

# Improving physical accessibility in schools in Cambodia



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# Academic research roots

## MY ROLE

Hired as international consultant by UNICEF Cambodia  
to develop a policy for educational services for  
children with disabilities





# Academic research roots

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

With colleagues from Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports (MOEYS), we conducted a situation analysis across eight provinces over three months.





# Academic research roots

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

Involved meeting and interviewing stakeholders, individually or in FGDs, including provincial and district education officials, senior ministry officials in MOEYS, Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSVY), Health (MOH), I/NGOs, regional and provincial teacher training colleges, Disability Action Council.



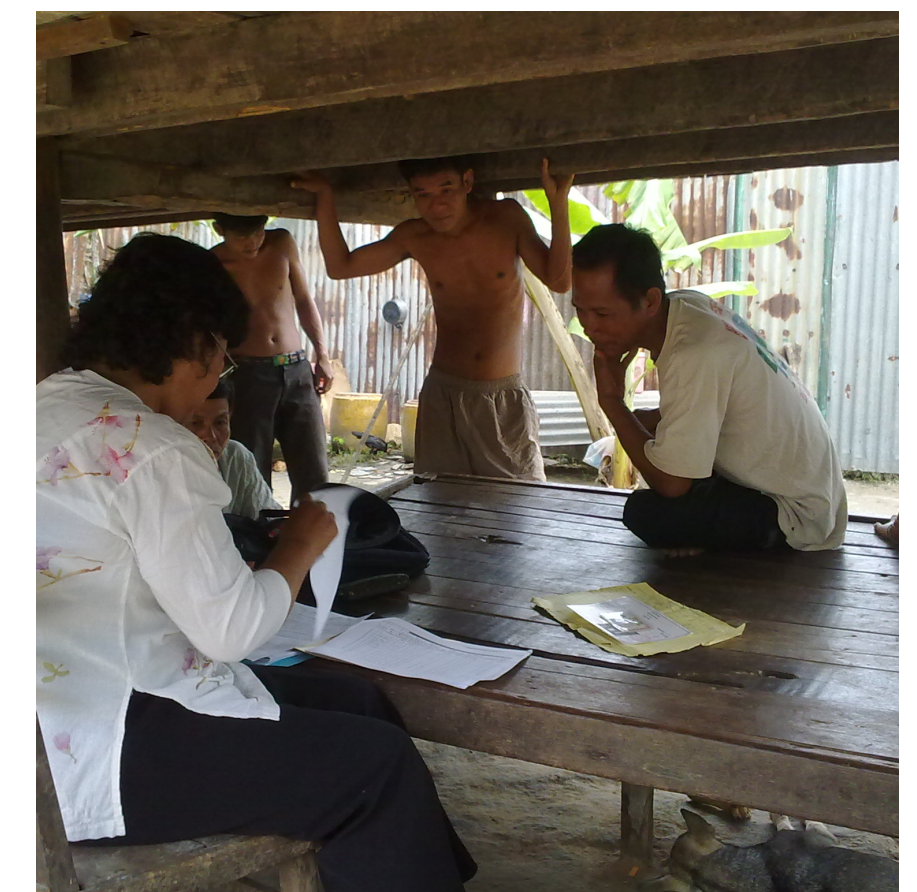


# Academic research roots

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

Interviews with school directors, parents of CWD, regular education teachers in inclusive schools run by NGOs, special education teachers in special schools run by NGOs, CWD in and out of school.

Interspersed by four workshops to share and confirm our analysis up to that point





# Academic research roots

## SITUATION ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Up to that point, the primary focus had been on rehabilitation of adult landmine victims through the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSVY).  
Inclusive and special education services were primarily provided by I/NGOs.





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## SITUATION ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Among other outcomes, we evaluated schools for physical accessibility. We found that ramps and toilets needed to be built according to Universal Design standards to comply with UNCRPD regulations on physical access. .





# Academic research roots

## SITUATION ANALYSIS FINDINGS

We saw some good examples of ramps in school buildings and toilets built by INGOs, like Handicap International, and local NGOs, with technical assistance from HI.





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## SITUATION ANALYSIS FINDINGS

In some instances, students could get to their schools in their wheelchairs provided by Handicap International (HI) but needed to be helped by their classmates into their classrooms because the school did not have a ramp.



