

5th Annual International Conference on TESOL: New Trends in English Teaching and Learning

Policy Initiative for Integration of English for Specific Academic Purposes Curriculum into Cambodian Higher Education Institutions

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Presentation Outline:

- 1. Overview of Cambodian HE**
- 2. Cambodian Competitiveness in ASEAN**
- 3. Situation Analysis of ELE in Cambodian HE**
- 4. Intervention Strategies**
- 5. Practical Challenges**
- 6. Policy Initiative**
- 7. Actions Needed from HEIs**

1. Overview of Cambodian HE

HE in the Past :

The 1940s – First Born HEI

The 1960s – Glory Period

The 1970s – Tragic Period of Civil War and Killing Fields

The 1980s – Reborn Period, establishment & rehabilitation

The 1990s – Reforming/Restructuring/Development

The Early 2000s – Growth of Private HEIs

HE at Present :

-> 106 HEIs = supervised by 14 different Min.

-> 39 of them are public HEIs

-> Categories of HEIs = institute & university.

HEIs and their concerned ministries/institutions

N	Ministries	Number of HEIs		
		Public	Private	Total
1	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport	9	55	66
2	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	9	10	19
3	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	3	0	3
4	Ministry of Health	2	0	2
5	Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts	1	0	1
6	Ministry of Economic and Finance	1	0	1
7	Ministry of Religions and Cults	3	0	3
8	Ministry of Public Works and Transport	1	0	1
9	Ministry of National Defense	5	0	5
10	Ministry of Interior	1	0	1
11	Ministry of Social Affairs Veteran and Youth Rehabilitation	1	0	1
12	Ministry of Industry Mines and Energy	1	0	1
13	Offices of The Council of Ministers	1	0	1
14	National Bank of Cambodia	1	0	1
Total		39	66	106

Expansion in Quantity

Degree	2006-2007		2011-2012	
	Total	Female	Total	Female
Doctoral	448	6.47%	998	5.81%
Master	8,830	15.48%	13,542	18.96%
Bachelor	92,340	35.18%	207,666	40.19%
Associate	15,802	28.97%	23,123	33.39%
Grand Total	117,420	32.75%	245,329	37.17%

1.1 Strengths in HE

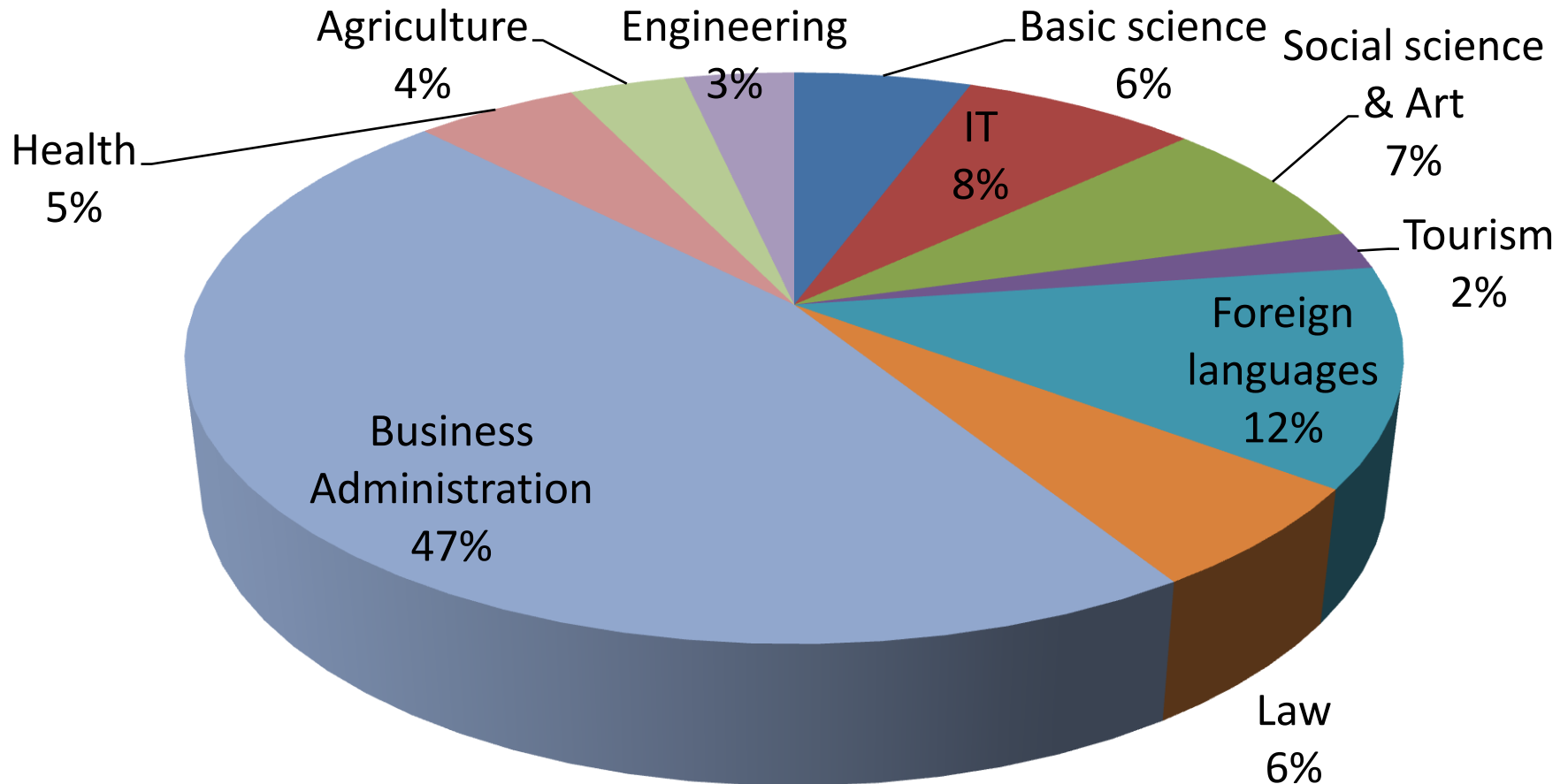
- Rectangular Strategy III → Capacity Building and Human Resource Development
→ Higher education is a priority sub-sector
- HE Sub-working group formulated and functional
- Research culture has been emerged
- DHE has gained foundation capacity for planning, monitoring, capacity building
- A stronger regional cooperation among HE networks

