



Center for Business and Law Organization

USAID Funding in Cambodia – What's it Really Being Used For?

February 2025

Overview

For over two decades, U.S. foreign aid has played a pivotal role in Cambodia's development, supporting sectors such as health, education, land mine clearing, and civil society.

This factsheet provides an analysis of USAID funding in Cambodia from 2020 to early 2025, highlighting the key focus areas of funding, and the implications of its sudden suspension --not just development gains, but on the well-being and livelihoods of vulnerable communities -- following Executive Order 14169. It specifically outlines how the freeze affects Cambodian development projects, organizations, key sectors, and civil society. Finally, it also examines lessons learned from sole reliance on a single source of aid, and proposes strategies which may mitigate the impact of this crisis and build greater resilience.

The factsheet is written by the Center for Business and Law Organization (BHRE Center), an independent non-governmental organization having a civic mission to promote and protect human and labour rights, fundamental freedoms, especially freedom of expression and the press, corporate accountability and environmental justice in Cambodia and broader region of Southeast Asia, where the contexts are relevant, by strengthening the rule of law and ensuring full and fair access to justice.

The Immediate Suspension of U.S. Foreign Aid: A Policy Shift with Global Ramifications

On 20 January 2025, mere hours after taking office, US President Donald Trump signed and issued Executive Order 14169, 'Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid.' The order instituted a *"90-day pause in United States foreign development assistance for assessment of programmatic efficiencies and consistency with United States foreign policy."*¹ The Order meant an immediate halt to US-funded aid activities worldwide, including in Cambodia.

A fortnight later, on 4 February, the Trump administration placed all US Agency for International Development (USAID) staff globally on administrative leave and recalled those working overseas back to the United States. The announcement came after President Trump had only days earlier described USAID as having been "run by a bunch of radical lunatics".²

¹ Executive Order 14169, 'Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid', Section 3(a)

² Jonathan Landay, Patricia Zengerle and Andrea Shalal, 'More USAID staff ousted after Trump administration dismantles aid agency,' 3 February 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/more-usaid-staff-ousted-trump-administration-dismantles-aid-agency-2025-02-02/> (accessed 11 February 2025)

International Responses to USAID Suspension

International aid groups have described the prospect of USAID's closure as one which "threatens the lives and dignity of millions"³ and constitutes "an extinction-level event for the global aid sector in the US and for much of the global relief and development sector around the world."⁴ Former US Ambassador to the United Nations and Administrator of USAID, Samantha Power, decried the agency's closure, in particular for the impact it would have on American political capital globally and the opportunity it would provide to the People's Republic of China to fill that vacuum.⁵

In contrast, Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova described USAID as "anything but an aid, development and assistance agency", claiming instead that the agency is a "mechanism for changing regimes, political order [and] state structure."⁶ Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban also praised the decision to close USAID, claiming that it had funded organisations which sought to overthrow his government and that he would take the opportunity to now legally eliminate those organisations.⁷

Private Sector Alarm

The private sector has expressed deep concern over the recent freeze on U.S. foreign assistance, emphasizing the significant impact it could have on economic stability, labor rights, and global supply chains. Organizations such as the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), which represents more than 1,100 global brands, have described the actions as tantamount to dismantling USAID, a move they argue will have serious consequences for industries and communities worldwide. The AAFA have also warned that the sudden freeze may create long-term instability, affecting supply chains, job creation, and democratic governance in the regions where these industries operate, including Cambodia.⁸

Direct Impact on Cambodia

In Cambodia, whilst there have been a few isolated instances of commenters on social media reacting seemingly with glee at the closure, the reaction to the closure of USAID has largely been met with concern as to what it means for the future of projects operating in the country and the organisations who run them.

