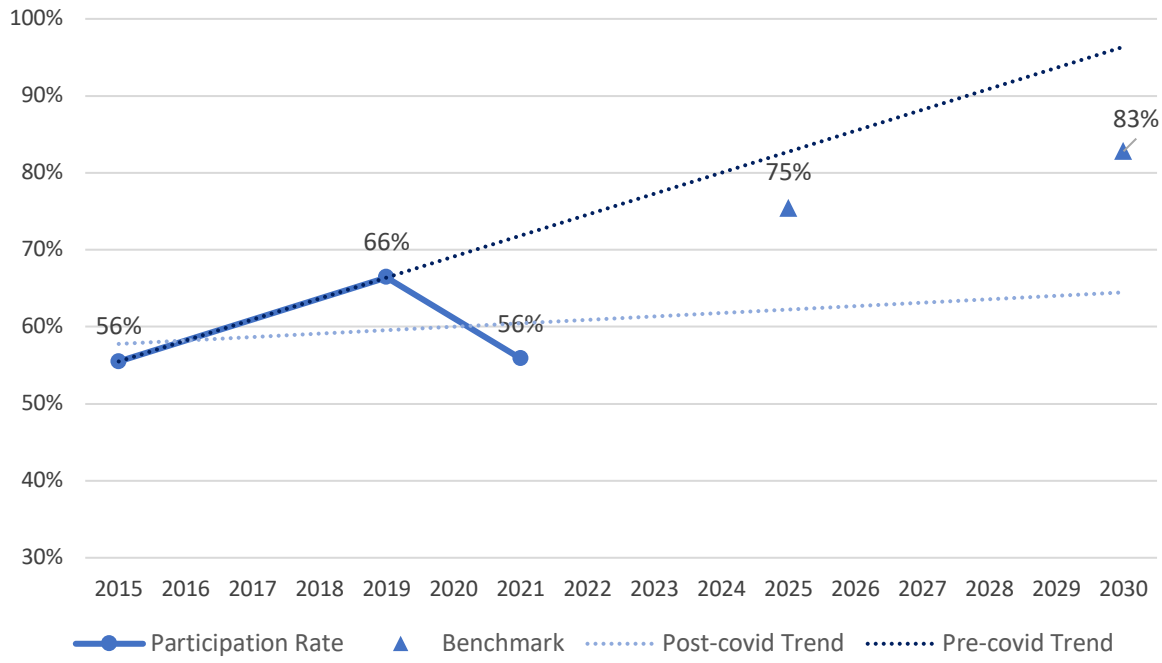
Indicator 4.2.2- Participation rate one year before primary education

Indicator 4.2.2- Participation rate in organized learning (one year before primary education)

COVID-19 severely interrupted positive progress

Indicator 4.2.2 represents the participation rate of students in organized, one year prior to primary education (or at 5 years of age). The definition of organized learning in this indicator goes beyond pre-primary education and includes any programs which offer a combination of education and care, with can include day-care centers or early-learning play groups. The participation rate showed a significant increase from 55.5% in 2015 to 66.4% in 2019. If this pre-pandemic trend had continued, Cambodia would have comfortably surpassed the benchmark targets. However, the upward trend was reserved in 2021, with participation decreasing to 55.9%. This dip can be linked to the pandemic as pre-primary education was one of the hardest hit sub-sectors as a result of many factors, including the low capacity of the Ministry to deliver distance learning for pre-primary classes as well as the limited effectiveness of online classes for pre-primary aged students. If progress continued according to this trend, Cambodia would fall short of SDG benchmarks. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess whether progress had been made in reversing this trend since entering the phase of pandemic recovery, as there is no data available for after 2021.

Figure 22 Participation Rate one year before Primary Education, 2015-2021.

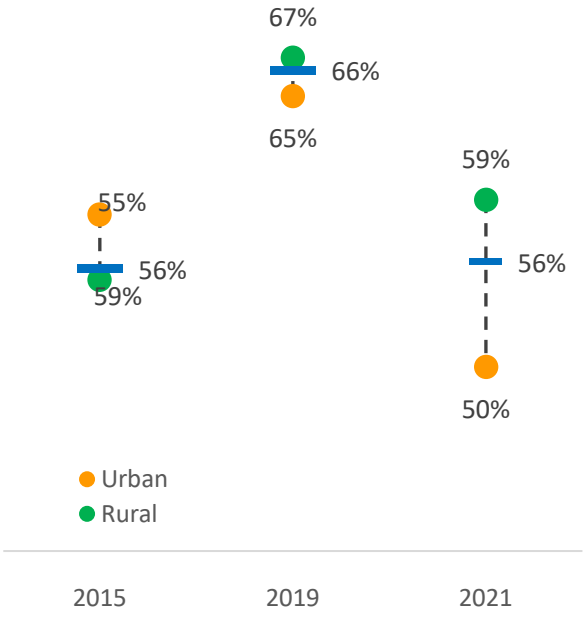


Sou*rce: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.*

Inequalities in early learning participation worsening

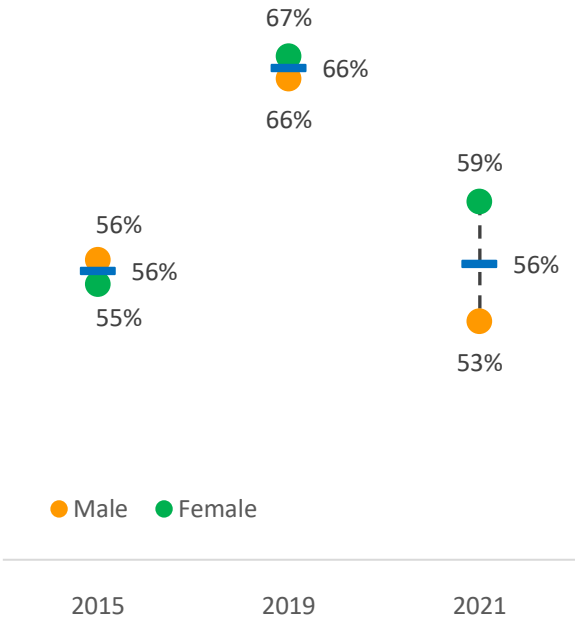
An unexpected trend is observed amongst rural and urban populations, with rural students increasingly demonstrating higher participation rates than their urban counterparts, with participation rates amongst rural populations surpassing urban in 2021. This may suggest that urban population were more severely impact during the pandemic, with stricter COVID-19 regulations in urban centers a potential contributing factor to this trend. When considering participation rates by gender, an overall general decline in observed from 2015 to 2021 for both boys and girls. Gender inequality has also been seen to increase overtime, with the gap between participation rates of girls and boys growing from 1% to 6% in favor of girls. This further suggests that male participation suffered disproportionately more than females as a result of the pandemic.

Figure 23 Participation rate one year before primary by locality, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

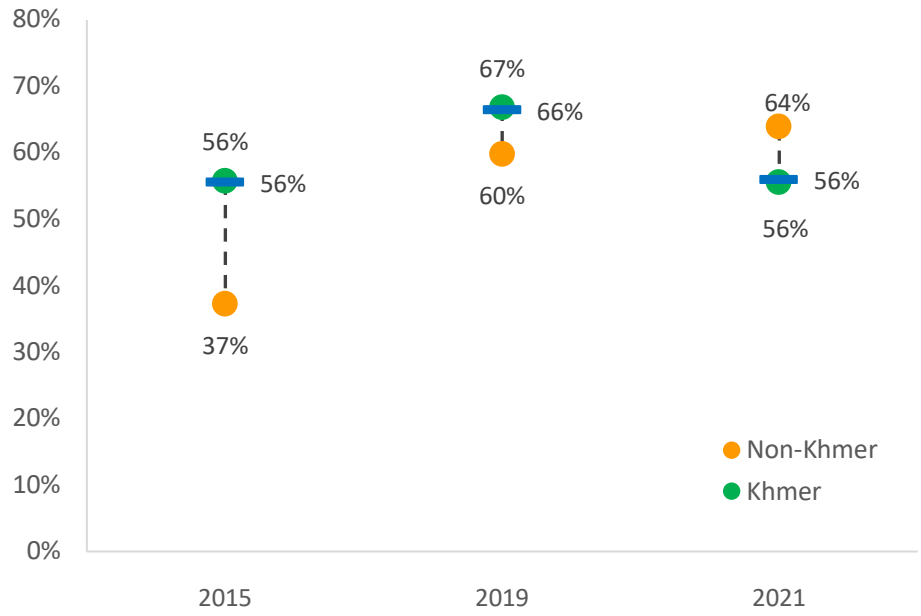
Figure 24 Participation rate one year before primary by gender, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

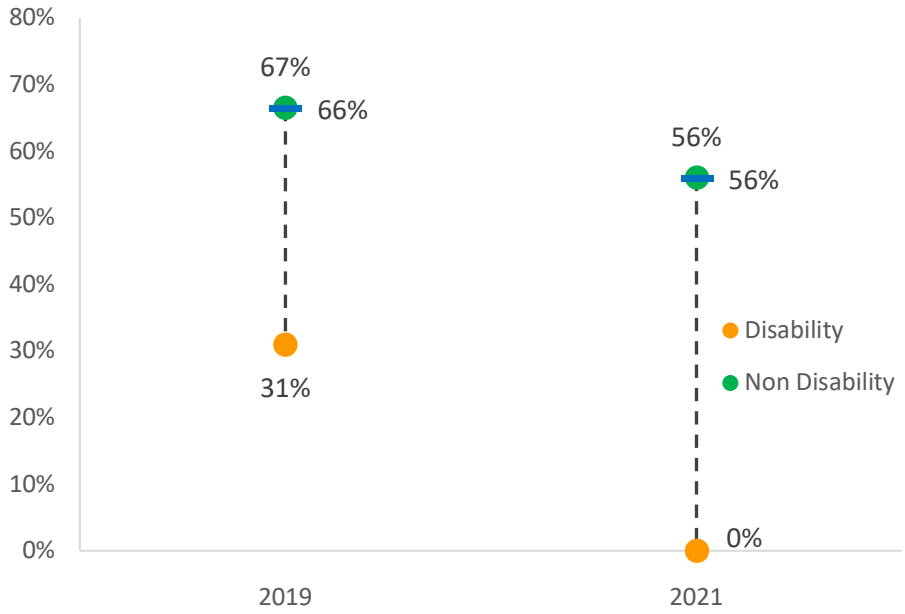
The disparity analysis between Khmer and non-Khmer students reveals that from 2015 to 2019, there was a significant improvement in the overall participation of both groups, along with increasing equity. Khmer students showed a higher participation rate than their counterparts in 2015 and 2019, however, in 2021 the trend inverted with non-Khmer students showing higher participation rates. This could be as a result of the fact that stricter COVID-19 regulations were applied in urban areas than rural areas, where non-Khmer populations are concentrated. The greatest disparities are, as with basic and secondary education, observed between non-disabled and disabled students, with the gap in participation rates growing from 2019 to 2021. Within the small sample of children aged 5 years with disabilities in CSES 2021, none of them had participated in early learning programs in 2021. The gap between learners from the poorest and richest wealth quintiles are seen to have evolved unevenly, with five-years old's from the richest quintile still almost 1.3 times more likely to have participated in early learning than those from the poorest.

Figure 25 Participation rate one year before primary by indigeneity, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



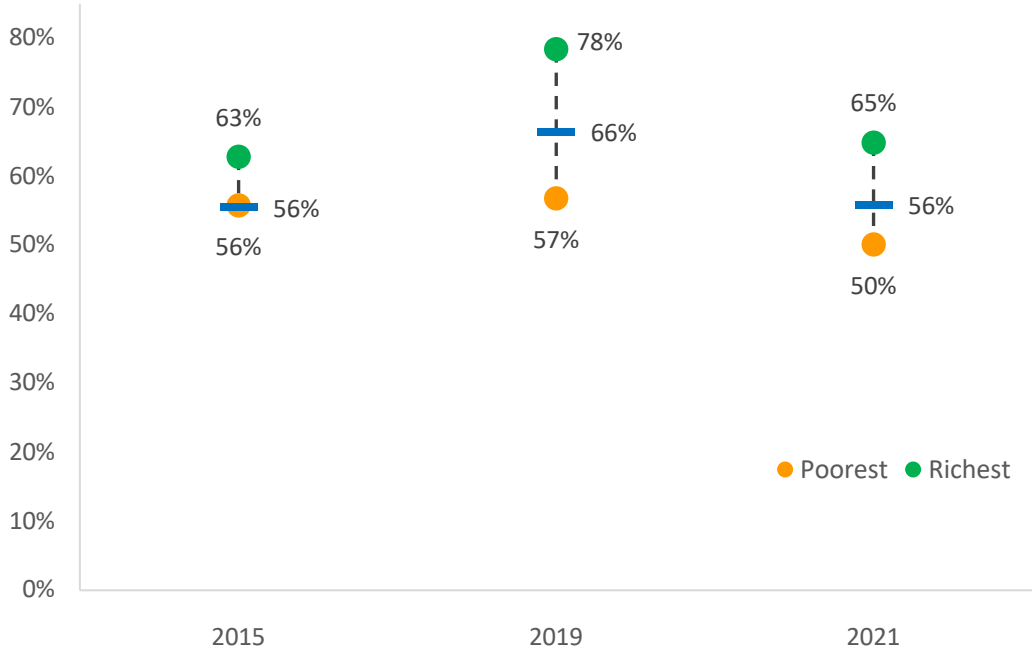
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 26 Participation rate one year before primary by disability status, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 27 Participation rate one year before primary by wealth quintile, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



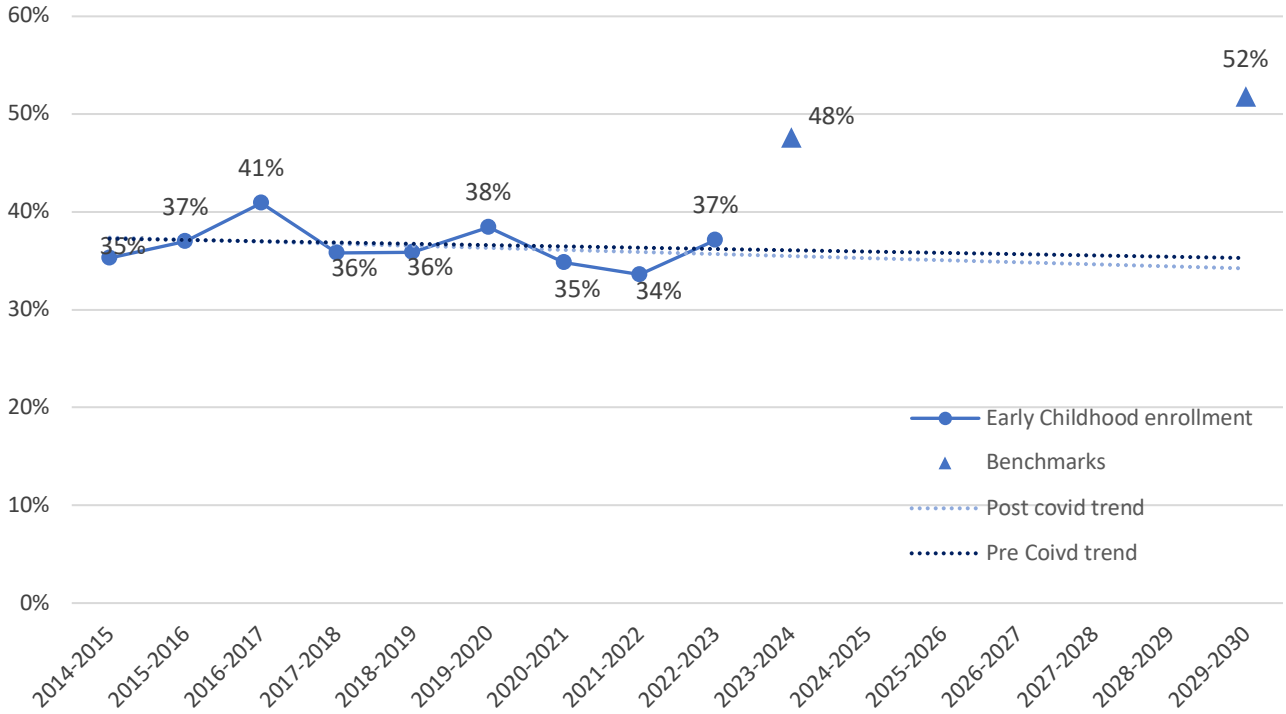
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Indicator 4.2.4- Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio

Indicator 4.2.4- Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio in (a) pre-primary education and (b) early childhood educational development

Indicator 4.2.4 measures the gross early childhood education enrolment ratio for children aged 3-5 years based on EMIS data. Unlike indicator 4.2.2, this provides a snapshot of the rate of participation in formal, pre-primary education programs, which are seen to improve primary readiness. The evolution of gross enrolment in pre-primary shows an uneven trend from 2014 to 2022, with the GER increasing from 35% to 41% between 2014 and 2019, before declining in 2018. This decline showed evidence of recovery; however, this was negatively impacted by the pandemic with decreases observed in 2021 and 2022. While there is evidence of post-pandemic recovery, both the post and pre covid trends indicate that Cambodia is not in line to achieve 2025 and 2030 benchmarks, with a target of 51.8% in 2030 compared to 37.1% in 2023.

Figure 28 Gross Enrolment Ratio Early Childhood Education, 2014/25-2022/23.



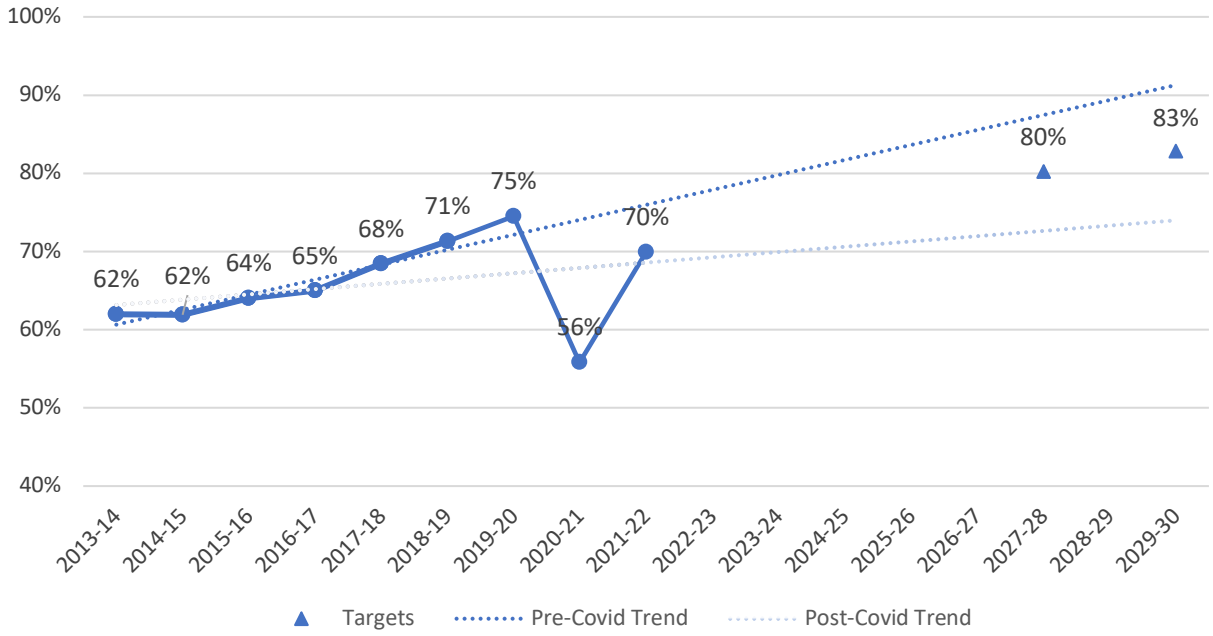
Source: EMIS data, 2014/15-2022/23.

Indicator 4.2.N- Percentage of Grade 1 pupils with ECCE experience

Indicator 4.2.N- Percentage of grade one children who have attended one year of formal early childhood education and care programing

Indicator 4.2.N is a national indicator selected in the Cambodia Education 2030 roadmap and reflects the proportion of grade one pupils that have attended formal ECE. This indicator is therefore similar to that of 4.2.2, while providing further information regarding the transition from ECE programming to primary. Furthermore, as this is a question that is asked to new students entering grade one, EMIS data has been utilized for the calculation of this indicator. Similar trends are observed as to 4.2.2, with steady progress observed in this indicator from 2014 to 2020, increasing from 62% to 75%, followed by a steep decline to 56% in 2021 as a result of the pandemic. Recovery has been strong, rebounding back to 70% in 2023, or almost pre-pandemic levels. If this positive recovery is sustained, it is possible that Cambodia will meet national roadmap targets, however sustained effort in the early-childhood education sector needs to be maintained.

Figure 29 Proportion of Grade One Students with ECCE Experience, 2014/25-2022/23.



Source: EMIS data, 2014/25-2022/23.

SDG 4.2- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

Access to pre-primary education has grown significantly since 2015, however evidence shows that this growth has mainly been within the 5-year age group, meaning younger children are still not benefiting from the full-cycle of early learning. Evidence has shown this to be related to a of a lack of parental understanding about the value of pre-primary education, with many families believing that 3 and 4 years old is too young for a child to be enrolled in school. Additionally, many community pre-schools, which are a major provider of pre-primary education in Cambodia, only offer one class level, further limiting the availability of classes for 3- and 4-year-olds. An additional challenge at the pre-primary level has been a lack of infrastructure. In Cambodia, pre-primary classes are often established as an extension of primary schools. As such, in schools where sufficient classroom space does not exist to establish a pre-primary school, this sub-sector is often excluded, especially in a resource constrained environment where the flexibility for schools to construct new classrooms is generally limited.

While the SDG 4.2 indicators do not directly consider pre-school quality, the perceived low-quality of pre-primary classes serves as a further barrier to enrolment. Not only is there a shortage of preschool teachers leading to high pupil-teacher ratios at the pre-primary level, but current teachers are also largely unqualified to teach specifically at the pre-primary level. With only one public pre-primary teacher training institute currently operational, the system currently

lacks the capacity to expand and provide the necessary supply of qualified educators for pre-primary classes. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic was observed to have a disproportionate impact on early childhood education, with distance learning programs proving less effective for young children. Furthermore, as younger children are seen as more vulnerable, many parents were reluctant to send their ECE aged children back to school upon school reopening, especially considering this age group was the last to have access to vaccinations.

Key Interventions

MoEYS has sought to strengthen both the provision and quality of early-childhood education in recent years, with a major development being the introduction of the National Action Plan on Early Childhood Care and Development 2022-2026. The action plan lays out the roadmap for the development of the sub-sector including an emphasis on play-based teaching techniques. This includes expanding the network of community pre-schools, with various decrees promoting the establishment of community pre-schools, as well as their inclusion into existing public primary schools. MoEYS has also focused on engaging parents and communities in early learning through the development of guidelines on parental education on supporting ECCE, and ensuring early childhood care is holistic, as evidenced in the design and dissemination of the comprehensive nurturing care manual. Future policy and programmatic development towards 2030 benchmarks will require expanding the capacity and offer of pre-primary teacher training opportunities while also increasing further parental engagement and improving perception of the value of early learning, especially for younger children.

SDG 4.3- Equal Access to Affordable TVET and Higher Education

Target 4.3- By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

The Sustainable Development Goals integrate technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and tertiary education as central concepts in the SDG 4 and Education 2030 Agenda. Target 4.3 acknowledges that lifelong learning opportunities can help ensure youth and adults continue to evolve and contribute to sustainable economic development. The target also considers lifelong learning opportunities through a gender lens, and considers the quality of services offered.

