

The Cambodia Relay Talk was successfully held!

On Thursday, January 22, 2026, the Hiroshima University Cambodia Center hosted an online Cambodia Relay Talk. Hiroshima University has been accepting international students from Cambodia since the 1990s. This Relay Talk was held with the aim of expanding the network centered on Hiroshima University, transcending academic fields and generations of faculty and students. With the cooperation of the Center's affiliated faculty and the International Affairs Office, current students were introduced alongside Hiroshima University alumni. A total of 34 participants, including faculty members involved with Cambodia within the university, attended. The session opened with remarks from Mr. Bunlay (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Deputy Director General of Higher Education), President of the Hiroshima University Cambodia Alumni Association. He emphasized that this gathering of alumni and current students provided an excellent opportunity to reconsider what is needed for Cambodia's national development (Photos 1, 2). The subsequent relay talk featured undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled at the university, who gave presentations of approximately 10 minutes each, transcending departmental boundaries.

Presentations focused not on research debates but on promoting interdisciplinary and intergenerational dialogue. Participants were asked to cover four topics: their motivation for enrolling at Hiroshima University, their current research theme, the most fulfilling moment in their research life, and their career aspirations after graduation/degree completion. Presentations were given by current students and alumni across a total of five fields.



Photo 1 (Publicity Poster)



Photo 2 (Mr. Bunlay)

The first presenter, Mr. Sar Sophea (Photo 3), enrolled in the Master's Program of the International Education Development Program at the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, shared that her motivation to study at Hiroshima University stemmed from her involvement with the Cambodian Ministry of Education and the presence of colleagues who had studied at Hiroshima University. Regarding her research activities at the university, she found the variety of courses available in international education particularly appealing. During the course, she found fulfillment in sharing with participants the joy of pursuing knowledge and how practical application in her home country, through research activities, leads to new learning.



Photo 3

The second presenter, Ms. Ouk Samboramey (Photo 4), enrolled in the Master's program of the Public Health Program at the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, shared that her motivation for studying abroad stemmed from her desire to pursue social insurance and health, particularly non-communicable diseases, after obtaining a computer science degree in her home country and working at the National Social Security Fund under Cambodia's Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training. This led her decision to pursue graduate studies. She came to Japan as a student under the JDS (The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship) scholarship program. After graduation, she plans to return to Cambodia and continue her professional work within the National Social Security System (NSSS). She also aims to utilize the knowledge and evidence-based insights gained in Japan to support the development and strengthening of Cambodia's health system.

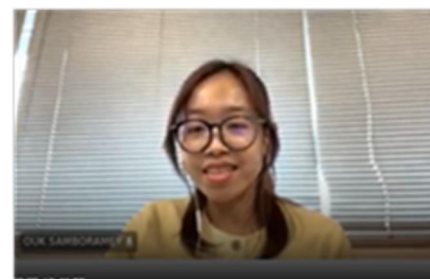


Photo 4

The third presenter, Mr SIM SOKCHAMROEUN (Photo 5), enrolled in the Master's Program of the Integrated Science and Engineering Program at the Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering, shared that he chose Hiroshima University for its advanced interdisciplinary foundation in public health and engineering. He was drawn to the opportunity to delve deeper into multifaceted research areas like epidemiology and social security system analysis within his laboratory, which encompasses not only public health but also environmental engineering. Currently, he is focusing on healthcare



Photo 5

disparities in non-communicable diseases (NCDs). NCDs include cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases, hypertension, diabetes, and others. His research aims to address disparities and inequalities in public access to healthcare. It focuses not only on providing out-of-pocket payments for quality medical care but also on understanding and evaluating the actual experiences of citizens in accessing healthcare.

The fourth presenter, Mr. Len Leang E (Photo 6), enrolled in the Master's program of the Integrated Health Sciences Program at the Graduate School of Medical Sciences, shared that her motivation to enroll stemmed from being recommended by the Ministry of Health to join the university program while working at a hospital. His study abroad was made possible through a JICA scholarship for government officials working domestically. As a nurse working in a hospital, he wanted to learn practical skills applicable in her home country, such as hospital and clinical nursing management.



Photo 6

I believe graduate research activities here differ from education in Cambodia in their emphasis on advanced research, management, administration, and innovation. Japan has introduced international guidelines for nursing care and nursing management adapted to the Japanese context, and it is essential to learn how these guidelines are implemented in practice. The Japanese guidelines used at Hiroshima University Hospital are highly excellent and I believe they would be beneficial for my country as well. After returning home, my research will focus on nurse competency development, so I plan to apply what I learned in Hiroshima back in my country.

The fifth presenters were Ms. Heanh Sochannyda (Photo 7) and Ms. Kun Ratanaklina (Photo 8), third-year dental students enrolled in the International Dental Course (IDC Program) at the Faculty of Dentistry. Both are entering their second year living in Japan and plan to stay for two more years. They had several motivations for choosing Hiroshima University. They had a strong interest in Japanese culture and lifestyle, and having often heard that Japan is clean and safe, they longed to come here. After living here for two years, they feel Japan truly is a safe country and the food is exceptionally delicious. Furthermore, they have experienced firsthand the high standard of

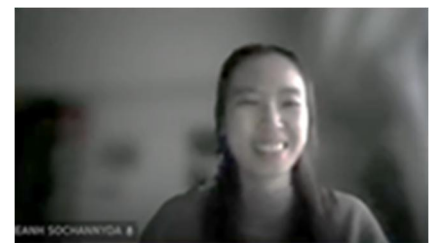


Photo 7

Japan's education system. Another motivation was a desire to challenge themselves through studying abroad. They chose Hiroshima University because, as scholarship students from their alma mater, Health Science University, they were able to participate in Hiroshima University's exchange program. The special clinical observation class, where they could observe the workflow in Japanese clinics and hospitals, was also highly beneficial. After completing the program, I plan to return to Cambodia, finish my remaining two years at the dental university, obtain my dental degree (DDS), and focus on improving my clinical skills and accumulating practical experience. While I am still exploring my career path, my long-term goals include opening my own dental practice or working in the field of dental education.