In October 2024, then-USAID Administrator Samantha Power visited Cambodia, announcing an additional \$17 million to strengthen healthcare in Cambodia, as well as \$29 million to improve agriculture and food systems. The closure has already had significant impacts, with staff working on

³ Caritas, 'Closure of USAID Foreign Aid Will Kill Millions,' 10 February 2025, <https://www.caritas.org/2025/02/closure-of-usaid-foreign-aid-will-kill-millions/> (accessed 11 February 2025)

⁴ Mark Townsend, Karen McVeigh, Charles Pensulo, Caroline Kimeu and Luke Taylor, 'Deaths predicted amid the chaos of Elon Musk's shutdown of USAID,' *The Guardian*, 5 February 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/feb/04/deaths-predicted-amid-the-chaos-of-elon-musks-shutdown-of-usaid> (accessed 11 February 2025)

⁵ Samantha Power, 'I Ran U.S.A.I.D Killing It Is a Win for Autocrats Everywhere,' *New York Times*, 6 February 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/06/opinion/usaid-trump-samantha-power.html> (accessed 11 February 2025)

⁶ Tamsin Paternoster, 'Russia and Belarus cheer dismantling of USAID as rights groups voice concerns,' *EuroNews*, 7 February 2025, <https://www.euronews.com/2025/02/07/russia-and-belarus-cheer-dismantling-of-usaid-as-rights-groups-voice-concerns> (accessed 11 February 2025)

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ American Apparel & Footwear Association, 'AAFA Reacts to Administration Actions Restricting USAID and Vital Foreign Assistance Programs,' February 7, 2025, https://www.aafaglobal.org/AAFA/AAFA_News/2025_Press_Releases/AAFA_Reacts_Restricting_USAID_Vital_Foreign_Assistance.aspx (accessed 11 February 2025)

USAID projects suspended or laid off and more than 1,000 trained mine clearance staff with the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) facing unemployment following suspension of their work.⁹

The impacts of US aid suspension have not only affected NGOs, with Cambodian government projects also directly impacted. Government officials appeared to be largely in the dark regarding the impacts of the suspension following its announcement, with spokesmen from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport telling local media they were unclear as to how the suspension would affect their projects.¹⁰ The country which also relies heavily on its garment and textile industry will feel the consequences as USAID-funded programs have been instrumental in improving working conditions, labor rights, and factory standards.¹¹ These initiatives support the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Cambodian workers, and strengthen Cambodia's position in the global supply chain.

How Much Money and Where It Goes: Funding Breakdown and Key Focus Areas in Cambodia

BHRE Center collated and analysed US-funded aid projects in Cambodia from 1 January 2020 to 20 January 2025. Data was taken from www.usaspending.gov, an official spending database website of the United States Government.

It turns out that, as expected, we are talking about a substantial amount of funding. Our analysis revealed that US-funded aid projects in Cambodia over the last five years have totalled more than US\$371 million across 185 projects. Of this, USAID accounted for the largest share, with over US\$224 million across 44 projects. The U.S. Department of State followed with US\$77 million for 106 projects, while the U.S. Department of Agriculture contributed US\$51 million to 11 projects. Other departments, including Health and Human Services, Interior, Defense, and Labor, provided substantial albeit smaller amounts.

Table 1: US aid funding sources in Cambodia, 2020 – 2025			
Agency	Amount (US\$)	Percentage of total	No of projects
USAID	\$224,750,905	60.45%	44
US Dept of Agriculture	\$51,520,581	13.86%	11
US Dept of Defence	\$1,222,399	0.33%	2
US Dept of Health and Human Services	\$12,918,307	3.47%	9
US Dept of Interior	\$1,349,472	0.36%	12
US Dept of Labour	\$3,000,000	0.81%	1
US Dept of State	\$77,056,158	20.72%	106
	\$371,817,822	100%	185

The table above shows the significance of USAID-funded activities in Cambodia, constituting well more than half of the US' overall aid program at 60.45%

Funding from the US Department of State comes in a distant second making up just over 20% of US-funded projects in Cambodia, primarily for funding for mine and unexploded ordinance clearance

⁹ Seoung Nimol, 'U.S. Aid Freeze Forces Cambodian Government to Seek New Funding Partners Amid NGO Layoffs,' *CamboJA*, 3 February 2025, <https://cambojanews.com/u-s-aid-freeze-forces-cambodian-government-to-seek-new-funding-partners-amid-ngo-layoffs/> (accessed 11 February 2025)

¹⁰ Seoung Nimol, 'Trump Administration's Foreign Aid Halt Is Worrying, Cambodian NGOs Say, As Programs Left in Limbo,' *CamboJA*, 28 January 2025, <https://cambojanews.com/trump-administrations-foreign-aid-halt-is-worrying-cambodian-ngos-say-as-programs-left-in-limbo/> (accessed 11 February 2025)

¹¹ USAID, 'Cambodia Strategy Statement' <http://cdc-crdp.gov.kh/en/donor-ngo/donor/3%20USAID%20Cambodia%20Strategy%20Statement.pdf> (accessed February 11 2025)

activities with more than US\$62 million granted by the Department for mine clearing between 2020 and 2025.