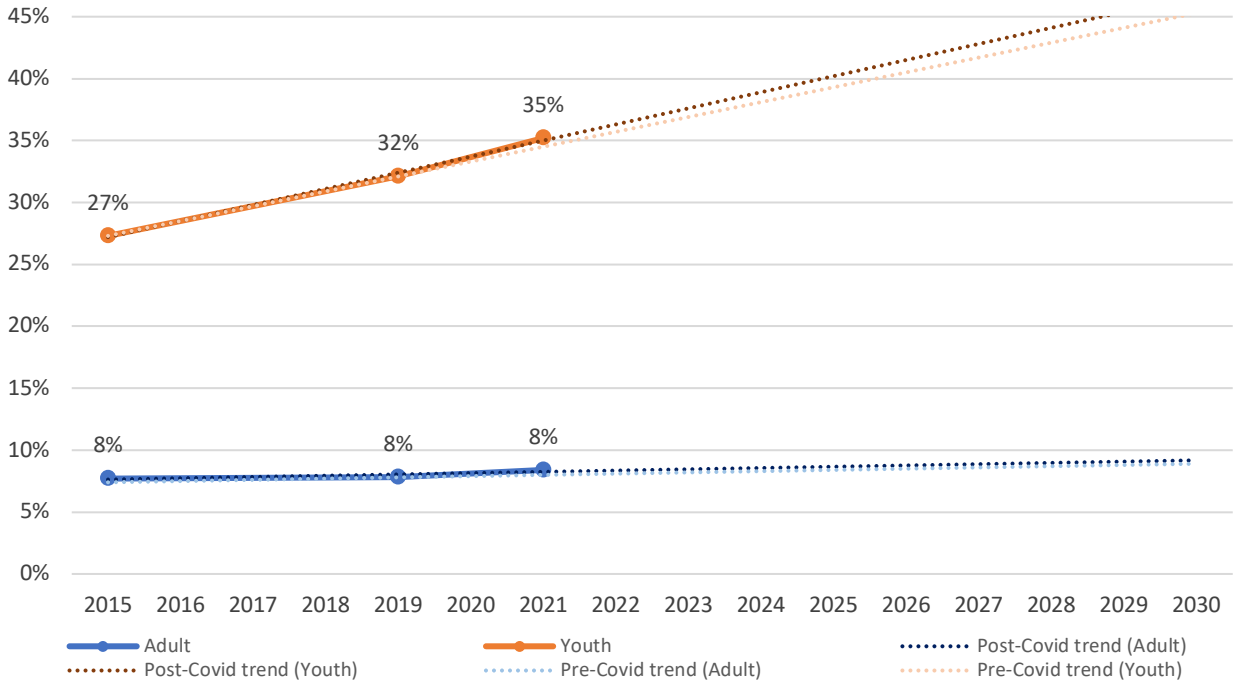
Indicator 4.3.1- Participation in education and training

Indicator 4.3.1- Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training

Improved youth participation in education and training

Indicator 4.3 examines the proportion of youth (ages 15-24) and adults (aged 15+) enrolled in any form of education, including non-formal and formal programmes, and both technical and general education. Analyzing its progress since 2015, it is found that youth have a significantly better participation rate along with a higher rate of progress over the years compared to adults. This improvement can be attributed to the increase participation of youth in upper secondary education, rather than non-formal or technical programs as; enrolment in TVET programs has remains declined (see Indicator 4.3.3), enrollment in higher education has remained stagnant (see Indicator 4.3.2) and enrollment in non-formal education remains negligible (around 40,000 in 2023). The lack of progress in enrollment by adults further suggests that the principles of life-long learning remain elusive and that adult education programs, such as literacy programs, are limited in scope.

Figure 30 Participation of Youth and Adults in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

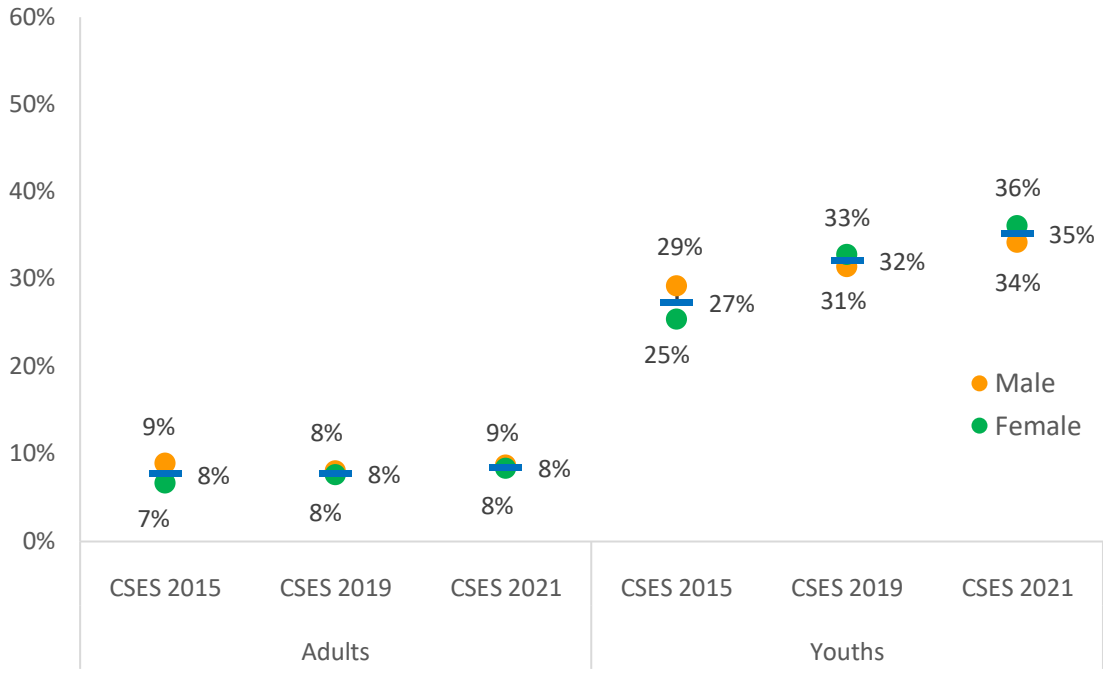


Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Adults and youth demonstrate similar trends equity considerations

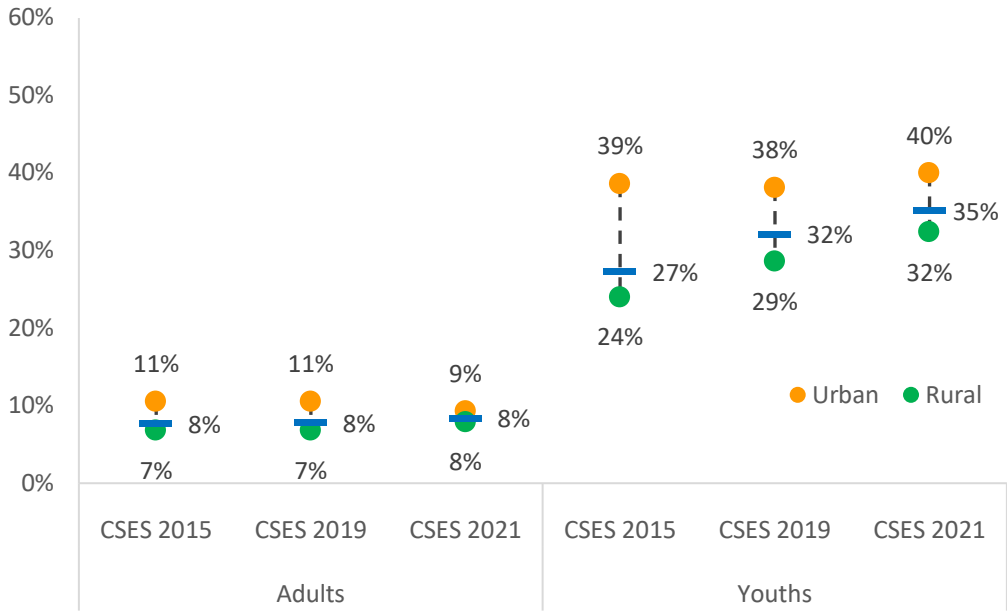
When considering gender, no large gaps are observed either in terms of youth or adult participation. The urban-rural contrast in participation rates demonstrates a positive trend with the gap narrowing from 15 points between urban and rural youth in 2015, to 8 percentage points in 2021. Similarly, the gap between urban and rural adults has come down from 4 percentage points in 2015 to a little more than one percentage point in 2021.

Figure 31 Participation Rate of Youth and Adults in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training by Gender, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

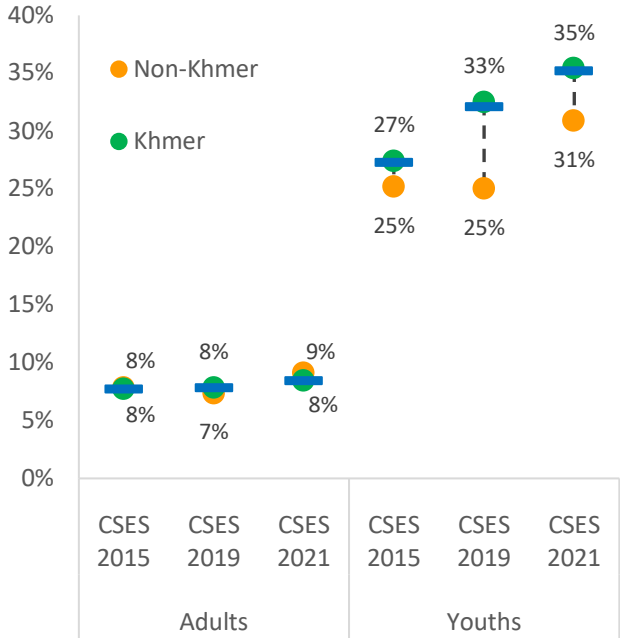
Figure 32 Participation Rate of Youth and Adults in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training by Locality, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

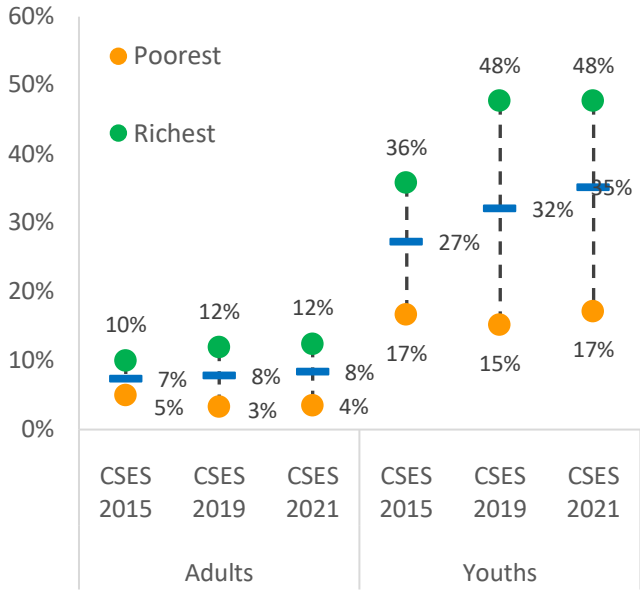
Conversely, in considering wealth quintile, there remain large gaps between the richest quintile and the poorest quintile, particularly among the youth population at 30 percentage points. This underlines the linkage between educational access and wealth, especially employment opportunities as a major motivation for dropout. Limited differences are seen between indigenous and non-indigenous populations, while disability status exhibits the greatest disparities, with non-disabled youth over six times more likely to be participating in education than their non-disabled counterparts.

Figure 33 Participation Rate of Youth and Adults in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training by Indigeneity, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



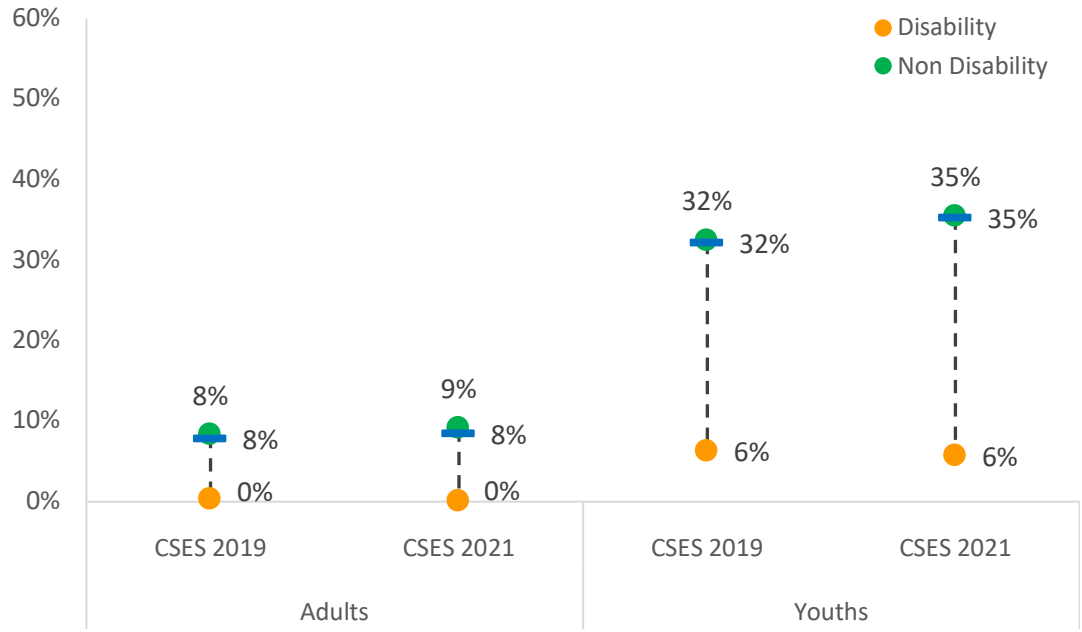
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 34 Participation Rate of Youth and Adults in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training by Wealth Quintile, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 35 Participation Rate of Youth and Adults in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training by Disability Status 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

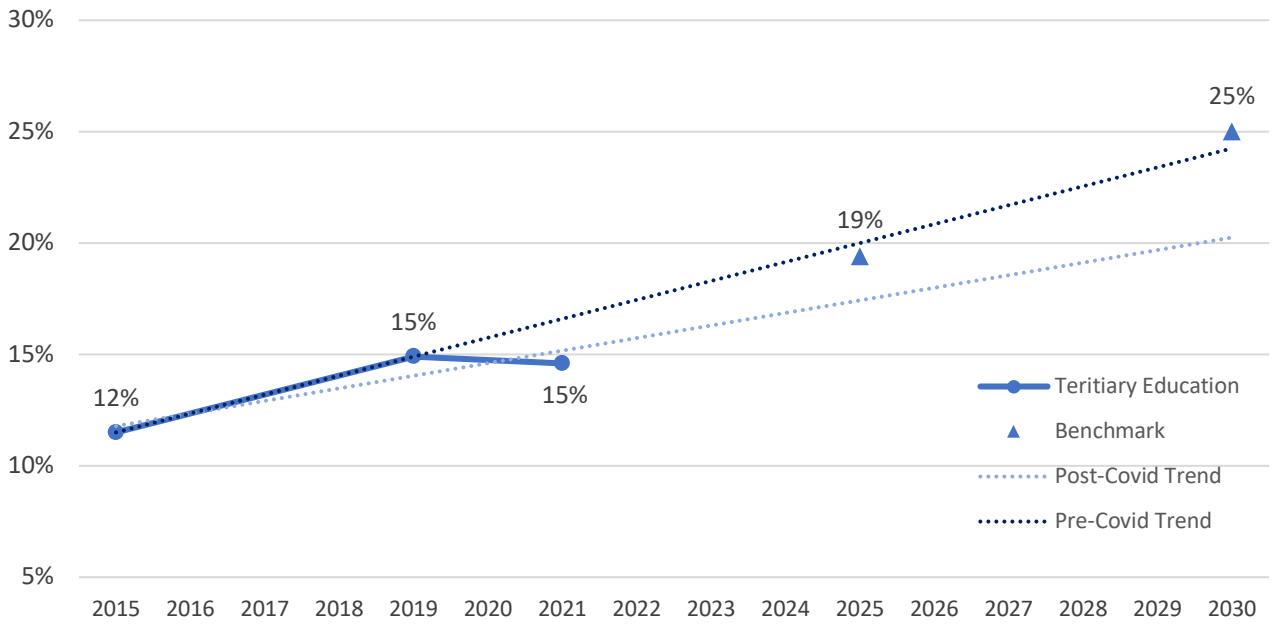
Indicator 4.3.2- Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education

Indicator 4.3.2- Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education by sex

Improved enrollment in tertiary education

The gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education demonstrates significant progress since 2015, despite a slight decline which may be related to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. If the pre-COVID-19 trend had continued, the 2025 and 2030 benchmark targets would have been achieved while the post-COVID-19 trend is below benchmarks. This evidences a need for a swift recovery and acceleration in order to get progress back on track towards the benchmark indicators**.**

Figure 36 Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

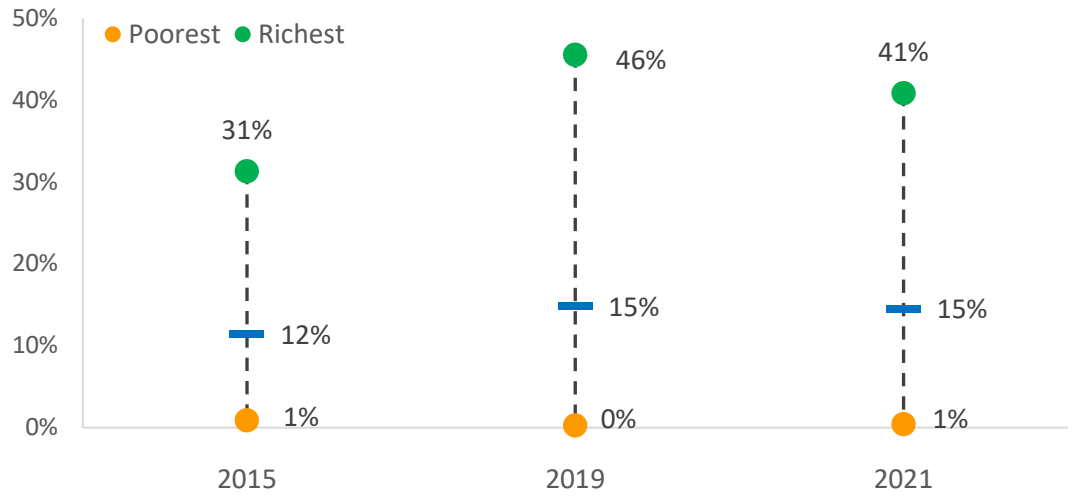


Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Complete absence of poorest populations in tertiary education

The enrollment of individuals from the poorest wealth quintile is almost inexistant according to data, with a GER of 0.5% compared to the richest wealth quintile at 41%. This suggests that financial barriers act as a major hurdle to enrollment in tertiary education and reflects the compounded effects of lower levels of enrollment of economically disadvantaged populations across all levels of education.

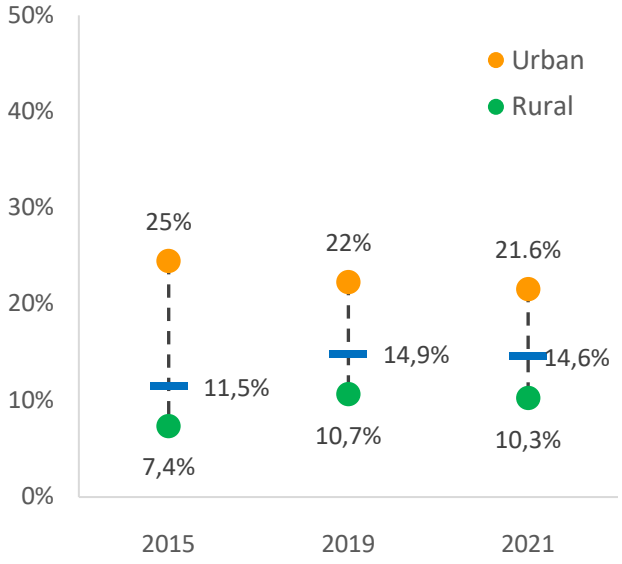
Figure 37 Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education by Wealth Quintile, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

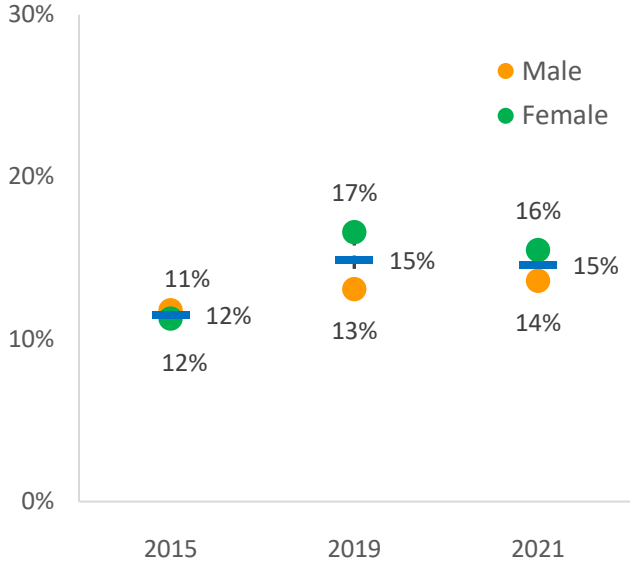
Comparatively, gender does not seem to play a huge role in tertiary enrolment, while almost parallel GERs observed. In terms of geographical disparities, it is found that urban populations have consistently had higher enrolment ratios than their rural counterparts. However, this gap is seen to have narrowed from 17 percentage points in 2015 to 12 points in 2019 to 11 points in 2021.

Figure 38 Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education by Locality, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

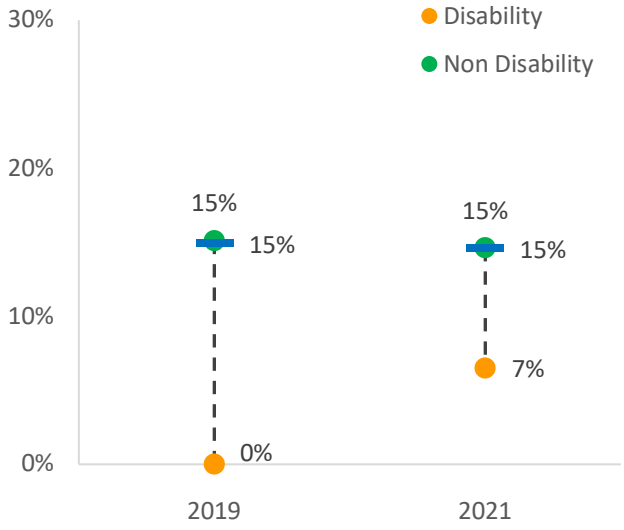
Figure 39 Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education by Gender, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

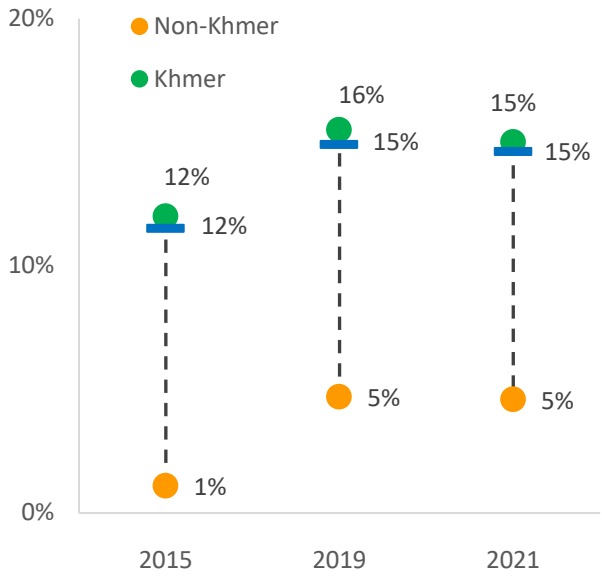
The disparity between students with and without disabilities has also shown a narrowing trend from 2019 to 2021, though caution is needed in interpreting this trend due to small sample sizes of people with disabilities in CSES data. The enrollment of non-Khmer population is also seen to have improved from 1% to 5% from 2015 to 2021, however this representation is still low.

