



Joint Statement

“Access to Information Law to promote public services and sustainable development”

Expedite Access to Information Legislation to promote public services and sustainable Development

Civil society organizations call on the Royal Government and the National Assembly to adopt the Right to Information Law as soon as possible in line with international standards and to ensure the right information to improve public services and address challenges in all areas.

Currently, Cambodians are still concerned about access to public information, as both national and sub-national authorities are reluctant to disclose or disseminate a few information due to the limitation of resources, despite certain provisions pointed out the role and responsibility of public administration in disclosing the information.

The current spread of Covid-19 demonstrates the importance of and active implementation of the Royal Government to the right to information in the health sector and contributes to the promotion of right to information in Cambodia. However, there is the significant down in the process of providing and receiving information on other public services, eventually affecting rights and benefits, such as economic land concessions, major development projects, national public procurement projects. land issues, forced evictions and other disputes.

CSOs and Youths recognize some of the Royal Government's efforts to promote access to information, especially at the sub-national level, through programs such as good governance at the grassroots level, social accountability framework, democratic development and one window service. The government's commitment to start the process of drafting the Law on the Access to Information has been highly appreciated, and the working group of civil society organizations strongly supports the remarks of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia on 11 January 2019, in the 3rd meeting with local journalists and on 10 January 2020, in the 4th meeting with local journalists on the guarantee of the legislation of access to information law in the 6th mandate. The draft law on access to information has now been reviewed by the Ministry of Justice and sent back to the Council of Ministers.

In the 5th Meeting between Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and local journalists on 14th January 2023, youths, elderly, civil society

organizations, and working group on the Right to Information, would like to propose to Samdech and the Royal Government:

- Accelerate the legislation of access to information law in accordance with international standards.
- Identify type of information which is confidential in the access to information law.
- State ministries and departments and government units must disclose public information, especially service fees, procedures for receiving services and deadline by law at the national level, economic land concession contracts, major development projects, national public procurement projects, land issues, forced evictions and other disputes.
- Strengthen and establish mechanisms to pay special attention to disseminate information in all types of media to ensure that citizen, youth, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples have access to information.
- Provide protection to all citizens who disclose and share information or any information that serves the public interest.
- Widely disseminate the information of right to information and encourage people, especially young people, to participate in the search for public information, related to daily livelihood.
- Create a better environment for the participation from citizen, especially young people in the development process of Cambodia.

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