

Chapter 3 Literacy

3.1 Progress of Literacy

As mentioned in the introduction, the information on literacy status in the Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey 2013 was recorded of each person, irrespective of age, but population aged 6 years and below has been grouped all as illiterate. Therefore, literate population in this analysis covers literate population aged 7 and above unless mentioned specifically.

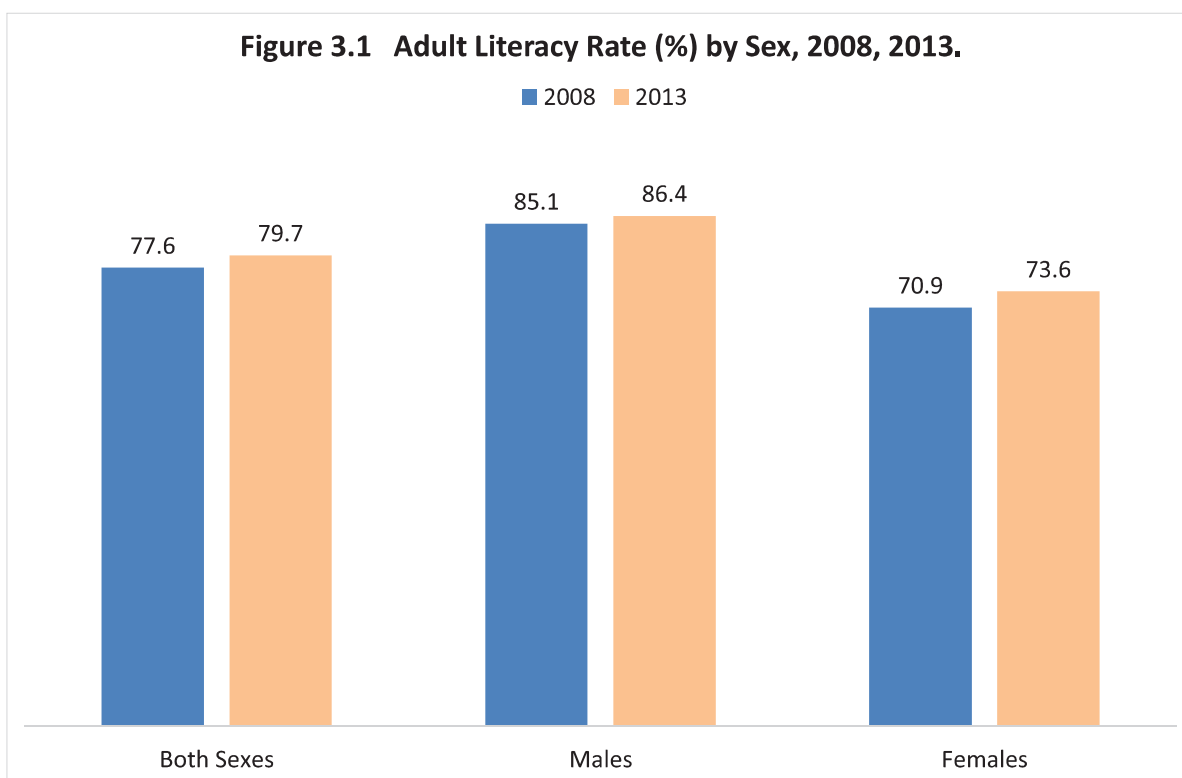
Various measures are being taken in the country to raise literacy in the last decade. Government has made great efforts in keeping pace with the rapidly expanding school-age population, with the construction of schools across the country. The number of primary school increased from 5,468 in 2000-01 to 6,767 in 2010-11 and the annual growth rate is 2.13% during the decade. Number of secondary schools also increased rapidly from 518 to 1,596 during the decade, the annual growth rate is 11.3%. However, the number of enrolled students in primary schools showed a decrease by 20,546, from 2,211,738 in 2000-01 to 2,191,192 in 2010-11, the annual growth rate is -0.1% during the decade. On the other hand, the enrolled students in lower secondary school increased rapidly from 233,278 to 560,868 and the annual growth rate is 8.8% during the decade. The students of upper secondary school also increased from 108,213 to 334,734, the growth rate is 11.3% during the decade (*Statistical Yearbook of Cambodia, 2011*). The enrollment of upper secondary school shows the marked rise.