Figure 40 Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education by Disability Status, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 41 Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education by Indigeneity, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Indicator 4.3.3- Technical-vocational programmes

Indicator 4.3.3- Participation rate in technical-vocational programmes (15-24 year-olds)

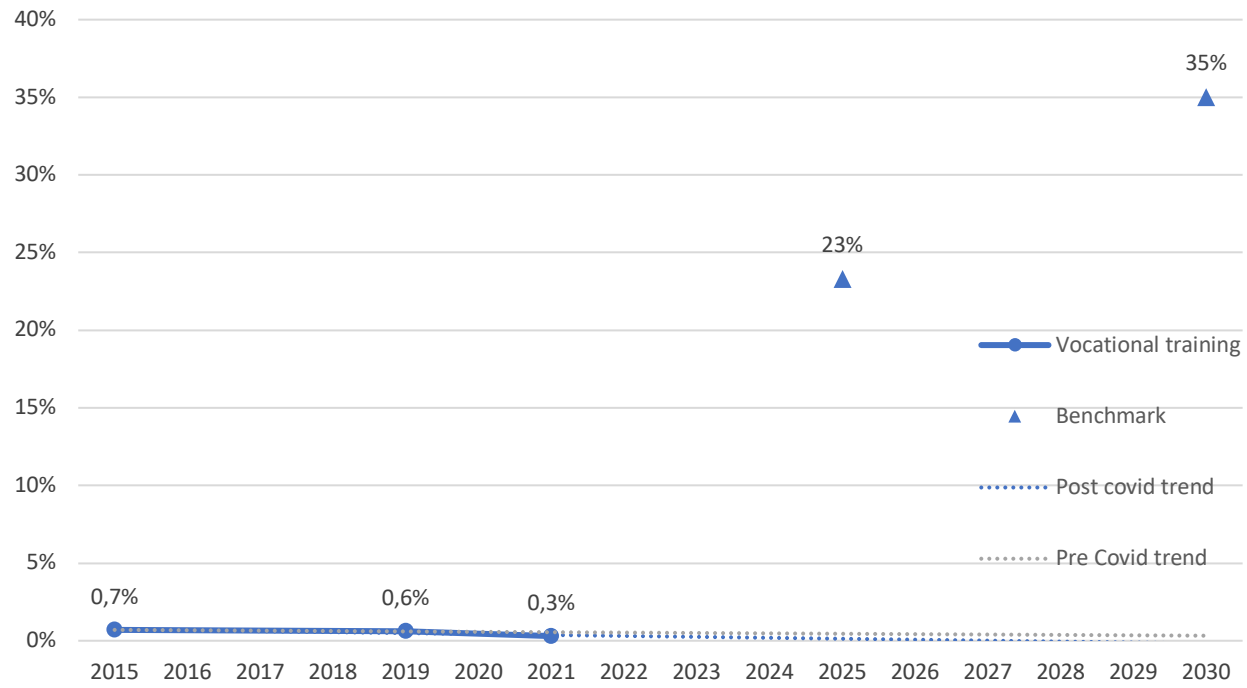
Analysis of indicator 4.3.3 in Cambodia is hampered by a lack of an accurate data source and the fragmentation of TVET programming in the country. While the data source for the calculation of this indicator should be household survey data, the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey, which is the main household survey with education-related data available in the country, does not contain clear questions regarding technical and vocational education in its questionnaires. Specifically, the questionnaires first asks whether individuals or children are currently enrolled in the school system. The phrasing of this question is problematic for TVET enrollment as many TVET programs in Cambodia function outside of the formal "school system" but are offered by other providers such as the Ministry of Labor or the Ministry of Agriculture. Secondly, if individuals answered positively to this first question, they are then asked which grade they are currently enrolled, with the 2021 survey giving options for pre- and post-secondary TVET. In doing so, this excludes those that are enrolled in technical secondary schools where they are receiving vocational programing. Accordingly, the design of the survey questionnaire may have caused severe underreporting of TVET enrollment, and as such, alternative data sources are also presented below to compliment the analysis of indicator 4.3.3.

Declining participation rate in TVET programmes according to household survey data

The rate of participation of 15–24-year-olds in technical and vocational education programmes in Cambodia is low, remaining below 1% since 2015, and demonstrates a decreasing trend. This is far below the ambitious targets set for 2025 and 2030 of 23% and 35% respectively. However, a potential caveat in

examining this indicator is that technical and vocational programs are not clearly defined in the CSES questionnaire or dataset, with an option for youth enrolled in technical secondary schools not given in the questionnaire responses. This mean that this indicator only considers those enrolled in post-graduate technical and vocational programs, which therefore excludes those that are enrolled in MoEYS technical secondary schools. Considering this current trend, it is expected that there will be zero participation in vocational programs by 2028, although this is unlikely in reality and may be attributed to the data concerns noted. Even if this negative trend was reversed, and further data collection surveys reviewed to be more inclusive, achieving the 2025 and 2030 target is extremely unlikely.

Figure 42 Participation Rate in Technical and Vocational Programmes, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

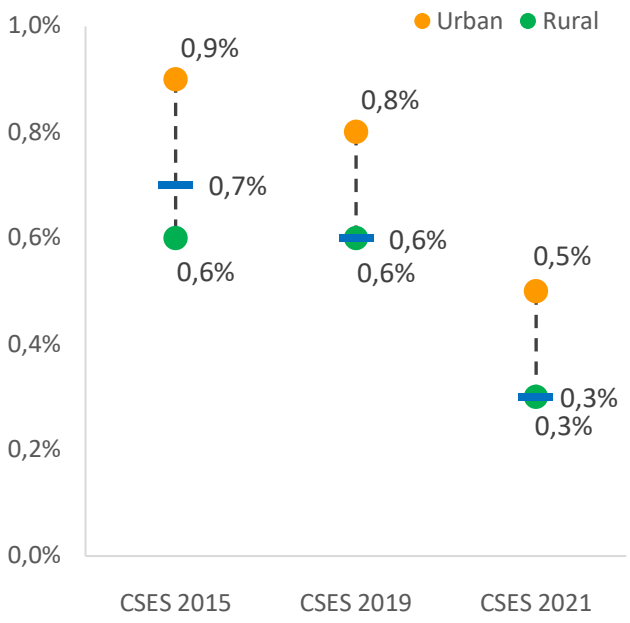


Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Low levels of disparities within limited participation

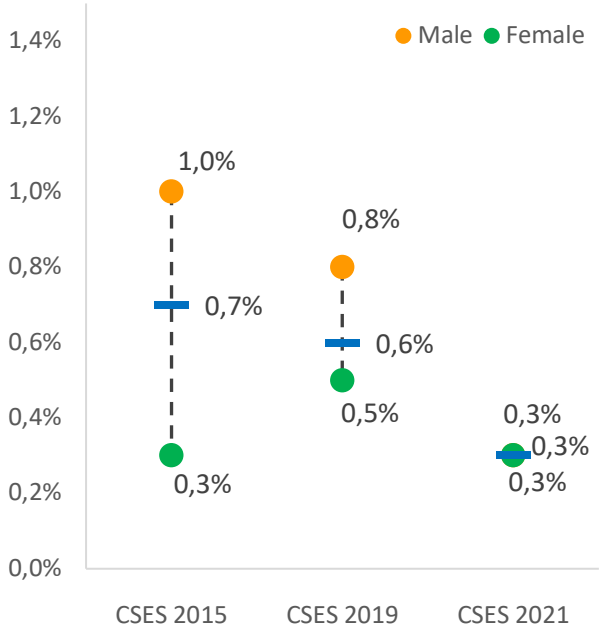
As the overall participation rate is very low, the disparities observed according to population group are limited. While it is difficult to make conclusions with such a small sample size, this does suggest that TVET programmes are more accessible for both poorer wealth quintiles, learners with disabilities and ethnic minorities. One noteworthy trend is youth having disabilities show significantly higher participation rates compared to those without disabilities in 2021. While the data does not provide sufficient information to further explain this trend, it would suggest that people with disabilities are more likely to opt for technical-vocational programmes, potentially because the barriers to accessing traditional, formal education remain high as is highlighted above.

Figure 43 Participation Rate in Technical and Vocational Programmes by Locality, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



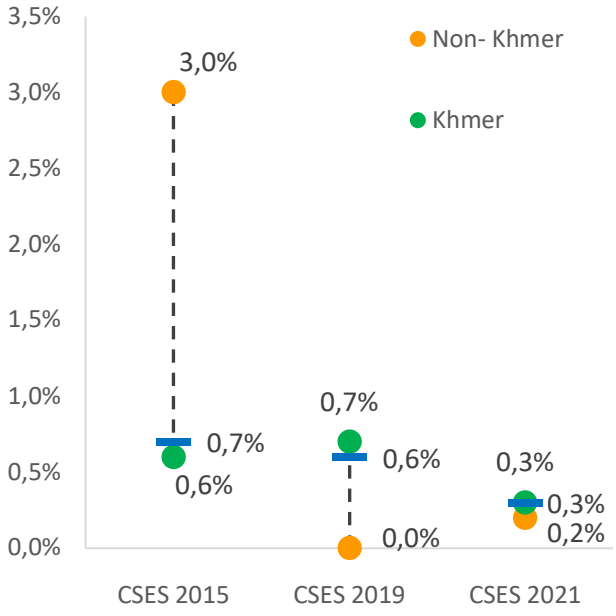
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 44 Participation Rate in Technical and Vocational Programmes by Gender, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



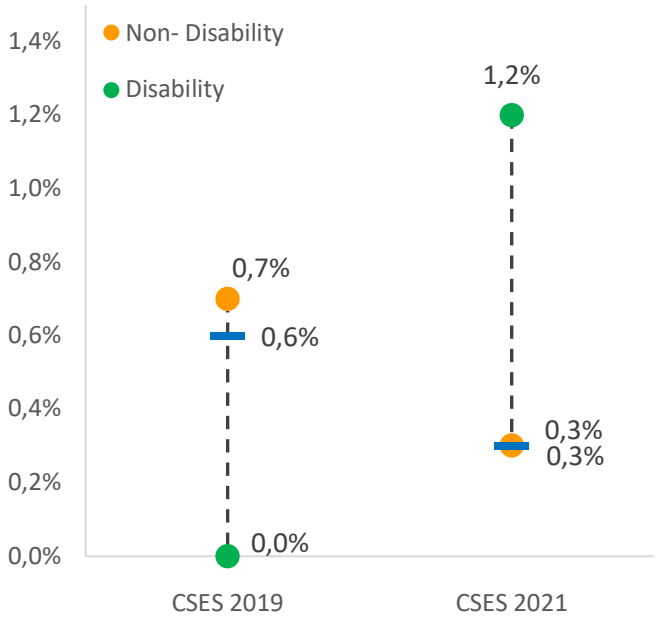
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 45 Participation Rate in Technical and Vocational Programmes by Indigeneity, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



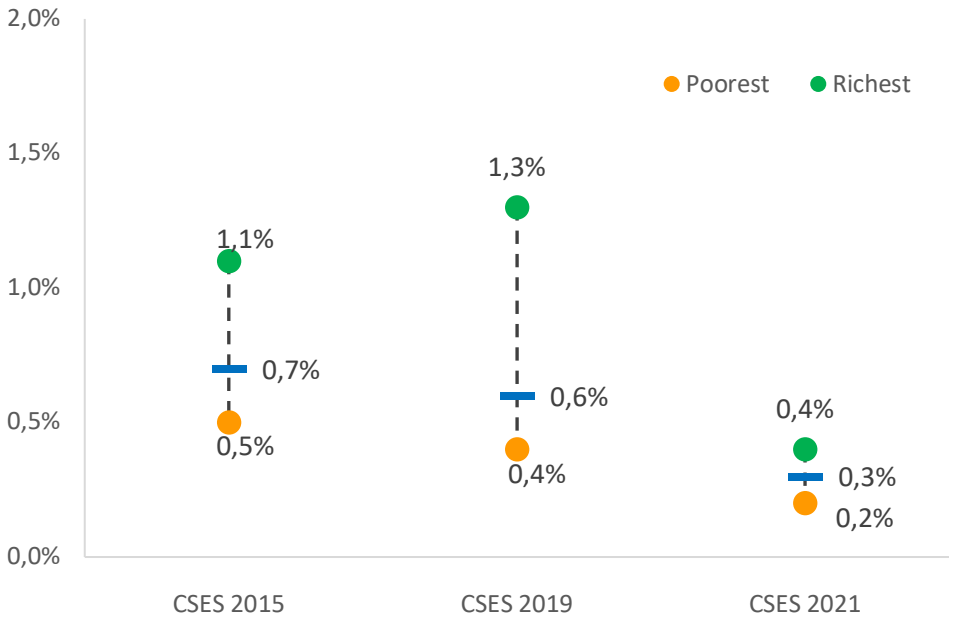
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 46 Participation Rate in Technical and Vocational Programmes by Disability Status, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 47 Participation Rate in Technical and Vocational Programmes by Wealth Quintile, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

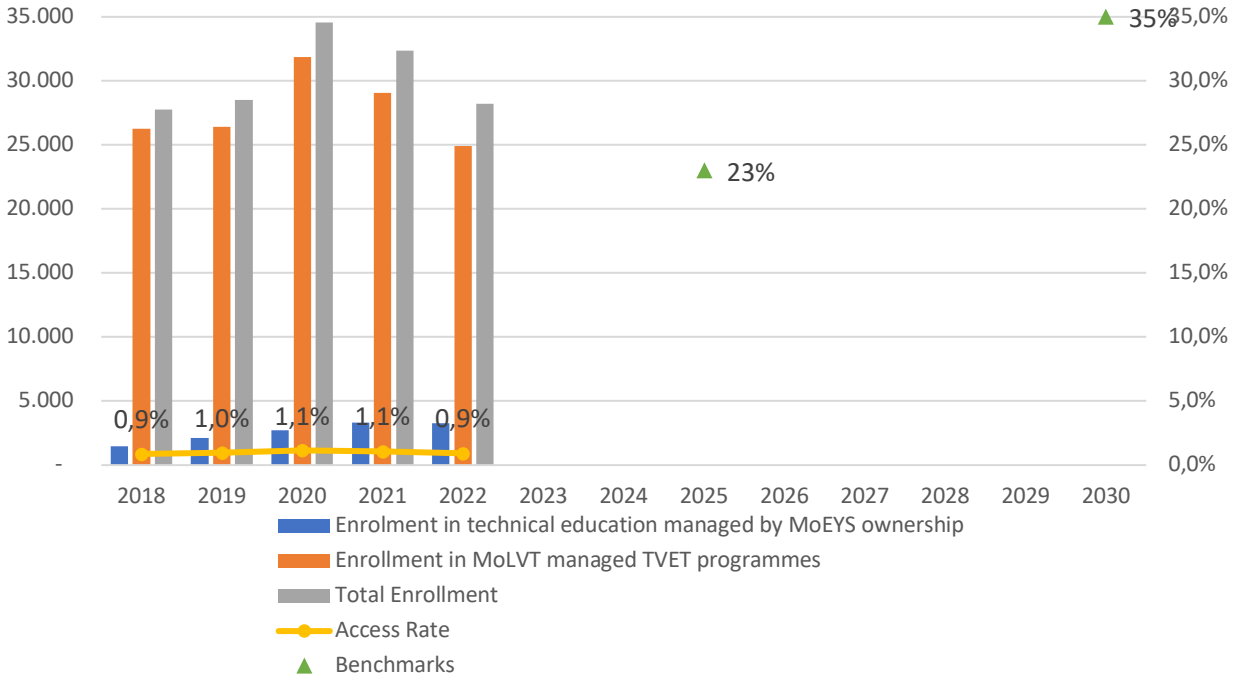


Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Administrative data show's steady TVET enrollment

As a result of the quality challenges related to the CSES data related to TVET enrolment as discussed above, analysis of indicator 4.3.3 is also complimented by administrative data in Figure 48 below. This data, which considers both TVET enrollment in MoEYS programmes, as well as TVET enrollment in Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training programmes, shows a steady level of enrolment in TVET programming since 2018, which contrasts the decline seen according to CSES data. Enrolment in MoEYS TVET programming is seen to have grown over this peroid, while MoLVT enrolment has not followed a steady trend. Additionally, this data is still not comprehensive as it does not include enrolment in TVET programs run by other Ministries, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, and as such, TVET enrolment can be assumed to higher than what is presented here. While administrative data does not show a decline in TVET participation, it also does not show a positive trend, with the 2025 and 2030 targets of 23% and 35% respectively, extremely unlikely to be achieved and require reconsideration.

Figure 48 Total TVET Enrolment (MoEYS & MoLVT), 2018-2022.



Source: MoEYS data & MoY data, 2018-2022.

SDG 4.3- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

Data demonstrates that participation in technical and vocational training is falling significantly short of 2030 benchmarks, with the sub-sector remaining limited in scope and reach. The supply of TVET centres is low, and the sectors' management by multiple ministries, including the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training and MoEYS, creates coordination challenges. Furthermore, current programs offered in TVET institutions are seen to be outdated and lack

industry-relevance, reducing potential student motivation. TVET programs additionally lack linkages and engagement with the private sector leading to most training opportunities being theoretical rather than practical, thereby further limiting the utility of TVET as job-specific training. Finally, TVET, tertiary education and non-formal education which are all considered here, receive little prioritization both in terms of political will and public investment, with the budgets for these programs inadequate to support expansion of the sub-sector.

Key Interventions

MoEYS has developed many policies and strategies related to higher education since 2015, including the Higher Education Strategy (2023) and associated Higher Education Roadmap. In addition, the Department of Higher Education has provided scholarships to students to access tertiary education opportunities and has sought to strengthen the quality of higher education institutions through the introduction of a higher education quality system. There has also been attention given to the harmonization of the system, with the curriculum of 133 programs being revised in line with Cambodia's Qualification Framework (CQF), which have subsequently been recognized by the General Department of Higher Education.

Similar improvements have been observed in Vocational Education, including the development of a Master Plan for technical education at upper secondary by MoEYS, as well at the introduction of standards for technical education in secondary schools. MoEYS has sought to combat some of the issues of inter-ministerial fragmentation by establishing an inter-ministerial working group with the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training.

The non-formal sector has also undergone expansion particularly in terms of teachers, with the ministry recognizing the employment of over 2,400 contract teachers in the non-formal sector in 2022. Furthermore, MoEYS has expanded the non-formal education offer by establishing income generating programs and expanding community learning centers in disadvantaged areas. A key new program in the non-formal sphere has been the establishment of the Basic Education Equivalency Program (BEEP) which was launched in 2022 in collaboration with the MoLVT and UNESCO. The BEEP program provides lower secondary education dropouts an opportunity to complete their schooling through a flexible, on-line program and supports them to re-enroll in formal education including technical education programs.

SDG4.4- Increase the number of people with relevant skills for decent work

Target 4.4- By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

Target 4.4 emphasizes the importance of equipping youth and adults with essential skills for employment, entrepreneurship and decent jobs, by building on literacy and numeracy skills acquired in school. This target appears against a backdrop of ever-changing labor market demands, and growing youth unemployment rates since the start of the new millennium.

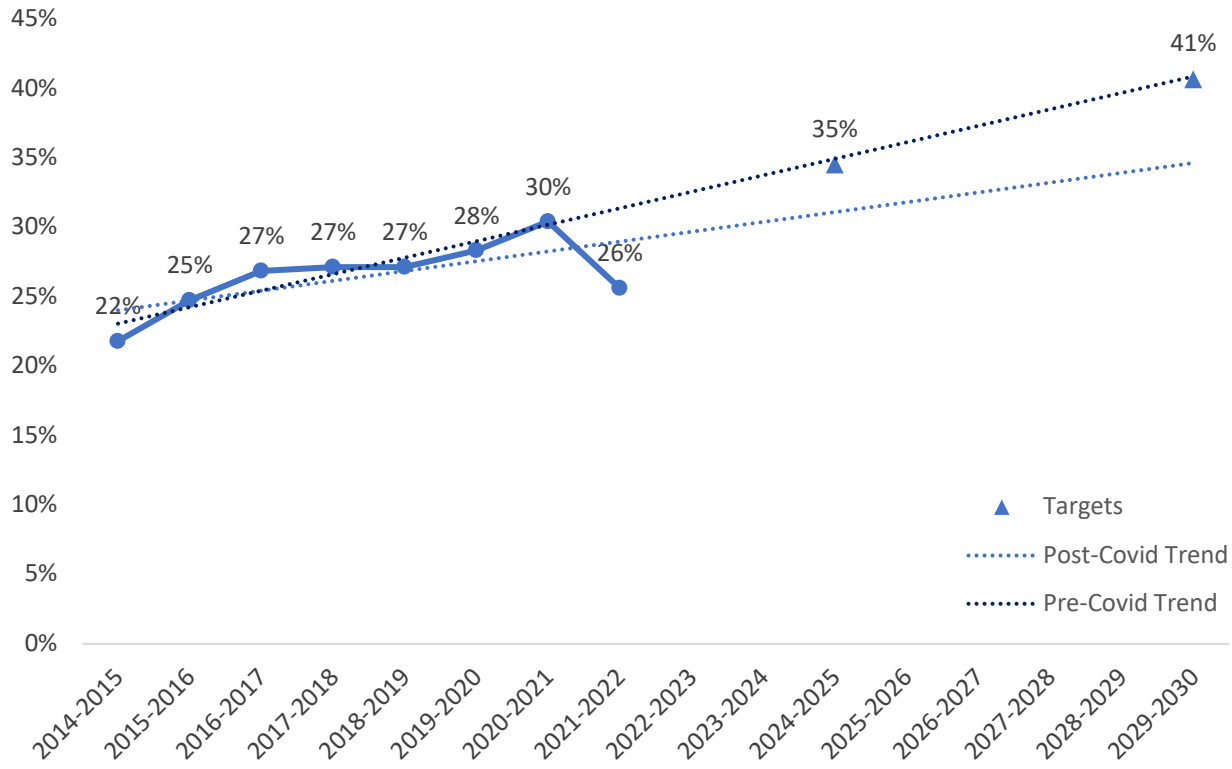
Indicator 4.4.R- Prevalence of STEM in higher education

Indicator 4.4.R- The percent of students in Tertiary Education in STEM field

Potential pandemic-related declines interrupt steady progress

Indicator 4.4.R is a regional indicator that has been selected by the EAPR to consider progress against target 4.4 and reflects the proportion of students pursuing a bachelor's degree who are enrolled in STEM fields. In Cambodia, the proportion of students enrolled in STEM shows a steady, positive improvement from 23% in 2014/15 to 30% in 2020/21, which is then followed by a dip from 30% in 2020/21 to 26% in 2021/22. This trend may be related to the pandemic as STEM fields are often those that require in-person instruction related to experimentation and labs, although there is a lack of evidence to support this. Excluding this dip, the pre-pandemic trends were on track to meet from 2025 and 2030 benchmarks.

Figure 49 Proportion of Bachelor's Degree Students Enrolled in STEM Subjects, 2015-2023.