The US Department of Agriculture is the third largest contributor, comprising more than 13% of total aid, with its projects primarily focused on improving food security in Cambodia.

Specific Focus Areas of Projects

The areas of focus for US-funded projects in Cambodia are extremely varied, touching upon almost all areas critical to the country's continued development including health, education, mine clearance, food security and development of a strong and robust independent civil society.

As can be seen from the table below, US-funded projects in Cambodia cover more than twenty different areas of focus.

Table 2: Focus areas of US aid in Cambodia, 2020 – 2025		
Focus area	Amount (US\$)	Percentage of total
Anti-Human Trafficking	\$23,318,623	6.27%
Child Protection	\$12,312,833	3.31%
Civic Engagement	\$25,502,986	6.86%
Civil Society Development	\$10,525,409	2.83%
Climate Change & Green Energy	\$7,081,313	1.90%
Disaster Relief & Humanitarian Assistance	\$233,000	0.06%
Ecological Preservation	\$6,673,708	1.79%
Economic Development	\$18,476,106	4.97%
Education	\$46,157,427	12.41%
Education & Cultural Exchange	\$597,767	0.16%
Food Security	\$30,069,309	8.09%
Health	\$72,802,745	19.58%
Historical & Cultural Preservation	\$6,585,038	1.77%
Human Rights/Democracy	\$33,382,623	8.98%
Media	\$2,296,280	0.62%
Mine Clearance	\$62,012,759	16.68%
Public Diplomacy	\$1,848,304	0.50%
Reintegration Services	\$1,010,000	0.27%
Research	\$1,274,599	0.34%
Rural Development	\$7,233,993	1.95%
Social Protection Development	\$2,423,000	0.66%
	\$371,817,822	100%

The highest spend is in health, where more than US\$72 million in projects were funded between 2020 and 2025. Not far behind is mine clearance, with more than US\$62 million funded, followed by education with projects totalling more than US\$46 million.

It is important to note again that USAID funding does not cover all of these focus areas. Some areas, such as mine clearance, public diplomacy and education & cultural exchange activities are all exclusively funded by the US Department of State, whilst food security projects are solely funded by the US Department of Agriculture.

Nevertheless, USAID funding focus areas remain extremely broad, with fifteen of the areas above being at least in-part funded by USAID activities. For some areas, such as child protection, rural development, social protection development and reintegration services, USAID is the sole source of funding, making its closure a direct threat to the continued funding and viability of projects working in those areas.

USAID's Critical Role in Cambodia: Proportion of Funding and Key Projects

The table below lists the focus areas funded by USAID specific projects in Cambodia between 2020 and 2025 and the proportion of USAID funding for those projects as a percentage of the overall total of US-funded projects in those focus areas during that period.

Table 3: Focus areas of USAID and US\$ amount as a proportion of total US funding, 2020 – 2025			
Focus area	USAID amount (US\$)	Total US-funded amount (US\$)	Percentage of total US-funding
Anti-Human Trafficking	\$21,223,623	\$23,318,623	91.01%
Child Protection	\$12,312,833	\$12,312,833	100%
Civic Engagement	\$24,902,986	\$25,502,986	97.65%
Civil Society Development	\$10,525,409	\$10,525,409	100%
Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance	\$233,000	\$233,000	100%
Ecological Preservation	\$4,925,264	\$6,673,708	73.80%
Economic Development	\$14,514,379	\$18,476,106	78.56%
Education	\$25,041,827	\$46,157,427	54.25%
Health	\$59,785,688	\$72,802,745	82.12%
Historical & Cultural Preservation	\$5,000,000	\$6,585,038	75.93%
Human Rights/Democracy	\$33,372,623	\$33,382,623	99.97%
Media	\$2,246,280	\$2,296,280	97.82%
Reintegration Services	\$1,010,000	\$1,010,000	100%
Rural Development	\$7,233,993	\$7,233,993	100%
Social Protection Development	\$2,423,000	\$2,423,000	100%
	\$224,750,905		

From this it can be seen that for the focus areas where USAID does fund projects, it constitutes at least more than half, and in most cases almost the entirety of US funding in those focus areas.