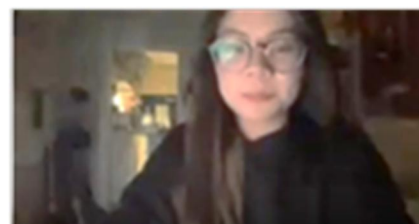


Photo 8

The final presenters were two graduates who gave a joint presentation. Mr. Chanphirun Sam (Photo 9), Deputy Director at Phnom Penh Teacher Education College (PTEC), is an IDEC graduate who obtained a Master's degree in Education (majoring in Educational Administration) from Hiroshima University in 2010. He then obtained a doctorate in the Netherlands and worked as an international researcher at Griffith University in Australia for about



Photo 9

two years before returning to Cambodia. Currently, PTEC and CMAC, where Mr. Asada (described later) works, are collaborating to provide landmine removal programs. Through this collaboration between CMAC and JICA, we hope to support the capacity development of CMAC instructors so that students can effectively acquire important landmine-related skills and expertise. After graduating from Hiroshima University and obtaining my doctorate in Europe, I had many opportunities to contribute to the development of education in my home country. I hope that after graduation, you will consider what you can do to support your home country.

Another graduate is Mr. Yoshinori Asada (Photo 10), who works at the Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC). I chose IDEC at Hiroshima University because I believed that through environmental economics, I could learn how to contribute to development issues while also addressing environmental problems.



Photo10

Simultaneously, IDEC offered courses primarily in English, not just Japanese, and I wanted to take advantage of this opportunity. After graduation, I spent seven or eight years in Laos, gaining practical experience applying my knowledge and skills by supporting development projects backed by the Japanese government. This involved working with the Japanese Embassy at times and with JICA's Laos office at others. My current project focuses on enhancing CMAC's international capacity, specifically its ability to provide international cooperation services and foster collaboration. This has elevated CMAC to a higher level, enabling it to share knowledge and experience with neighboring countries like Laos and Vietnam, and more recently, Ukraine. My primary role within this is to promote collaboration between CMAC and Ukraine. It is to facilitate cooperation between CMAC and its stakeholders as much as possible. Currently, we are exploring potential collaborations with numerous organizations, private companies, and even other JICA projects.

Both graduates and current student participants shared their most memorable moments and experiences at Hiroshima University:

They enjoyed gathering with multinational students, sometimes sharing drinks and conversation to build bonds with research peers, and expanding their academic networks through seminars and events. Additionally, they noted improvements in their academic writing and presentation skills, research abilities, and data analysis capabilities. They also gained a clearer understanding of how their current research can support real-world policy decisions.

Presentations also highlighted differences from life in Cambodia, such as finding Japanese language more challenging than expected and the difficulty of easily accessing groceries and ingredients locally, unlike in Cambodia. Some students also mentioned feeling the difference in seasons (winter being very cold is tough) and missing Cambodia's warm weather.

After the presentations by the 8 students and graduates, Dr. Sreypouv Ouch (Photo 11), a graduate of our university and currently working in the Primary Education Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, provided comments.

Studying abroad is extremely beneficial for students from Cambodia. I was particularly pleased to hear her mention that interacting with Japanese students and other international students contributes to personal growth. I felt this was a valuable opportunity for mutual learning across all participating fields. One thing I wish to emphasize is this: when you complete your studies in Japan and return home, what perspectives will you bring back to Cambodia as specialists? It is crucial to consider together not only technical skills but also how to apply the perspectives gained in Japan to benefit Cambodia. This forms the foundation of our cooperation. Let us walk together toward future educational development.

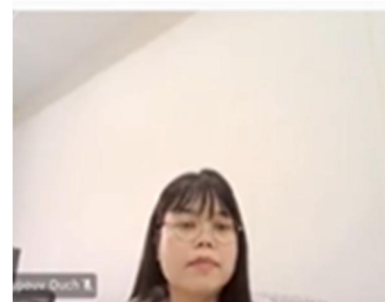


Photo 11

Finally, Professor Kinya Shimizu (Photo 12) expressed his renewed surprise and deepened understanding that Hiroshima University accepts many students from Cambodia across various fields. He emphasized the importance of utilizing this opportunity and human network for Cambodia's future, highlighting how Hiroshima University covers a broad range of fields to foster human security for the Cambodian people. To current students, graduates, and those who will enroll in the future, please stay healthy and watch over Cambodia's development. With these closing words, the session concluded.



Photo 12

Reference Website

Cambodian Journal of Educational Development: <https://cjed.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/>

CMAC Cambodia Mine Action Centre (JICA website):

https://www.jica.go.jp/Resource/project/cambodia/0701732/outline/ku57pq0000231j8w-att/cmac_01.pdf

Phnom Penh Teacher Education College: <https://www.ptec.edu.kh/>