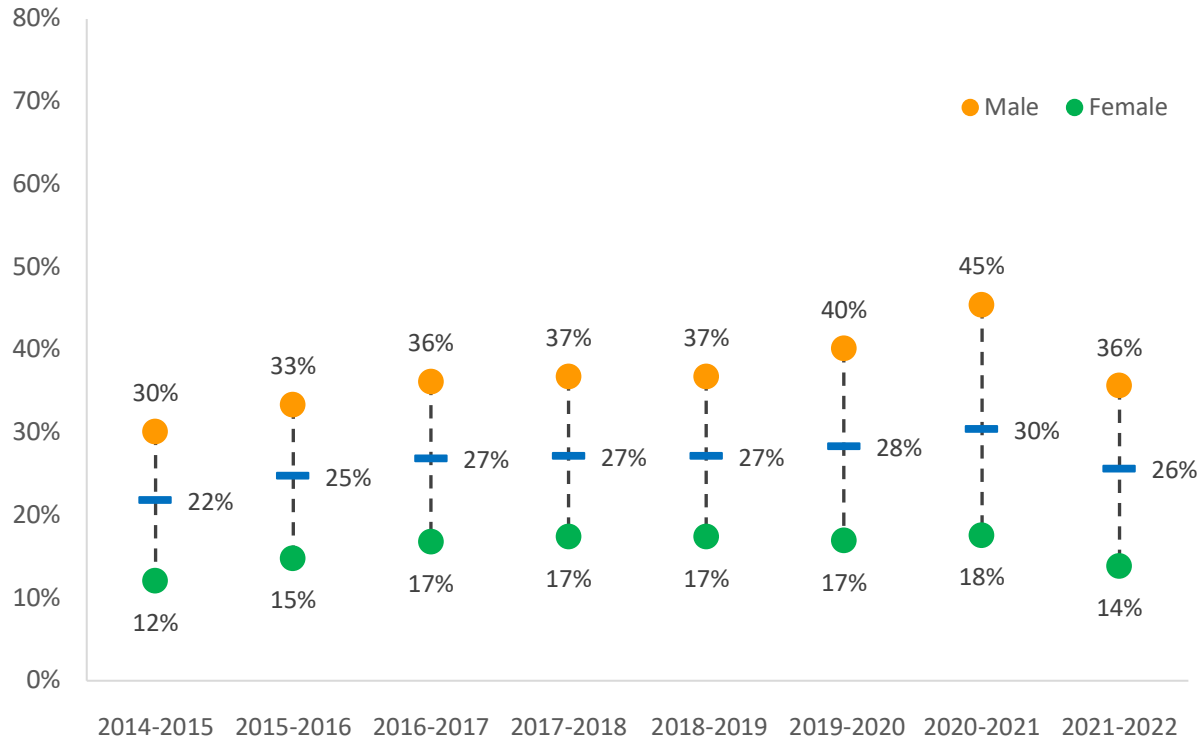


Source: EMIS data, 2015-2022.

STEM subjects continue to be male dominated

A gender analysis of enrollment trend demonstrate that males continue to dominate in STEM-related fields in higher education. Additionally, the gap is seen to have remained relatively stable overtime, with limited change observed which suggests the continued prevalence of gender norms in STEM subjects. While overall positive progress in this indicator is observed, these improvements have mostly benefitted males and future policy and programmes must include explicit interventions to improve the representation of women pursuing STEM subjects in higher education.

Figure 50 Proportion of Bachelor's Degree Students Enrolled in STEM Subjects by Gender, 2015-2023.



Source: EMIS data, 2015-2023.

SDG 4.4- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

There has been significant progress made with regards to increasing the proportion of post-graduate students pursuing studies in STEM fields. However, it must be considered that the higher education system needs to recruit from upper-secondary, where there continues to be a shortage of qualified teachers for STEM subjects as well as a lack of teaching and learning materials. Furthermore, student motivation to pursue STEM subjects has been described as low, with secondary students observed to choose the social studies track as it is perceived that the national examinations for STEM subjects are too difficult, and many students lack the means for additional tutoring required in preparation. Additionally, the quality of STEM courses in HEIs is hampered by an outdated curriculum, lack of equipment and facilities, weak assessment and accreditation systems and limited and research innovation capacity which may further deter students from enrolling in these programs.

Key Interventions

MoEYS has adopted several strategies to promote STEM enrolment in tertiary education, with key policies and initiatives detailed in Annex 1. One of these initiatives has been the development of the National STEM Policy Framework which applies to all levels of education. In terms of higher education, the framework commits to strengthening accreditation pathways in STEM subjects and building the capacity of STEM lecturers. The Ministry has also taken steps to cultivate an interest in STEM in the lower levels of education especially through the organization of STEM exhibitions in school centres, with every upper secondary school conducting at least one exhibition since 2018. The STEM Education Partnership Program further worked to create linkages between HEIs and secondary schools to support upper secondary schools in pursuing higher education in STEM subjects. Other activities have included the distribution of experimental materials for resource sources, the creation of resource libraries, the development of new curriculum support materials and the creation of New Generation Schools. Increasing STEM enrolment is a priority of the government in its new development plan with the ministry priorities including increasing the number of New Generation Schools and resource schools, investing more in STEM experimental materials, strengthening public knowledge regarding STEM opportunities and improving STEM teaching methodologies, all while ensuring that an equity lens is applied.

SDG 4.5- Eliminate all discrimination and ensure equity in education

Target 4.5- By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

Equity and inclusion are at the heart of the SDG 4-Education 2030 Agenda. Target 4.5 calls upon national and international stakeholders to make an even deeper commitment to equity in education and learning.

Indicator 4.5.1- Adjusted parity indices

Indicator 4.5.1- Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated

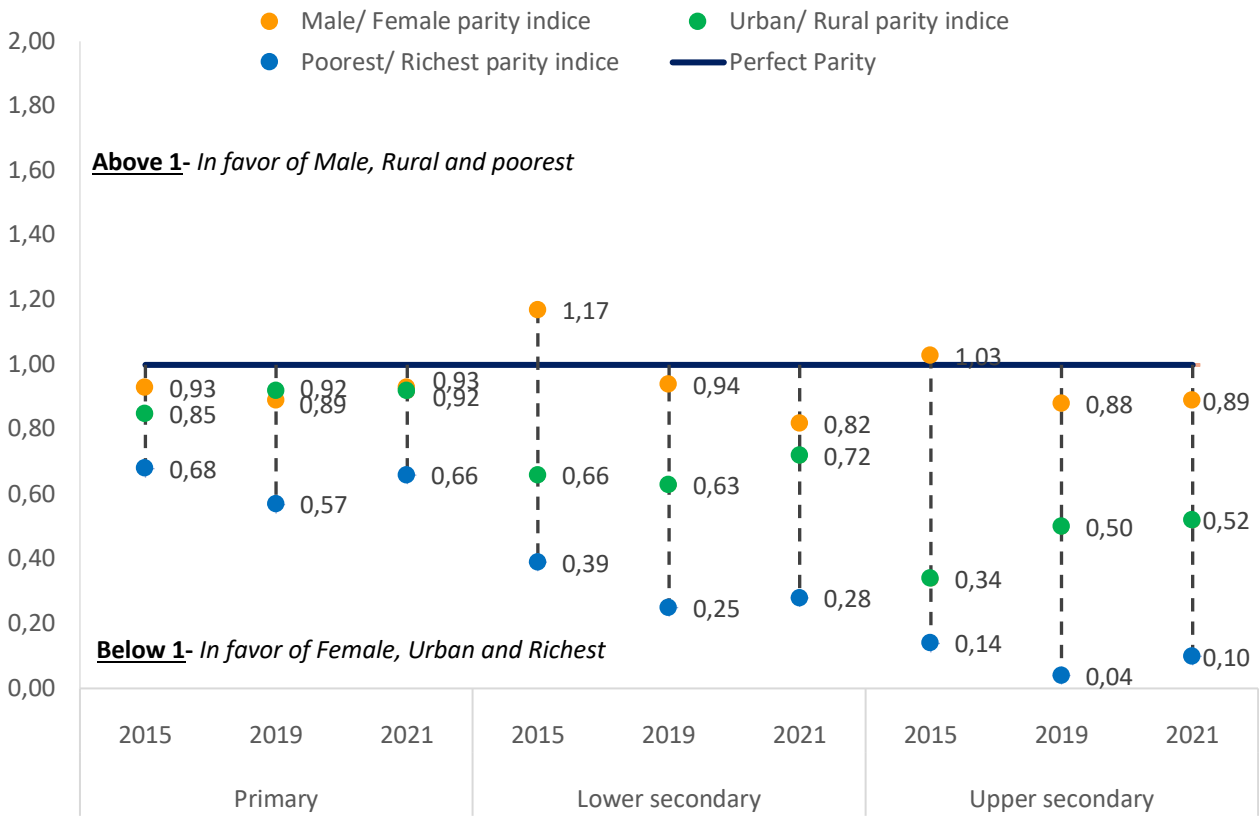
Indicator 4.5.1 measures equity through the examination of parity indices for a variety of population groups. Cambodia has selected to examine the parity indices for completion rates for gender, locality and wealth quintile. In Figure 51, the vertical blue line indicates perfect parity where there are equal school completion rates between male-female/rural-urban/richest-poorest populations. Any point above 1 (over the blue line) indicates that the completion rate is in favor of male/rural/poorest populations. On the other hand, any point below 1 (below the blue line) indicates that the completion rate is in favor of female/urban/richest populations. The international standard for acceptable parity is any parity index that falls between 0.97-1.03.

Inequitable completion across education levels

The analysis generally reveals a widening equity gap according to increasing education level, particularly for parity according to wealth quintile. This suggests that the indirect costs and direct costs, as well as opportunity costs, associated with educational access increase with increasing education level. Gender parity is seen to have significantly worsened at the lower secondary level, decreasing from 1.17 (in favor of boys) to 0.82 (in favor of girls) from 2015 to 2021. A similar, although less extreme decline is observed at the upper secondary level, with parity observed in 2015, declining to a parity index in favor of girls in 2021. Conversely, improvement has been observed in parity according to locality, most significantly at the upper secondary level

where the parity index improved from 0.34 in 2015 to 0.52 in 2021, albeit this remains far from acceptable levels of parity. Overarchingly, the most disadvantaged populations are observed to be those from the poorest wealth quintile, with intersectionality, especially with locality, also playing a role.

Figure 51 Completion Rate Adjusted Parity Index by Gender, Locality and Wealth Quintile, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 and 2021.

SDG 4.5- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

It is clear from the fact that no level of education exhibited acceptable levels of parity in 2021 according to either gender, locality or economic status that there are various barriers to access to equitable education in Cambodia. As discussed in the previous sections, particularly Target 4.1, disparities according to economic status continue to be the greatest dimension of inequality in Cambodia. This can be attributed to both the continued indirect and direct costs, as well as high opportunity costs, associated with educational access and retention. A further challenge in this regard is the perceived low-quality of education and its lack of alignment with the labor market.

In this way, students and families may perceive that staying in school will not bring them sufficient improved earning opportunities in the future to justify the lost income and costs associated with enrollment. This perception is greater in rural areas, which are dominated by the agriculture sector and wherein formal education is not seen to provide the necessary skills for work in this field. Boys are further seen to be disadvantaged as a result of cultural norms, which necessitate that they be financially responsible for support their family from a very young age. In this way, future research and programming could also consider the role of intersectionality in educational equity, particularly along the nexus of gender and locality.

Key Interventions

MoEYS, with support from partners, has committed to focus on the most disadvantaged populations. This has included gender transformative policies such as the Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and pro-poor policies, particularly large-scale scholarship distribution, work to support families to bear the costs of educational access. With support from UNICEF, multi-lingual education programmes, including translation of the national curriculum, have been developed to support marginalized ethnic minority communities in the Northeast of the country. Furthermore, overarching efforts to improve education quality, including upgrading of teacher qualification and improved teaching practices, can also be considered pro-equity policies, with ambitions that improved quality will tip the balance of opportunity cost and encourage students, particularly boys, to invest in education for improved earnings later in life. Future priorities include the improved participation of parents in school development activities through the strengthening of school management committees in order to better disseminate the message of education for all.

SDG 4.6- Universal Youth Literacy and Numeracy

Target 4.6- By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

Literacy is a basic human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a prerequisite for achieving all other development goals. Acquiring basic functional literacy and numeracy skills is the foundation for further learning, decent work, participation in society and many other domains. Target 4.6 renews the commitment to universal literacy for youth and adults and stresses the achievement of proficiency, which is the ability to use literacy and numeracy skills in daily life.

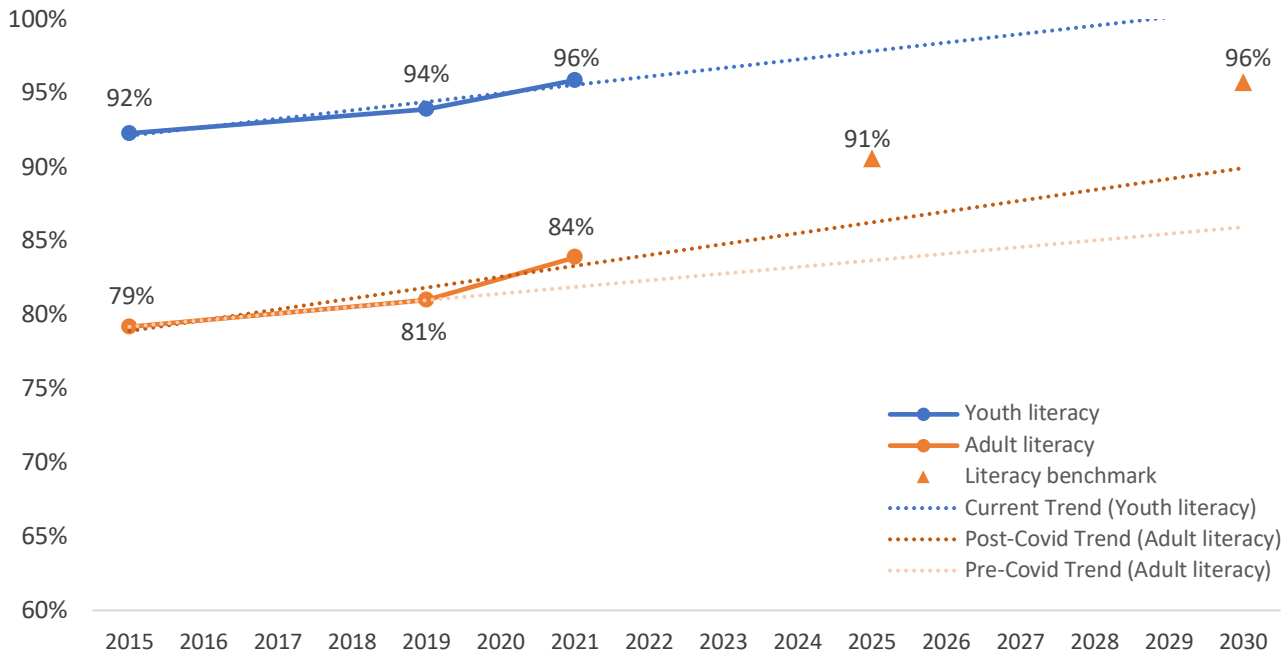
Indicator 4.6.2- Youth and adult literacy

Indicator 4.6.2- By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

Generational literacy gap prominent

Indicator 4.6.2 indicates literacy rates for youth (15-24 years-old) and adults (aged 25+). Both adult and youth literacy rates are observed to have grown since 2015. However, while youth literacy rate could achieve universalism by 2029 if the current rate of progress is continued, adult literacy is forecasted to fall short of both 2025 and 2030 targets. The higher levels of youth literacy can be attributed to the improved school completion and enrolment witnessed over the past 30-years and indicates that non-school-based literacy programmes are either in undersupply or of low-quality.

Figure 52 Adult and Youth Literacy Rates, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

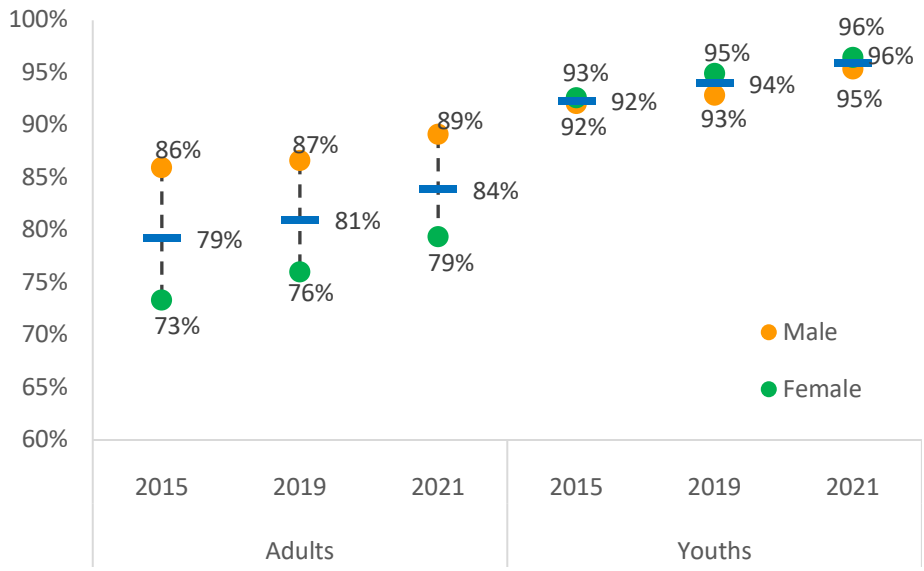


Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Improved equity for the younger generation

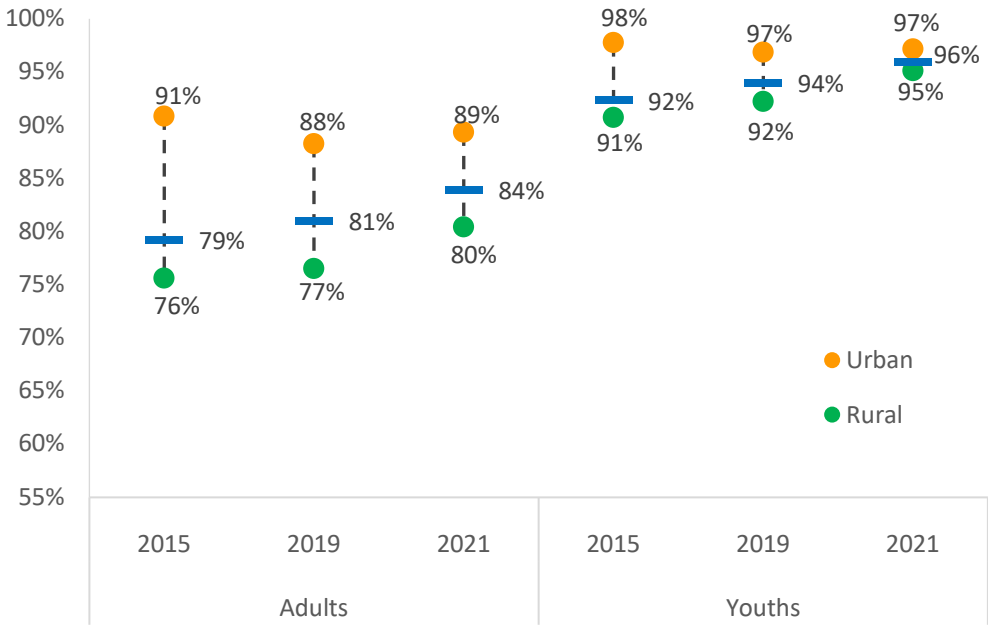
Across all individual characteristics, disparities are more prominent amongst adults than youth. This is arguably a positive trend as it suggests that greater levels of equity in educational opportunities amongst the younger generation. While the gap between rural and urban population is seen to have decreased for both adults and youth, it is much more significant for adults at 9%. A similar trend is observed with males and females, with parity observed for youth, and a 9% gap remaining for adults.

Figure 53 Adult and Youth Literacy Rate by Gender, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Figure 54 Adult and Youth Literacy Rates by Locality, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



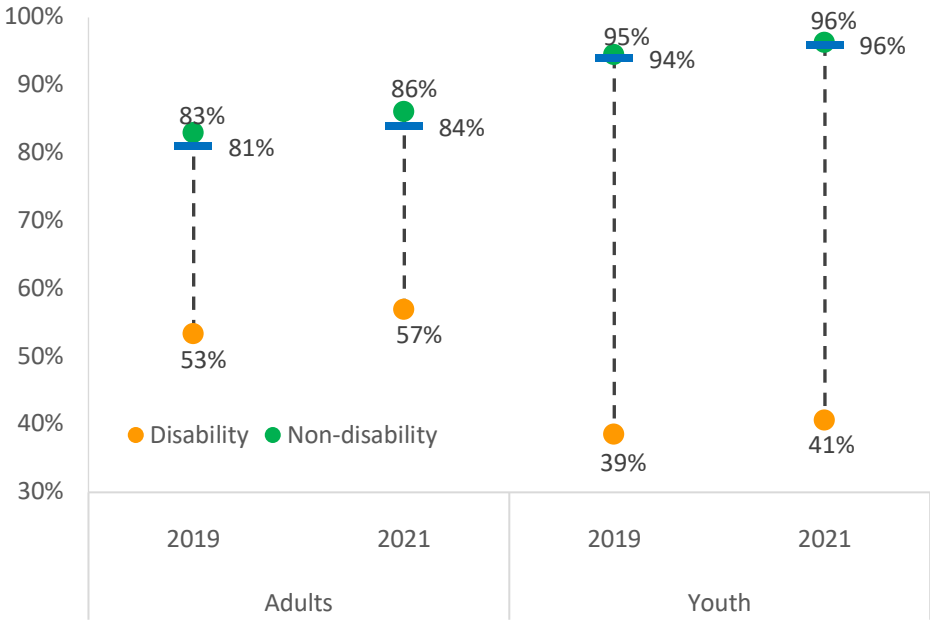
Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Disabled youth the least-likely to be literate

While there were slight improvements in youth and adult literacy rates for people with disabilities between 2019 and 2021, these improvements did not help to close the gap between the two

populations groups, with it observed at 29% for adults and 40% for youth. Interestingly, disabled status is the only population group where disparities are significantly more pronounced for youth than for adults.

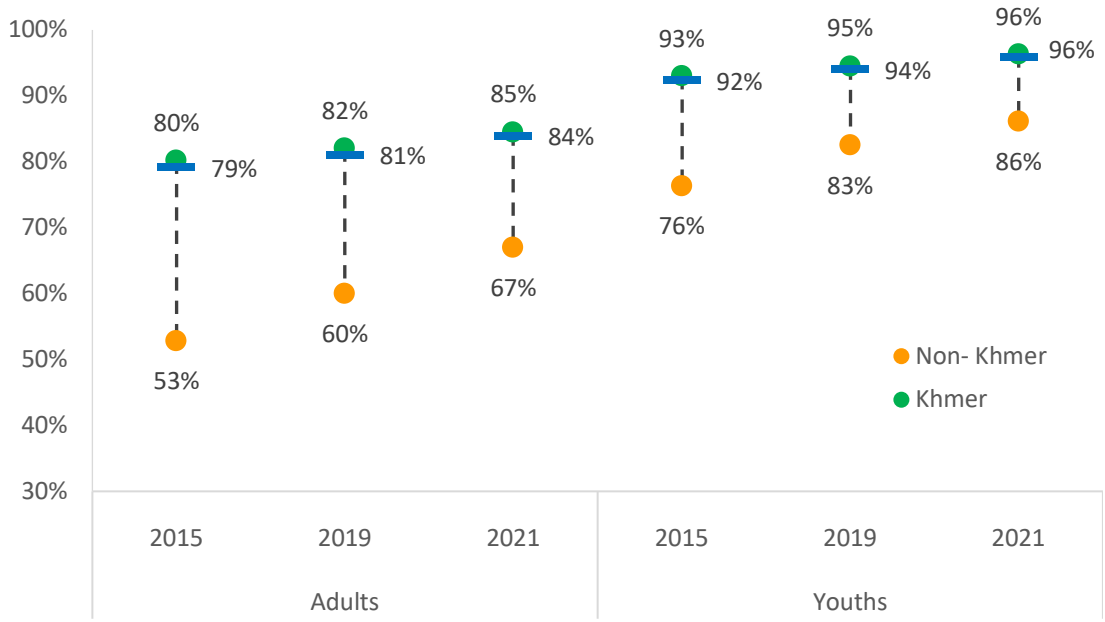
Figure 55 Adult and Youth Literacy Rates by Disability Status, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

Three also exist significant disparities between Khmer and Non-Khmer populations in both adult and youth literacy rates. While the gaps have been narrowing in general, the gap for adults still stood at 10 percentage points and 15 percentage points for youth in 2021.