USAID funding comprises 100% of US funding for six focus areas, and more than 90% in four others. These focus areas are ones which are critical to Cambodia's continued development, and, in many cases, are also recognised by the Cambodian Government as such. In many instances, these projects work hand in glove with Cambodian Government officials to support the country's development.

Examples of USAID-Supported Projects in Cambodia**Health Sector – FHI 360**

A five-year project managed by international organisation FHI 360 between August 2018 and November 2023, which received more than US\$17 million in funding from USAID in the period 2020 – 2025 (and more than US\$27 million overall), worked to improve the quality of public and private health services in Cambodia through provision of technical assistance to national and sub-national health systems.¹² The success of this project led to a follow-up project managed by FHI 360 to run from October 2023 until October 2028, which has already received more than US\$11 million in funding, to strengthen the Cambodian health system at the national and sub-national level.¹³

Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) Project

¹² Cooperative Agreement 72044218CA00006, available at:

https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_72044218CA00006_7200 (accessed 11 February 2025)

¹³ Cooperative Agreement 720AAD24CA00001, available at:

https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_720AAD24CA00001_7200 (accessed 11 February 2025)

Similar is the USAID-funded Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) project, managed by international organisation Research Triangle Institute. The IECD is a five-year project which began in July 2020 and is scheduled to conclude in July 2025. It has received more than US\$20 million in funding since it began. The project aims to improve children's development in Cambodia through delivery of community, group, and home-based activities that integrate responsive caregiving and early learning, nutrition, health and hygiene, and household stability and support into daily activities.¹⁴ The project works alongside officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, who are considered lead partners for technical activities due to their expertise.¹⁵ The project has developed tools for screening children for disabilities and referring them for additional testing and taught Cambodian Sign Language to deaf children.¹⁶

A closure of USAID leaves the future of projects such as these highly uncertain. Whilst it is likely that the US will continue to fund health and education projects in Cambodia through other agencies, the closure of USAID would appear likely to cause a significant reduction in the overall funding provided in those areas.

Other at-risk projects

Other current USAID-funded programs that would also seem at risk include:

- **Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance** project on tuberculosis diagnosis;
- **University of Nevada's 'Wonders of the Mekong in Cambodia'** project which studies water and aquatic biodiversity in the Mekong River Basin;
- **Winrock International's 'Countering Trafficking in Persons'** project which combats human trafficking and assists the Cambodian Government in working towards improving its Trafficking In Persons tier ranking.

Impact on Human and Labour Rights Organizations

Whilst the organisations funded by USAID to undertake work pertaining to human and labour rights and democracy may occasionally draw the ire of the government, a robust, independent civil society that holds the government to account is an undeniably vital part of any democratic nation.

The closure of USAID and suspension of funding could cripple many human rights and labor organizations in Cambodia, whose work relies on this support. Not only Business & Human Rights Law Group's human and environmental rights defenders' protection program is affected but also this includes to name a few more:

- **The American Center for International Labor Solidarity**, which recently signed an agreement for a US\$1.8 million, five-year contract funded by USAID between October 2024 and September 2029.¹⁷
- **The Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)**, a local human rights organisation, which reportedly relies on USAID funding for about 70% of its current activities. In 2023, it signed a five-year agreement for \$1.95 million with USAID.¹⁸

¹⁴ Katherine Merseth King et al, 'Integrated Early Childhood Development in Cambodia: Protocol of a Cluster Stepped-Wedge Trial,' *Pediatrics* (2023) 151, 2