1.2 Weaknesses/Challenges in HE

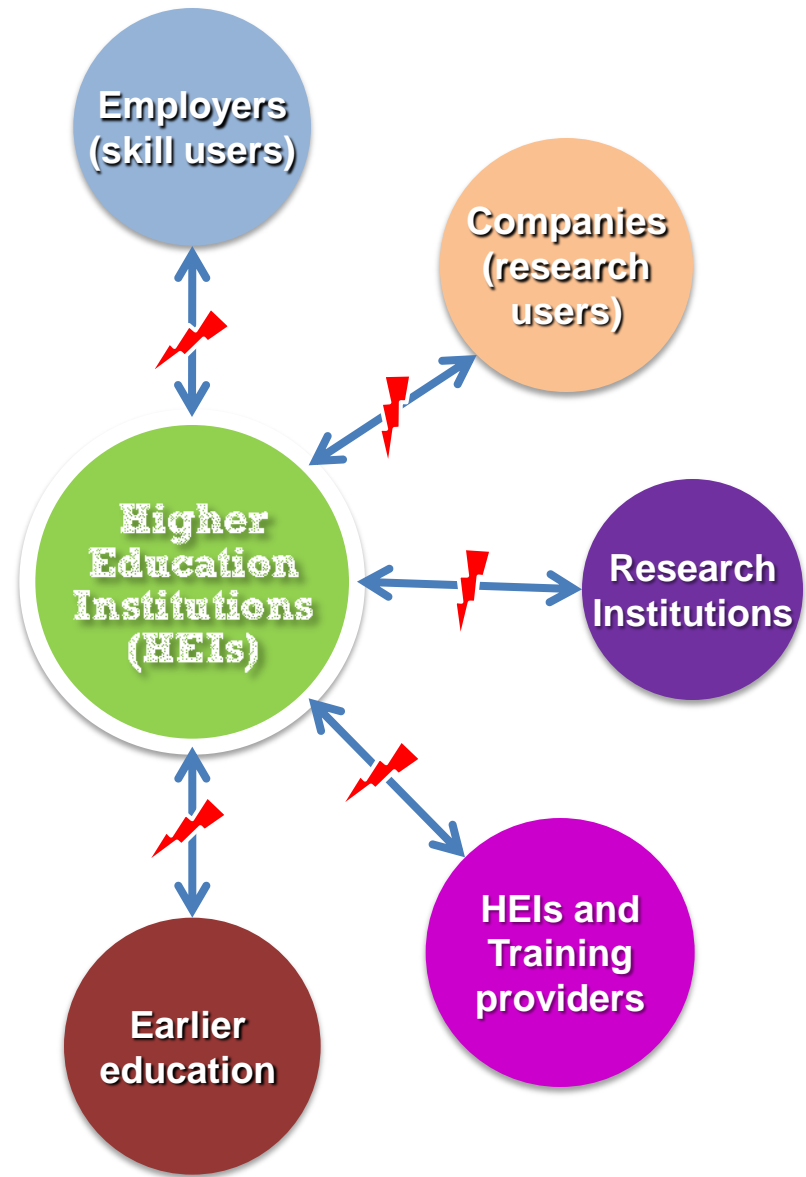
- Quantity vs Quality: Many graduates do not have right skills (technical & soft skills)
- Students enrolment: not consistent with priority programs. (less number of students register in STEM; lack of access to right information that could help them to make right decision)

Curriculum Mismatched

Undergraduate Training Distribution by Fields (2011)

