

Phnom Penh Internet Forum (PPIF)
“Cambodia for a Just and Inclusive Digital Future”
17 - 18 Oct 2024
Venue: Factory Phnom Penh

1. Context

Cambodia's journey towards a robust digital economy and inclusive digital society is guided by the Digital Economy and Social Policy Framework 2022-2035. The framework sets out ambitious goals to transform Cambodia into a digital economy and society, focusing on three main pillars: Digital Citizen, Digital Government, and Digital Business. However, several challenges impede progress: **Infrastructure Deficiencies, Digital Literacy Gaps and Regulatory Adaptability.**¹ For instance, according to the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, only 30 percent of Cambodians possess basic digital literacy.²

To support the digital transformation, the Cambodian government is drafting legislation to address **cybercrime, cybersecurity, and personal data protection and other internet-related legislations** aiming to create a secure digital environment by addressing cyber threats and protecting personal data. However, these draft laws raise several concerns. Critics argue that the cybercrime and cybersecurity laws may overreach, potentially infringing on freedom of expression and access to information. The draft data protection law, while necessary for safeguarding personal data, must align with international standards to ensure it effectively protects citizens' privacy without stifling innovation.

Emerging technologies present significant **opportunities for Cambodia, including enhanced efficiency, innovation, and economic growth** across sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, and finance. However, emerging technology has had a profound impact on the online harassment of female journalists, as well as the spread of AI-driven fake news and online scams in Cambodia. With the rise of social media platforms and digital communication tools, female journalists are increasingly targeted by online harassment, including gender-based attacks and threats. The use of AI, while beneficial in many fields, has also facilitated the creation and distribution of fake news, exacerbating misinformation and eroding trust in the media. This growing digital landscape has also paved the way for sophisticated online scams, where bad actors exploit technology to deceive and defraud individuals, further contributing to a challenging and dangerous online environment. The lack of comprehensive digital literacy and legal frameworks to combat these issues amplifies their impact, leaving the public vulnerable.

¹ https://asset.cambodia.gov.kh/mptc/media/Cambodia_Digital_Government_Policy_2022_2035_English.pdf

² <https://cambojanews.com/government-unesco-developing-digital-literacy-plan-for-cambodians/>

Addressing the challenges associated with the Digital Economy and Social Policy Framework 2022-2035, draft legislation on cybercrime, cybersecurity, and personal data protection, and the opportunities and threats posed by emerging technologies requires a multi-stakeholder approach. Co-leading by the members of Digital Rights Working Group (DRWG), Phnom Penh Internet Forum 2024 aims to facilitate dialogue, share best practices, and develop strategies to overcome these challenges. By doing so, Cambodia can create a secure, inclusive, and prosperous digital future for all its citizens.

2. What is Phnom Penh Internet Forum (PPIF)?

PPIF is a forum initiated by DRWG in Cambodia to promote, and provide protection on digital rights and internet freedom in Cambodia by mobilizing the voices across multi sectors in Cambodia and learning from regional and international experiences. PPIF is committed to be established annually under co-organizing of the members of DRWG. The forum is a place to exchange knowledge, skills, concerns, challenges, and lessons learnt for vulnerable groups, CSOs, governments, development partners, UN Agencies, academia and the private sector.

Regional partners and networks who have been working to promote internet freedom, digital rights, and tech accountability will be mobilized as the experts and guests to share in the forum. PPIF will put more focus on the scope of Cambodia issues but we won't be limited in our approach to mobilize the support from regional partners to have enough influence for pushing policy changes in Cambodia.

3. About DRWG

Digital Rights Working Group (DRWG) was established in late of 2020 by more than ten local and international NGOs and associations in Cambodia which have been working to promote digital rights, freedom of expression, press freedom and internet freedom. Since it has been established, DRWG has conducted regular monthly meetings and special meetings, according to urgent tasks which need to be addressed. International organizations, funding agencies and individual experts are also invited to be the observers who would share their strategic ideas and sharing funding to implement DRWG's annual action plan.

4. Scope of PPIF

PPIF will focus on the internet issue in Cambodia which would advocate for positive changes in the policy frameworks, or in-Cambodia legislations.

5. Overall objective of PPIF

PPIF aims to promote and protect digital rights and internet freedom in Cambodia through proactive dialogue, debate and sharing from the practices and lessons learnt through multi-stakeholder approaches.

6. Specific Objectives

- Establish a dynamic and inclusive platform that brings together diverse stakeholders to share lessons learned, raise concerns, and discuss emerging issues related to internet freedom, digital rights, and the responsible use of technology.
- Encourage in building strong digital infrastructure and literacy programs while supporting legislation that aligns with global standards and addresses the needs of the digital age.
- Harness the potential of emerging technologies, making sure they are developed and used ethically, with attention to privacy, security and protections to Cambodian citizens.

7. Expected Results

- Increased collaboration and dialogue will occur through open discussions among diverse stakeholders, including civil society, government, the private sector, and academia. This will lead to stronger partnerships and a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to internet freedom and digital rights.
- Concerns and inputs related to cybercrime, cybersecurity, and data protection laws have been considered leading to protect the safety of Cambodian citizens on online platforms while safeguarding freedom of expression and privacy rights.
- Collaboration among government, private sector, civil society, and international partners is strengthened, leading to the responsible use of emerging technologies, with increased public awareness and engagement on digital rights and ethical issues.

