My World of Work
Cambodia Decent Work Country Programme
2015

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List of abbreviations

MDG: Millenium Development Goal
SDG: Sustainable Development Goal
HDI: Human Development Index
DWCP: Decent Work Country Programme
NEA: National Employment Agency
FGD: Focus Group Discussion
OSH: Occupational Safety and Health
SME: Small Medium Enterprise
IVR: Interactive Voice Response
SMS: Short Messaging Service
CAPI: Computer Assisted Personal Interview
Introduction

Decent work is seen as an important goal to aspire to and a necessity for people all across the world—whether that is in developed or developing nation and has become a crucial part of the agenda in the run up to the Post 2015 sustainable development goals adoption. Mr. Juan Somavia, the erstwhile Director General of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in his report, delivered to the International Labor Conference in 1999, said, "The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.”

Findings from the global consultations on Growth and Employment in the Post-2015 Agenda

One of the fundamental employment challenges faced by much of the developing world today is the vulnerability and precariousness of employment. Over half of workers in developing countries work in the informal sector (including over three quarters in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa). Having a job is not a guarantee against poverty—nearly one in three workers around the world live with their families in poverty. Much progress has been made to reduce working poverty and increase productivity and earnings, although most of this progress is attributable to East Asia. Basic social protection is lacking, basic measures of safety and health in the workplace are often neglected, while the voices of workers and their freedom to associate are restricted.
Education and training: The consultations indicate that, despite much progress in access to education in most countries in recent years, there remain widespread deficits in terms of quality, relevance and equity of education and training. In developed countries, education is no longer a guarantee for a good job, as evidenced from high unemployment, disguised unemployment and the proliferation of unpaid, voluntary work among many educated young people. In the developing world, young people from poor, rural and indigenous backgrounds are severely disadvantaged in accessing and completing higher levels of education due to their lack of education earlier in life. For example, Cambodian youth consulted about the post-2015 agenda say that teachers are poorly paid and ill trained and that there are not enough schools in rural areas. Many participants highlight the importance of improving the quality and coherence of education systems from primary to secondary and tertiary education. People want to see their countries invest in vocational training—a key issue especially for countries with a sizeable demographic dividend.

MY WORLD Survey

The ‘My World’ exercise, which was a landmark innovation in setting the new development agenda, involved a series of national consultations on issues pertaining to the sixteen development areas that were flagged in the list. Some of these issues that were discussed in Cambodia through the national consultations were education, employment, health, environment and private sector. In particular, the discussions around employment with the stakeholders revealed that Cambodians face a lack of employment opportunities as well as skills training that matches the job market. Those who do have jobs, work for very low wages and often in very unsatisfactory work environments. A combination of these factors leads to migration—both rural to urban and vice versa causing families to get estranged. Young people and representatives of the private sector agreed, that there is a greater need to promote entrepreneurship and vocational skills training.

Job opportunities need to be created for the rural youth so as to enable them to generate alternative sources of income so that they do not solely rely on agriculture. What came through very strongly in the consultations was the human-capital mismatch, which can be mitigated by a focus on skill development across sectors.

1 Post 2015 Consultations: Cambodia Country Consultation Report (Coordinated by the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator)
3. Better job opportunities

At the global level, the ranking of “Better job opportunities” seems to change with age. Those under 45 years of age see this as a high priority, ranking it in second place. Voters 55 and younger prioritize the issue higher than all other groups, ranking it in third place. This could signal children’s growing concern for their future employment prospects.

The importance that different groups attach to job opportunities also varies with where they live. While the over-60s in very low HDI countries — most of which don’t have pension systems — rate jobs as the fourth most important priority, the same age group in very high HDI countries ranks it as the thirteenth most important issue. This shows the difference that social protection policies can make to people’s lives.

Methodology of My World

The methodology of My World can be summarized as follows:

- The United Nations and partners teamed up to put in place an innovative global survey, known as MY World, so people can participate in the post-2015 process and their voices can be incorporated.
- It was an options survey which, through creative online and offline methods, allowed people across the world to tell the United Nations, global leaders - and in particular the Secretary General’s High Level Panel, the most important issues they would like the post-2015 agenda to address.
- MY World asks individuals which six of sixteen possible issues\(^2\) they think would make the most difference to their lives. The sixteen issues have been built up from the priorities expressed by poor people in existing research and polling exercises, and from the ongoing technical and political discussions about possible future goals. They cover the existing Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), plus issues of sustainability, security, governance and transparency.

\(^2\) The sixteen issues shortlisted for the survey are the following: • A good education; • Better health care; • Better job opportunities; • An honest and responsive government; • Affordable and nutritious food; • Protection against crime and violence; • Access to clean water and sanitation; • Equality between men and women; • Freedom from discrimination and persecution; • Protecting forests, rivers and oceans; • Support for people who cannot work; • Better transport and roads; • Political freedoms; • Phone and internet access; • Reliable energy at home; • Action taken on climate change.
The salience of this mode of crowd sourcing data, lay in its way of listening to what people think a new global agreement on development should look like. It complements other initiatives bringing citizens voices into the post-2015 debate, such as through the ‘Participate’ project, run by the Institute for Development Studies and the ‘Beyond 2015 Coalition’ of civil society organisations, which is doing in-depth qualitative research into people’s priorities, and the large number of national and thematic consultations organised by the United Nations across the world.