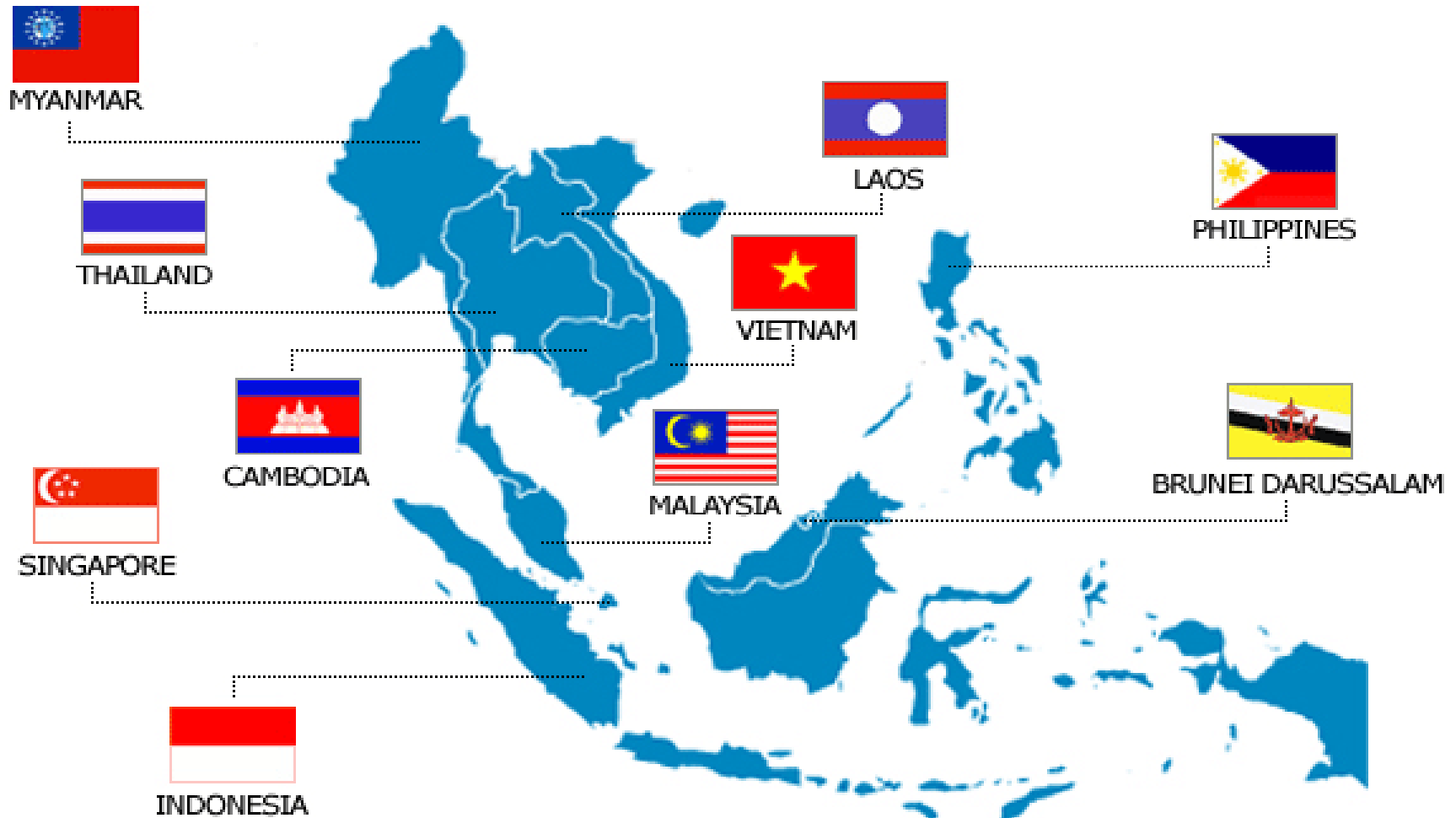


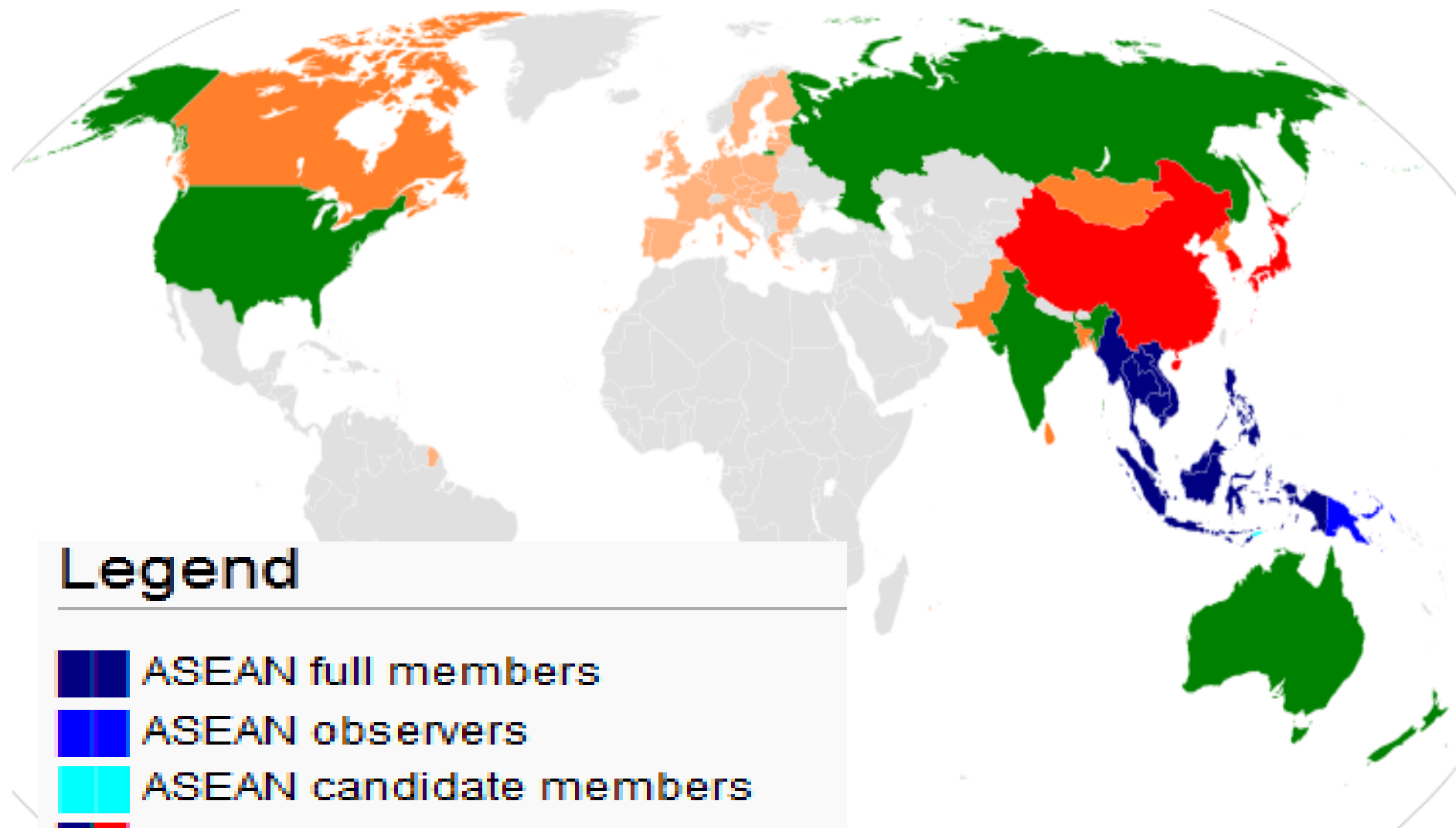
**“Higher education
is not working
as a system of
connected actors”**



- Fragmented system (HEIs are managed by 14 ministries)
- Race for the bottom competition (lowering tuition fees → low quality of input & process)
- Public budget expenditure for HE remains the **lowest** in the region (MoEYS receive only 1.8% of GDP. HE received approximately 0.1% of GDP, about one-tenth of the world average of 1%).