The expansion of basic education has resulted in a substantial rise in literacy level of the population of Cambodia during 2008-13 as shown in Table 3.1. The general literacy rate, the percentage of total population aged 7 and over in literate population, rose during 2008-13, particularly the female literacy rate has shown progress. The difference of the general literacy rate between males and females has reduced slightly from 10.9% point in 2008 to 10.3% point in 2013. Adult literacy rate aged 15 and over has also shown considerable improvement, though the gender gap is not still small (Figure 3.1).

Table 3.1 General and Adult Literacy Rates by Sex in Cambodia						
Year	General Literacy Rate (%)			Adult Literacy Rate (%)		
	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Both Sexes	Males	Females
1980	-	-	-	-	74	23
1995	-	-	-	-	80	57
1998	62.8	71.0	55.4	67.3	79.5	57.0
2004	74.4	82.1	67.4	73.6	84.7	64.1
2008	78.4	84.0	73.1	77.6	85.1	70.9
2013	79.8	85.1	74.8	79.7	86.4	73.6

Note: 1. Percentage in literate persons calculated after excluding literacy not reported.
2. General literacy rate is the percentage of literate population aged 7 and over to total population aged 7 and over.
3. Adult literacy rate is the percentage of literate population aged 15 and over to total population aged 15 and over.

Source: 1. *Literacy and Education, General Population Census of Cambodia 1998, Analysis of Census Results, Report 7.*
2. *Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey, 2004.*
3. *Literacy and Educational Attainment, General Population Census of Cambodia 2008, Analysis of Census Results, Report 7*



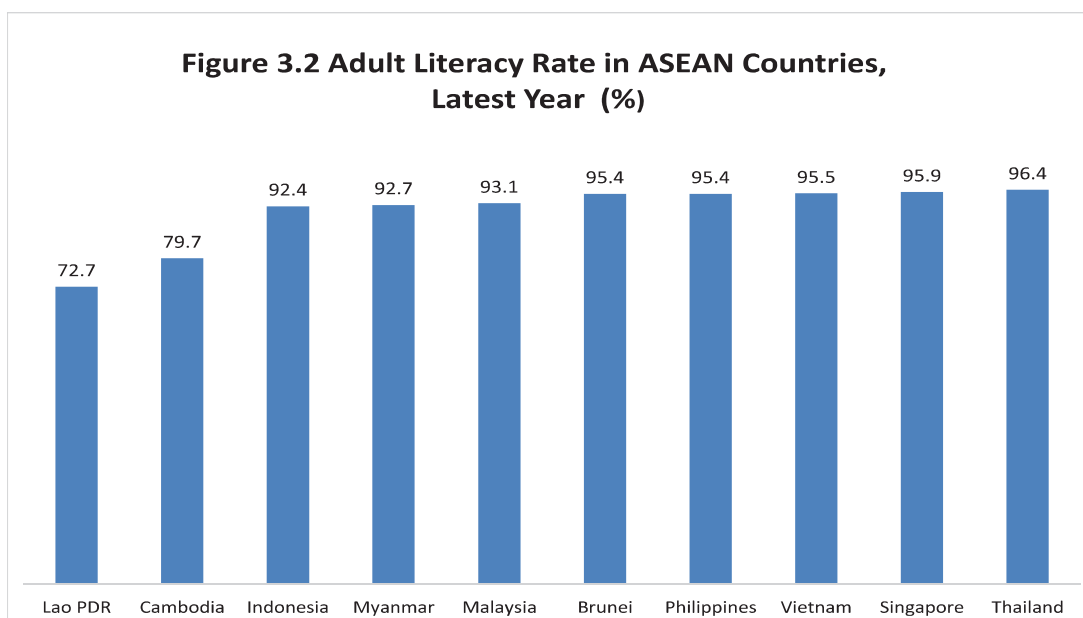
3.2 Comparison in Literacy among ASEAN Countries