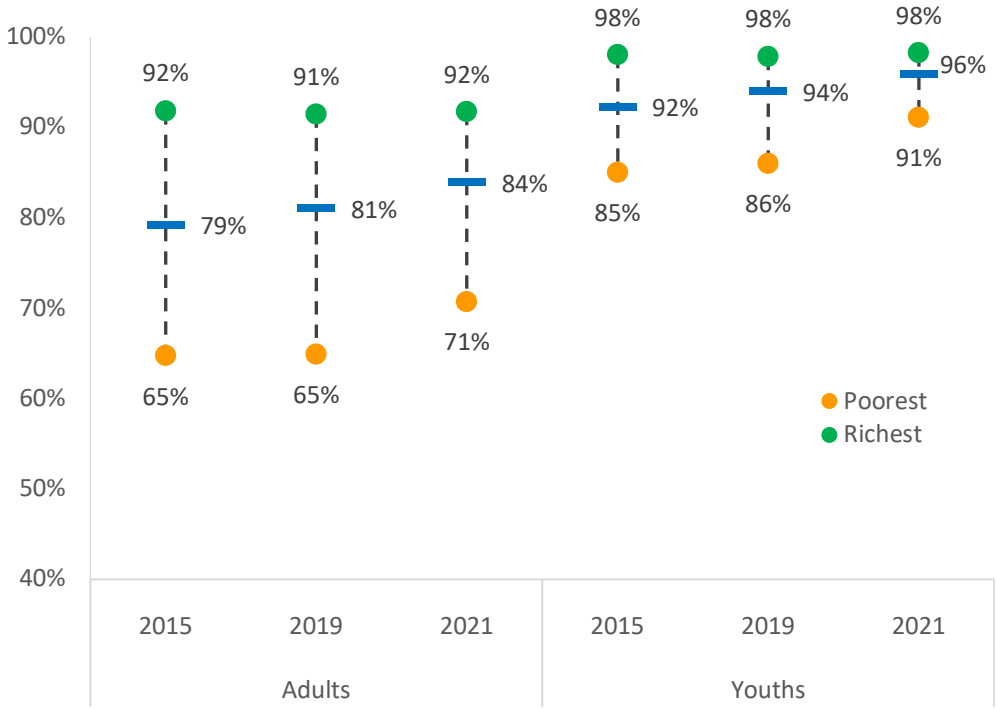
Figure 56 Adult and Youth Literacy Rates by Ethnicity, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

A similar pattern of narrowing gaps is observed between the richest and poorest populations. It is interesting to also note that wealth seems to have less of an effect on literacy rates than on educational access and retention. This suggests relatively stronger levels of equity with regards to accessing early years of learning wherein literacy is most often established.

Figure 57 Adult and Youth Literacy Rates by Wealth Quintile, 2015, 2019 & 2021.



Source: CSES data, 2015, 2019 & 2021.

SDG 4.6- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

Initiatives to improve adult literacy and foster a culture of lifelong learning have been hampered by a shortage of financial and human resources. Most notably, there is an observed shortage of qualified and trained staff to support literacy and alternative education programmes. Additionally, access has been disproportionate, with adult populations particularly disadvantaged since most literacy and alternative education programmes are targeted at youth and those with prior school experience. Furthermore, as literacy particularly amongst adults has increased, there has been a paralleled decrease in the number of centers offering post-literacy programmes. While this is logical given the declining trend in the number of adults who require literacy programs, it suggests the need for very targeted programming in order to reach the most disadvantaged communities who still require basic literacy education.

Key Opportunities

MoEYS, in cooperation with other Ministries, development partners and the private sector has employed a range of strategies to improve literacy, with the principles of lifelong learning imbued in the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2019-2023). MoEYS has supported literacy programming through community learning centers which offer vocational literacy and post-literacy programmes, as well as libraries and reading corners, with the number of community learning

centers seen to have grown in recent years. An innovative development in the fight against illiteracy has been the development of the Literacy Program for Garment workers which provides literacy classes for garment factory workers within the premises. This programme has seen great success and interest and, with the support of partners, has been expanded to other types of factories and prisons, enshrining the principles of education for all.

SDG 4.7- Education for sustainable development and global citizenship

Target 4.7- By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

Target 4.7 presents a vision of education as a force for societal transformation in support of the broader Sustainable Development Agenda. The target looks beyond the acquisition of academic knowledge and skills as the purpose of education but rather highlights the transformative capacities of education to build responsible and global citizens which contribute to peaceful and sustainable societies. The target encompasses Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as well as Global Citizenship Education (GCED). Concretely, this goal requires themes like education for peace and non-violence, human rights, gender equality, health and sexuality, sustainable lifestyles and cultural diversity to be integrated into curricula, teaching, assessments and education policies by 2030.

Indicator 4.7.1- Global Citizenship Education

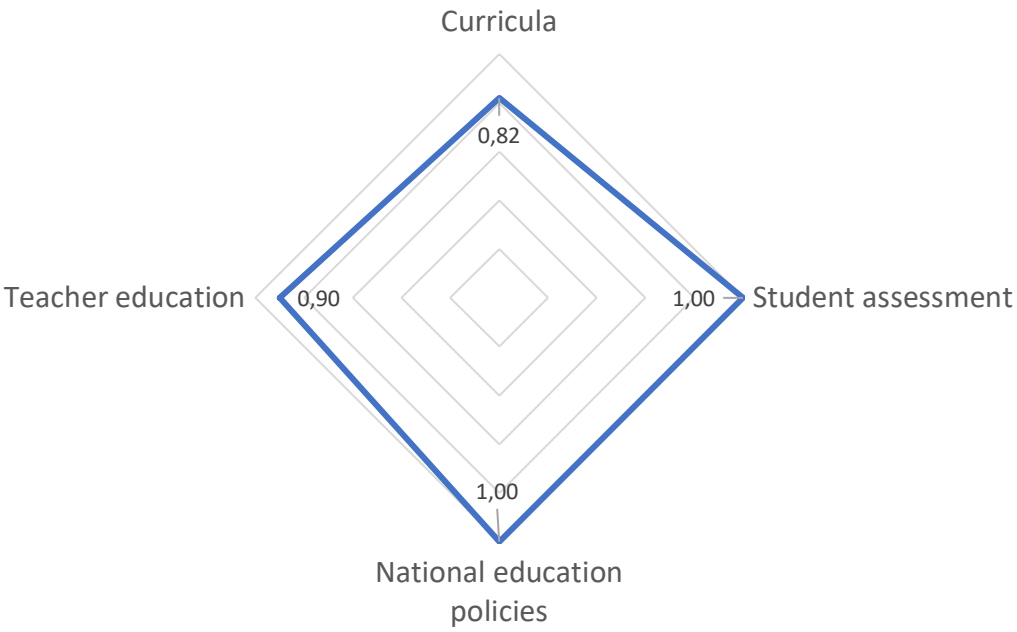
Indicator 4.7.1 - Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment

Indicator 4.7.1 measures the extent to which countries mainstream GCED and ESD in education policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessments. As such the indicator is qualitative by nature and the data originates from specialized surveys or research. The measurement of "this indicator aims to give a simple assessment of whether the basic infrastructure exists that would allow countries to deliver quality ESD and GCED to learners, to ensure their populations have adequate information on sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature" (UNESCO, 2023).

The most recent data on this indicator for Cambodia comes from national responses to a questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1974 *Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom*, implemented by UNESCO and the UNESCO Institute

for Statistics in 2020. The questionnaire was distributed to member states and responses were submitted by national governments, typically by the Ministry of Education with support from key partners. A composite of the responses to this questionnaire are used for the construction of the global indicator which gives a score from zero to one for the extent to which the four components of policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment mainstream global citizenship education and education for sustainable development. It is important to note that this is a self-assessment questionnaire, with respondents given a choice between yes and no, or not at all, extensively and unknown. Being a self-assessment, which does not require countries to provide evidence, it must be considered that some of these scores may be overinflated.

Figure 58 SDG Indicator 4.7.1, Cambodia, 2020.



Source: UIS data, 2020.

According to data from the questionnaire, Cambodia scores very highly on indicator 4.7.1, receiving the highest score of one in both national education policies and student assessment. Looking more closely at the questionnaire used to produce these scores, these specifically reflects that education officials confirmed that both national and sub-national education policies, frameworks, strategic objectives, laws, legislation and legal frameworks all cover the eight GCED/ESD themes of cultural diversity, tolerance, gender equality, human rights, peace and non-violence, climate change, environmental sustainability, human survival and well-being and sustainable consumption and production. Additionally, it reflects an extensive integration of

GECD and ESD themes in student assessments or examination, as well as an inclusion of the four dimensions of GCED/ESD (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes/behaviors).

The lowest score is observed for curricula, reflecting officials' sentiments that not all eight themes of GCED/ESD are integrated within the primary and secondary curricula, or that all eight themes are separate subjects or fields or study, rather than included within subjects themselves. This score is slightly surprising given the high score exhibited in student assessment, and may suggest a misalignment between the curriculum and assessment practices. Finally, teacher education also exhibited high levels of integration, with responses indicating that teachers, trainers and educators are largely trained to teach GCED and ESD subjects during initial, pre-service and/or through continuing professional development and that they are trained in the relevant approaches.

SDG 4.7- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

The interdisciplinary nature of citizenship and sustainable education can serve as a barrier to its full integration into education systems. Cambodia is no different in this regard, as it currently lacks a clear framework that facilitates this inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration. This is a result of both an institutional weakness, as well as a lack of human capacity or subject knowledge, which create barriers to efforts for improved integration. There is an identified need therefore to strengthen institutional mechanisms for coordination, leadership and advocacy amongst key stakeholders in order to provide a more solid foundation to ensure complete integration of GCED and ESD into all aspects of the education system.

Key Interventions

Significant progress has been made in the integration of GCED and ESD themes into the education system in Cambodia. This has been spear headed by the MoEYS' focus on the development of 21st century skills which integrates the values of citizenships and peace in its teaching of digital skills and entrepreneurship to equip Cambodian youth to support social development. The Local Life Skills program has similarly reflected this effort in utilizing a value-based pedagogy with the program currently being implemented in 294 secondary and 107 primary schools. In recent years the programs have further been dedicated to efforts to include dimensions of climate change and global citizenship education in syllabuses. In terms of sustainable development education, a major development has been the creation of climate change education curriculum materials for both primary and secondary schools. Non-violence and peace education has largely been taken on as a responsibility of the sport department of MoEYS, with the sector developing under the slogan "Sports lives in harmony in society under the shade of peace." Future development includes the scale up of both the Local Life Skills program and 21st century skills with a focus on

encouraging students and young people to think critically and develop innovative solutions to world issues.

SDG 4.a- Inclusive and safe schools

Target 4.a- Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

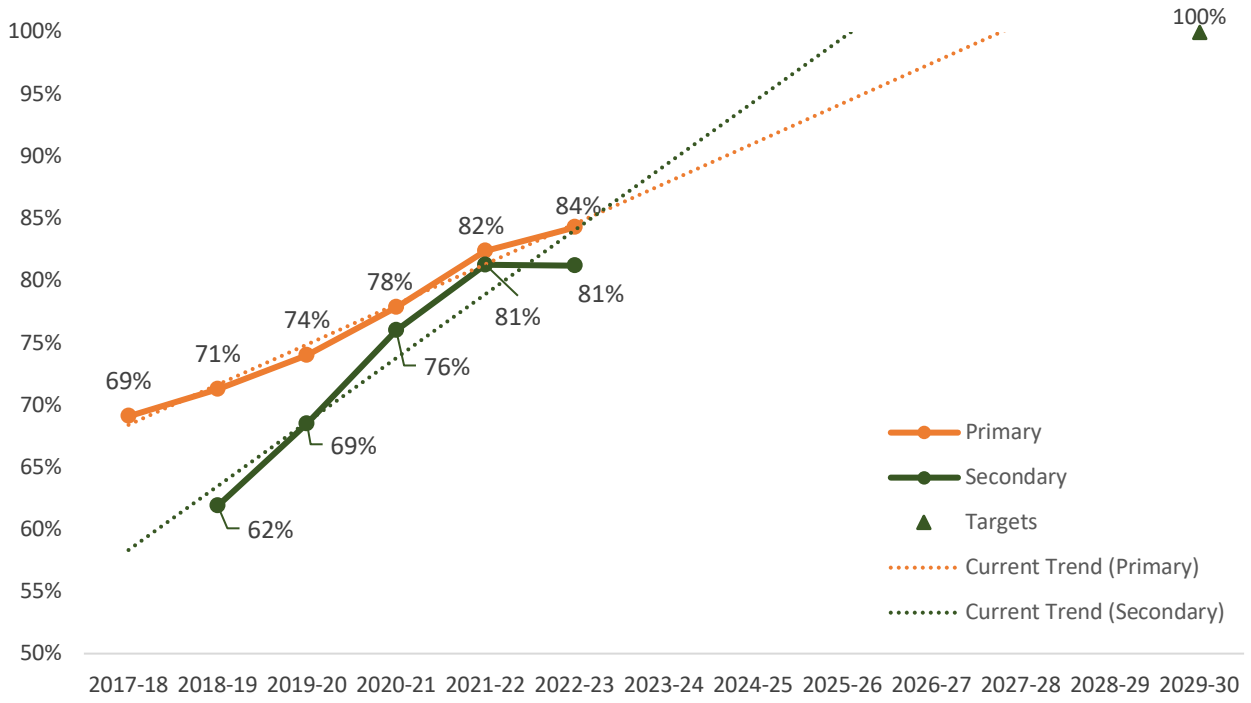
Target 4.a is the first of three means of implementation for the SDG 4 - Education 2030 Agenda. The target covers different aspects of the school environment, ranging from infrastructure and resources to the physical safety and psychosocial well-being of students, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity and other socioeconomic characteristics. In this regard, the target is similar in nature to the concept of child-friendly schools' which emerged from the 1990 Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Indicator 4.a.1- Proportion of schools offering basic services

Indicator 4.a.1- Proportion of schools offering basic services, by type

Indicator 4.a.1 highlights the percentage of schools with basic services, with school access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities considered here. Since 2017/18, Cambodia has adopted the STAR metric method to assess the availability and quality of WASH facilities on school campuses. STAR 1 indicates that a school is meeting a minimum quantity and quality of WASH facilities, while STAR 2 and STAR 3 indicate intermediate and high quality respectively, while also exceeding quantity needs. Figure 58 reflects schools which scored at least one star according to this metric.

Figure 59 Schools Meeting Basic Requirements for WASH Facilities, 2017/18-2022/23.



Source: EMIS data, 2017/18-2022/23.

Improved quality and supply of WASH facilities

Both primary and secondary schools have steadily improved the availability and quality of WASH facilities in schools since 2017. While the progress of secondary schools was initially faster than primary schools, it has stagnated in the recent years, possibly due to the impact of the pandemic and the cuts to capital expenditure observed, with the pace of progress of primary schools also seen to have slowed. If the past 5-year rate of progress continued, Cambodia could achieve the 100% target before 2030 at both primary and secondary levels, however, this is only possible if the slowed-down progress during the pandemic is brought back on track.

SDG 4.a- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

The commitment to provide basic WASH facilities in all schools faces challenges in the form of financing and capacity. While policies and action plans have been developed, as are detailed in Annex 1, the current system is observed to lack the tools, skills and budget to implement many of these policies. Financing for WASH initiatives is constrained, with the capital education budget seen to have decreased in recent years, and reports from schools citing that current levels of school operational funds are insufficient to maintain the current quality of services.

Coordinated efforts to ensure WASH facilities are of basic quality and above have also adopted an inclusion lens in order to ensure that the facilities are appropriate for use by all. Guidelines have been developed and provided to schools regarding the construction of gender and disability-friendly WASH facilities. The Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan 2021-2025 has also helped to improve the quality and supply of sanitation facilities in schools through ensuring that facilities are both gender-segregated and accessible. Finally, one potential positive affect from the pandemic was the intensive effort made by MoEYS to supply handwashing facilities in schools.

SDG 4.b- Expand higher education scholarships for developing countries

Target 4.a - By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries public expenditure

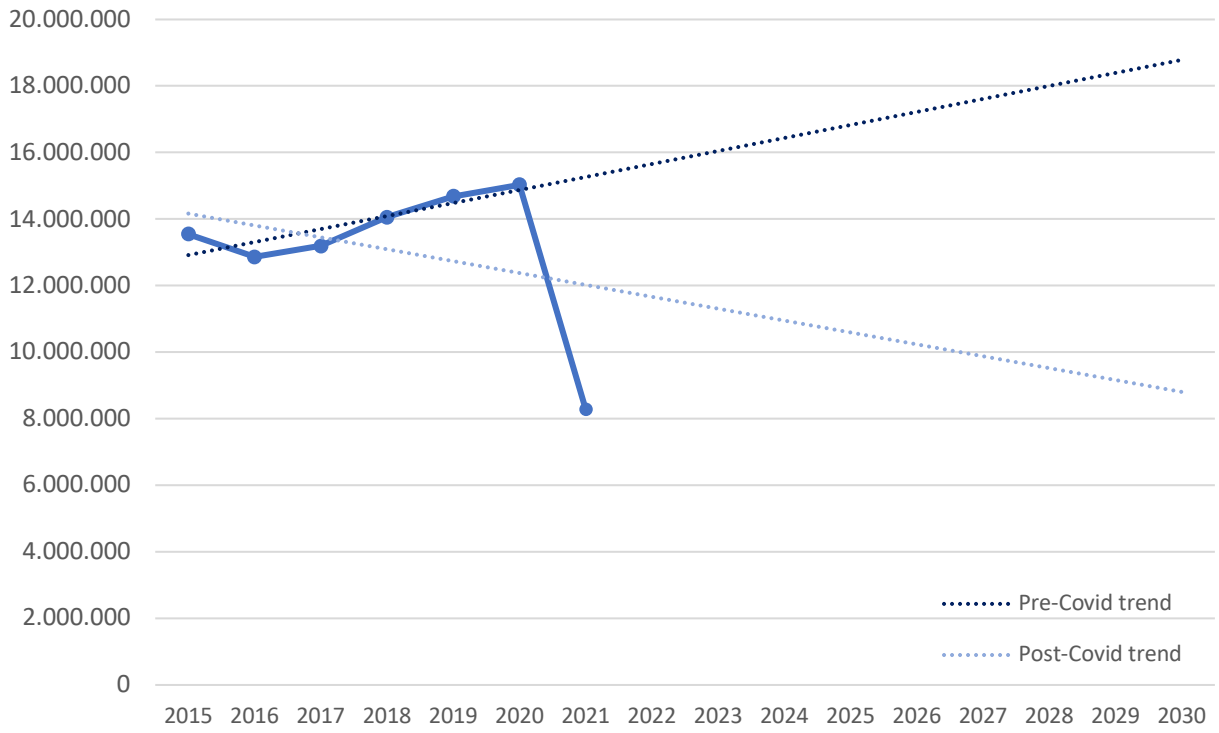
Scholarships enable young people and adults to pursue the higher education they might otherwise not be able to afford. In order to reduce inequality in tertiary education, Target 4.b calls for increasing funding for scholarships to students in developing countries.

Indicator 4.b.1- Development assistance flows for scholarships

Indicator 4.b.1- Volume of official development assistance (ODA) flows for scholarships

The total value of scholarships provided directly to Cambodian students across all levels funded by official development aid (ODA) stayed in the range between US$ 13 million and US$ 16 million between 2015 and 2020 except for a large spike in 2014. In the most recent year (2021), it sharply dropped to US$ 8.3 million, which is can be related to the impacts of the pandemic including school closures and reprioritization of donor funding to health efforts. No targets for this indicator were set in the Cambodian road map.

Figure 60 Volume of Official Development Assistance Flows for Scholarships, USD, 2015-2023.



Source: UIS data, 2015-2021.

SDG 4.b- Current Policies, Key Priorities and Challenges

Scholarships are arguably not a priority for ODA in Cambodia due to the capacity and reach of the governments' own scholarship provision programmes, with the government providing over 140,000 scholarships in primary alone in 2023. While in the past ODA may have supported the direct provision of scholarships, partners now concentrate on strengthening the MoEYS scholarship provision system. For example, the CDPF and WFP provided capacity building training to 3,139 scholarship management committees in target provinces in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government scholarship distribution. Some partners do continue to provide scholarships directly, however these are usually targeting teachers or officials rather than students, with the with the USESDPI program providing scholarships to 496 teachers trainees to attend the National Institute of Education and Teacher Training Centre in for example. Moving forward, ODA will continue to support scholarships for capacity building of education officials and teachers, while simultaneously providing system strengthening support to MoEYS for its own scholarship programme.

SDG 4.c- Increase the supply of qualified teachers

SDG 4.c- By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states

Teachers play a critical role in delivering high-quality education and learning outcomes. This is recognized by Target 4.c, which calls on countries to train more teachers and ensure they meet the qualifications set by national standards.

