



DEMOCRACY DIALOGUE SERIES

on

YOUTH'S PERSPECTIVES ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN CAMBODIA

Speakers: Plenary session

Moderator: Chanroeun Pa, President of CID

Date: 19 August 2023

Time: 9:00-10:30 a.m

Questions for Discussion

- 1) What is the youth's perception on civic engagement and political participation in Cambodia nowadays?
- 2) What are the challenges and opportunities for youth's civic engagement and political participation?
- 3) How to promote youth's civic engagement and political participation?
- 4) What should the new government do to promote youth's civic engagement and political participation?

Summary

The dialogue examines youth's perceptions of civic engagement and political participation in Cambodia nowadays. The discussion highlighted the challenges and opportunities for youth's civic engagement and political participation in Cambodia, including limited access to education and information, a lack of trust in political institutions, and the presence of societal norms that discourage youth from actively participating in political affairs. However, it also noted the increasing use of social media platforms as a means of mobilising and organising youth-led movements, which has the potential to drive change and promote a more inclusive political landscape in Cambodia. Overall, the dialogue emphasised the importance of creating spaces and opportunities for youth to voice their opinions and contribute to decision-making processes to foster a more democratic and participatory society.

The discussion shed light on the fact that to promote youth's civic engagement and political participation in Cambodia, it is crucial to provide them with access to quality education and information, as well as opportunities for skill development and leadership training. Additionally, creating safe and inclusive spaces for dialogue and collaboration between youth and government officials can help build mutual trust and understanding. Furthermore, the government should implement policies that support

youth involvement in decision-making processes, such as lowering the voting age and establishing youth councils. By addressing these key factors, Cambodia can empower its youth to actively contribute to shaping the country's political landscape and promoting a more democratic society.

The dialogue emphasized that to promote youth's civic engagement and political participation in Cambodia, the government should also invest in educational programmes, especially civic education, that teach young people about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. By providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the political system, the government can empower youth to effectively voice their opinions and advocate for change. Additionally, creating platforms for young people to express their ideas and concerns, such as through town hall meetings or online forums, can encourage their active participation in political discussions. Ultimately, by valuing and including the perspectives of young people, Cambodia can foster a more inclusive and representative democracy.