Main findings from the My World survey:

- Over 80% of participants were from developing countries – over one third (35%) from low HDI countries; another 45% from medium HDI countries
- Half of the participants completed the survey using the ballot ‘pen and paper’ method hence the importance of traditional forms despite innovations involving technology.
- Over one third of participants have low education levels and are likely to be poor. (education is used as a proxy for income in most surveys) – 15% of participants didn’t respond giving one priority.
- There is a roughly an equal gender split for participants: 53% male, 47% female; although for the SMS outreach male participants outnumbered women by almost 3 to 1.
- Over two thirds (68%) of participants were under the age of 30

On disaggregating the data for ‘My World’ from Cambodia, the following facts come to light:

- Human Development Index (HDI): Medium
- Significance in the total share of votes: 0.0%
- Total votes: 936

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3 Results as of July, 2015
4 In Cambodia, the population living under the national poverty line of US$0.93 per capita per day in 2009 (Ministry of Planning, 2013) is defined as the poor.
5 The Human Development Index (HDI) is a comparative measure of life expectancy, literacy, education, standards of living, and quality of life for countries worldwide. It is a standard means of measuring well-being, especially child welfare. It is used to distinguish whether the country is a developed, a developing or an underdeveloped country, and also to measure the impact of economic policies on quality of life. Over half of the world's population live in countries with "medium human development" (51%)
My World of Work: Cambodia 2015

In pursuit of an effective DWCP Analysis for Cambodia for the next biennium (2016-18) the ILO, inspired by the ‘My world’ survey conducted a My World of Work survey to better reflect the citizen’s aspirations and perceptions about work and employment. This survey aimed to gather and analyze information using online and offline forms of social media in the country so as to be able to incorporate citizens’ voices into the country programme of the ILO.

Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) have been established as the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries. DWCPs have two basic objectives. Firstly, they promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies. At the same time they organize ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework to advance the Decent Work Agenda within the fields of comparative advantage of the organization. Tripartism and social dialogue are central to the planning and implementation of a coherent and integrated ILO programme of assistance to constituents in member States.

Given the success of the My World survey in bringing people’s voices directly into political processes, there is a need to look at how the results from this exercise can be used to contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
Despite its unique historical legacy, Cambodia has over the past two decades achieved remarkable levels of peace and stability, economic growth and socio-economic development, with steady but uneven poverty reduction, based on strong performance in agriculture, garment manufacturing and textiles, tourism and construction. This has been accompanied with high levels of international development assistance, increasing foreign investment and significant progress toward regional and sub-regional economic integration.

This exercise aimed to integrate in the aspirations of the people with respect to work with the work and planning of the ILO in the country for the next biennium.

The objective of this survey is three fold- to incorporate the aspirations of the people in various sectors of the economy with respect to work and employment, their expectations from the employers, the government and the ILO as well as to capture a snapshot of the informal economy situation in the rural as well as the urban areas. The plan is to then incorporate these findings into the Decent Work Country Programme analysis and increase the effectiveness of the work that the ILO plans to do.

*My World of Work* will enable the constituents to directly voice their opinions and have a say in the policies while constructing the Post-2015 development agenda and provide the essential evidence base to policy makers to feed into their deliberations. Further, it will be a part of a broader effort of the Decent Work Country Analysis for 2016-18, which will influence the work of the ILO.

**Methodology**

This study combined offline and online modes of data collection with the details of the process outlined below.

**Offline modes of data collection**

A customized cloud based application was designed in collaboration with a local app development company in Phnom Penh entitled ‘*World of Work 2015*’ for the real time collection of field data. Smartphones and tablets are much cheaper than data collection devices designed specifically for field use, which is why this method was chosen.

Mobile database applications increase data integrity by allowing users to enter information into a structured database during initial collection. In some cases, data can even be synced to a central server when the user has an internet or cellular connection. This also allows for a close monitoring of the real time collection of the data from any geographical location. This increases the accuracy of the data collected as mistakes can be rectified immediately.
Survey Design: The survey used a questionnaire developed and finalized through a process involving the National Employment Agency (NEA) as well as the ILO Office in Bangkok. Standard statistical procedures were followed to calculate the sample size and for the stratified random sampling of the citizens. The detailed sampling plan is attached in the Appendix (1). The quantitative survey was followed by focus groups in each of the sectors to further explain the aspirations and expectations of the people with respect to work and employment. This added depth to the quantitative findings from the survey.

Online modes of data collection

The My World Of Work Website and Khmer translated questionnaire that were disseminated through the networks of various pressure groups and social media pages like facebook to reach a different segment of the population were used to reach populations that have access to the internet in the country. The survey was used to ensure representativeness and the online modes were used to maximize responsiveness in this exercise. This was an improvement from the approach used by the ‘My World’ exercise as it prioritized responsiveness with very few representative surveys in what was a deliberate choice on behalf of the administrators.