¹⁵ Ibid., 3

¹⁶ Jennae Bulat and Carmen Strigel, 'The Power of Locally Led Inclusive Education for People with Disabilities,' *RTI International*, 19 July 2024, <https://www.rti.org/insights/inclusive-education-disabilities-locally-led-development> (accessed 11 February 2024)

¹⁷ Cooperative Agreement 72044224LA00001, available at: https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_72044224LA00001_7200 (accessed 11 February 2025)

¹⁸ Cooperative Agreement 72044223GR00001, available at: https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_72044223GR00001_7200 (accessed 11 February 2025)

- **The Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL)**, a local labor rights organization, which signed a five-year agreement for \$950,000 with USAID.¹⁹

In Cambodia, where civil society is already under pressure, U.S. aid has served as a critical lifeline for countless communities. The suspension of USAID funding threatens to create a vacuum, leaving room for hostile actors or unaccountable interests to gain influence.²⁰

Programs like the USAID Global Labor Program have played a vital role in building the capacity of democratic unions in Cambodia, promoting freedom of association, and collective bargaining in an environment where labour rights are often under threat. This program, in partnership with the Solidarity Center, provides technical assistance and engages with government, the private sector, and civil society to advance worker empowerment and workplace safety. Without these initiatives, Cambodia's progress in improving labour rights and working conditions is at risk of further backsliding.²¹

In addition, the freeze on U.S. aid will hobble humanitarian work and human rights efforts, particularly at a time when China's influence in the region is growing, potentially pushing Cambodia and other countries in the region further into China's sphere of influence. The US retreat from civil society programs has been described as a move crushing "democratic potential in virtually every country in the region."²²

Potential for lessons to be learned: overcoming dependency on a sole source of funding

There is perhaps a lesson to be learned for some organisations in over-dependence on a single donor as those organisations which have more diverse funding sources are likely to fare better through this crisis. While this crisis may showcase that diversifying funding sources is critical for long-term sustainability, this is often easier said than done, especially for smaller, under-resourced organizations, which are often reliant on sub-granted funds from larger organisations.

For example, Women's Community Voices (WCV), a community radio station based in Kratie Province, was sub-granted \$49,987 under FHI 360's US-aid funded Civil Society Support project.²³ In August 2022, it was reported that the radio station had been evicted from its studio after failing to pay rent

and after a campaign for donations managed to raise only \$103.²⁴ Samritth Tona, the Executive Director of WCV, told media at the time that the studio would be relocated to his home, which was wooden and caused an echo when recording. WCV is clearly not a well-resourced organisation and not in a position to consider diversity of funding sources; it needs to take virtually whatever funding it

¹⁹ Cooperative Agreement 72044223GR00005, available at:

https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_72044223GR00005_7200 (accessed 12 February 2025)

²⁰ Poppy McPherson and Josh Smith, 'U.S aid freeze risks handing influence to China in Beijing's backyard,' February 11, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-aid-freeze-risks-handing-influence-china-beijings-backyard-2025-02-11/> (accessed February 11, 2025)

²¹ American Apparel & Footwear Association, 'AAFA Reacts to Administration Actions Restricting USAID and Vital Foreign Assistance Programs,' February 7, 2025, https://www.aafaglobal.org/AAFA/AAFA_News/2025_Press_Releases/AAFA_Reacts_Restricting_USAID_Vital_Foreign_Assistance.aspx (accessed 11 February 2025)

²² Poppy McPherson and Josh Smith, 'U.S aid freeze risks handing influence to China in Beijing's backyard,' February 11, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-aid-freeze-risks-handing-influence-china-beijings-backyard-2025-02-11/> (accessed February 11, 2025)

²³ Cooperative Agreement 72044221LA00002, available at:

https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_72044221LA00002_7200 (accessed 11 February 2025)

²⁴ Prak Chan Thul, 'Troubled Community Radio Station Relocates to Home,' *KiriPost*, 17 August 2022, <https://kiripost.com/stories/troubled-community-radio-station-relocates-to-home> (accessed 11 February 2025)

can get in order to survive. Grassroots organisations such as WCV already operating on minimal resources will significantly suffer from the impacts of a cessation of USAID funding.

