



## Joint Statement

### “The Access to Information Law Ensuring Access to Environmental Information and Public Financial Management in the Digital Age”

Cambodia’s civil society organizations (CSOs) call on the Royal Government and the National Assembly to quickly adopt a new Access to Information Law, in line with international standards, and to ensure the Cambodian citizens’ correct information in digital age, to enhance transparency and accountability, improve public services, and address the challenges that exist in several areas especially access to environment information and public financial management.

After more than a decade from the first drafting of this critically important bill, Cambodians are still concerned about their right to access public information, as both national and sub-national authorities seem reluctant or unable to disclose or disseminate information, also due to limited resources, despite international and national principles call the public administration's attention to fulfilling its role and responsibilities in revealing information.

In any modern nation, particularly those aspiring to reach the status of middle-income developed countries, public information is a key to success. The Public needs information to monitor the work of its representatives at all levels, and the private sector needs information to shape business strategies, draft long-term plans, and make informed decisions related to investments. Without transparency and access to documents, budgets, public contracts, and solid financial data, no serious company — small, medium-sized, or large, foreign or domestic — would commit the resources that are much needed for the growth of our Country.

More recently, the RGC disclosed some data about national development projects, marking an essential contribution to the promotion of access to information in Cambodia. However, the process of providing and receiving information on other public services is still lagging, affecting people’s rights and benefits, particularly on key issues like major development projects, national public procurement procedures and contracts, as well as economic land concessions, land issues, and forced evictions, and other disputes directly involving the rights and welfare of many citizens.

The CSOs and Youths recognize the Royal Government's efforts to promote access to information, especially at the sub-national level, through programs that enhance good governance at the grassroots level, the social accountability framework, democratic development, and the One Window Service. The Government's commitment to starting the process of drafting the Law on Access to Information has been highly appreciated by civil society organizations. During the 5th meeting with local journalists on 11 January 2023, **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen – Former Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia** - committed to the passing of the Access to Information Law “in 2024 or 2025”, and in any case during the 7<sup>th</sup> parliamentary mandate.

The Access to Information Working Group of civil society organizations has launched a campaign on Facebook to gather public opinions on whether to support or oppose the Access to Information Law, aiming to promote accurate public information for citizens. This campaign started on September 29, 2025. As of October 7, 2025, **there have been 149 Facebook accounts participating, and 145 accounts (individuals) have expressed support for the Access to Information Law** to promote accurate public information for citizens. The Access to Information Working Group of civil society organizations will continue its campaign on Facebook and in person in 2026 to collect public opinions on whether to support or oppose the Access to Information Law, aiming to promote accurate public information.

On the occasion of the celebration of the 2025 International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) under the theme “The Access to Information Law Ensuring Access to Environmental Information and Public Financial Management in the Digital Age”, the CSOs’ Access to Information Working Group (A2I WG) would like to propose the following recommendations to **Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and to the Royal Government:**

- Accelerate the legislative process on the Access to Information Law in accordance with international standards, to be completed in 2025 or 2026.
- Clearly identify in the Access to Information Law the type of information that is deemed “confidential”.
- Instruct State ministries and departments and Governmental units to disclose public information, especially service fees, procedures for receiving services, and deadlines by law at the national level, economic land concession contracts, reports on environmental impact assessment, major development projects, national public procurement projects, land issues, forced evictions, and other disputes.
- Strengthen and establish mechanisms to pay special attention to disseminating information to all types of media to ensure that citizens, youth, people with disabilities, and indigenous peoples have access to information.
- Protect all citizens who disclose and share public information or any information that serves the public interest.
- Widely disseminate information on the right to and encourage people, especially young people, to participate in the search for public information related to communities’ daily life.
- Create a better environment for the participation of citizens, especially young people, in the development process of Cambodia.

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