Main Findings

Survey

The focus of the survey was largely on the informal sector in Cambodia- one that has been largely unregulated and hence prone to various wage and social protection related challenges. The sectors that were a part of this study were agriculture, construction, hospitality and SMEs (moto taxi drivers, gasoline workers, small scale brick workers and street vendors). In rural areas, this sector includes farmers and workers in non-farm activities such as fishing, fish processing, mining, spinning and weaving, food processing, handicraft making and vending.

Demographic data

Age break up of the surveyed population
Marital Status

Majority of the respondents were married at the time of administering this survey while around 33.5% of them were single.

Educational Qualifications

From the data on educational qualifications, of those surveyed around 27.5% had completed primary school (upto sixth grade) and 22% had completed lower secondary.

Geographical Distribution
• **Status of Employment:** Of those surveyed, around 28.3% can be classified as Own Account Workers and 62.7% of those are employees. 3.7% are unpaid family workers.

The growing problem of unemployment among the educated youth which if not addressed has the potential to be a socially and politically destabilizing force. One third of the unemployed urban youth have been so for six months or more and the rate for young women is higher still. The unemployment rate among those with vocational training is exceptionally low. However young people are still entering the labour market with low levels of education and without the skills needed for work.

A World Bank survey found that skill shortages are already an important barrier to growth and even amongst employees with higher education or training, a significant proportion of graduates do not have the required skills.

Cambodia has suffered skills shortages as well as skills mismatch in both the urban and rural areas. As part of efforts to tackle the latter, the National Employment Agency (NEA) was established in 2010. Since then, over 65,000 job seekers have registered with it, one third of whom have been women. The success rate of referrals to employers, at 31.4 per cent, can be further improved, but already in a short span of time the NEA has established itself as a valued resource both by employers as well as job seekers.

• **Work Satisfaction**

Most of the respondents self identified as ‘Very Satisfied’ with their work (80.2%) though more than half of them did not see their current wage as enough to sustain the family (56.3%)

• **Discrimination at work**
Counter intuitively, around 93.6% reported that they had ‘never faced discrimination’ at work. However a small proportion reported discrimination based on age, sex and disability.

- **Working Conditions**
  
  Main issues related to working conditions are seen to be the following:
  
  1. Wages (24.5%)
  2. Working Time (15.2%)
  3. Health and Safety Conditions (12.2%)
  4. Insurance and Social Protection (8.7%)

- **Expectations from the government:** Employment related expectations from the government in order of priority are:
  
  1. Better Wages (24.7%)
  2. Safer Working Conditions (18.1%)
  3. Creating more jobs in the economy (14.6%)
  4. Better infrastructure (13.3%)
• Awareness regarding the International Labour Organization (ILO): In the Informal sector, around 34.3% had heard about the ILO and its work through the National Employment Agency (NEA) and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT).

• What work ILO is involved in according to the sample:
  1. Child labour, forced labour and migration related issues (43%)
  2. Increase jobs and employment related awareness (21.4%)
  3. Training for Ministry of Labor officials (17.6%)

Grievance redressal mechanisms

Grievance redressal mechanisms at the workplace: This was to discern the methods of solving problems at the workplace and the respondents were asked the ways in which they resolved issues at work.

  1. Sorting it out amongst peers (47.6%)
  2. Solving with the supervisor and asking for advice (25%)
  3. Keeping silent and continuing work as usual (19.6%)

• Future expectations and aspirations for self and the family
Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
This section will attempt to cut across or integrate the FGD groups and highlight important results considering some of the observed similarities of the participants’ responses attributed to their background or the sector they work in.

Aims of the FGDs:
1. To assess from the perceptions of those in the informal sector of the economy, the work related situation and future expectations
2. Obtain greater depth, detail and voice on aspects of work especially Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and skills development

The main topical areas covered in the focus groups were job level, occupational safety and health, migration, social protection, work related challenges, future expectations and equality and discrimination at work. Around 24 focus groups were conducted across provinces and four sectors with equal groups of men and women. 6

Preliminary findings from the FGDs conducted with youth groups

Significant challenges are faced by Cambodia youth as far as education and employment is concerned. Some of them begin as early as at the secondary school level with the absence of any career counseling to enable the youth to decide career paths. Though the Ministry of Education has embarked on a set of reforms, they are too few and far between with a major skills mismatch that needs to be addressed urgently.

For those among the youth who aspire to be entrepreneurs, there is a lack of access to credit and financial assistance. Majority of the youth felt that more focus needs to be directed towards

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6 Focus group guidelines and photographs attached in Appendix 1.2, 1.3
apprenticeship programmes for students to facilitate the transition from education to the work life. They expect the ILO to work with the government to address the issue of skills mismatch with long-term policies and focus on facilitating apprenticeship programmes.

**Sector wise focus group findings**

**Agricultural Sector:** To the extent that there has been some improvement in productivity this century in Cambodia, it results from improved agricultural productivity and the movement of workers from the relatively low-productivity agricultural sector into the relatively high-productivity non-agricultural sectors. However various challenges still remain in this sector.

From the data gathered through the focus groups in Prey Veng, Kampong Cham and Siem Reap provinces, the following findings can be highlighted:

Excerpts:

“I and other farmers got sick, dizzy, vomit and burn skin while mixing pesticide and spray it.”