2) Cambodian Competitiveness in ASEAN





Legend

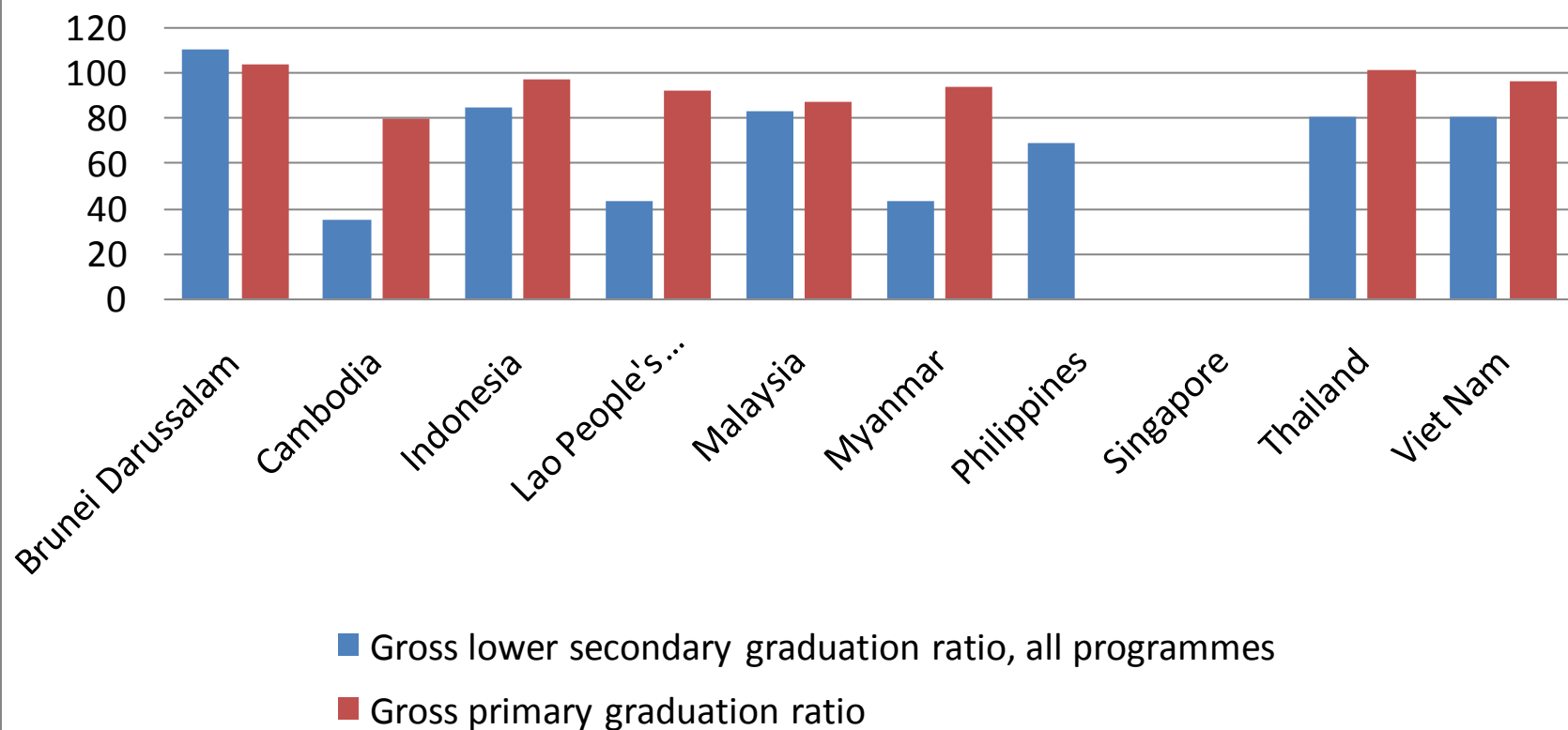
- ASEAN full members
- ASEAN observers
- ASEAN candidate members
- ASEAN Plus Three
- East Asia Summit
- ASEAN Regional Forum

Key Reforms of ASEAN

- Expansion and standardization of primary and secondary school education to larger part of the economy (Urban and Rural Sectors)
- Curriculum reform to emphasize basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills (**English language is important**)
- Educational reforms in line with expected industrial structures
- ...etc.

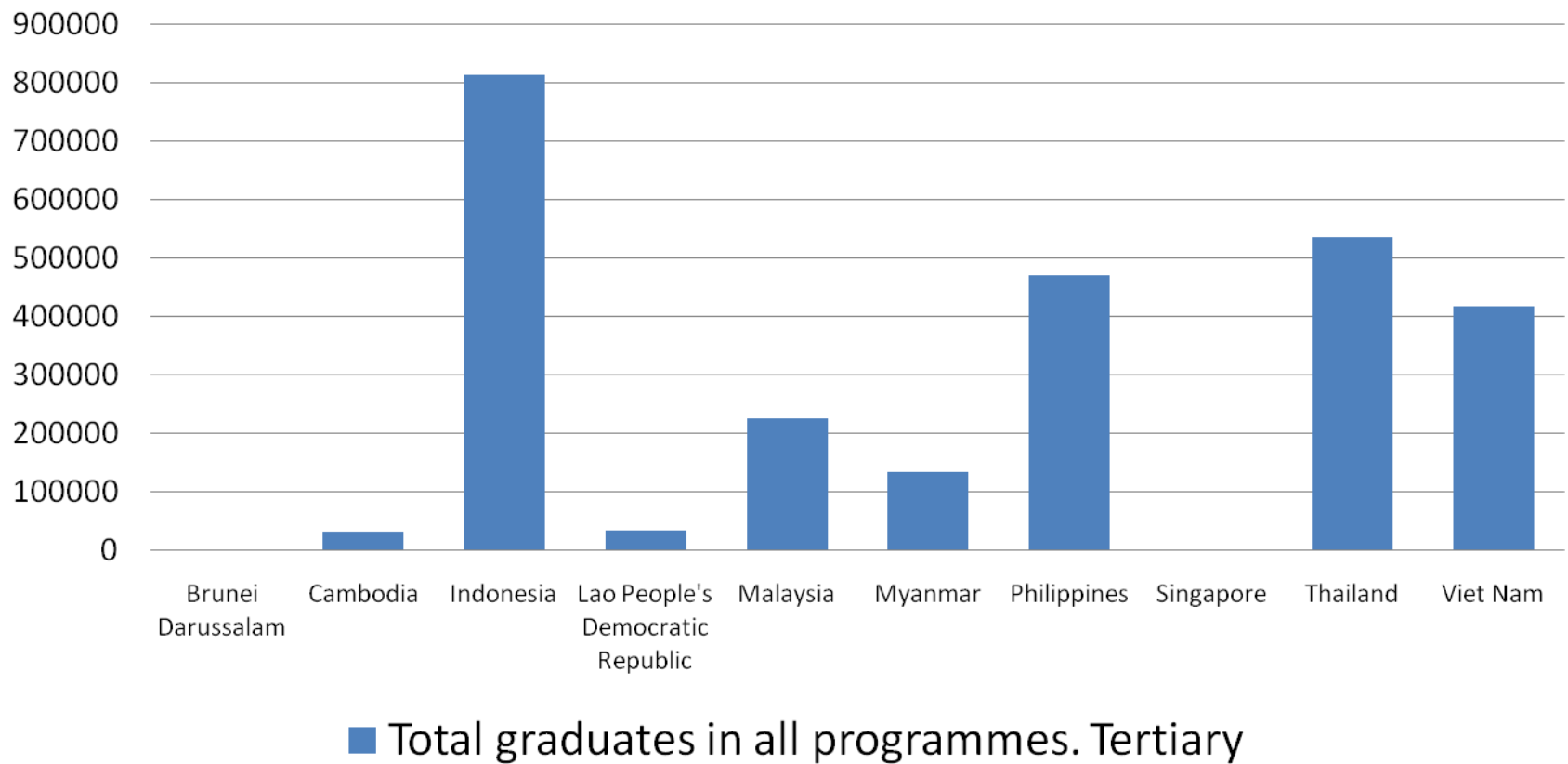
But...where do we stand now...?

