

ERIA Research Project Report 2024, No. 7a

Research on Branding Strategy in Cambodia: Phase 1

By

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List of Abbreviations

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ARISE+	ASEAN Regional Integration Support by the European Union
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DEBC	Digital Economy and Business Committee
DIP	Department of Industrial Property
DIPR	Department of Intellectual Property Rights
DX	digital transformation
EU	European Union
FinTech	financial technology
GI	geographical indication
IP	intellectual property
KPPA	Kampot Pepper Promotion Association
KYC	know your customer
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MISTI	Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation
MOC	Ministry of Commerce
NBC	National Bank of Cambodia
PGI	protected geographical indication
R&D	research and development
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
TSC	Techo Startup Center
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Background and Objectives

Thanks to the global distribution and diversification of consumer tastes, goods and services have been flooding the market in Cambodia. The overall consumer trend is leaning towards more modern lifestyles, so consumers are inclined to utilise branded products and services more as their economic status keeps improving. Cambodia's significant youthful population – as well as high smartphone penetration rate – has spurred an agile consumer market, with a large digital economy (Startup Kingdom, 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the role of digital technology in maximising productivity, promoting economic diversification, and creating jobs. During and after the pandemic, technology has drastically altered consumer behaviours, transformed business models, created unprecedented markets, and changed the way that people live through emerging tech businesses – including e-commerce and consumer-to-consumer businesses. Financial technology (FinTech) has also seen significant development through a rapid surge of mobile connections, relatively higher percentages of mobile money accounts, more online purchases, and changing attitudes towards digital payments (NBC, 2021a).

The country thus necessitates branding strategies that utilise intellectual property (IP) – such as trademarks, geographical indications (GIs), and industrial design-related regulations – to distinguish excellent products and services and to connect these to investment. Understanding the current status and issues of branding strategies in Cambodia and disseminating successful examples of branding will contribute to the country's future economic growth in anticipation of its further digital transformation (DX).

This project was undertaken to (i) raise awareness of branding in Cambodia as well as to promote local industries through the utilisation of IP in anticipation of further DX; and (ii) contribute to the promotion of branding for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a whole by disseminating the knowledge gained. It will also look at the current state of DX in Cambodia and how it has contributed to economic development through branding.

2. Outline of the Project

This project first examines the current IP system for branding in Cambodia through a survey of laws on trademarks, industrial design, and GI, including through current trends of registration, statistical data, and other published materials. If sufficient data were

unavailable, information was obtained through inquiries to the Department of Intellectual Property Rights (DIPR), Ministry of Commerce (MOC) as well as the Department of Industrial Property (DIP), Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation (MISTI).

Then, this project defines the concept, significance, benefits, and methods of branding from the literature. It examines agriculture, traditional crafts, and other sectors in Cambodia considered to be successful or potentially successful with respect to branding. Next, DX in Cambodia is examined, noting branding strategies that have occurred. Finally, case studies on the actual utilisation of branding in specific enterprises in Cambodia are examined to provide a more comprehensive understanding of branding strategies there.

Given the wide cross-section of products and services that fall under branding research, the timeline for this work, and fast changes amongst the targeted industries, the scope of the project does not account for all activities – including those related to consumers – with respect to branding.

Chapter 2

Intellectual Property Systems for Branding in Cambodia

1. Trademarks

1.1. Definition

A trademark is a way to distinguish goods or services provided by a specific owner or a third party. In Cambodia, it is defined as a visible sign that distinguishes goods or services amongst enterprises, pursuant to Article 2 of the Law Concerning Marks, Trade Names and Acts of Unfair Competition (i.e. the Trademark Law). Under the law, every good or service is also divided into classes of trademark classification: (i) Classes 1–34 are referred to as marks (i.e. goods), and (ii) Classes 35–45 are known as signal services (i.e. services). Accordingly, Cambodia is a signatory to the NICE Agreement concerning the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks, which states that classification of trademarks under domestic registration should be in accordance with the classification of goods and services in this agreement (Article 9 of Sub-Decree No. 46). The NICE Agreement comprises an alphabetical list of goods and services as created by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).¹

As a trademark is defined as a mark that is tangible and visible, this implies that non-traditional trademarks that are not visible – such as sound and scent trademarks – are not eligible for protection.² Indeed, in Cambodia, motion trademarks are not eligible for protection; yet, non-traditional trademarks that are visible – such as colour combinations, shapes, and holograms – are considered distinctive and are thus eligible for protection .

In Cambodia, a trademark is effective throughout the entire country and can be issued to an owner regardless of citizenship. A trademark is not protected if the owner fails to apply for trademark registration (Article 3 of the Trademark Law).

¹ WIPO, Class 1, Nice Classification, https://www.wipo.int/classifications/nice/nclpub/en/fr/?basic_numbers=show&class_number=1&explanatory_notes=show&lang=en&menulang=en&mode=flat¬ion=&pagination=no&version=20230101

² Note that a symbol that cannot be distinguished from another cannot be recognised as a trademark.