“I heard from my neighbor, who has a relative working in Thailand, that going to Thailand is surely get hired and can earn more money than working in the village or Phnom Penh.”

“Last year we are accepted to reduce our wage during the unfavorable season in order to secure the job and to keep good relation with farm owners.”

“By using more agricultural pesticide, I’m really worried about my health in the future.”

“Currently, there is not irrigation canal system in the village. The crop plantation needs this system so that I can cultivate land in both in dry and rainy seasons. I can increase my family income and improve my family’s living condition.”

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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Comments and Findings</th>
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</table>
| Job Level   | • There is an overall expectation of a reduction in the cost of overheads which will reduce the overall cost for the workers  
              • A great need was felt for more information dissemination as regards increasing productivity and better use of pesticides |

7 All excerpts have been translated as it was in the Khmer script so as to retain the essence of the viewpoints expressed by the respondents.
**Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)**

- The expectation from the government was for improvements in infrastructure (especially irrigation systems in the rural provinces).
- Accidents at the workplace are common due to the rampant use of pesticides as well as sharp agricultural tools. The ways of preventing injuries at work that they use are wearing protective gloves, thick clothing and masks.
- They also read instruction manuals for handling pesticides and share knowledge among the community to help decrease the risks involved in their daily lives.
- Most women are not involved in the handling of pesticides hence they aren’t prone to such accidents as much as men are.
- Most participants had attended the short course on handling pesticides organized by the Ministry of Agriculture but need more frequent trainings.

**Migration**

- Most participants knew of people in their own family who migrated for the purpose of work.
- The most common reasons for migrating are better and more stable job opportunities as well as higher pay.
- The destinations of migration include Phnom Penh, Thailand and Malaysia.

**Work related challenges**

- Higher prices from middlemen which leads to a very small income share for the farmer.
- Very high prices of raw materials (including fertilizers).

**Future expectations**

- There are low expectations since this sector involves hard work for low returns.
- Majority are willing to move out if better opportunities arise- with higher pay and safer work conditions.

**Construction Sector:** From the data gathered through the focus groups in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap provinces, the following findings can be highlighted:
Excerpts:

“When I step on nail, I try to stop the bleeding by using a lemon to scrub on the wound in order to avoid tetanus or any affection. I have to pay by myself for those medicine”

“I want to learn finishing and frame decoration skill in order to get more paid to support my family since I am the only one earning person.”

“Working in Cambodia get lower salary than abroad. For example, working in Cambodia, they get only 500,000 Riel per month (approximately USD 125) while working in Thailand they get more than 1,000,000 Riel per month. Moreover, In Thailand the worker use machine to mix and carry cement.”

"I think it will be better because we can exchange the ideas, we can make a request to the company when we have any problems or wage issue. In addition, if we work longer we can learn more to improve our skills, get more experiences, and we will get higher wage."

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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Comments and findings</th>
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</table>
| **Job Level** | • Most of them expect to earn a living, support the family and their children’s education  
• For additional income, they have to work for small sub-contractors who may not pay them a fair wage  
• Some of them are able to get the supervisor to send them to vocational school to pick up additional skills  
• There is a great deal of self awareness regarding the need to be safe and work with all the necessary precautions  
• Pre work safety training is conducted by some companies to ensure that the workers are well equipped and aware of the potential dangers associated with their job |
| **Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)** | • Minor injuries are an inevitable part of the process due to harsh weather condition and inadequate tools  
• Most respondents use traditional healing methods or self-prescribed medicines  
• In the event of injuries at the workplace, the company/contractor provides medicines and leave till they recuperate |
| **Migration** | • Nearly all of them migrated from rural to urban areas  
• Countries of destination for those going abroad include Thailand, |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>My World Of Work Cambodia DWCP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Korea, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• There were specific reasons for migrating so (low standard of living, salary, opportunities for employment, climatic conditions, poverty)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Equality and Discrimination at Work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Most of the participants have never faced any discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Those who have reported state the following reasons: Religion, living conditions, lack of skills and disability</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Work related challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Health related concerns with regards pay cuts when sick</td>
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<td>• There isn’t enough skill development due to the informal nature of the sector</td>
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<td>• Lack of health insurance is a major issue and majority would like to be covered under some form of insurance</td>
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<tr>
<th>Future Expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Overall they will continue to work despite the challenges associated with the nature of the job, as pay is relatively good and opportunities abundant. They also feel that the experience will eventually help them move up</td>
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<tr>
<td>• They would like to hone their skills (bricklaying, finishing, template and frame decoration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expect their wages to increase with better appraisals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Hospitality Sector: From the data gathered through the focus groups in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap provinces, the following findings can be highlighted:

Excerpts:

“I moved from Phnom Penh to work in Siem Reap province because here I get better paid.”

“There is a need for stronger unions in this sector as we need to know the correct wages that need to be set.”

“In order to improve my working conditions, I need to learn more skills. When I have problems, I go to see my boss and negotiate with him. If it’s unsuccessful, I will find an organization (union) to help.”

“I and my colleagues suggested the company having medicines and first aid at workplace and set up a room for employees to rest when they are sick and injured etc. Also we demanded to have the sufficient time to rest and the manager must take care of employees.”