Gross Graduation in ASEAN



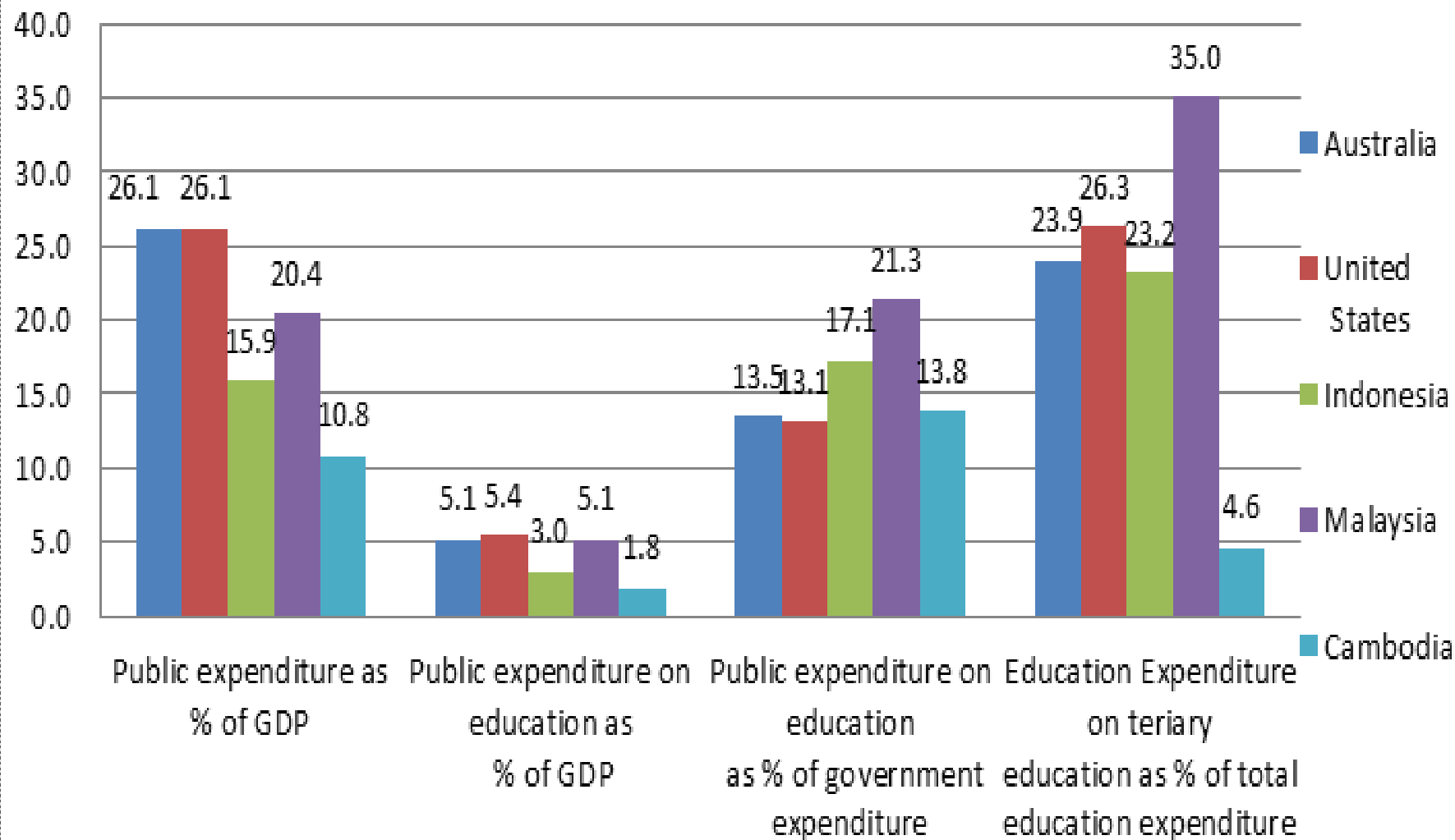
Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics