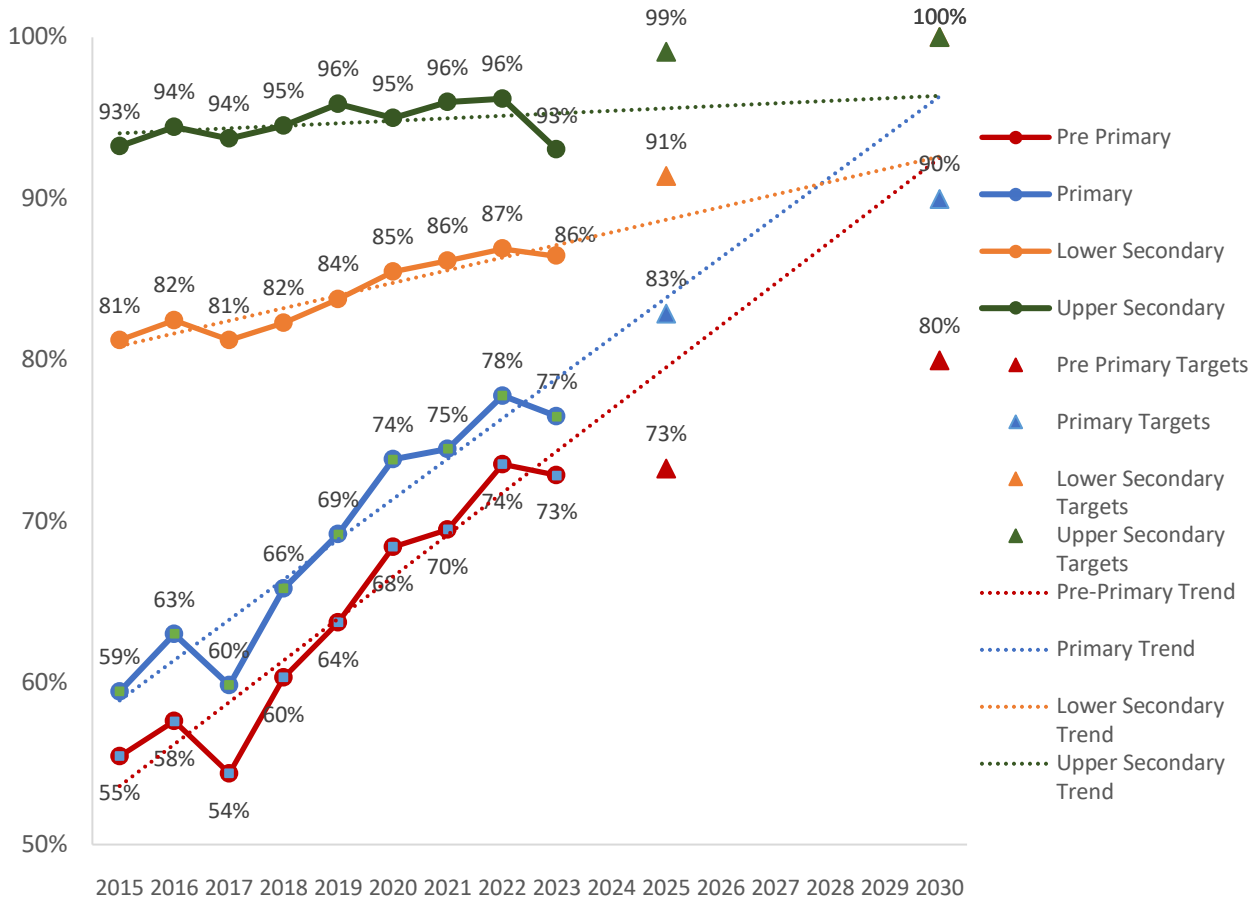
Indicator 4.c.- Percentage of teachers qualified according to national standards

Indicator 4.c.- Percentage of teachers qualified according to national standards

Indicator 4.c.1 measures the proportion of qualified teachers across all levels of education according to locally defined qualification standards. While there are many policies and action plans concentrated on the upgrading of teacher qualifications and associated centers, the minimum qualifications needed for teachers to be considered qualified are not clear. There does not exist one document that clearly spells out the minimum requirements for each level of education, with the generally accepted rule being that pre-primary, primary and lower secondary teachers necessitate secondary completion, followed by two years of sub-sector-specific training in a specialized teacher training center, while upper secondary teachers require a Bachelor of Education. Teachers can also be considered trained if they have completed a bachelor's degree in an unrelated subject and have attended one-year of pedagogical training, although this program is only currently available for the upper secondary level. Furthermore, the enrollment of trainee teachers is not controlled by the MoEYS but rather falls under the purview of the Ministry of Civil Service, who sets a yearly quota for new recruitment according to sub-sector.

Significant improvements in qualification of primary and pre-primary teachers

Figure 61 Proportion of Qualified Teachers by Education Level, 2015-2023.



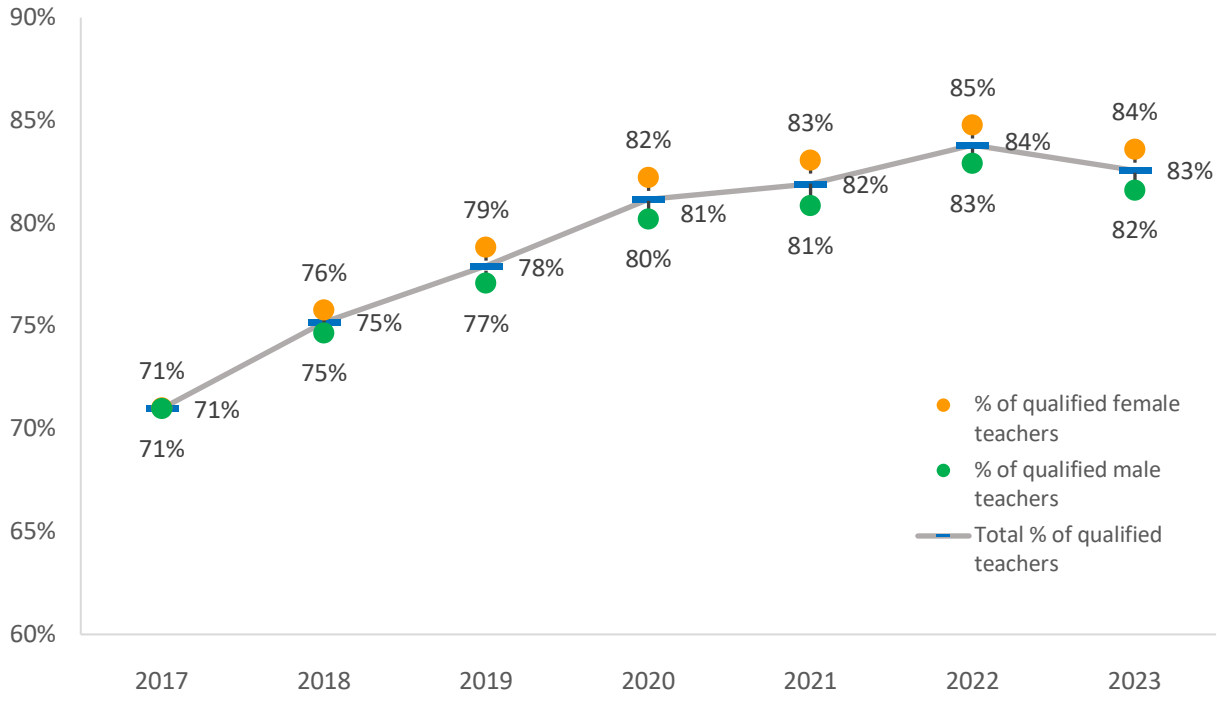
According to the widely accepted definitions of qualified teachers discussed above, high proportions of teachers are observed to be qualified in Cambodia. At all levels, some decline was observed in 2023, likely due to the pausing of teacher recruitment in 2021 and 2022 alongside teacher attrition Prior to this, significant improvements were observed for pre-primary and primary teachers, with the proportion of pre-primary and primary teachers considered qualified both increasing by 18 percentage-points from 2015 to 2022. Even with the slight decreases observed during the pandemic, both pre-primary and primary levels are expected to achieve and surpass their targets of 80% and 90% of all teachers qualified according to national standards respectively.

The highest proportion of teachers qualified is observed amongst upper secondary teachers, with 93% of teachers considered qualified in 2023. This is arguably an interesting trend considering that upper secondary teachers require the highest levels of qualifications in order to be considered qualified. Both upper and lower secondary teachers' qualifications have seen incremental increases since 2015, and despite positive trends, neither are on track to meet the ambitious target of 100% qualification by 2030.

Gender differentials heavily level dependent

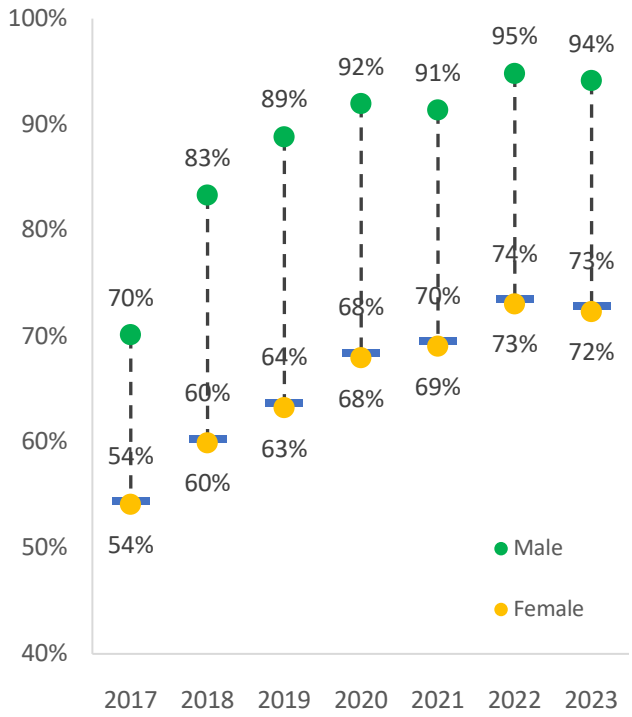
At a global level, considering all teachers across all levels, there are limited difference between male and female teachers observed, with the proportion of female teachers qualified just two percentage points higher than males. However, this situation changes drastically with the level of education examined, with male teachers significantly more likely to be qualified at the pre-primary level than their female counterparts, which may be explained by the very small number of male teachers working at this level. This trend is reversed at the primary level where female teachers are seen to be more qualified than male teachers, with this gap seen to remain constant over time.

Figure 62 Proportion of Teachers Qualified (all education levels) by Gender, 2017-2023.



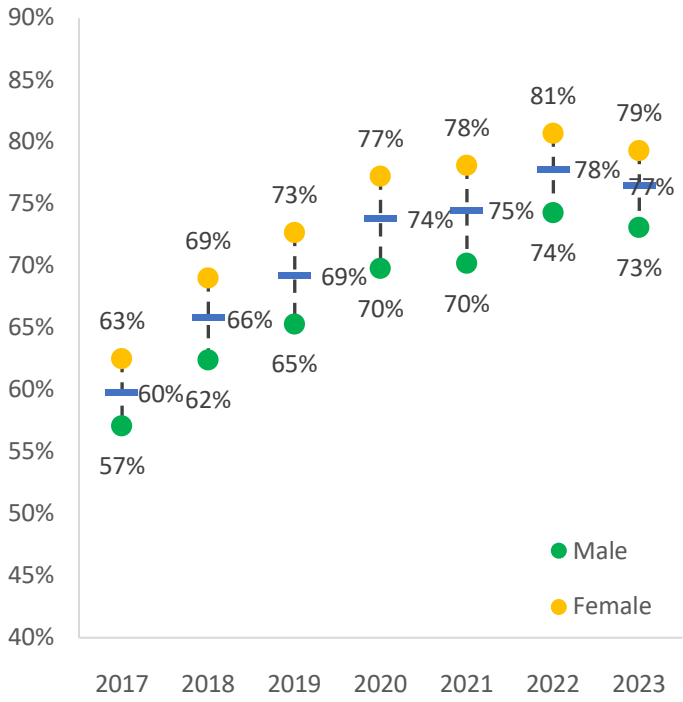
Source: EMIS data, 2017-2023.

Figure 63 Proportion of Qualified Pre-Primary Teachers by Gender, 2017-2023.



Source: EMIS data, 2017-2023.

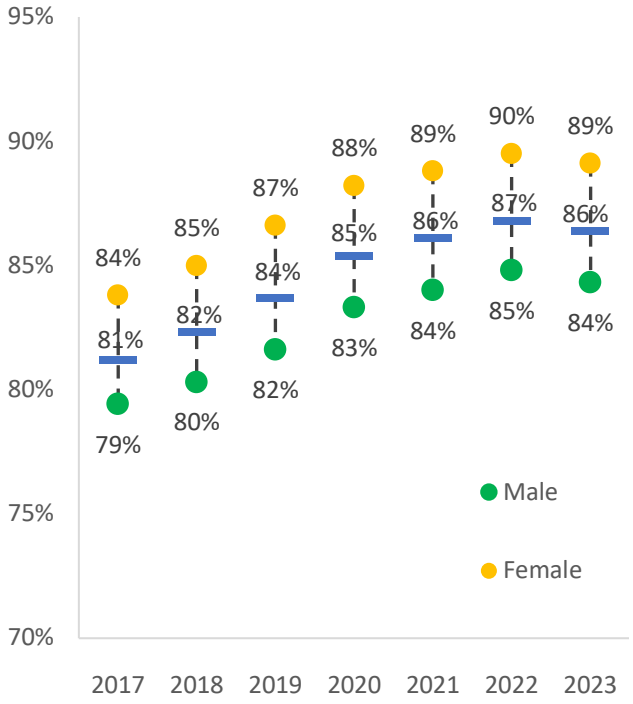
Figure 64 Proportion of Qualified Primary Teachers by Gender, 2017-2023.



Source: EMIS data, 2017-2023.

A similar trend is observed at the lower secondary level, with female teachers consistently around 4-5 percentage-points more qualified than their male counterparts. At the upper secondary level, gender parity is achieved, with the proportion of male and female teachers qualified at this level consistently within one percentage point of each other.

Figure 65 Proportion of Qualified Lower Secondary Teachers by Gender, 2017-2023.



Source: EMIS data, 2017-2023.

Figure 66 Proportion of Qualified Upper Secondary Teachers by Gender, 2017-2023.

Source: EMIS data, 2017-2023.

SDG 4.c.- Current Policies, Key Priorities and Challenges

Key Challenges

As part of efforts to address the low-learning outcomes expressed under indicator 4.1, MoEYS and partners has put significant investment into teacher training in recent years. This support has included initiatives across the training spectrum, from pre-service and in-service training to teacher upgrading. In terms of pre-service training, MoEYS is shifting towards a bachelor's degree as a standardized minimum qualification for teachers, with the current system mandating only two-years of post-graduate study for primary and lower secondary teachers. To support this transition, MoEYS, with support from the STEPCam program have invested in transforming Regional Teacher Training Centres, which can only offer diploma level courses, to Teacher Education Colleges, which can offer degree level courses. This has further supported by the development of a specific Bachelor of Education course which is accessible at these TECs. These efforts have been supported by the development of key policy documents such as the teacher professional standards and the teacher upgrading plan which has evaluated the level of investment necessary to bring existing teachers up to this new minimum level of qualification.

In addition to the transformation of the system, significant investments have been made to improve the quality and relevance of in-service and pre-service teacher training, particularly with regards to learner-centered, early grade learning, inclusive education, STEM and ICT-based pedagogies. This has included the revamp of the basic teacher training program for primary teachers in order to include both pedagogical knowledge and in-classroom practice. A formalization of the pre-primary teacher training program has also been implemented, with the teacher training curriculum and supporting documents recently revised to align more closely with the curriculum framework. Master trainers responsible for providing teacher education have also been trained or given opportunities for qualification upgrading in order to ensure they have the skills to deliver new materials.

Key Interventions

Despite these significant investments, the education system faces high levels of teacher attrition, with educated and qualified teachers seeking work in more lucrative careers or in the private sector. This can also be attributed to the shortage of teachers in many schools meaning that teachers are often overburdened with heavy workloads and therefore, are disincentivized to continue in this profession. High levels of attrition create a limit on the utility of investments in teacher upgrading, with teachers observed to leave the career once they have received upgraded qualifications. Furthermore, the system lacks the capacity to keep up with demand and the results of this attribution. Recruitment quotas as mentioned above, are not sufficient to match the high levels of attrition observed or the movement towards lower pupil-teacher ratios.

SDG 1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources to end poverty

Target 1.a - Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

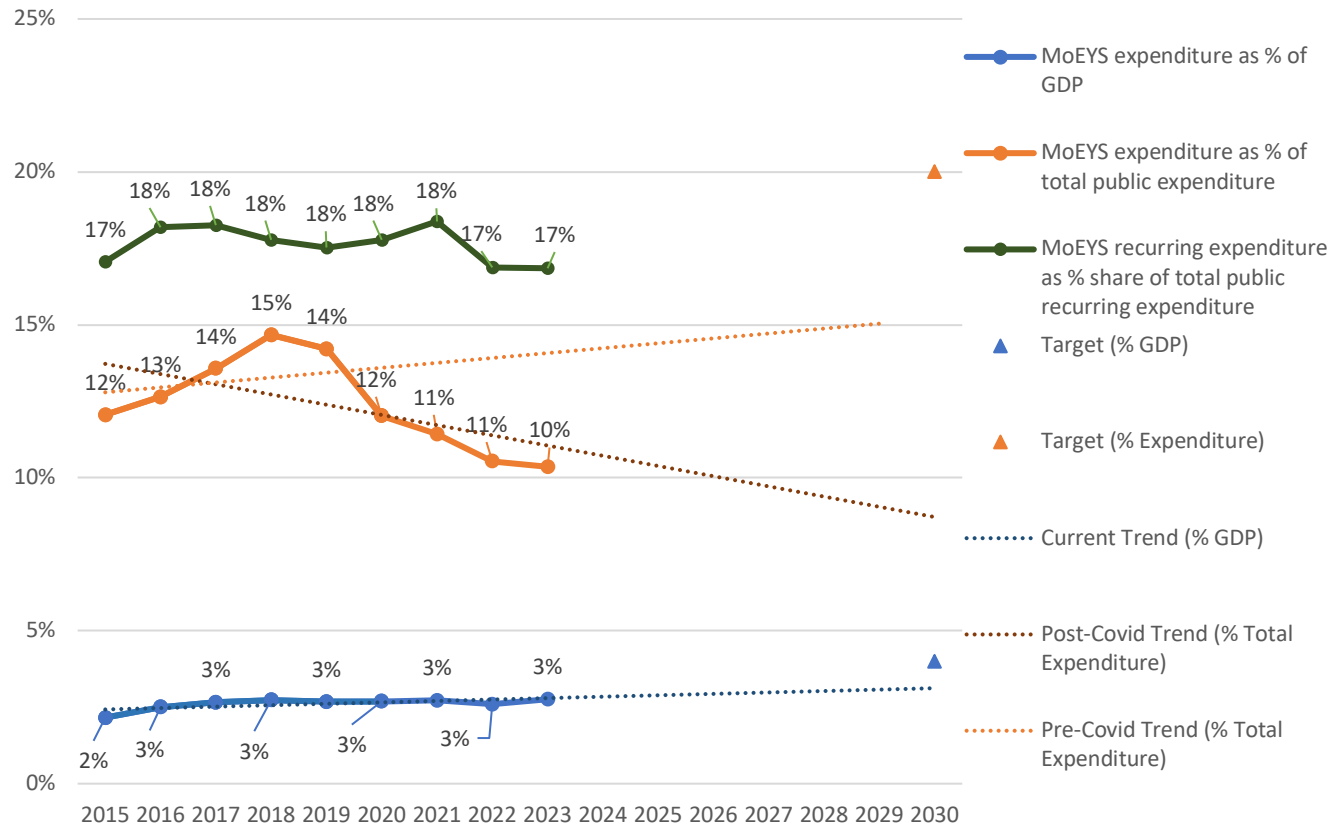
In addition to the targets and indicators related to SDG 4, this report also considers SDG 1.a which falls under the overarching SDG 1 who's goal is to eradicate poverty. Target 1.a and its indicators considers the mobilization of resources in order to implement policies that support the eradication of poverty, including education.

Indicator 1.a.2- Public education expenditure

Indicator 1.a.2 - Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

For an education system to function and achieve all other targets under SDG 4, it needed to receive sufficient levels of financing. As education expenditure is not measured by a specific SDG 4 indicator, Indicator 1.a.2 from SDG 1 is applied which measures the proportion of total government spending on education services. Specifically, it examines the proportion of total government spending on education, education expenditure as a proportion of total GDP and education recurrent expenditure as percentage of total public recurrent expenditure.

Figure 67 Public Education Financing, 2015-2023.



Source: MoEYS expended outturns, 2015-2023.

Cambodia falls short in its financial commitments to education

Current levels of educational expenditure in Cambodia fall below both the 4-6% of GDP and the 15-20% of total government expenditure internationally recognized targets, demonstrating that Cambodia continues to fall short in terms of financing SDG4. While education expenditure as a proportion of GDP has grown slightly from 2.2% in 2015 to 2.8% in 2023, this current trend is not increasing fast enough to meet the target of 4% set for 2030.

The education share of the total public expenditure showed a steady increased from 2015 to 2019, followed by a steep decrease ~~in~~ in 2022, possibly due to the de-prioritization of education spending during the COVID-19 pandemic. Education expenditure is not seen to have recovered, with further decreases observed to the point that the share of total public expenditure in 2023 was lower that what it was in 2015. Even if the positive trend pre-pandemic has continued, the 2030 target of 20% would still not have been met, with current progress off track. While some impact of the pandemic is also observed, education recurrent expenditure as a proportion of total recurrent expenditure shows a slightly more stable trend despite the pandemic with it remaining in the 17-18% range from 2015-2023.

SDG 1.a- Challenges, Policy Priorities and Key Interventions

Key Challenges

The education sector still does not meet the minimum requirement of 15-20% of total government expenditure spent in the education sector as mandated under Education 2030 commitments. As the education budget credibility is high in Cambodia, this suggests that the foremost challenge in achieving this target is a lack of political will or de-prioritization of the education sector. Furthermore, financial management processes face challenges in terms of limited knowledge regarding financial procedures in some public entities and at the school level, particularly with regards to the digital-financial management system. Additionally, a lack of alignment between financial planning documents and the education strategic plan has been noted amongst some entities.

Key Interventions

Efforts to improve budget allocation and strengthen overall financial management processes have been framed within overarching government public financial reforms. At the MoEYS, this has included the production of guidelines on budget implementation procedures for the decentralized levels as well as guidance for development partners on standard financial management processes. Moving forward, there is a need to improve advocacy with the Ministry of Finance to increase the allocation of funding to the education budget. Additionally, future focus will also need to concentrate on strengthening decentralized financial management in line with the government priorities of decentralization and de-concentration.

Chapter 4- Impact of COVID-19 on SDG 4 Progress

COVID-19 in Cambodia

Five days after the pandemic was declared, the Royal Government of Cambodia closed all educational institutions as a preventive measure to combat the spread of the virus. Across the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, Cambodian schools were closed for more than half of the days they should have been open. These closures disrupted children's lives and learning and put extra pressure on families who were already suffering due to the restrictions caused by the pandemic. During the period of school closure, face-to-face instruction was replaced with remote teaching and learning activities.

There was a total of 136,262 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 3,056 related-deaths between January 2020 and June 2022. Although Cambodia achieved a high level of vaccination (92%) which tempered some of the human cost of the pandemic, the related economic contraction caused negative impacts on household income, employment, food security, education and child protection. Furthermore, large-scale migrations of Cambodian nationals working in Thailand were seen in the early stages of the pandemic, driven by job losses and high case numbers.

Cambodia has had made enormous development gains over the past two decades and achieved lower-middle income status in 2015. This is reflected in the average GDP growth rate of 7.1% between 2011 and 2019, although this was briefly interrupted by the pandemic and related weak global demand and a fall in tourism, which caused economic growth to contract by 3.1% in 2021. Official projections predict that Cambodia will return to strong economic growth after COVID-19, but there can be no guarantee that this will happen, and future economic shocks are a distinct possibility. There are positive indicators that an economic rebound is occurring, but many of the mechanisms, frameworks and conditions required to boost equitable economic growth are still not in place. Industrial growth still relies on a low-skilled workforce, and the education system requires intensive reform and investment before it can produce a sufficiently qualified, high-skilled workforce that can drive business innovation and entrepreneurship.

Impact of COVID-19 on SDG 4 indicators

The pandemic had varied effects on SDG targets and indicators related to access, learning outcomes and student wellbeing. While many indicators showed stagnated or reversed progress, some indicators show upward trends despite the pandemic. One of the worst affected SDG indicators was 4.1.1 (learning proficiencies), with the pandemic leading to a significant amount of learning loss during school closures. As the national report on learning loss [4]indicates, there were significant declines in learning outcomes during COVID-19 which is further reflected in the worsening math proficiencies observed in indicator 4.1.1. These trends could largely be

[4] Learning Loss Report://www.unicef.org/cambodia/reports/learning-loss-report

attributed to the absence of in-person classes and the lack of teacher and student capacity in distance learning. The report on learning loss further cited a lack of digital resources, low digital literacy and unfamiliarity with using online methods for teaching and learning as contributing factors to the dip in learning outcomes.

Access to education was severely impacted by the pandemic and the associated school closures. These impacts can be most acutely observed at the early childhood level in relation to SDG target 4. 2. The closure of pre-primary schools during the pandemic and the limitations to delivering online classes for pre-primary students seem to have all contributed to the worsening performance of ECE indicators. This is evidenced in the fact that prior to COVID-19, Indicator 4.2.2 was on track to achieving its 2030 goals comfortably. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has stunted its progress and a strong reverse trend is now required for ECE targets to be met by 2030. The National Action Plan on Early Childhood Education 2022-2026 promises to help improve access and quality of ECE in the country. On the road to recovery, improved teacher training and introducing updated teaching methodologies are a top priority in this sector.