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Comments and findings</th>
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</table>
| **Job level** | • Expect to earn more for a better living, support the family and children  
• Working hard and overtime is expected, especially if it entails working on a national holiday; insurance and work without discrimination  
• A greater need for a strong union that will act as a arbitrator to negotiate with the company and mediate in problem solving as well as wage related issues  
• More frequent training in labour law  |
| **Social Protection** | • No serious accidents at work (very minor cases)  
• Mostly cope by themselves and occasionally employers may provide facilities  
• Some companies have medical professionals at the workplace/ arrange for medical services  |
<p>| <strong>Migration</strong> | • Rural-urban migration (Takeo, Kampong cham, Phnom Penh) don’t migrate abroad but are aware of people going to Thailand, Korea, Japan, Malaysia (through informal  |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>My World Of Work Cambodia DWCP</th>
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## Reasons for migration

- Better opportunities
- Pay differential
- New work environment
- Marriage
- Study
- Rampant poverty

## Occupational Health and Safety (OSH)

- Is of great concern due to the nature of the work i.e. night shifts that mean lack of sleep for most workers
- Female employees do not own personal transportation so this is an issue as far as safety is concerned
- Companies need to pay more attention to the health and safety of their staff at the workplace (hire additional staff, adequate breaks, training for those who need specialized skills)

## Equality and Discrimination at work

- It exists and often on the basis of role and hierarchy at work, education, physical appearance, social class and gender

## Work related challenges

- Overall dissatisfaction with the nature of the job due to:
  1. No leaves on national holidays
  2. No health insurance or accident insurance
  3. Low wages
  4. No annual bonus or performance based raise

## Future Expectations

- Not very optimistic an outlook for the future
- Mergers with foreign companies may improve the working conditions of the people which is the expectation

### SME and Informal Sector (combination of formal and informal enterprises)

From the data gathered through the focus groups in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap provinces, the following findings can be highlighted:

Excerpts:

“When I got injured, I used the traditional method by using lemon to clean my wound and prevent from tetanus.”

“I work so hard to earn enough money to support my family at my home town and my
children education. One more thing, I want to have motorbike, and tractor for growing in rice.”

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Comments and findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Job level**                             | • Earn more money to be able to support the family and especially the children’s education  
                                            • Work hours are too long and often overtime is not paid                              |
| **Social Protection**                     | • Mixing cement affects their health adversely                                        
                                            • Long hours lead to adverse effects                                                   
                                            • Need for insurance for their health                                                 |
| **Migration**                             | • Destinations of migration include Phnom Penh, Malaysia, Siem Reap, Battambang, Rattanakiri  
                                            • There is great difficulty in finding work locally which is why most people tend to migrate |
| **Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)**  | • Company usually covers health and accident related expenses including immediate care 
                                            • Mixing cement on a daily basis, inhaling the smell of paint, smoke, debris of paint polishing may lead to health issues and lung related problems. |
| **Equality and discrimination at work**   | • No particular cases of unequal treatment at work or discrimination of any sort for most respondents |
| **Work related challenges**               | • Adverse health consequences due to the work conditions                              
                                            • Job instability and very few long term contracts                                     
                                            • No performance based salary hike                                                    |
| **Future expectations**                   | • Overall not happy about the future prospects of their jobs                             
                                            • Running their own business remains a desire for many                                 
                                            • Health related issues are rather important for most especially at the workplace     
                                            • Vertical ascent in the company and the opportunity to broaden their skillsets       |
Overall picture and key issues by sector

This depicts the top three priorities by sectors that were extracted from the responses in the survey as well as the focus groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Key issues</th>
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</table>
| Agriculture                 | 1. Prices of agricultural products  
                              | 2. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)  
                              | 3. Infrastructure (roads, irrigation in the provinces) |
| Construction                | 1. Occupational safety and health (OSH)  
                              | 2. Skill development  
                              | 3. Social Protection |
| Hospitality /Tourism        | 1. Wages  
                              | 2. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)  
                              | 3. Social Protection |
| SME and informal sector     | 1. Wages  
                              | 2. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)  
                              | 3. Social Protection |

Key findings and priorities by theme

Social media outreach and Online Campaign results

To supplement the offline data it was essential to run a small-scale campaign to capitalize on the high rate of internet penetration in Cambodia. Internet penetration stands at 25% in Cambodia despite a staggering 414% increase as of January this year. The Digital, Social and Mobile in APAC 2015, published by We Are Social (Singapore).
social media active youth in Cambodia and in particular some of the indigenous youth groups in the northeastern provinces of the country- Mondolkiri and Ratanakiri.

Based on the data collected through internet administered surveys where the questionnaire could be accessed through a google form, the following findings can be highlighted:

- Educational Qualifications: Most of the respondents had a fairly high level of education with 50% having completed upper secondary levels and around 14% graduate degree holders
- Status of employment: Most of the respondents (around 70%) who responded were employees
- Full time or part time employment: Around 60% of the respondents were engaged in full time employment but with more than one job
- Work place discrimination: Around 85% of the respondents faced no workplace discrimination but the 15% who did report, stated the reasons as disability, age and gender

- Working Conditions Priorities

![Working conditions priorities](image)

**Figure 1 Working conditions priorities**

- Employment expectations from the government

![Employment expectations](image)

**Figure 2 Employment expectations**
Learning and areas for improvement

There were several learnings and improvement areas that were seen in the course of this study with respect to the design as well as the implementation. A few of these are elucidated below that can also be rectified when replicating this study in the future.