Total graduates in all programmes. Tertiary



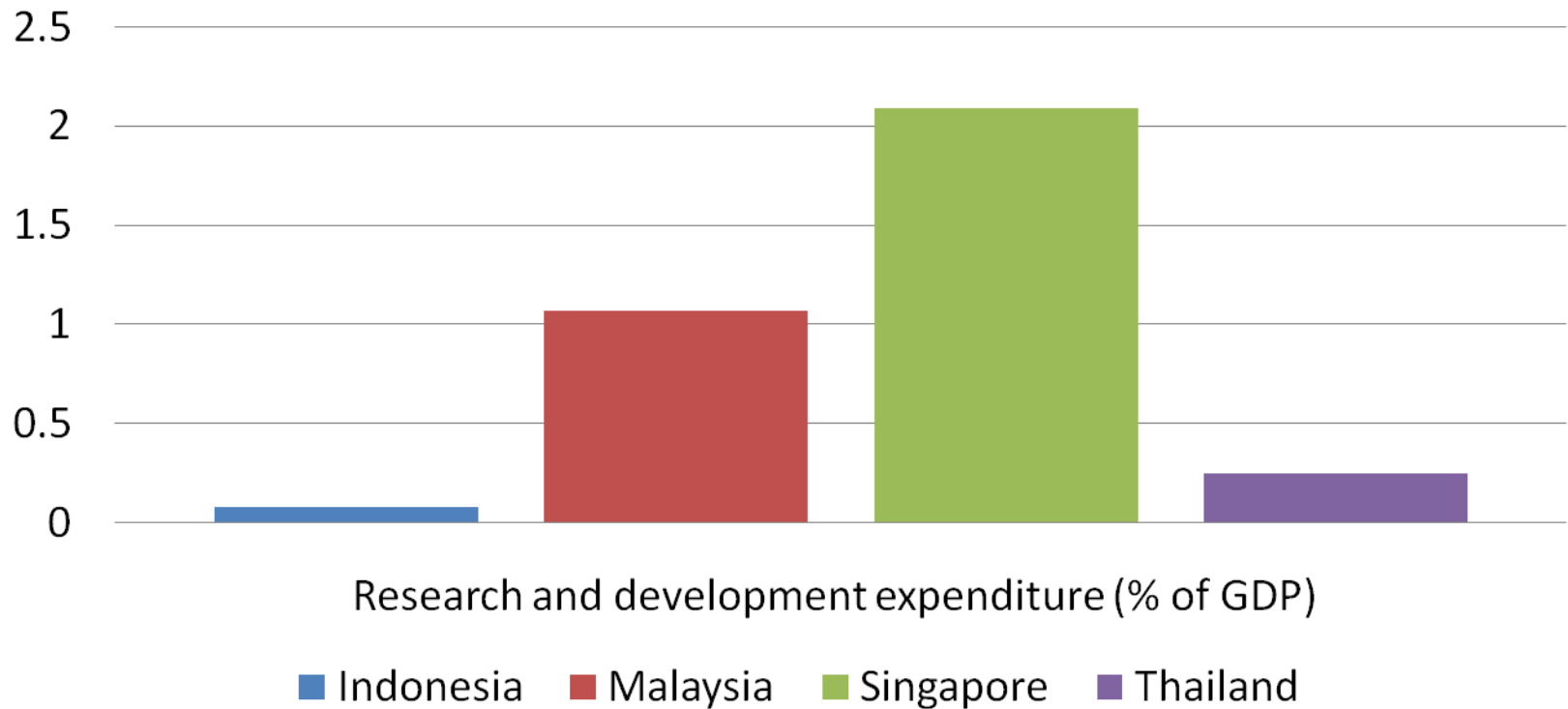
Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics

Expenditure at Micro and Macro Levels



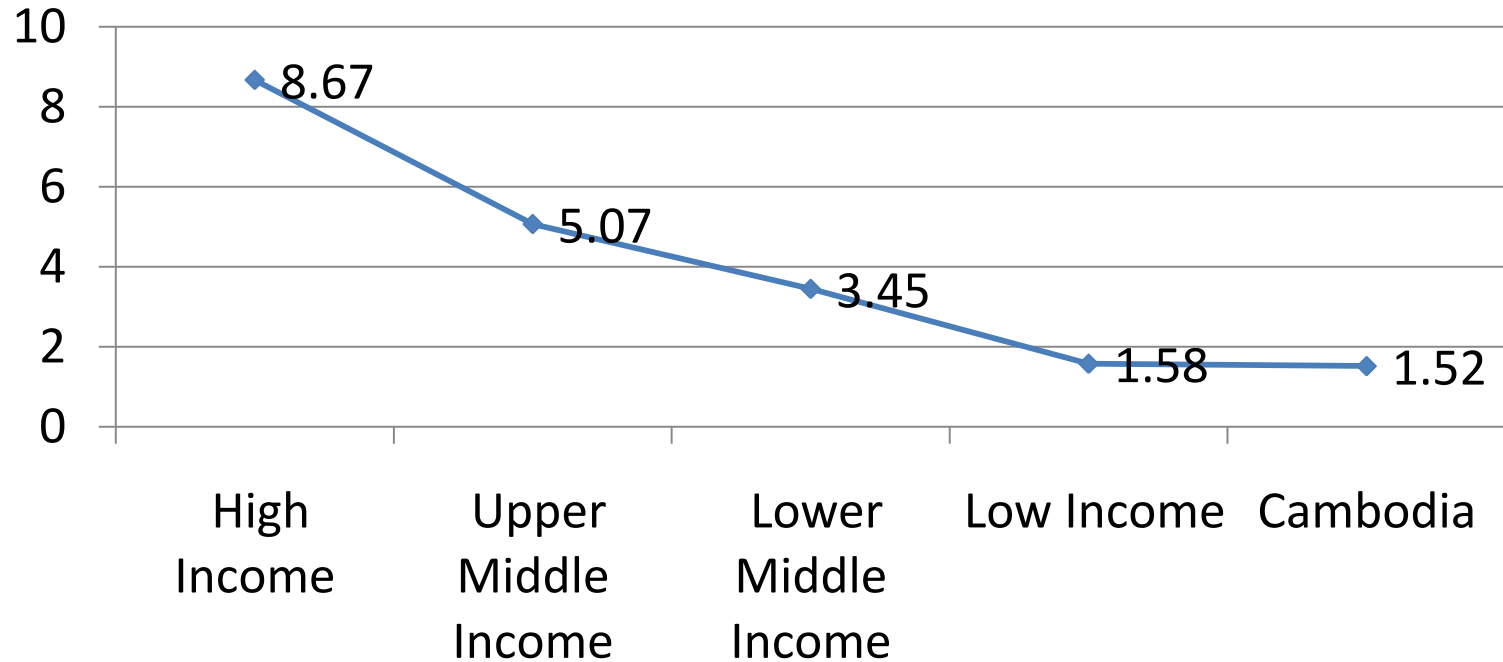
Source: Layheng Ting, 2013

R&D in selected ASEAN countries



Where do Cambodia stand?

