



WDE Commentary No. 14

“Women in the Field of Engineering”

WDE Policy Dialogue

WOMEN'S
DIGITAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

វគ្គទី១៤

“ស្ត្រីក្នុងមុខជំនាញវិស្វកម្ម”

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ពន្ធុនកិត្តិយស | កញ្ញាបណ្ឌិត **ន្ទំ ស៊ីរីត្ថ**
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The 14th episode of the WDE Policy Dialogue entitled “Women in the field in Engineering” was hosted by **Ms Chea Sreymach** on 12th May 2022. She was joined by our distinguished speaker, **Ms Tum Sereyroith**, a Postdoctoral researcher at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology in Japan and a PhD student in Engineering at Hokkaido University. This episode discussed women’s roles in engineering and the challenges facing women in this field.

To begin with, Ms Sereyroith defined an engineering major as the study of the experiment of various theories from scientific research to understand its application. She further explained that many types of engineering exist in almost every field, from banking to agriculture to the environmental sector.

Moreover, the speaker explained that engineering majors are crucial to Cambodia’s economy. First, Cambodia lacks human resources in this field, and the country needs to hire foreign specialists. More students pursuing this major will help produce more domestic specialists. Also, as Cambodia’s economy heavily depends on the agricultural sector, engineering could help increase productivity by modernising the harvesting method. In addition, the speaker mentioned the importance of women’s role in engineering. As engineering requires a diversity of ideas from both genders to align with the need of users, women play a vital part in understanding female users’ needs when designing any infrastructure. Moreover, more than half of Cambodians are female, so the country needs more female engineers to participate in designing and building infrastructure in the country.

Furthermore, Ms Sereyroith mentioned the challenges in pursuing the study of engineering. Pressure from family is the first barrier which could discourage students from choosing engineering as a major. Aside, social pressure and mindset also discourage more women from pursuing a career in this field. There is also discrimination against female engineers as engineering requires some physical work that is more suitable for male workers. Also, most workplaces in Cambodia still have not adopted an environment that aligns with the needs of female staff.

The speaker also explained that as more women entered the engineering field, it changed students’ mindset in choosing this major. She said that changing how people think of this major is important because it helps push more women to participate in this field. Family and society are the most important actors in encouraging more women to pursue their careers in engineering. The government also plays an important role in promoting females in engineering by providing scholarships, competition, and policies that favour women. Government can also help through advertising and educating directly to female students about engineering majors, especially citizens who live in the countryside or remote areas.

In conclusion, Ms Sereyroith recommended that every student focus on what they are pursuing and think of what they can achieve other than limit their imagination because of what other people may think. She also suggested that every student should also think of the importance of digital technology in today’s society and try to explore any opportunities that come their way.