1. **Design related learning**: Given time frame of the study, the sample was stratified as per the location of job centres of the National Employment Agency (NEA) staffed with people capable of collecting the data as well as representative of the sectors that we were interested in (agriculture, construction, hospitality/tourism and the informal/SME). The sampling plan was designed such that the focus groups would add depth to the findings of the survey. However the small number of focus groups (approx. 20 across sectors) may contribute to a lack of analytic power- the lack of leverage for separating the effects of multiple causes. The uniform guidelines across all focus groups may have mitigated this to a certain extent. Stratified random sampling was the preferred technique for the survey design as has been mentioned in the methodology section.

2. **Technology related learning**: The application was designed for a Khmer audience but there were translation issues, as several of the questions in the initial version were open ended. However, this was solved once the questionnaire was revised to add more multiple choice
questions and 3 point scaled questions in place of a Likert Scale (5 or 7 point). Further, technology is an innovation in this study in so far gathering real time data and perceptions of the people are concerned (especially the indigenous population in the country) and not as an enabler. Workers were able to read and hear the questions in order to ensure that literacy levels did not hamper the outcome of the survey. However, this had implications for the worker responses, as the overt nature of the interaction with tablets caused workers to worry about being implicated for their participation or responses. One of the advantages of using mobile phone technologies lies in enabling workers to interact at their own convenience and in private. The use of tablets may counteract this. However with the various questions asked in the survey as well as the focused groups there were guidelines that accompanied them at every stage with the questions explained in Khmer by the enumerators to ensure clarity.

**Replication of the study (include a little more on why this should be replicated and a few things that should be done differently)**

The capacity of the survey method for generating quantifiable data on large numbers of people who are known to be representative of a wider population in order to test theories or hypotheses has been viewed as conducive for collecting large amounts of data in policy practice. On the other hand, focus groups as part of qualitative research helps in the triangulation of the data collected. On the whole, this exercise is replicable to the extent that along with the existing methods, mobile technology can be leveraged further to ensure maximized responsiveness of the people. There is the possibility of using SMS or IVR (free phone number) in partnership with mobile software developers and mobile network operators at the country level to reach out to people.

While considering the replicability of this study, it is essential to look at how mobile technology can be used to give stakeholders a direct role through the ability to voice individual concerns and ideas. The other two important factors to consider are the sample selection and the key messages driven through a targeted campaign. The strength of this project lay in reaching social media active populations but there is a need to leverage mobile technology better as a tool to reach stakeholders in the changing world of work.

Perhaps the biggest contributing factor to the appeal of the use of mobile technologies is the low barriers to entry in terms of affordability and literacy requirements. Today, mobile phones are both affordable to buy and use. They do not need any specialized skills and only require low levels of literacy. They are also portable. This ensures access at all times which contributes to factors such as privacy, ease of reporting and ease of engagement. The portable nature of the mobile phones

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9 A Likert scale could prove challenging when explaining the questions to the respondents on the field as advised by the NEA given their previous experience
encourages people to use them as an instantaneous “push and pull” device. They are able to send out information as and when they think of it and they are able to receive information as and when a query arises.

An example of applications that seek to capture worker feedback is that of Labor Voices and Good World Solutions’ Labor Link. Labor Voices provides early issue detection, grievance mechanisms, benchmarking of working conditions in factories and broadcasting of information to workers among other things. Mobile technology and their propensities for data generation and collection provide the means to tap into real time information develop targeted responses and maximize constrained resources.

Technology in general needs to be used such that capacity can be build and people can actively interact with the context they inhabit and access to useful information can be transformed.

The adoption of electronic devices for data collection has helped bring down the ongoing costs by eliminating data entry and checking operations. It increases sample size and the devices are relatively cheap to procure. However with the growing optimism that new technologies and their increasing penetration are increasing the volume and types of data exponentially there is a need to be cognizant of the associated challenges. The blind use of technology may reinforce inequalities as well as under represent the already undercounted and therein decrease the credibility of the survey design and implementation.

Advantages of using CAPI as it was done in this study:

- Routeing problems within the questionnaire are eliminated
- The interviewers cannot miss questions or ask the wrong questions
- All the questions are ‘customised’ correctly and can be changed along the way if need be
- The computer checks for inadmissible or inconsistent responses as the responses are immediately transferred to the cloud based server
- Errors from separate data entry are eliminated

Conclusions and Recommendations

Recent and reliable data are critical to monitor progress, understand people’s priorities, and design policies to improve development outcomes. In the Post-2015 developmental framework, it is going to be crucial for national governments to put in place mechanisms for frequent and timely collection of quality data. Disaggregated data can help to assess whether development is ‘leaving no one behind’, and to formulate policies targeted at the most vulnerable populations. The importance of
subjective data, which establishes people’s priorities and their perceptions of progress, is also increasingly recognized (United Nations, 2014; Rodríguez Takeuchi et al, 2015). Equally, data can empower citizens and enable them to demand accountability from governments and other actors. It is important to hence incorporate the voices of the constituents as a lending credibility to what the ILO is doing right and where the loopholes lie.