Table 3.2 and Figure 3.2 indicate the level of adult literacy in ASEAN countries (Association of South-East Asian Nations). Cambodia has the second lowest adult literacy rates among ASEAN countries, next to Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

Country	Year	Both Sexes	Males	Females
Cambodia	2013	79.7	86.4	73.6
Brunei	2011	95.4	97.0	93.9
Indonesia	2010	92.4	94.8	90.0
Lao PDR	2005	72.7	82.5	63.2
Malaysia	2010	93.1	95.4	90.7
Myanmar	2011	92.7	95.1	90.4
Singapore	2010	95.9	98.0	93.8
Philippines	2008	95.4	95.0	95.8
Thailand	2010	96.4	96.4	96.4
Vietnam	2009	95.5	96.4	94.6

Note: Data for adult literacy is taken from UNESCO statistics, except Cambodia and Lao-PDR.

Source: 1. UNESCO Institute for Statistics: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/>
 2. Cambodia Inter-Censal population Survey, 2013.
 3. Results from the Population Census 2005, Lao PDR.
 4. 2010 Population Census, Indonesia.
 5. Census of Population 2010, Singapore.
 6. The 2010 Population and Housing Census, Thailand.
 7. Vietnam population and housing census 2009.



The gender gap of the literacy in Cambodia is also the second greatest among ASEAN countries. It is taken notice of the adult literacy for women is higher than that for men in the Philippines.

3.3 Literacy by Urban and Rural Areas

3.3.1 Main Languages in Literacy by Urban and Rural Areas

Table 3.3 gives the distribution of the literate population by main languages and by urban and rural area. Those who are literate in Khmer language only, account for 88.3% of total literate population, 71.3% in urban and 93.9% in rural literate population. Those who are literate not only in Khmer but also in English account for 8.0% of total literate population. Urban dwellers have substantially higher percentage than rural dwellers in the literate population in Khmer and English: 21.7% versus 3.5%.

Urban/ Rural	Sex	Total Literate Population Aged 7 and over in any Language	Literate Population Aged 7 and over by Language			
			Khmer Language Only	Khmer and English	Khmer and Other Languages except English	Any Language Other than Khmer
Total	Both Sexes	10,173,741	8,985,346	814,304	295,896	78,195
	Males	5,214,216	4,533,730	482,397	162,751	35,338
	Females	4,959,525	4,451,616	331,907	133,145	42,857
Urban	Both Sexes	2,517,009	1,794,078	546,083	144,706	32,141
	Males	1,260,678	846,967	326,427	71,170	16,115
	Females	1,256,331	947,111	219,656	73,537	16,027
Rural	Both Sexes	7,656,732	7,191,268	268,221	151,189	46,053
	Males	3,953,538	3,686,764	155,969	91,582	19,223
	Females	3,703,194	3,504,504	112,252	59,608	26,830
Total	Both Sexes	100.0	88.3	8.0	2.9	0.8
	Males	100.0	86.9	9.3	3.1	0.7
	Females	100.0	89.8	6.7	2.7	0.9
Urban	Both Sexes	100.0	71.3	21.7	5.7	1.3
	Males	100.0	67.2	25.9	5.6	1.3
	Females	100.0	75.4	17.5	5.9	1.3
Rural	Both Sexes	100.0	93.9	3.5	2.0	0.6
	Males	100.0	93.3	3.9	2.3	0.5
	Females	100.0	94.6	3.0	1.6	0.7
Sex Ratio						
	Total	105	102	145	122	82
	Urban	100	89	149	97	101
	Rural	107	105	139	154	72

Note: Sex ratio is males per 100 females.