Access and associated enrolment in higher education was also negatively affected during the pandemic, with indicator 4.3.2 reflecting these trends. While from 2015 to 2019 this indicator showed an encouraging upward trend, there was a slight drop from 14.9% in 2019 to 14.6% in 2021, thereby stagnating the possible progress. While the pre-COVID trend was on track to meet the 2025 and 2030 targets, this stagnation has changed the trend meaning if it is continued, Cambodia will miss the SDG targets in for indicator. The pandemic was further seen to affect the proportion of tertiary students pursuing STEM subjects with a step reverse trend observed.

While access was arguably overarchingly negatively impacted, some indicators show positive trends during the pandemic, mostly as a result of the unprecedented and unique policies that were applied during this period. For example, completion rates across all levels of education were seen to increase in household survey data from 2021, with the rate of increase greater between 2019 and 2021 than from 2015 to 2019. This can partially be attributed policy of an automatic promotion that was instituted during the pandemic, wherein students who met appropriate criteria to be candidates to take the exam, based on formative assessments, were able to move to the next grade without sitting for exams.

Indicator 4.5.1 (adjusted parity index) also showed positive trends in terms of a narrowing wealth and location disparities during COVID-19 for all levels of education. The gaps in completion rates between rural and urban populations as well as between the poorest and richest populations decreased during the pandemic potentially as a result of the automatic promotion policy implemented across the country. This may also be as a result of the different experiences of the pandemic across the country, with urban centers, wherein wealth is traditionally concentrated, suffering from stricter lockdown policies, than rural areas.

In addition to affecting access and retention, it is also important to consider how COVID-19 affected student well-being during a period of school closures and associated isolation. The COVID-19 Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) report produced by MoEYS, UNICEF and Save the Children in 2021, examined this subject in detail and found that 55% of students experienced at least one type of mental health or psychosocial stressor during the pandemic including sadness, loneliness, and fear. Students from higher levels of education experienced more stressors with approximately 61% of upper secondary students experiencing at least one mental health and psychosocial stressor, compared to 58% in lower secondary school, 57% of students in NFE centers, 54% in TEIs, and 52% in primary school and pre-school. The worry among higher-grade students was largely found to be related to future and upcoming exams. Students and teacher trainees who self-identified with a disability more frequently reported experiencing MHPSS distress than those who self-identified as not having a disability. Nearly 68% of respondents who self-identified as having a disability reported experiencing at least one stressor, compared to 52% of respondents who self-identified as not having a disability

Globally, many vulnerable children who benefit from school feeding programmes faced additional challenges in access to food and nutrition during school closures. This was also exacerbated by high levels of household income loss due to the pandemic. Findings from the JENA 2021 showed that 53% of students and caregivers reported that their households had access to the same quantity of meals per day before and during the pandemic, while 40 reported having less food than before COVID-19. Access to food for pre-school, primary and NFE (non-formal education) student households declined more than the average of all respondents, indicating that they were the worst affected group of students.

The pandemic also saw the intensification of risks to children's safety and development, with the risk of children engaging in child labor the most frequently reported concern for both boys and girls in the JENA report. This was followed by risk factors related to emotional and/or sexual abuse and neglect. Risk factors for vulnerable groups, such as children with disabilities, were exacerbated during the pandemic, with students who self-identified as having a disability reporting being more at risk of experiencing additional violence, abuse or exploitation as a result of school closures, than those who self-identified as not having a disability.

Impact following school re-opening

The impact after school re-opening specifically on enrolment, retention and dropout rates are not all clear in the SDG 4. This is as a result of the use of household data for the calculation of many indicators, and the fact that the most recent household data available is from 2021. Indicator 4.1.3, which utilizes administrative data, shows limited dropout for lower and upper secondary students following school re-opening, with the gross intake ratio to the final year of

each of these cycles improving in 2022/23. Conversely, primary dropout seems to have been more prevalent, as evidenced in the drop in the gross intake ratio at this level.

Recovery is also observed at the early childhood level, with the proportion of students with ECCE experience rebounding in 2022/23 following a sharp decrease in 2021/22. This is particularly significant due to the fact that the ECCE sector in Cambodia was seen to be one of the hardest hit during the pandemic. Additionally, the accessibility to basic WASH services in school has largely stagnated since the pandemic, suggesting that capital investment efforts are still taking a backseat in terms of priorities since school re-opening.

Lessons learned on provision of remote learning

School closures due to COVID-19 have driven education systems around the world to provide alternative learning methods, by adopting online teaching, or broadcasting lessons over national television and radio channels. Global efforts to transition to distance learning were hampered by lack of access to appropriate and reliable infrastructure, information technology, communication devices, and basic learning materials. For example, in Cambodia, only 39% of teachers, 28% of school directors and 26% of students reported access to the internet. Similarly, computer or laptop ownership teachers was estimated at 34% for teachers and 12% for students, demonstrating the challenge of online learning methodologies in Cambodia. Students access to Telegram or Zoom was also low at 21%, compared to 43% of teachers 39% of school directors. This being said, findings show that approximately 70% of students accessed at least one distance learning programme of MoEYS during school closure. This varied according to socio-economic status with 72% of students from non-ID-poor households reporting to have accessed least one alternative distance method compared to 57 per cent of students from ID-poor households.

The pandemic forced Cambodia to jump ahead much faster than anticipated in the provision of online learning. While this faced many growing pains, it helped the country learn very quickly the challenges of implementing these programs on which it can now build. Digital education and ICT are priorities of the government in the new Pentagon development strategy, with current efforts underway to introduce relevant policies to form a framework for this development. However, it will also be necessary to consider the lessons learned during the pandemic, particularly limited internet access and a lack of hardware, if these policies are to be implemented effectively.

Chapter 5- Revision of National SDG4 Framework

Table 6 Benchmark SDG4 Indicators for Cambodia

Benchmark Indicators	Baseline (2015 unless otherwise noted)	Current (2023 unless otherwise noted)	Target 2025	Target 2025 Revised	Target 2030	Target 2030 Revised
4.1.1 Minimum learning proficiency in reading and mathematics						
Reading						
Grade 3	47.4%	49.5% (2019)	57.8%		66%	
Grade 6	68.5% (2016)	63.7% (2021)	77.3%	TBD	85%	TBD
Grade 8	81% (2017)	82.7% (2022)	87.2%		91%	
Mathematics						
Grade 3	55.1%	59.1% (2019)	58.5%		67%	
Grade 6	46.9% (2016)	25.6% (2021)	60.4%	TBD	68%	TBD
Grade 8	64% (2017)	56.8% (2022)	76.3%		84%	
4.1.4 Completion rate						
Primary	76.9%	83.8% (2021)	86.2%	TBD	91.1%	TBD
Lower Secondary	42.9%	51.9% (2021)	55%	TBD	61.1%	TBD
Upper Secondary	22%	28.4% (2021)	38%	TBD	45%	TBD
4.1.5 Out of School Rate						
Primary	6.7%	4.2% (2021)	1.5%	TDB	0%	TBD
Lower Secondary	15.3%	9.5% (2021)	6%	TBD	3.5%	TBD
Upper Secondary	49.8%	40.4% (2021)	30%	TBD	27%	TBD
4.2.2 Participation Rate in Organized Learning one year before Primary						
Total	55.5%	55.9% (2021)	75.4%	TBD	82.8%	TBD
4.c.1 Percentage of trained teachers						
Pre-Primary	55.5%	72.9%	73.3%	TBD	80%	TBD
Primary	59.5%	76.5%	82.9%	TBD	90%	TBD
Lower Secondary	81.2%	86.4%	91.4%	TBD	100%	TBD
Upper Secondary	93.3%	93%	99.1%	TBD	100%	TBD
4.5.1 Gender gap in upper secondary completion						
Upper secondary gender parity index	1.03	0.89 (2021)	N/A	TBD	N/A	TBD
1.a.2 Share of government expenditure on education						
As % of total expenditure	12.1%	10.4%	N/A	TBD	20%	TBD
As % of GDP	2.2%	2.8%	N/A	TBD	4%	TBD

The Way Forward

The revision of the indicators in Table 6 will largely be selected with the help of the Education Financial Simulation Model developed within the context of the drafting of the new Education Strategic Plan (2024-2028). The simulation model will helped to ensure that targets are financially feasible and that they are aligned with the key strategies contained within the plan. The EFSM is currently under-development, and,

as such, many targets have been left blank and will be updated once the EFSM and ESP is finalized in the first quarter of 2024.

The attainment of the revised SDG 4 targets will be guided a revisited Education 2030 Roadmap, which will be developed in the first half of 2024. The roadmap, originally developed in 2018, will be reviewed according to the findings presented above, and will consider the need to update the five policy priorities and key activities originally elaborated. It will also integrate the priorities identified in other key strategic policy documents which have been developed since 2018, specifically the Education Strategic Plan 2024-2028 which is currently being drafted, the Pentagon National Development Strategy 2023, Cambodia's commitments at the Transforming Education Summit 2022, the APREMC-II Bangkok Statement 2022, the Pentagon Development Strategy Phase I 2023, and the Priorities of Education, Youth and Sport Reform 2023-2028 issued by the new government in August 2023. These policy documents and statements, while not designed specifically for SDG 4, include the highest-level political commitments to the education development agenda and all contain strategies relevant to the attainment of SDG 4 targets.

While waiting for the updated Roadmap, the following tables have drawn out some of the key strategies and high-level activities identified in the listed policy documents and statements, and their relationship with SDG 4 targets. While these targets were not identified in the documents originally, they have been identified ex-ante to highlight what will be done to achieve the SDG 4 2030 Education Agenda in the immediate future. It is important to note that goal 4.b is largely absent from policies as it considers external support to higher education in the form of scholarships, which is not an element considered in national policy documents.

Table 7 Transforming Education Summit (2022) Strategies

Strategy	Related SDG 4 Target
Invest more on health infrastructure at schools, vaccination programs for teachers and students, social safety needs for children, food safety and security, school means and scholarships to vulnerable and poor children	4.5, 4.7, 4.a
Address learning losses by involving all stakeholders to support schools, promoting early grade reading and early grade mathematics	4.1
Implement effective school-based management in order to improve the accountability of schools to the community, increase the autonomy of schools in implementing school improvement plans, ensure transparent and reliable assessment results to improve teaching and learning and increase participation of parents and stakeholders in school oversight	4.1
Ensure a high-quality teaching force by improving teachers' capacity through PRESET, INSET and Continued Professional Development (CPD) to improve content knowledge, pedagogy and teaching methods, and the use of technology through increased investment in necessary infrastructures including libraries and teaching resources, implementation of leadership programs, improving the teaching practicum, implementing quality assurance, and supporting teacher career development	4.c
Ensure teachers and students are equipped with digital tools and skills through improving existing digital platforms and establishing digital and remote education centres, producing instructional videos for core subjects from K1 to 12, and creating	4.1, 4.4

an e-learning system, integrating the use of technology into everyday teaching and learning, developing digital infrastructure in schools such as ICT rooms and Learning Management Systems and implementing education programs focused on specific ICT skills such as coding, App development, robotics, etc.	
Attract more students to STEM education through increasing the number of New Generation Schools and Technical High Schools, improving the quality subject knowledge and pedagogy of STEM teachers, developing and implementing effective STEM teaching methods, investing in labs, ICT classrooms and 21st century libraries, creating study clubs, STEM festivals, competitions, and partnerships with higher education institutions and private companies and developing curricula with flexible micro-credentialing models for technical education	4.3, 4.4, 4.c
Developing 21st century skills for young people through youth development programs which focus on hard and soft skills, 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, entrepreneurship, leadership, and global citizenship, vocational training programs with clear links to employment opportunities and participation of young people in socio-economic development.	4.3, 4.7
Creating the Centre of Excellence in Higher Education through Higher Education reform, which focus on strengthening governance of Higher Education Institutions (HEI), increasing qualifications of lecturers, updating curricula and learning resources, the use of technology and blended teaching methods, promoting research and development, and increased investment in infrastructure, establishment of a Cyber University to promote the effective use of digital technology for teaching and learning, as well as sharing educational resources between HEIs, linking education to the labour market; and partnerships between universities and private sector	4.3
We strive to increase education budget from the current level of 18% to 20% of current government budget through cooperation and partnership with all stakeholders, including NGOs, international financial institutions, and global actors, and strengthening public-private partnerships	1.a

Table 8 APREMC-II Bangkok Statement (2022) Strategies

Strategy	Related SDG Target
Strengthening legal frameworks and ensuring that education sector plans, policies and strategies are inclusive, equitable and gender-transformative, coupled with equity-based budget allocations	4.5
Eliminating barriers to access to education and learning of persons with disabilities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls, and children living in extreme poverty and/or in remote locations and those from refugee and migrant families	4.5
Establishing flexible learning pathways with multiple re-entry points at all ages and educational levels, and the recognition and accreditation and validation of alternative education, in particular for out-of-school children, adolescents and adults	4.1, 4.3
Adapting curricula to learners from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds and promoting access to initial literacy and further learning in the mother tongue	4.1, 4.5
Strengthening monitoring systems and the availability of relevant, timely data on vulnerable groups to develop targeted services and track progress on their participation in education	4.1, 4.5

Re-designing curricula to provide learners with foundational, digital, 21st century and socio-emotional competencies, and strengthening the delivery of education for sustainable development, global citizenship, and comprehensive sexual education	4.4, 4.7
Transforming pedagogies so that they are learner-centred and facilitate learning across multiple domains (knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values) and are based on the principles of cooperation and solidarity;	4.1, 4.7
Strengthening the effective use of assessment for learning and reducing the negative effect of high-stake examinations	4.1
Formulating clear competency-based learning achievement standards and strengthening national and regional large-scale assessments to monitor learning outcomes and inform reforms of teaching and learning policies and practices	4.1
Developing safe, inclusive, gender-just, climate-protective and stimulating learning environments which foster learners' health and psycho-social well-being, so that all children and young people have the required conditions to learn and thrive	4.7, 4.c
Empowering families and communities to engage in learning and granting flexibility to teachers, parents, and learners to adapt learning content to the leaners' needs	4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Prioritizing pre-primary education through increased provision and investment, and leverage innovative early learning programmes that extend beyond the school and include home engagement	4.2
Strengthening equitable access to and the relevance of secondary education by developing a more modular approach and flexible transitions between secondary programmes and reforming end of secondary certification so that it takes into account all programmes and assesses a wider set of competencies including transferable and 21st century skills	4.1, 4.4
Strengthening adolescent and youth skills development with a focus on life and employability skills, creativity, digital literacy, entrepreneurship by aligning programmes' content and pedagogical approaches with youth's aspirations, the needs of the labour market and socioeconomic demands taking into account fast evolving technologies, scientific innovations and the digital and green transition of economies	4.3, 4.4
Establishing flexible learning pathways with multiple re-entry points at all ages and educational levels, and the recognition and accreditation and validation of alternative education, in particular for out-of-school children, adolescents, and adults, recognizing qualifications earned through online and blended learning through micro-credentials and providing opportunities for re-skilling and upskilling in a lifelong learning perspective	4.1, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6
Promoting education for sustainable development throughout education levels, harnessing local and indigenous knowledge in educational programmes to respond to climate change, and to facilitate sustainable development and peace building	4.7
Reviewing and reforming teaching standards and competency frameworks so that teachers are equipped with innovative learner-centred pedagogical skills, digital literacy and competencies to teach in a digital and blended eco-system, have the ability to manage diversity in the classroom, and to support learners' socio-emotional well-being;	4.1, 4.c
Investing in pre- and in-service training and ensuring that it remains up to date with teaching standards and competency frameworks and responsive to evidence on effective teaching and learning approaches	4.c

Taking policy measures to make the teaching profession attractive and improving teachers' selection processes to attract the most promising candidates and developing performance based career structures;	4.c
Providing teachers with strong support structures including digital platforms and adequate opportunities to exchange with peers, promoting collaborative learning, improving their practices including through professional learning communities	4.c
Improving teachers' working conditions and ensuring that their health, well-being, and labour rights are protected	4.c
Recruiting and supporting teachers from disadvantaged backgrounds	4.c
Prioritizing and investing in connecting schools and making digital platforms and programmes available in particular in remote areas and small island developing states	4.a
Providing free and quality access to connectivity and devices in schools and homes for the most disadvantaged learners;	4.a
Leveraging technologies to support in-person learning and enhance the relevance, resilience, and quality of education delivery. This includes high-tech as well as quality and contextualized flexible low-tech and no-tech solutions to reach all learners	4.1
Setting strong quality standards for public and private institutions and improving accountability structures to achieve greater quality of teaching and learning, other key cross sectoral services in schools and efficiency of spending	4.1
Strengthening autonomy, flexibility, leadership and planning at school level and train school leaders for improved school management and resilience	4.1, 4.c
Enhancing cross-sectoral collaboration between health, education and other relevant ministries, local governments, communities, and parents to ensure inclusive and protective learning environments in and around schools, delivering adequate services and preparing for future risks including climate change and other humanitarian disasters	4.a, 4.7
Establishing equity-based, pro-poor budget allocations so that education expenditures serve to reduce inequities and are efficiently linked with strengthened social protection schemes for children	1.a, 4.5
Prioritizing and protecting financing of public education in national budgets and progressively increase financing of education and urging to adhere to the minimum benchmark of 4-6% of the Gross Domestic Product and/or 15%-20% of total public expenditure according to the country context	1.a

Table 9 Pentagon Strategy - Phase 1 2023

Strategy	**Related SDG 4 Target**
Continuing to enhance quality of education and trainings at all levels, updating curricula at all levels and creating an environment conducive to lifelong learning	4.1, 4.6, 4.c
Continuing to implement school reforms with a focus on further enhancing the existing achievements, promoting the establishment of new generation schools and role-model schools, strengthening governance and management efficiency of the Departments of Education, Youth and Sports, as well as promoting strong participation and ownership from parents, communities and the private sector	4.1

Strengthening the quality of teachers' training and teaching methods, as well as continuing to improve livelihoods and promoting social values of teaching personnel at all levels	4.c
Continuing to promote digital education, developing digital infrastructures in schools and promoting studies of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM)	4.4, 4.7
Promoting school health and increasing scholarships for poor and vulnerable students	4.5, 4.7
Strengthening the governance of higher education institutions, promoting research and development, and innovation, and promoting public-private partnerships	4.3
Strengthening governance system and governance of technical and vocational education and training institutions, both public and private, through updating relevant policies and regulations, digitalization and strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	4.3
Continuing to improve teachers' capacity and qualifications by encouraging them to conduct further studies and carry out regular research, as well as by attracting highly qualified teachers with strong practical backgrounds to teach in TVET institutions nationwide	4.3, 4.c
Strengthening the quality of technical and vocational skills, both soft and hard, through the full implementation of training programs based on capacity and industrial needs	4.3, 4.4

Table 10: Prioritization of Education, Youth and Sport Reform 2023-2028

Strategy	Related SDG 4 Target
Strengthening capacity building, knowledge, health and behaviour for all students from pre-primary to secondary education	4.1, 4.2
Strengthening existing pre-primary schools without expanding and focus on pre-primary standard and quality pre-primary teacher training, especially community pre-primary schools	4.2, 4.c
At the primary level, focus on first reading and mathematics packages (EGRA, EGMA), foreign language teaching, addressing teacher shortages in disadvantaged areas, student health and nutrition and poverty	4.1, 4.5, 4.7
At the secondary level, expand secondary and high schools according to the needs of the people	4.1
At the higher education level, strengthen doctoral training through the review of the conditions and criteria for doctoral training processes and the use of private sector networks to participating in evaluating and ensuring the quality of higher education	4.3
Continue to reform schools, focusing on "model schools"	4.1
Implement new teaching methods, such as project-based teaching, the use of technology etc.	4.1
Encourage the teaching and learning of STEM subjects by establishing committees for the promotion of STEM teaching methods and supporting general education institutions, in collaboration with higher education institutions such as the Institute of Technology of Cambodia and STEM outstanding teachers, to prepare documents to compile good teaching methods and promote teaching and learning of STEM subjects.	4.4

Establish a standard library, in collaboration with development partners	4.1, 4.6
Develop measures and mechanisms to help slow learning students such as preparing self-study worksheets in lessons as daily training documents, encouraging teachers to give student work, and organizing study clubs by subjects	4.1
Strengthen school principal training and appointments as well as monitoring and evaluation the school principal's work according to the school principal's minimum standards, in line with the motivation of good performance of school principal and implementation of the school principal's career path.	4.1
Improve student capacity assessment through transparent testing, supporting learning and teaching, and organizing classes to help slow learning students, focusing on students with limited reading, writing, and numeracy	4.1
Increase school accountability posting public results of self-assessment, annual results, school revenue and expenditure, and the school standard level	4.1
Increase autonomy and decision-making authority at the school level through the School Management Committee, Class Management Committee, preparing school and class improvement plan, preparing annual outcome agreement of teachers, and preparing monthly and quarterly meeting of school managers;	4.1
Increase the participation of parents and stakeholders in the management and development of schools to achieve a model school	4.1, 4.5
Improve teacher training centres and sharpen teaching methods	4.c
Monitor and evaluate the management of private educational institutions	4.1
Promote teacher development through teacher training institutions reform including implementing strict measures in the management of teachers and education, organizing incentive for good teachers and principals and reviewing support for remote and disadvantaged areas	4.c
Examine, adjust and organize curriculum and extracurricular activities in accordance with the need to strengthen the knowledge, discipline, ethics and behaviour of students	4.7
Promote student school health by taking care of students' health through child nutrition programs and school food quality control including implementing the school feeding program and the cash scholarship program	4.5, 4.7
Motivate and encourage the participation of parents, guardians and the community in education in line with the motto of public-community partnership for education	4.1
Promote digital education and digital literacy	4.4
Establish the Centre of Excellence in Higher Education	4.3
Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning in science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and agriculture in public and private higher education institutions by modernizing the curriculum, teaching and evaluating students' learning outcomes	4.3
Continue to build the capacity of research and innovation to meet the needs of the market, community, and socio-economic development through investment funding for targeted higher education institutions, and conditions for the production of scientific research evidence to support products and sample products from research for priority industries/sectors	4.3, 4.4
Improve equity and quality of higher education through the renovation of infrastructure and the expansion of scholarship programs	4.3, 4.5, 4.b
Support the modernization of institutional governance systems in higher education	4.3

Strengthen the implementation of internal education quality assurance systems in higher education	4.3
Promote the internationalization of higher education	4.3
Promote the implementation of reforms in the field of physical education and sports by strengthening management and existing mechanisms, training human resources and providing incentives	4.7
System building and capacity development including implementing a results-oriented management approach and strengthening the implementation of human resource management reform	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.c