Going forward, the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) process ought to take into consideration, the voices of the people across sectors- to assess the on ground situation and set priorities for themselves for the next biennium. It is not only an innovation but also one that gives more legitimacy and direction to the work of the ILO in championing labour rights all over the world.

Employment is indeed important and a primary concern for majority of the citizens in Cambodia. Global evidence from ‘My World’ places it as the fourth most voted for priority to be incorporated into the next SDG framework. Through perception surveys, it can be seen that people express challenges and views that correspond to the employment challenges faced by their country. Perceptions hence are an important indicator to understand the employment challenges being faced by any country. With data from the focus groups however, these perceptions get more depth and the accompanying reasons become clear. The analysis and comprehensive desk review that has accompanied this process shows that opportunities to advance the Decent Work agenda in Cambodia are rife if the government and all the development partners take note and work in collaboration.

It is imperative to hear people’s concerns about better jobs, particularly with respect to secure employment and social protection. Policy strategies should certainly aim for both more and better jobs, to ensure the employment link between economic growth and poverty reduction (Islam, 2004; Khan, 2007; Osmani, 2003).

The results from ‘My World Of Work’ survey (online and offline) and focus groups shed light on the work and employment related aspirations of the people of Cambodia across sectors. Of the four sectors covered in this study- agriculture, construction and SMEs fall into the ambit of the informal economy whereas hospitality is a part of the formalized economy. This is a crucial aspect of the focus of this study and the sample selection as it is important to incorporate the voices of those in the informal economy.

10 Informal economy as per the ILO Definition: The term “informal economy” refers to very small-scale units producing and distributing goods and services. These units are composed of independent, self-employed producers, family labour, hired workers or apprentices. These units: ■ operate with very little capital or none at all; ■ utilise a low level of technology and skills; ■ operate at a low level of productivity; ■ generally provide very low and irregular income, and highly unstable employment for those who work in them. “Informal” in the sense that they are mostly: ■ unregistered and unrecorded in official statistics and thus not recognised, supported or regulated by the government; ■ have little or no access to organized markets, credit institutions, formal education and training institutions, or to many public services and amenities; ■ are compelled to operate outside the legal framework and beyond the pale of social protection, labour legislation and protective measures, even if they are registered and respect certain aspects of the job.
informal sector in Cambodia since of the jobs lie there. This high level of informality coupled with low education levels and skills shortages highlight a weakness in the system. Skills mismatch can hinder growth and impede Cambodia’s ambitions to achieve middle-income status by 2030.

The important recommendations as a result of the study are the following:

1. **Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)** as an overarching concern that needs to be prioritized for workers especially in the informal sectors of the economy, more from the vantage point of prevention rather than as a responsive set of measures.

2. **Low levels of education and skills shortages** (especially among the urban educated youth) will continue to be a challenge in wake of the adoption of the National Employment Policy. Abundant young labour force exists and a dual strategy of making sure future entrants into the labour force are prepared as well as making sure that the youth already in the labour force have chances of developing and diversifying their skillsets.

3. **Wider social protection**: Access to healthcare in the rural areas as a specific concern came through the findings as there is very little that can be accomplished if the health equity funds cannot be used to give wide access to healthcare in the country.

Cambodia is currently at a crucial stage in policy formulation as a number of important policies are being adopted by the government - the Cambodia Industrial Development Policy (2015-2025), the new minimum wage for the garment sector and the National Employment Policy (NEP). It is crucial therefore, for both the government and the ILO to borrow from each other and formulate strong bottom up policies that can put the country in the path to sustainable economic growth and development. Globally too, the development agenda is undergoing a paradigm shift. The Post-2015 SDG agenda may be criticized by many as being too ambitious and all encompassing but the process of its adoption has managed to galvanize worldwide political will. A document like the DWCP can be one of the key components of refocusing resources and attention to a plethora of labour related issues in Cambodia.

**References:**

• Growth and employment in the Post 2015 Agenda: Messages from a global consultation: UNDG (the comments from Aurelio Parisotto)
• Post 2015 Cambodia Country Consultation Report: UNRC led initiative (national consultation)
• Technology and the data revolution: Lessons from the My World Survey (Tanvi Bhatkal, ODI)
• Listening to One million voices: ODI Paper
• Cambodia Labour Force and Child Labour Survey 2012 (CCLS 2012)
• Focus Groups and surveys as complimentary research methods – A case example: Brent Wolff, John Knodel, Werasit Sittitrai
• ODI Blog: Claire Melamed: Methodology for the My World
• Sustainable Development Summit 2015: Interactive dialogue 3: Fostering sustainable economic growth and transformation and promoting sustainable consumption and production