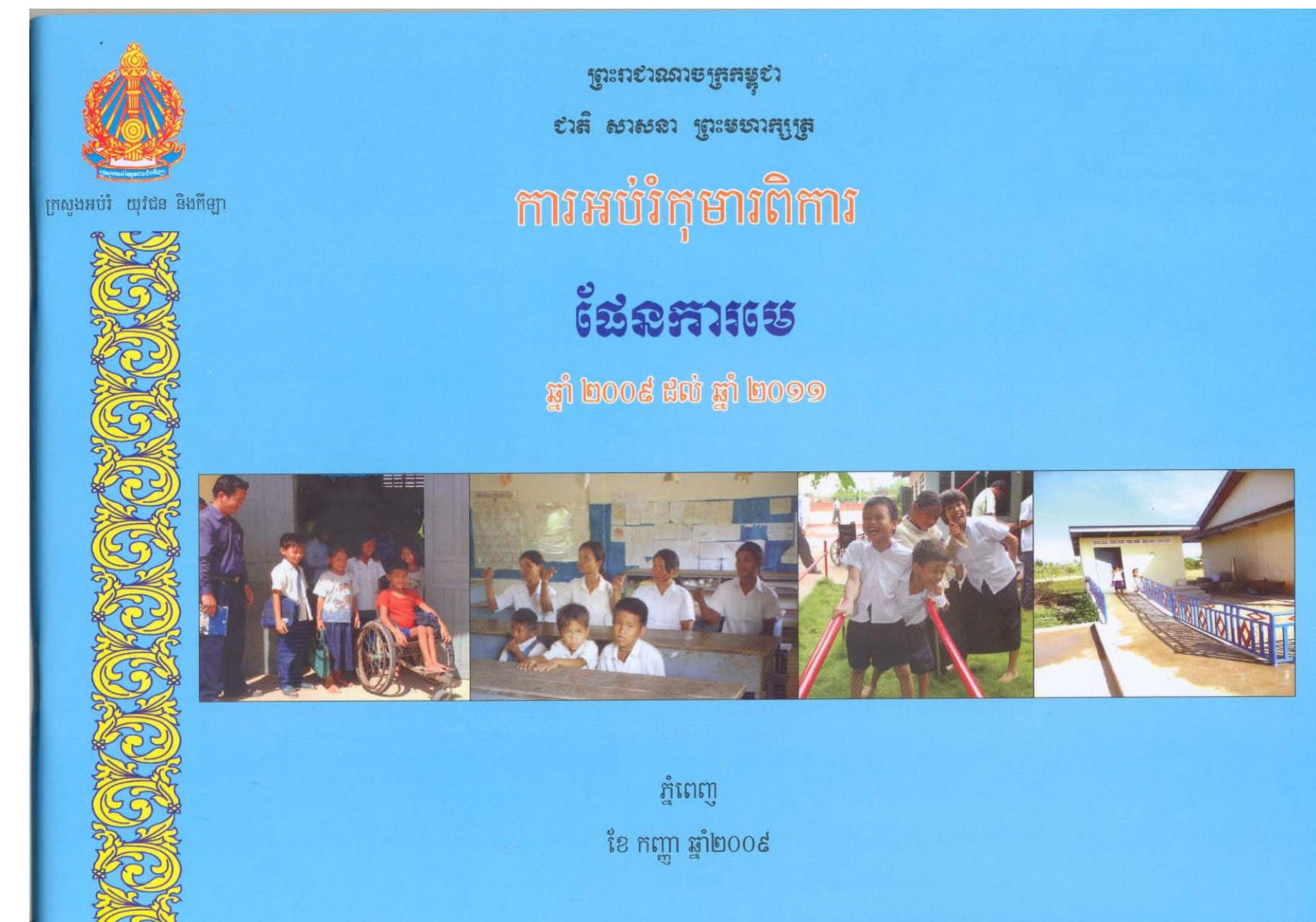
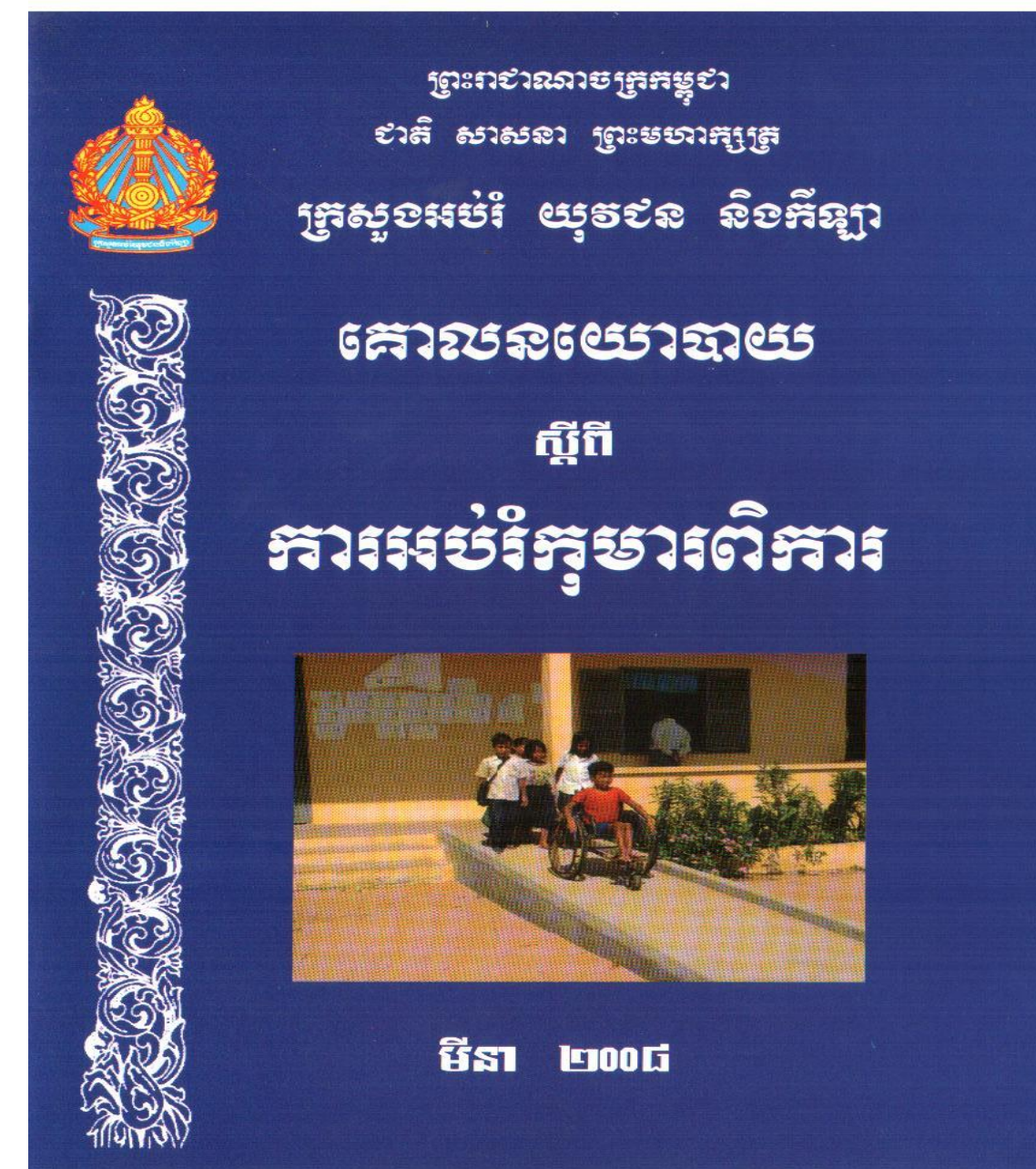