Table 11 Draft Education Strategic Plan 2024-2028 Strategies

Strategy	Related SDG 4 Target
Expansion of public pre-schools (including those in primary schools)	4.2
Establishment of community-based preschools	4.2
Establishment of community-based childcare centres	4.2
Expansion and strengthening of inclusive ECE for students with disabilities and students from minority language groups	4.2, 4.5
Expansion of school health and nutrition programs in ECE	4.2, 4.7
Implementation of model preschool standards	4.2
Promoting parental education including the importance of ECE for all children, including those with disabilities	4.2, 4.5
Strengthen monitoring and evaluation in ECE programs	4.2
Strengthen system of self-assessment including school inspection and supervision for pre-schools	4.2
Expansion of state-community partnerships for ECE	4.2
Encourage climate resilience in preschools	4.2, 4.7
Implementation of measures to increase enrolment, attendance, and completion, especially for disadvantaged children and those at risk of dropping out in primary education	4.1, 4.5
Promotion of health, safety and nutrition in and through primary school	4.1, 4.7
Development of primary school infrastructure including digital infrastructure, in accordance with the standards of primary schools, with special attention to underprivileged and disadvantaged schools	4.1, 4.4, 4.5
Updating of the primary curriculum and textbooks, including by integrating climate change, multilingual education, and inclusive education	4.1, 4.5
Integration of the use of technology and digital resources into teaching and learning, to create a conducive environment for learning in primary education	4.1
Promotion of extra-curricular programs, to improve ethics and teacher and student attitudes in primary education	4.7
Improve competencies of school management in primary education	4.1
Improve the efficiency of equity funds, financing, and cooperation with the primary school community	4.1
Establishment of model schools and new generation schools in primary education	4.1
Construction of an effective support system for primary schools	4.1

Promotion of partnerships between primary schools and communities	4.1
Implementation of measures to increase participation and improve school attendance and retention in secondary schools, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups	4.1, 4.5
Expansion of partnerships between secondary schools and higher education and vocational technical training institutions, private sector and enterprises, in order to strengthen the offer of technical training	4.3
Improvement of physical infrastructure and facilities for secondary institutions and schools	4.1, 4.a
Implementation of the new curriculum, including the expansion of science subjects, technology, engineering, mathematics and foreign languages, to meet 21st century skills frameworks in secondary education	4.1, 4.4
Expansion of technical secondary education that is oriented towards careers and income generation	4.3
Support to new learning methods, including digital tools, that fit within the new learning context at the secondary level	4.1
Improvement of school health at secondary education level	4.1, 4.5
Implementation of school-based management approach at the secondary level	4.1
Establishment of model schools and new generation schools at the secondary level	4.1
Strengthening of support and supervision of secondary schools and principals, including through self-assessment and development of education quality assurance framework	4.1
Promotion of partnerships between secondary schools, private sector, development partners and communities	4.1
Develop policies and plans to strengthen teacher education	4.c
Strengthen the Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs)	4.c
Develop, review and revise existing teacher and educator standards	4.c
Develop, review, and revise teacher education curriculum	4.c
Strengthening the implementation of continuous professional development (CPD) and Teacher Career Pathway (TCP)	4.c
Improve support systems/mechanisms in teacher education	4.c
Strengthen database for effective planning and management of teacher development	4.c
Implementation of measures to increase equitable access to higher education	4.3
Development of teaching and learning infrastructure for higher education	4.3
Modernization of the higher education curriculum to respond to the needs of the economy	4.3
Promotion of internationalization to improve quality and relevance of higher education	4.3
Improvement of competencies of senior management and core technical staff in higher education institutions	4.3
Upgrading the capacity of lecturers in higher education institutions to implement modernized academic programs	4.3
Enhance internal quality assurance system implementation for academic programs in higher education institutions	4.3
Strengthening of institutional leadership and management in higher education institutions capacity to develop and implement support systems	4.3

Expansion of literacy and non-formal primary and secondary equivalency programs	4.1, 4.6
Provision of re-entry programs for primary and secondary dropouts	4.1
Transformation of community learning centres to lifelong learning centres	4.4, 4.6
Recognize, validate, and accredit knowledge, skill, and competences acquired from non-formal education program	4.4
Development of Teacher Training framework for NFE teachers	4.c
Foster the Implementation of the Community Learning Centre Evaluation Framework	4.6
Capacity development of CLCs-LLCs management committee members	4.6
Technical Training of life-skills and income generation teachers	4.c
Enlargement of the coverage of youth programs, with attention to STEM, digital, volunteerism, entrepreneurship, leadership, and 21st century skills	4.4
Use of information to identify disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable populations, institutions and territories	4.5
Enactment of fiscal compacts with sub-national governments to secure level of investment in a national fund for education	1.a
Ear-marked, formula-based transfers to sub-national administrations and schools (e.g. SOF)	1.a, 4.5

Annex 1

Below are tables which summarize the key interventions, activities, policies, strategies and action plans that have been implemented and developed in Cambodia since 2015 that have contributed to progress on SDG 4 targets. The following tables break these down by type and present their alignment with SDG 4 targets. These tables compliment the more detailed analysis of how these activities have supported progress towards targets and have worked to overcome bottlenecks and challenges presented above.

Table 12 provides a summary of large-scale programmatic interventions that have been implemented, or are currently being implemented, which support the attainment of SDG 4 targets. Please note that this table does not cover all interventions, programs and projects that have been implemented since 2015 nor are the list of key activities and achievements exhaustive. Rather, focus has been placed on large-scale intervention and highlights activities that are directly related to the SDG 4 indicators discussed above.

Table 12 Key Programmes and Interventions by SDG 4 Target, 2015-Present.

Related SDG 4 Target(s)	Program	Years Implemented	Key Activities/Achievements	Stakeholders
4.1, 4.2	General Education Improvement Project (GEIP)	2022-2026	• Program currently targeting 1,633 schools from kindergarten to secondary, to improve and enhance learning outcomes, while also increasing the quality and equity of general education • Established a working group to document best practices in ten specialized subjects in 650 secondary schools • Supported the development of a continuous assessment system including worksheets for monthly, quarterly and semi-annual assessments • Provided training in school community strategies to 3,953 principals, school management staff and decentralized education officials	MoEYS, World Bank, GPE
4.1, 4.3, 4.4	Basic Education Equivalency Program (BEEP)	2022-onwards	• Flexible, online-based alternative education program aiming to help youth who have dropped out of lower secondary to reintegrate into formal education in either TVET institutions or technical upper secondary schools • Accessed by 708 students in 2022	MoEYS, UNESCO

4.1, 4.2, 4.5	School Feeding Program (including home grown school feeding)	2014-onwards	• Provision of nutritious free-school meals to students, reaching over 100,000 students a year • Home-grown school feeding program works with commune councils and schools to purchase food from supplier and producers within the community, particularly women farmers	MoEYS, World Food Program, KOICA
4.1, 4.5	Primary Education Scholarship Program	2015-onwards	• Provision of both merit and needs-based educational scholarships to over 100,000 primary students annually, including indigenous populations	MoEYS, GPE (initial funding, now fully financed through national budget)
4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.a, 4.c	Capacity Development Partnership Fund Phase 3	2018-2026	• Strengthen the capacity of officials and institutions at national and sub-national levels in planning, monitoring, public finance and policy implementation • Development of local-based life skills curriculum and roll out to 294 secondary schools and 107 primary schools • Support to the roll out of the EGL reading programming for all primary schools in 19 provinces and math program in all primary schools in eight provinces including teacher training • Implementation of Generation Future, a youth mentorship programme that supports youth-led social change projects and provides them with an opportunity to present their ideas in front of influential figures and potential investors • Supported the development of Community Preschool Curriculum and its application in community preschools, including teacher training	EU, GPE, SIDA, UNICEF, MoEYS

			• Supported the initiative for community pre-schools to become annexed to public/pre or primary schools	
4.4, 4.7, 4.c	New Generation Schools	2015-onwards	• New generation schools are autonomous public schools which receive high investment linked to new standards of accountability and governance as well as professional standards for 21st century learning • Schools are built on the five key operation principles of good governance, high teacher professional standards, intensive investment linked to annual accreditation as a condition, rationalized resource allocation and operational autonomy • Schools are provided with high quality science and computer facilities to support STEM education • Teachers receive incentives linked to their performance and are provided opportunities for mentoring and professional upgrading	MoEYS, Kampuchean Action to Promote Education (KAPE)
4.1, 4.4, 4.a, 4.c	Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP)	2017-2022	• Strengthened school-based management by providing funds for school improvement, improvement of qualification of lower-secondary school teachers and school management and improvement of school equipment in 100 target secondary schools • 2,287 teachers upgraded through the teacher upgrading program • 310 principals, vice principal and officials of municipal-district offices of education trained in the leadership upgrading program • Target schools conducted standardized student	MoEYS, World Bank

			performance assessment to identify learners needing additional support	
4.3, 4.4	Higher Education Improvement Project (HEIP)	2018-2024	• Supported five target higher education institutions and select private higher education institution to improve governance and teaching and learning capacity • Developed local partnership program for STEM education, establishing linkages between higher education institutions and secondary schools • Upgraded 46 teachers to master's degree to become core trainers	MoEYS, World Bank
4.3, 4.4. 4.5, 4.6	Decent Employment for Youth in Cambodia Project Phase 1 & 2	Phase 1: 20 Phase 2: 2020-2023	• Increase the availability of training in life, soft, green and digital literacy skills • Enhance the quality of the national TVET system • Improve private sector engagement in TVET design and deliver • Provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills training to employees in factories • Expansion of the gender and green-responsive entrepreneurship education/training	RGC, UNESCO, SDC, ILO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNDO
4.c	Project of Establishment of Teacher Education Colleges (E-TEC)	2017-2022	• Provision of scholarships for teacher trainers to pursue higher education nationally and abroad • Developed the curriculum framework for the Bachelor of Vocation for Primary and Secondary teachers • Construction and furnishing of two Teacher Education Colleges	MoEYS, JICA
4.1, 4.4, 4.b, 4.c	Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Programme 1	2017-2022	• Provided scholarships to 6,408 upper secondary students • Provided allowance of $20/month to 789 STEM teachers in seven target provides	MoEYS, ABD

			• Provided scholarships to 496 teacher trainees at the National Institute of Education or Teacher Training Centres • Improved curriculum of upper secondary education on science, mathematics and ICT to meet regional/international standards • Developed capacity of 250 upper secondary school teacher trainers, 10,533 upper secondary school teachers and 891 secondary school management staff • Provided school improvement funds to 50 resource high schools and 247 network schools • Established math and science study clubs in 50 upper secondary schools	
4.1, 4.4, 4.c	Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Programme 2	2019-2024	• Aims to improve teacher quality and boost the quality and labour market relevance of upper secondary education • Developed the STEM training manuals for STEM core trainers and teachers for secondary resource schools and network schools • Developed the curriculum for lower secondary upgrading (BA+1), upper secondary upgrading (BA+2), school principal training and Master of Education Administration Training program for non-formal contract teachers at the National Institute of Education • Develop School Based- Based STEM Framework (STEP UP-ADB) • Developed STEM training manual in English and Khmer • Trained STEM core trainers from National Institute of Education and other relevant education service providers	MoEYS, ABD

			• Provided training on STEM Education and Gender Responsive • Provided doctoral scholarships to 7 professors at the National Institute of Education	
4.1, 4.c	Strengthening Teacher Education Programs in Cambodia (STEPCam)	Phase 1: 2018-2022 Phase 2: 2022-2025	• Aim to enhance the teacher quality and early grade student learning by strengthening pedagogical approaches through improved in-service and pre-service teacher training • Renovated 11 provincial teacher training colleges including information and communication equipment • Established a continuous-professional development management system for teachers, accessible by almost all teachers in Cambodia • Developed the Master of Education curriculum framework and curriculum for primary education • Upgraded qualification of 67 teacher educators to a Bachelor of Education • Developed math visual aid packages and learning materials for grades 1, 2 and 3 • 7,000 teachers and staff trained on play-based early grade literacy and maths materials	MoEYS, UNESCO, GPE
4.1. 4.c	Improving School Environment and Supplying Material and Equipment for Education in Cambodia	2018-2022	• Constructed of 26 high schools and one regional teacher training centre equal to 289 rooms in three provinces	MoEYS, People's Republic of China
4.1, 4.4, 4.c	Project for ICT Capacity Building of Lower Secondary Education in Cambodia	2021-2026	• Improved the quality of ICT education for pre-service and secondary education • Renovated the equipment and ICT equipment at two regional teacher training centres	MoEYS, KOICA

			• ICT core textbooks for regional teacher training centres and lower secondary schools developed • Scholarships provided for 15 ICT teacher educators to study abroad for Masters Degrees	
4.1, 4.5	Capacity Development Partnership Fund Phase II	2014-2017	• Strengthened the capacity of planning staff at the centralized and decentralized levels • Improved the quality and capacity of EMIS staff at sub-national levels for the management, use and development of EMIS tools • Supported the pilot and rollout of the financial information management system • Strengthened school management and local accountability • Reviewed the gender mainstreaming in education plan and disseminated the action plan	MoEYS, UNICEF, GPE, USAID, EU, SIDA
4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.b	Strengthening Education & Employability in Kampuchean (SEEK)	2020-2022	• Targeted 322 schools from preschool to secondary in disadvantaged districts, particularly those with high populations of ethnic minorities • Implemented tutorial classes for under-performing students in target secondary schools in disadvantaged areas • Provided scholarships to secondary school students at risk of dropping out • Supported local organization to enhance vocational training and career orientation services for youth	MoEYS, EU, KAPE, WeWorld-GVC, BSDA, YCC
4.b	Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship	2021-present	• Provides scholarships to government officials to obtain master's or Doctoral degrees in Japanese higher education institutions	RGC, JICA

			• Develops the next generation of education officials to drive transformative change	
4.1, 4.c	All Children Reading/Learning Cambodia	2016-2021	• Piloted and launched the early grade reading packing in 1,373 primary schools and nine provincial teacher training centres and teacher education colleges • Integrated the Khmer early grade reading program into the pre-service training curriculum • Built the capacity of over 2,600 teachers to effectively teach early grade literacy in grade 1 and 2 in three target provinces • Supported 1,373 schools with the full EGR package • Provided one-on-one coaching to over 2,000 EGR teachers	MoEYS, USAID, World Education
4.2	Integrated early childhood development	2020-2025	• Strengthening the enabling environment at the national and sub-national levels to promote the institutionalization of ECD activities	RGC, USAID
4.1, 4.5, 4.c	Strengthening early-grade math through inclusive, level-appropriate education (SMILE)	2021-2026	• Strengthening the competencies of teacher trainers and ministry staff to effectively support school-based mentors, primary school leaders and (student) teachers in teaching early grade math in a level-appropriate and gender responsive way • Strengthening pedagogical content knowledge and classroom management skills of teachers through a continuous professional development (CPD) trajectory that is complemented by remote learning and mentoring, allowing teachers to put their newly strengthened skills to practice • Establishment of collaboration, dialogue and adaptive learning between MoEYS and (a) research institution(s) to develop an	MoEYS, Belgium/VVOB

			evidence-informed scaling strategy for pre-service and in-service teacher training on level-appropriate and gender-responsive quality EGM teaching.	
4.1, 4.4, 4.c	Strengthening math results and teacher (SMART)	2017-2021	• Upgraded 710 maths teachers through targeted training • Integrated teaching at the right level pedagogies into training materials for early grade mathematics • Improved teacher education colleges focus on teaching performance, gender and environment	MoEYS, Belgium/VVOB
4.2	Early Childhood Care and Development for Floating Village Project	2016-2019	• Constructed 11 community based ECCD centres • Established 635 home-based ECCD programs • Built the capacity of facilitator in the CB ECCE centres • Conducted training sessions for core mothers group leader parents on child friend home-based ECCD	MoEYS, World Bank
4.1, 4.4	Cambodia Science and Technology Project in Upper Secondary Education (STEP UP)	2022-2027	• Providing high-quality teaching and learning environment in upper secondary schools • Increasing the skills of upper-secondary STEM teachers and strengthening STEM education delivery • Strengthening upper-secondary leadership and management capacity	MoEYS. ADB

Table 13 presents the key policy documents that have been developed to support the realization of SDG 4 targets since 2015 including policies, strategies, standards, guidelines, strategic plans and action plans. The policies have been organized according to the four "phases" of education sector reform identified by MoEYS.

Table 13 Key Policies Documents by SDG Target, 2015-Present.

Relevant SDG Target(s)	Policy	Phase

4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.a, 4.c	Education strategic plan 2014-2018	Phase 1: 2014
4.3	Guidelines on strengthening the management and implementation of technical education in upper secondary schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.3	Guidelines on technical education student examination	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Guidelines on the Child Friendly School Program in secondary education	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Guidelines on the implementation of education quality assurance inspections	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.4	Guidelines on the implementation of STEM education policies	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.4	Guidelines on the implementation of the re-enrolment program	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.3	Higher education standards	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.7	Information and communication technology syllabus for grades 4 to 12	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.7	Learning materials for climate change for grades 10 to 12	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.7	Life skills education framework and curriculum for grades 4 to 9	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.b, 4.7	Manual for the implementation of the Child Friendly School program	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.5	Master plan for assisting children with disabilities	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.3	Master plan for technical education at upper secondary	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.b	Minimum school WASH standards	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	National framework for scholarships in primary schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.c	National teacher training institution standards	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.a	Policy on minimum WASH standards for schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.2, 4.a	Provisions for quality assurance for pre-school and general education	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.5	Scholarship framework focusing on the principle of equity in primary education	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.6, 4.a	Standards for community learning centres	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.3, 4.a	Standards for general and technical secondary education	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Standards for primary school teacher education programs	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.a	Standards for resource secondary schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.4	Policy on STEM education	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.c	Teacher career pathways framework	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Teacher policy action plan 2015-2020	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Teacher training provider standards	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.a, 4.c	Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.c	National action plan on early childhood care and development	Phase 3: 2018-2022
4.5	Action plan on inclusive education	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.5	Action plan on multilingual education	Phase 3: 2019-2022

4.c	Action plan on the development of regional pedagogical centres and provincial pedagogical and teacher training schools (2019-2023)	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.c	Bachelor's degree training program framework for master trainers	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.c	Basic training program for lower secondary teachers (12+2)	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.c	Continuous professional development policy, framework and action plan	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.5	Framework for implementing in-school meal programs using community-based agricultural products	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.5	Gender mainstreaming strategic plan 2021-2025	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.2	Guidelines for the implementation of school community strategies for early childhood education	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.4	Guidelines on teaching and learning science according to the STEM methods in primary schools	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3, 4.4	Guidelines on the development and management of science journals in higher education institutions	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Guidelines on the implementation of local-based life skills curriculum	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3	Master plan for human resource development in higher education	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.c	Master plan on the upgrading of qualifications of education staff (2021-2025)	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3, 4.4	National action plan on youth development 2022-2026	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	National plan on school health 2021-2030	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	National policy on lifelong learning	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3, 4.1, 4.6	Policy on non-formal education equivalency programme	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.c	Pedagogical internship guidelines for upper secondary teacher trainees (BA+2)	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.4	Policy and strategy on ICT in education	Phase 3: 2019-2022
1.a.2	Policy framework on results-based budgeting 2022-2030	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.c	Principles, procedures and methods for evaluating teacher trainees	Phase 3: 2019-2022
1.a.2	Roadmap for public investment in the education sector 2022-2030	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Standard operational procedure for school health promotion	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.c	Training program framework for upper secondary teachers (BA+2)	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3	Higher education strategy and roadmap	Phase 4: 2023-onwards
4.1, 4.c	Teacher policy action plan (Updated) 2024-2030	Phase 4: 2023-onwards

Table 14 displays a list of key activities that have been untaken by MoEYS since 2015 towards related SDG 4 targets. Many of these activities fall under the policies or programs listed above, and others are standalone actions that have been taken as part of wider government reforms. This list of activities is not

exhaustive but rather provides examples of how programmes and policies have translated into concrete actions towards the achievement of SDG 4.

Table 14 Key Activities by SDG Target, 2015-Present

Relevant SDG Target(s)	Activity	Phase
4.1, 4.c	Minimum pay for teachers at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary teachers increased	2013-Ongoing
4.1, 4.c	Teachers in remote and disadvantaged areas provided with financial incentives provided with additional pay incentives	2013-Ongoing
4.c	Transformation of Regional Teacher Training Centres into Pedagogical Institutes (National Education Centres)	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.5	Establishment of the National Institute of Special Education	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Development of bachelor's degree training program (12+4) at Pedagogical Institute	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.c, 4.5	Improvement of primary school teacher training documents on inclusive education programs	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.c	Establishment of Teacher Resource Development Committee	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Upgrading of 59 master trainings for pedagogical institutes to master's degree level	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Upgrading of 1,7000 lower secondary teachers through the Accelerated Teacher Training Program to become qualified to teacher at the upper secondary level	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.c	Development of accelerated BA program six subjects for upgrading of basic education teachers to upper secondary level	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Implementation of thematic inspections for specific skills and statistics, leading to the periodic inspection of over 2,5000 primary schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Formulation of results-based assessment framework	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Formulation of procedures for measuring competence at equivalency level	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Implementation of PISA-D	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Decentralization of upper secondary school examination to the capital and provinces	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1, 4.4	Establishment of math and science study clubs in secondary schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Adoption of curriculum framework for general and technical education from kindergarten to secondary school levels	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.2, 4.5, 4.c	Preparation of documents on inclusive education for kindergarten teacher trainees	Phase 2: 2015-2018

4.3	Improvement of non-formal primary education equivalency program	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.1	Training on school-based management for 472 primary school principals	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.3	Legal regulations and mechanisms on the expansion of general and technical secondary schools updated	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.2	Development of the standardized teacher training curriculum for kindergarten teachers	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.2	Alignment of community kindergarten framework with annexed primary schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4,2	Inter-ministerial prakas on funds for community kindergartens, facilities and allowances issued	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.b	Pilot on the implementation and revision of minimum standards for clean water in schools	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.7	Mainstreaming of global citizenship education and financial management in the syllabus	Phase 2: 2015-2018
4.7	Developed the capacity of 634 21st century pedagogical educators, teachers and trainers	Phase 3: 2019 to 2022
4.7	Development of climate change education textbooks and workshops for grades four, five and six	Phase 3: 2019 to 2022
4.1, 4.c	Creation and roll-out of the teacher upgrading program for un- or underqualified teachers and school directors	Phase 3: 2019 to 2022
4.5	Creation of a newsletter in the Cambodian Journal of Educational Research and STEM for professional reviewers seeking research opportunities	Phase 3: 2019 to 2022
4.c	Development of a credit-based system for continuous professional development for education staff	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Development of core ICT textbooks for training of basic teacher trainees (12+2)	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3, 4.c	Implementation of the curriculum framework for BA of Vocational Education	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.4, 4.c	Capacity building for 250 master trainers and 8,434 upper secondary teachers on science, mathematics and ICT	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.c	Upgrading of 941 basic level teachers and 173 school principals to bachelor's degree level	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.b, 4.c	Provision of scholarships for 51 indigenous teacher trainees	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Completion of core textbooks and teachers guides for health education in grade 1, 4, 7 and 10	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Completion of core textbooks and teachers guides for physical education and sport in grades 10, 11 and 12	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.2	Revision of detailed syllabus and development of core textbooks for all subjects for community kindergartens	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Development of support materials for mainstreaming climate change for grade 4, 5 and 6	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3, 4.4	Establishment of a STEM centre app for online teaching	Phase 3: 2019-2022

4.1, 4.4	Improvement of core textbooks for mathematics and science for grade 10 to 12	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.4	Development of ICT syllabus for grade 4 to 12 and revision of core textbooks	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1	Review of the content of the national grade 6 assessment and alignment with the global proficiency framework	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1	Administration of PISA to 183 sample schools in 23 capitals and provinces	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.2, 4.7	Comprehensive nurturing care manual designed, developed and disseminated	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.1, 4.3	Development of lower and upper secondary equivalency programs for out of school children and youth	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3	Curriculum of 133 higher education programs revised in line with Cambodia's Qualification Framework (CQF) and recognized by the General Department of Higher Education	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3	Quality assurance system established and implemented in 49 higher education institutions	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.3, 4.4	Tracer studies implemented in 22 higher education institutions	Phase 3: 2019-2022
4.7	Integration of Health Education into the national curriculum	Phase 4: 2023-onwards
4.c	Increase of allowance for student-teachers enrolled at TTCs	Phase 4: 2023-onwards