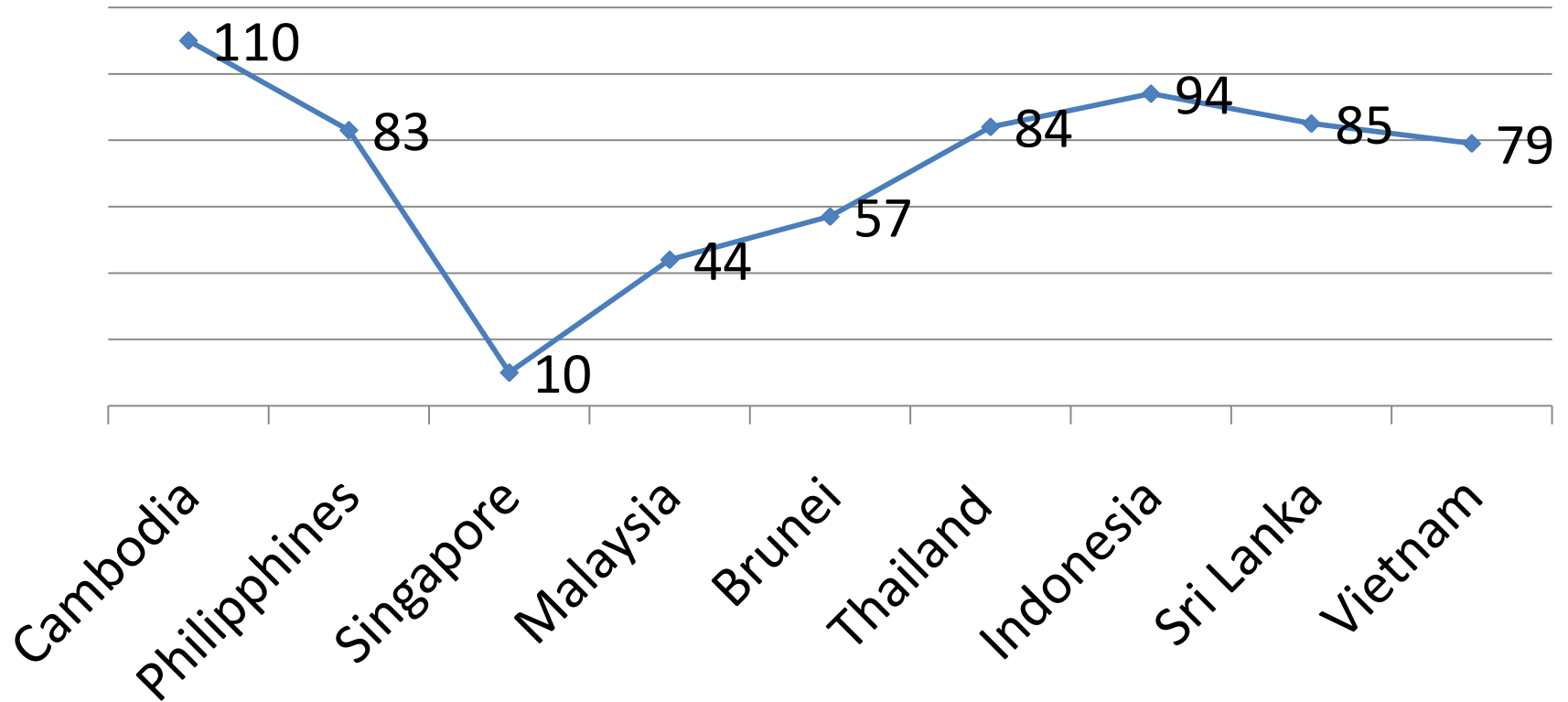
Knowledge Indicator



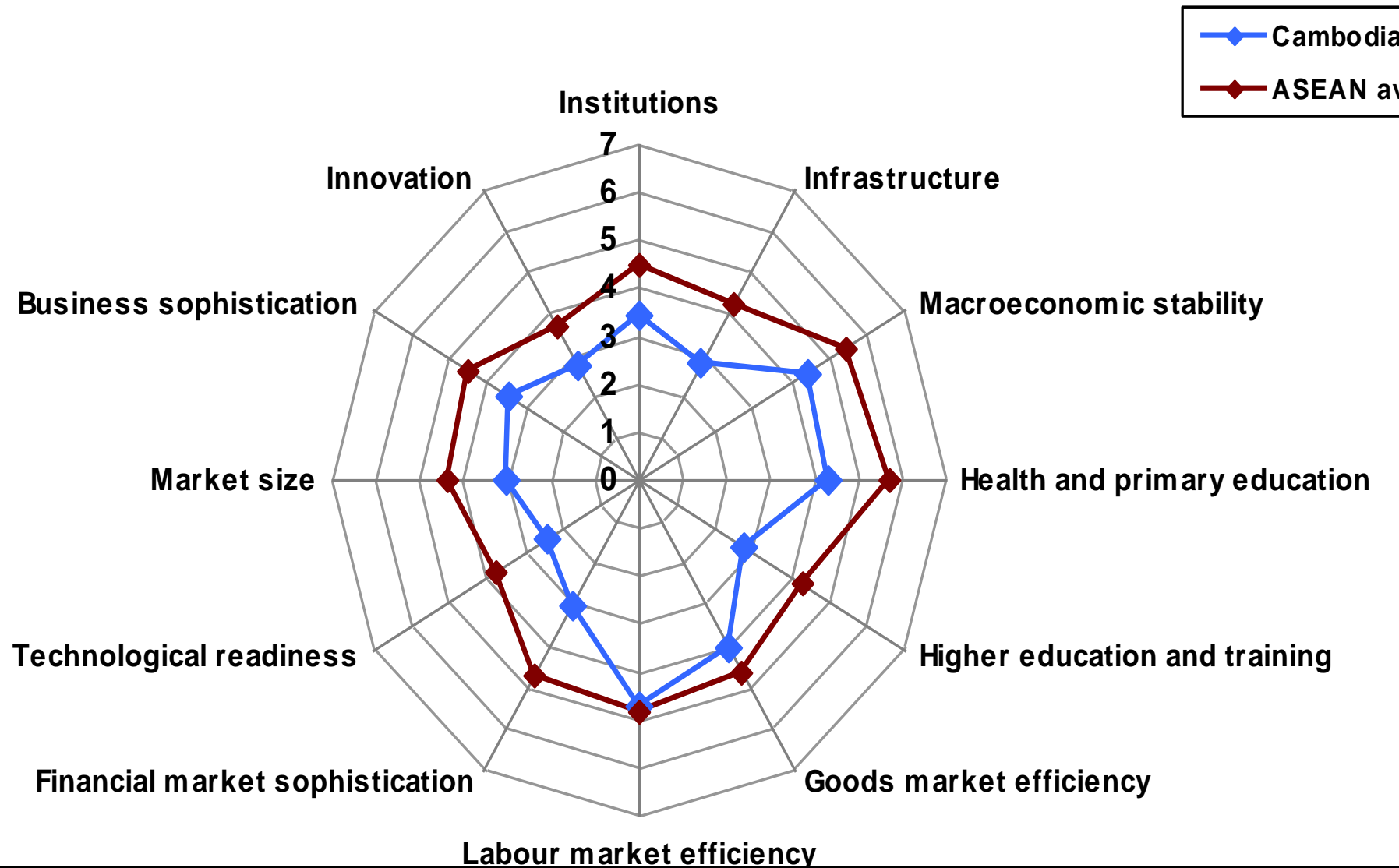
KI is the simple average of the normalized performance scores of a country or region on the key variables in three Knowledge Economy pillars - education and human resources, the innovation system and ITC.