Appendix I
Detailed Sampling plan for the Survey (Conducted by the National Employment Agency)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% distribution</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Hospitality/Tourism</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>SME and Informal sectors</th>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takeo</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kep</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of sample</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Hospitality/Tourism</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>SME and Informal sectors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<td>250</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siem Reap</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prey veng</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takeo</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>267</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kep</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Appendix I.I
Photographs from the training and the administering of FGDs
Focus group session from Takeo province (Agricultural sector)
Focus group session from Phnom Penh province (Construction sector)
Focus group session from Siem Reap province (SME sector)
Appendix 1.2: Questionnaire for the My World of Work Survey 2015

Questionnaire ID:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification Information</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Sex:*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status: *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Qualification*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Never attended school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Not completed any levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Completed Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Completed Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Vocational Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Graduate degree holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province (current residence): *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province (hometown): *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Urban area:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of household members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of earning household members:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. What is the status of your employment?
   o Employer
   o Own Account Worker
2. Is this employment full time or part time? What is the classification of full time and part time as per the NEA/NIS data?
   - Full time
   - Part time

3. Do you work overtime and get paid for it?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Sometimes

4. Are you, in your household, the person who contributes the most to the household income?
   - Yes
   - No

5. Does your work give you a sense of personal accomplishment?
   - Yes
   - No

6. Is your current wage enough to provide for you and your family?
   - Yes
   - No

7. How many jobs have you changed in the past year?
   - One
   - Two
   - Five
   - Others (please specify how many)

8. Have you ever faced discrimination at work based on the following? If so, then what kind? Please tick one of the following (can be more than one)
   - Age
   - Sex
   - Race or ethnicity
   - Nationality
   - Religion
   - Disability
   - Never faced any discrimination

9. Are you satisfied with the physical work environment?
   - Yes
   - No

10. If you are facing problems in the physical work environment due to the following please tick one or more options.
    - Temperature
    - Noise
    - Smoke
    - Waste generation

11. Do you have any expectations from the government with respect to employment? (can be more than one)
    - Better Wages
12. Have you heard about the ILO?
   - Yes
   - No

13. If yes, do you have any expectations from the ILO with respect to employment? (can be more than one)
   - Better Wages
   - Better working conditions
   - Infrastructure

14. Are there any complaint mechanisms for addressing problems at work?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

15. Do you intend to continue at your current place of employment for the next year at least?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

16. What are the three big work-related challenges you are currently facing? (please choose at least 3)
   - Insufficient Wages
   - Health and Safety
   - Insurance /Social security
   - Discrimination
   - Harassment
   - Job satisfaction
   - Inadequate skills at the workplace

17. What are your goals for the next three-five years for yourself and your family? (can choose more than one)
   - Better job
   - Better pay
   - Better education for the children

18. Do you feel positive about the future?
   - Very positive
   - Not positive
   - Moderately positive
   - Neutral

* The highlighted questions are mandatory to answer

Adapted from: References for the survey design: Fifth European Survey on Working Conditions (EWCS by Eurofund); ILO Labour Force Survey 2012

Appendix 1.3: Focus Group guidelines

Focus Group Discussion Guidelines: ‘My World of Work’ Exercise
The moderator’s goal is to generate a maximum number of different ideas and opinions from as many people in the time allotted.

Ideal time frame for the GD: 45-60 minutes (90 Max.)

Structured around a set of carefully pre-determined questions

At least 2-3 focus groups per sector to produce valid results

8-12 questions are a maximum for the FGD

Three kinds of focus group questions:

1. Engagement questions
2. Exploration questions
3. Exit questions

Guidelines:

Consent Form

Consent to Participate in the Focus Group

You have been asked to participate in a focus group sponsored by the International Labour Organization (ILO), facilitated by the National Employment Agency (NEA) (Cambodia)

The purpose of the group is to try and understand what your employment related views and expectations are. The information learned in the focus groups will be used to design labour related programmes and policies of the ILO.

You can choose whether or not to participate in the focus group and stop at any time. Although the focus group will be recorded, your responses will remain anonymous and no names will be mentioned in the report.

There are no right or wrong answers to the focus group questions. We want to hear many different viewpoints and would like to hear from everyone. We hope you can be honest even when your responses may not be in agreement with the rest of the group. In respect for each other, we ask that only one individual speak at a time in the group and that responses made by all participants be kept confidential. I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions mentioned above.

Signature
Name and Date

Basic Demographics of people involved (to be taken before the FGD begins and after the consent form is signed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Important questions to be answered through the FGD:

1. Job level: needs and expectations *(wages, health and safety, insurance and social security, discrimination, harassment, job satisfaction, inadequate skills at the workplace)*
   - What are your needs and expectations from your work?
   - What would you like to do to improve your working conditions?

2. Social Protection
   - Have you ever faced a work related accident?
   - In case of an accident at work, what do you do?

3. Migration
   - What are the areas to which people migrate? R-U or U-R
   - What are the main reasons people choose to migrate?

4. Equality and Discrimination at work
   - Have you ever faced discrimination at work based on the following?
   - If so, then what kind of discrimination have you faced? *(Anecdotes and person experiences preferred)*

5. Health and safety at work
   - Do you think your work affects your health/ exposed to other risks?
   - If so, then what do you think can be done to minimize exposure to risk?

6. Work related challenges
   - What is the biggest work/employment- related challenge you are currently facing?

7. Expectations about the future
   - Do you feel positive about the future? Why or why not?