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Enhancing literacy skills among garment workers

Sen David / Khmer Times



[UNESCO and Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia to implement literacy programme for garment workers. KT/Khem Sovannara](#)

UNESCO and the Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia (GMAC) will implement a literacy programme in 11 factories across seven provinces this year to increase employee skills in the workplace.

This annual programme held in collaboration with the GMAC's Cambodian Training Institute (CGTI) is to support lifelong learning among garment factory workers.

The accredited Factory Literacy Programme (FLP) developed by the Ministry of Education and UNESCO will include GMAC in project implementation.

The Cambodian garment sector employs a large number of migrant female workers with low levels of literacy and the FLP launched in 2016 is to upskill

these workers and help close the skill gap in the garment, footwear and apparel industries.

Tailored to the needs of migrant female factory workers, FLP equips learners with functional literacy and numeracy skills to help them cope with the day-to-day challenges of life. Learners who pass the course's final exam are provided with a certificate of completion by their respective provincial offices of education that are recognised by the Education Ministry as an equivalent to Grade 4 of formal education.

This year UNESCO and the ministry have introduced new textbooks that will provide learners with the option to also obtain a Grade 6 equivalency.

Since its launch, some 2,063 workers across 12 provinces through 25 partner factories have participated in the FLP, with a 72 percent completion rate, and this year it will implement in 11 factories across seven provinces.

The programme is directly aligned with the ministry's Lifelong Learning Policy, developed in partnership with UNESCO to maximise human resource development to enable the country to progress to upper-middle-income status by 2030 and an upper-income country in 2050. The policy builds on the ministry's earlier Non-Formal Education Policy (2002) and is integrated with MoEYS's Education Strategic Plan (2019-2023) and Education Roadmap.

CGTI is Cambodia's first fashion and textile training institute that aims to narrow the gap between training needs and jobs in the garment industry. They offer a diploma as well as short courses that are designed keeping the human resource needs of GMAC partners in mind.

Through increased access to education and upskilling, these enhanced and diversified learning opportunities will contribute to the economic empowerment and resilience of Cambodia's factory workers, especially migrant women.