# Academic research roots

## SITUATION ANALYSIS OUTCOMES

National Policy on Education of Children  
with Disabilities was approved in March,  
2008;

Master Plan approved in September, 2009





# Formation of the partnership

## MOEYS & GPE

In 2006, Cambodia received US\$57 million from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). Funding began in October 2008 and continued until June 2012. One of the priorities was constructing new schools.

I was hired as the international advisor on inclusive education





# Formation of the partnership

MOEYS, GPE & HI

The Ministry teamed up with Handicap International Cambodia. The schools that HI had constructed had ramps built to specification and allowed access for students who used wheelchairs.

HI hired an international consultant, an architect who had helped HI build the ramps in their schools in Cambodia, to conduct a one-day workshop for all the contractors who were leading the GPE school construction project. Contractors were provided with blueprints on wheelchair accessibility features for buildings and toilets.



# Translated product

**PHYSICALLY ACCESSIBLE SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND TOILETS**

**All GPE schools were constructed using these  
specifications for wheelchair accessibility in the  
school buildings and toilets**





# Platform for dissemination

The blueprints and technical specifications  
were made available to all contractors at the  
time and the international consultant for the  
school construction project to ensure that  
subsequently hired contractors would receive  
this information as well.



# Lessons

1. Sometimes change can be simple to effect.
2. Situation analysis research must result in recommendations for practical and feasible suggestions, so that government has a clear direction to implement change.
3. In hindsight, we should have persuaded the Ministry to regulate building standards for physical accessibility, so that all school buildings built subsequently by NGOs, private agencies, etc would have had to comply with these standards as well.



# Current status of partner's use

School buildings built by the government continue  
to comply with standards of accessibility