Gender differentials in literate population by language are also clear. The sex ratio of literate population in Khmer and English is 145, as compared to that of literate population in Khmer language only (102). This means that more males than females can read and write both Khmer and English.

3.3.2 Literacy by Sex and Urban / Rural Areas

Table 3.4 provides the literate status between urban and rural area by sex. General literacy rate has increased 75.3% to 76.9% in rural area during for 2008-2013, however decreased slightly from 90.2% to 90.1% in urban area for 2008-2013. The literacy in urban area is higher than that in rural area by about 13% point in 2013 as well as in 2008. The literacy rate of females in rural areas has increased more than the counterparts during 2008-2013. However, a gender gap in the literacy status still exists both for urban and rural areas. The literacy rate of rural women is 71.4%, lower than that for rural men (82.8%) and that for urban women (87.0%). The result may reflect poor condition of educational facilities and gender system in rural area.

The sex differentials by literacy are also found by sex ratios of literate population as well as that of illiterate population (Table 3.4). The sex ratios of literate population in 2013 are 100 in urban areas and 107 in rural areas. On the other hand sex ratios of illiterate population in 2013 are 47 and 56, in urban and rural areas, respectively. This means that more males than females for literate population in rural areas, and less males than females for illiterate population both for urban and rural areas are observed.

Table 3.4 Population Aged 7 and over by Literacy Status in any Language and Sex: Urban/Rural, 2008, 2013

Residence Sex	2008					2013					Change in Literacy during 2008-2013
	Population Aged 7 and over	Literate Population Aged 7and over in any Languages	Illiterate Population Aged 7 and over	Literacy Not Reported	Percentage Literate in any Language	Population Aged 7 and over	Literate Population Aged 7and over in any Languages	Illiterate Population Aged 7 and over	Literacy Not Reported	Percentage Literate in any Language	
Total											
Both Sexes	11,435,116	8,959,383	2,475,563	170	78.4	12,753,622	10,173,741	2,579,881	0	79.8	1.4
Males	5,512,476	4,629,702	882,686	88	84.0	6,125,512	5,214,216	911,296	0	85.1	1.1
Females	5,922,640	4,329,681	1,592,877	82	73.1	6,628,109	4,959,525	1,668,585	0	74.8	1.7
Urban											
Both Sexes	2,325,209	2,096,641	228,557	11	90.2	2,792,319	2,517,009	275,310	0	90.1	0.0
Males	1,107,608	1,035,208	72,394	6	93.5	1,348,602	1,260,678	87,924	0	93.5	0.0
Females	1,217,601	1,061,433	156,163	5	87.2	1,443,717	1,256,331	187,386	0	87.0	-0.2
Rural											
Both Sexes	9,109,907	6,862,742	2,247,006	159	75.3	9,961,302	7,656,732	2,304,571	0	76.9	1.5
Males	4,404,868	3,594,494	810,292	82	81.6	4,776,910	3,953,538	823,372	0	82.8	1.2
Females	4,705,039	3,268,248	1,436,714	77	69.5	5,184,392	3,703,194	1,481,199	0	71.4	2.0
Sex Ratio											
Cambodia	93	107	55	107	-	92	105	55	-	-	-
Urban	91	98	46	120	-	93	100	47	-	-	-
Rural	94	110	56	106	-	92	107	56	-	-	-

Note: 1. Percentage in literate persons calculated after excluding literacy not reported.

Adult literacy rates aged 15 and over have shown an increase from 74.0% to 76.5% in rural area, however, decreased slightly from 90.4% to 90.3% in urban area during 2008-2013 (Table 3.5). The adult literacy status for males and females in rural areas improved remarkably, however in urban areas, those for males fell down and those for females remained the same level during the period for 2008-13. The difference of literacy rates between urban and rural areas is not still small (Figure 3.3). The gender difference still exists in 2013 and the gender difference of adult literacy rates in rural area is larger than that in urban areas: 7.4 point in urban area versus 14.4 point in rural area (Table 3.5).