8. Tentative Agenda

Time	Agenda	Responsible Person/Team	Remark
Day 1. Thursday 17 October 2024			
Morning session			
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Registration	Digital Rights Working Group	
8:30 AM – 8:45 AM	Welcome Remarks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Nop Vy, Executive Director of Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association (CamboJA) and Representative of DRWG 2. Mr. Stuart Bryan, Second Secretary of Australian Embassy in Cambodia 3. Ms. Po Sophea, Representation of Citizen Journalist of Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM) 	
8:45 AM – 9:00 AM	Opening Remarks	Representative of Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (TBC)	
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Cultural Performance	Epic Art	

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Panel Discussion: <i>Cambodia's Vision toward Digital Transformation: Challenges and Opportunities</i>	Key Speakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Representative of Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (TBC) 2. Mr Siriwat William Chhem, Co-founder and President of AI Forum 3. Mr. Martin Brisson, Executive Director of EuroCham 4. Mr. Lam Socheat, Executive Director of The Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) 	Moderator: Ms. Kum Somaly
10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	Break time		
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Youth Dialogue: <i>Youth and Digital Transformation</i>	Key speaker: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Vin Vichet, representative of people with disabilities 2. Venerable. Khun Hey 3. Ms. Soun Sreydet, representative of KHLAHANN 4. Mr. Siv Thorth, representation of Cambodia Indigenous Peoples Organization 5. Samnang, Representative of LGBTQ+ Communities 	Moderator: Sok Len
Lunch break (12:00PM – 1:30PM)			

Afternoon session			
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	Presentation on: <i>Internet Universality Indicator - ROAM-X Approach</i>	Mr. Chanty Pisal, Director of Digital and Innovation Policy Research Center at the Cambodia Academy of Digital Technology (CADT)	
2:30 PM - 3:10 PM	TEDx Talk 1. <i>Online Harassment of Female Journalists</i> 2. <i>Artificial Intelligence and Digital Rights</i>	1. Ms. Hang Samphors, Team Leader of Cambodian Female Journalists (CFJ) 2. Dr. Marc Pinol Rovira, Research Manager of Asia Center	
3:10 PM - 3:25 PM	Break		
3:25 PM - 4:45 PM	Conversation with digital citizen: <i>The Role of Content Creator in contributing to digital transformation in Cambodia</i>	1. Dj Nana 2. Mr. Chheuy Haklao known as Laoclassics	Moderator: Nop Linda, member of DRWG
4:45 PM - 5:00 PM	Wrap up Day 1	Mr. Ith Sothoeuth, Media Director of CCIM and Representative of DRWG	
Day 2. Friday 18 October 2024			

Morning Session			
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Registration	Digital Rights Working Group	
8:30 AM – 8:45 AM	Introduction of Day 2	Mr. Lam Socheat, Executive Director of API and Representative of DRWG	
8:45 AM - 10:30 AM	Thematic Workshop <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>How to reduce risk of online Fraud</i> 2. <i>Online Harassment</i> 3. <i>Online Scamming</i> 4. <i>Fake News and Digital, Media and Information Literacy (DMIL)</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chumrum Digital/Digitalhub101 - 2. Mr. Ngeth Moses of Karpeer Project 3. Mr. Amir Goyara, Head of Governance of United Nations Development Programme, Cambodia (UNDP Cambodia) 4. Representative of Cambodian Center of Independent Media (CCIM), Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association (CamboJA) and UNESCO supported by CamboJA 	
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Break		
10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	Summary of all workshop	Mr. Ith Sothoeuth, Media Director of CCIM and Representative of DRWG	

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	TEDx Talk 1. <i>Internet Censorship Monitoring</i> 2. <i>Gender and online FoE</i>	1. Mrs. Than Thary, ICT and Internet of The Advocacy and Policy Institute (API) 2. Ms. Eng Chandy, Executive Director of Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC)	
Lunch (12:00 – 13:30 PM)			
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Presentation: <i>Trends of Cyber-related legislation in Southeast Asia</i>	Representative of EngageMedia (TBC)	
3:00 PM - 3:15 PM	Break Times		
3:15 PM – 4:30 PM	Interactive session <i>Striking the balance between rights and security on Cambodian digital legislations</i>	1. Representative of Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (TBC) 2. Mr. Nop Vy, Executive Director of the Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association 3. Mr. Duch Piseth, Human Rights Lawyer of Business and Human Rights Law Firm 4. Mr. Toby Mendel, UNESCO Expert, Executive Director of the Center of Law and Democracy (CLD)	Moderator : Dr. Pa Chanroeun, President of Cambodian Institute for Democracy (CID)

4:30 PM - 4:45 PM	Key Recommendations	Mr. Thomas White, Director of Democracy and Governance, USAID Cambodia	
4:45 PM - 5:00 PM	Closing Remarks	Ms. Chan Sokunthea, Executive Director of CCIM and Representative of Digital Rights Working Group	