Source: World Bank, 2012, Knowledge for Development

Technological Readiness Ranking



Source: World Bank, 2012, Knowledge for Development



Source: WEF Global Competitiveness Report 2008-2009. Note: data for Laos and Myanmar not available

What needed for ASEAN Integration???

- English as a lingua franca
- Creative Science for Creative Industry
- 21st century soft skills, which is so-called 7Cs:
(Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration,
Cross-cultural understanding, Communication,
Computing/ICT, Career & Learning self-reliance)
- STEM becomes backbone for HR Development

3. Situation Analysis of ELE in HEIs

- English is to be taught from grade 4, but the actual implementation needs to be materialized
- Students depend on private classes
- No uniformity in structure of English program to be taught in Cambodian HEIs
- Different in nature and focus of instruction, 4 categories of HEIs can be observed

Category A

- Very small proportion under this category
- High English proficiency is required for entrance (exam or proficiency tests)
- Students not necessarily learn through ESAP, but on general English and strengthening of 4 macro-skills.
- Medium of instruction in English
- High profile in teacher recruitment

- Students not meeting English requirement needs to take English Bridging courses and tutorial is given to the weak students.
- Extra-curricular activities to enhance language skills (club, seminar, language lab, student exchange, community services)
- Graduates can functionally communicate their specialization in English
- Clear role of curriculum development committee with regular evaluation

Category B

- HEIs offering specialized programs such as Agriculture, Engineering, Medical Science, rather than comprehensive ones
- General English is conducted in Year 1 (Foundation Year) or 2 and ESAP is introduced from Year 2 or 3.
- ESAP is more in Terminology but not 4 skills
- No placement test is administered to balance the level of students

- Textbook-based Syllabus is adopted...Eg. English for Agriculture, English for Dentistry
- English Language Center or English Department is responsible for curriculum development
- Low level of English among students make it difficult for students taking ESAP, esp. when conducted by a foreign lecturer
- Some HEIs have experienced lecturers, some employ part-time lecturers

Category C:

- Largest proportion among the 4 categories
- Both public and private, from small to big HEIs
- These HEIs usually have B.A or BEd in English as well as other majors.
- English Department is responsible for developing English courses for non-English major students

- English proficiency is not required and measured before the entry (profit-oriented strategy)
- Year 1 for General English, and 2 or 3 for ESAP courses (but in terminology)
- Poor English proficiency and big gap of proficiency is the common challenge (Students are grouped according to their major)
- Poor motivation from students to learn English

- Challenges in teaching practice and teachers
- Most teachers are part-time (not much involved in curriculum development)
- Grammar-translation method with insufficient and ineffective use of materials
- Foreign-based textbooks, not locally designed to meet local context and students level

- Most HEIs have a committee or body responsible for curriculum development, but their “genuine expertise” is questionable (promotion based on experiences of teaching rather than qualifications)
- Positive sign: importance of English is recognized → recruitment of well-experienced teachers, collaboration with universities overseas, English-only campus, extra-curricular activities

Category D

- HEIs do not have strong management and administrative structure.
- Purely profit-oriented
- No investment in full-time staff
- The “Owner” hold multi-functional tasks, ranging from administrative to academic
- “Stealing” and “shopping” curriculum is their strategy

4. Intervention Strategies

- Department of Higher Education has its mandate in capacity building for higher education sub-sector
- Efforts should be made first on the input level (curriculum)
- Two workshops aiming at improving quality of ELE in Cambodian HEIs through the adaption of ESAP curriculum

Workshop Objectives:

- a) realize the important roles of English in national and regional development framework;
- b) discuss the current situation of teaching and learning of English in Cambodian HEIs and identify its shortcomings;
- c) realize the importance of ESAP and the needs for its integration in the curriculum of their institution;

- d) design English for Specific Academic Purposes courses which meet specific needs of students doing majors other than English; and
- e) integrate soft skills into the English for Specific Academic Purposes curriculum.

Output → A revised ESAP curriculum which better responds to the needs of students

- Workshop #1 from 25 Feb – 01 March 2014 to provide theoretical input
- Workshop #2 (to be held this September) to provide technical feedback on the syllabus
- At the interval of 6 months between workshop #1 and #2, the local facilitator would travel to HEIs to help revise the curriculum
- Two technical meetings were carried out in July, 2014

5. Practical Challenges

- Insufficient time for English teaching
- Lacking in technical experts in ESAP curriculum development, textbook development, material design...etc
- Mixed-ability of students in English
- English ability not screened prior to entrance to university
- English ability is too low to start ESAP

- Not smooth coordination among management team → conflicting of interest
- Some HEIs don't know how to properly conduct needs analysis for ESAP
- Some HEIs don't have clear line of responsibility
- Unwillingness among HEIs to invest more
- Resistance from student to study ESAP
- Lacking in content-specific knowledge among lecturers

6. Policy Initiative

- 120 credits minimum for Bachelor Degree (but HEIs can teach up to 135)
- 5 semesters of English teaching are encouraged (but 6 is really appreciated)
- English sessions focus on GE → EAP and → ESAP is encouraged
- In some cases, it OK to start from EAP before moving to ESAP

7. Actions Needed from HEIs

1. Deciding on which major they are going to introduce the ESAP
2. Deciding how many English semesters to be introduced in that major (5, 6 or 7?)
3. Structuring the English semesters in the whole curriculum of that major (GE, EAP, ESAP)
4. Producing **Curriculum Document** for that major detailing where English is taught

5. Conducting Needs Analysis and produce **Needs Analysis report**
(methodology, tools, audience, findings...)
6. Based on the findings of Needs Analysis, produce the **Syllabus of ESAP**
(Goals, Objectives, Course Description, Time Frame, Contents...etc)
7. Submitting 1) Curriculum Document, 2) Needs Analysis Report and 3) Syllabus of ESAP to Department of Higher Education to technical feedback during 2nd workshop

Post-workshop Activities for MoEYS

- Identifying 7 key specializations
- Contracting textbook writers to produce textbooks on those 7 specializations. Each one is divided into 4 levels
- Producing glossary for those 7 specializations

Keep in touch...!

You are welcome to our September
workshop in Siem Reap!