As noted, the notion of diversifying funding sources is also not a simple equation, even for better resourced organisations. The total value of current USAID-funded projects in Cambodia is more than US\$164 million. This is a significant figure and not easily covered by any other donor or nation, except for potentially the People's Republic of China. Whilst there is an opportunity for nations to potentially buy some influence in Cambodia at the moment by stepping in to fill this funding gap, it seems highly unlikely that any will be likely to plug the hole completely. Organisations cannot fund projects with money that does not exist.

Call to Action

The suspension of US foreign aid is a crisis that threatens to reverse years of hard-won progress in Cambodia. This is not just a development setback—it is also a security risk. Cutting aid does not reduce costs; it increases the long-term price of managing instability. The ripple effects will hit Cambodia's health system, food security, landmine clearing initiatives, civil society, and more, all of which are crucial to the country's growth and resilience.

All of these sectors now face an uncertain future, with thousands of lives at risk and critical development programs hanging in the balance. Cambodia cannot afford to lose this support, and therefore it is imperative that local and international stakeholders unite to protect Cambodia's development and ensure that vital aid continues to reach the people who need it most.

If they have not already, organisations will need to start looking and start lobbying the governments of other countries to either increase or redirect aid funding to Cambodia. This is something that can and ought to be done in partnership between local and international organisations and the Cambodian Government owing to the critical importance of funded focus areas to Cambodia's continued development. Countries in the region should be prioritised – Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand – due to their greater interest in Cambodia's development as a neighbouring country, whilst the deepening of relationships with nations such as Canada provides an opportunity to access new streams of development assistance. Each of these nations also have a clear geopolitical interest in preventing the expansion of Chinese influence in Cambodia through increased aid following any American withdrawal.

Conclusion: Navigating an uncertain future

The coming months are likely to be extremely difficult, not only for many organisations working across Cambodia, but also for the people those organisations work with. If one thing is clear from the figures above, it is that USAID-funded aid projects in Cambodia are doing significant amounts of good in areas of critical importance to Cambodia's development and often in close collaboration with the Cambodian Government. That is not to say that the administration, management or execution of those projects is always perfect. There is almost certainly an element of waste in USAID-funded projects in Cambodia, however the notion that these projects are merely an avenue for elite aid and NGO workers to enrich themselves does not seem borne out by the figures nor the practical results of these projects in Cambodia.

Whilst the notion that Cambodia ought not be reliant on foreign aid forever and should become a self-sufficient nation certainly has merit, many of the current USAID-funded projects are primarily focused on capacity building, be it of the health system, the education system, independent media, or civil society organisations. That is, those projects are designed to build the capacity of Cambodians in anticipation of a time when aid is no longer needed. In that sense, the continued presence of these projects, at least at the present time, is not indicative of Cambodia being reliant on aid, but rather a

reflection of Cambodia's development and the ongoing capacity building of the nation to gradually move away from the need for foreign aid projects.

It is now of the utmost importance for the future of Cambodia's development that the Government and local and international organisations unite in collaborative lobbying efforts both to carve out exceptions in aid provision from the Trump administration, as well as to access new funding streams from development partners in other nations — not just for maintaining progress, but also for promoting stability and safeguarding human rights.

For more information, please contact us via: info@bhre-center.org.

Note to Editors:

Center for Business and Law Organization (BHRE Center) is an independent Cambodian environmental and human rights organization — officially registered in October 2025 — working to promote and protect environmental and human rights in business, nurturing the principle of human rights and environmental due diligence, and advancing corporate accountability in Cambodia and broader region of Southeast Asia, where the contexts are relevant, by strengthening the rule of law and ensuring full and fair access to justice.

In a democratic society, we find it essential to respect differences and to value the ideas of all individuals. If Cambodia is to become a more just and free society, which is what BHRE Center's envisions, more emphasis must be placed on public participation and the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and freedoms. The future of a truly democratic Cambodia, as the Constitution sets out, requires public debate — positive or critical — which can be carried out without self-censorship or fear of retaliation. BHRE Center's research, analyses and publications therefore intend to nurture public debates and policy consideration on environmental and human rights standards in business based upon national and international legal frameworks.