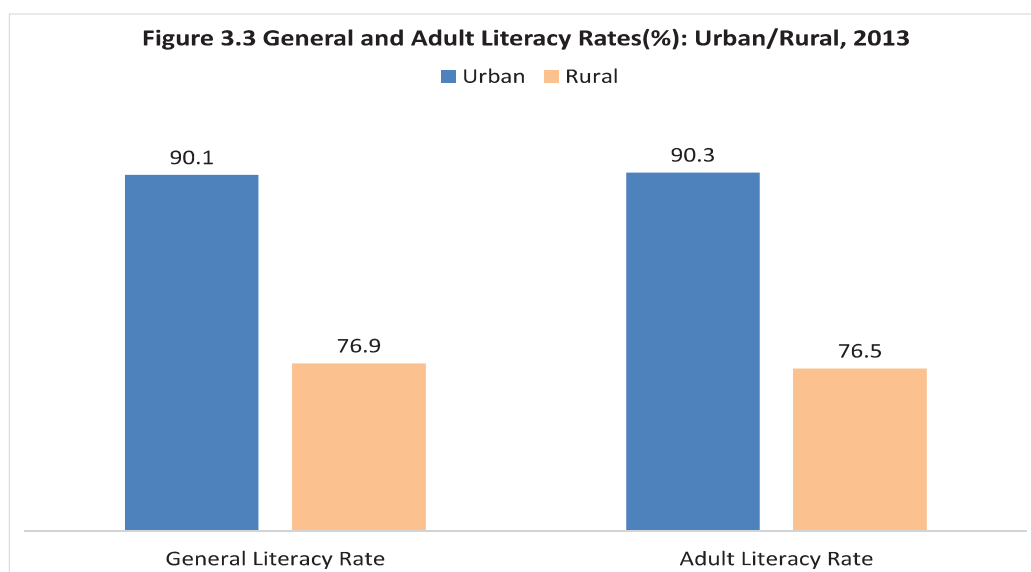


Table 3.5 Population Aged 15 and over by Literacy Status and Sex: Urban/Rural, 2008, 2013

Residence Sex	2008					2013					Change in Literacy during 2008- 2013
	Population Aged 15 and over	Literate Population Aged 15 and over in any Languages	Illiterate Population Aged 15 and over	Literacy Not Reported	Percentage Literate	Population Aged 15 and over	Literate Population Aged 15 and over in any Languages	Illiterate Population Aged 15 and over	Literacy Not Reported	Percentage Literate	
Cambodia											
Both Sexes	8,881,890	6,891,035	1,990,705	150	77.6	10,355,192	8,248,054	2,107,139	0	79.7	2.1
Males	4,201,248	3,574,466	626,702	80	85.1	4,901,331	4,236,343	664,989	0	86.4	1.3
Females	4,680,642	3,316,569	1,364,003	70	70.9	5,453,861	4,011,711	1,442,150	0	73.6	2.7
Urban											
Both Sexes	1,949,676	1,762,852	186,813	11	90.4	2,360,243	2,131,553	228,690	0	90.3	-0.1
Males	915,814	865,304	50,504	6	94.5	1,123,941	1,058,521	65,420	0	94.2	-0.3
Females	1,033,862	897,548	136,309	5	86.8	1,236,302	1,073,032	163,271	0	86.8	0.0
Rural											
Both Sexes	6,932,214	5,128,183	1,803,892	139	74.0	7,994,949	6,116,500	1,878,448	0	76.5	2.5
Males	3,285,434	2,709,162	576,198	74	82.5	3,777,390	3,177,821	599,569	0	84.1	1.7
Females	3,646,780	2,419,021	1,227,694	65	66.3	4,217,558	2,938,679	1,278,879	0	69.7	3.3
Sex Ratio											
Cambodia	90	108	46	114	-	90	106	46	-	-	-
Urban	89	96	37	120	-	91	99	40	-	-	-
Rural	90	112	47	114	-	90	108	47	-	-	-

Note: Same as Table 3.4.