Report on Content ICT policy

Friday, May 15, 2009

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1   Introduction

ICT area in Cambodia is still in the starting point. See the important role of Information Communication Technology in poverty reduction, first draft of ICT policy has been written in 2003 by Cambodian Government.

In 2004, under the leadership of:
- Chairman, Prime Minister, Samdech Akkeak Moha Sena Pakdey Decho Hun Sen
- Deputy Chairman, Deputy Prime Minister, H. E. Sok An
- Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Phu Leewood

6 departments have been created to fulfill the requirement suggested by the ICT policy draft:
1. Policy and Strategy Coordinator
2. Infrastructure
3. Human Capacity
4. Policy Environment
5. Content & Application
6. Enterprise Development.

To lead these departments, 6 Deputy Secretaries General are recruited. I am the one who is in charge of the Content and Application department.

2   ICT policy development

Since the creation of these departments, the draft of ICT policy has been discussed during years. It has been submitted several time to the Council of Ministers who assigned this request to the "Economy Social Culture Observation Unit" called OBSES to review this ICT policy.

I have a very good knowledge on this policy as I am member of this unit in addition to my another job in National Ict Development Authority,

The first draft promoted 100% the open source software as the only one type of software that Cambodian Government allows. Very skeptical, I asked for equal chance for open source and proprietary software to co-exist together. The reasons are:
- Cambodia does not have sufficient skillful programmers to support alone any errors
- Cambodia has free market policy
- 99% of computers are equipped with MS Windows
- Freedom for any organization to choose the system they want.

Also, there are several issues with other ministries about overlapping areas between NIDA, Ministry of Post and TeleCommunication and Ministry of Information. At this moment, the infrastructure and the domain name registration is under control of the Ministry of Post and TeleCommunication.

6 years have already passed, the ITC policy is still not adopted by the Government.

3 Policy on Content

3.1 Unicode adoption

Khmer Unicode is promoted to be the unique standard in Cambodia. The project of E-Document of Pan Localization uses this standard to produce its contents.

Several organizations are still utilizing the former Khmer Font Limon with American code. The reason is quite simple: people get familiar with it since 20 years; they cannot change their habit right away.

Smart typing, line breaker and spelling check are excellent and available tools to get more and more adhesion of Cambodian people for Khmer Unicode.

Government organizes, encourages all seminars, trainings on Khmer Unicode organized by Pan Localization, Open Source, NIDA.

3.2 Content development

NIDA E-Document of Pan Localization is an encouragement of the Government on promoting relevant content on Website that allows documents in Khmer language to be scattered everywhere. By reassembles all content developers like journalist, writer, author, all kind of information will be available for all every time and everywhere.

This project has a library feature that stored all data, new or old inside the database that allows people to get old data back by using search box in Khmer Unicode.

Rural area is the main purpose of our project. The obstacle is big. Promoting content is this area is still infeasible because lack of Internet infrastructure, high cost of Internet access and more, lack of electricity. We planned to distribute books to the farmers who are interested in our documents.

3.3 Uniformity

Different texts collected from our content partners are generally in the former font called Limon. Before published these texts, we uniform all documents to Unicode Standard. Conversion tool of Pan Localization is very useful to fulfill this task.

Uniformity of Khmer standard is shown as model to the public in agreement with the Government policy.

3.4 Policy extract

This is the extract of the draft of policy on content

4.1
Government will actively promote the development of relevant Cambodian content on all ICT systems.
4.2
In pursuant to government policy, Government will support and encourage the development and use of relevant ICT application systems.
4.3
Government supports the e-Government system and will mobilize resources for its expansion to all provinces in the country.
4.4
Government will ensure that all work procedures within and among state agencies benefit from new ICT systems and applications in place.
4.5
Government will develop suitable policy directives to encourage each agency to develop and promote quality content on ICT systems.
4.6
Government will encourage communication between government agencies and government servants to be conducted via e-mails and electronic memo systems etc.
4.7
Government will support and encourage government agencies to develop respective networked application systems. NiDA shall oversee the standardization of these application systems in order to integrate within the umbrella of the e-Government system already in place.
4.8
Government will continuously monitor and ensure that official information and content about the country are homogenous and correct.
4.9
Government should develop, support and adopt a standard UNICODE based Khmer characters system to be adopted in all ICT applications and systems.
4.10
Government is committed to developing the capacities of rural areas to develop and manage content on ICT systems.
4.11

Government will establish appropriate legal instruments to check and control indecent use of ICT such as spams, viruses, web squatting, fraud, copy right violation, denial of service, unauthorized entry, privacy infringements, misleading media content, and inappropriate broadcasting.

4.12

Government will streamline a standard reporting system for all public service activities.