Table 2.1. Examples of Trademarks in Cambodia

Type	Definition	Example
Device	Combination of numbers, letters, and names as well as a logo or label	
Autograph	Signing mark	
Mixtures of hue	A variety of colour combinations that become a particular shape	
Figure	Shape mark that has a pop-up motif on goods	
3D symbol	Represented in a three-dimensional shape	
Hologram	Elements with holographic characteristics	

Source: EUIPO, Hologram Marks, <https://guidelines.euipo.europa.eu/1803468/1787324/trademark-guidelines/9-10-----9-3-10-hologram-marks>

Two more marks can be registered under Cambodia’s trademark system: collective and certification marks. Table 2.2 shows examples.

Table 2.2. Examples of Collective and Certification Marks in Cambodia

Collective	Certification
	

Source: Author.

A collective mark is a visible symbol that distinguishes amongst goods or services or their features; such a registered mark may be used only under the authority of the collective mark owner. A collective mark can be owned by a community or an organisation; its members use it to identify their products by guaranteeing their quality and clarifying their origin. Features of collective marks include (i) general communities are rights holders, (ii) each member of the enterprise has rights to commercialisation, (iii) only members can use the mark, (iv) limits on use depend on internal rule stipulation, and (v) materials depend on the regulation of product use.

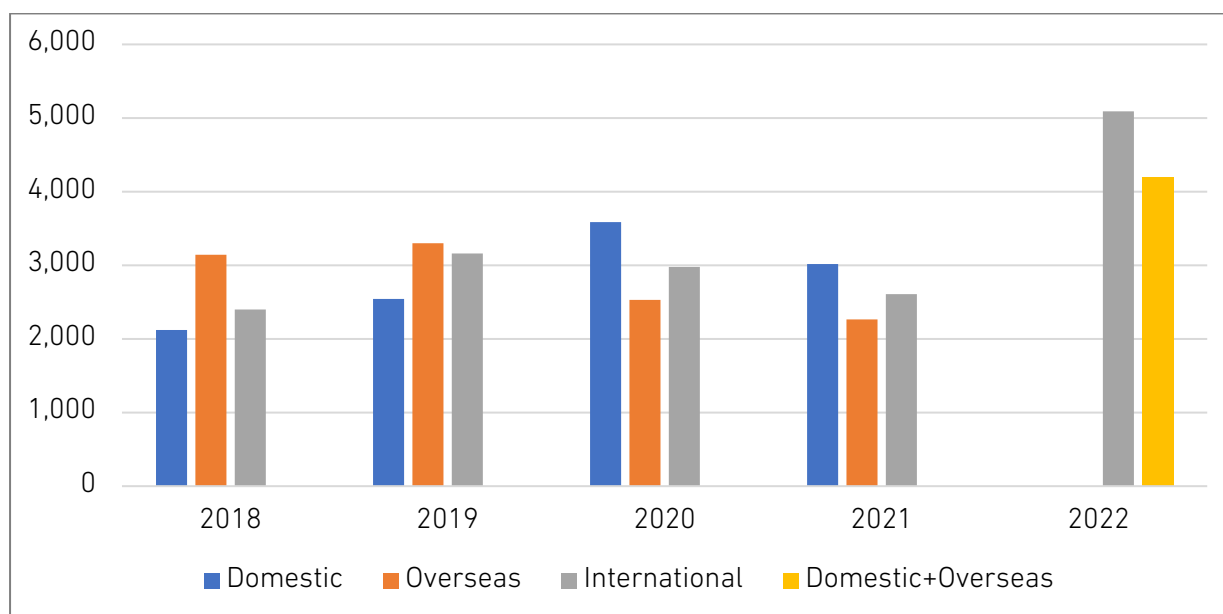
A certification mark is a name, sign, or combination of marks representing that a good or service is used for a certain purpose and/or that the registered owner has been validated regarding the materials, origin, process, manufacture, or supply of the quality. It identifies and ensures the quality level of the good or service (e.g. ISO 9000). Certification marks feature (i) a person or community as the rights holder, (ii) commercialisation not restricted to a community, (iii) a third party’s ability to use mark, (iv) a limited or unlimited product, and (v) materials depending on regulation of their use.

Trademark Applications and Process

The number of trademark applications filed in Cambodia has increased in the last few years; this can be attributed to Cambodia being a signatory to the Madrid Protocol, which enabled international applications in the country (Figure 2.1). After Cambodia joined the protocol in 2015, the number of applications increased by 18% compared to the previous year, and the number of applications has been consecutively increasing since then (MOC, 2016). The applications can be divided into (i) domestic applications through the national system, (ii) overseas applications through the national system, and (iii) applications filed

through the Madrid system (i.e. international) (Table 2.3).

Figure 2.1. Trademark Applications in Cambodia, 2018–2022



Source: Author, and MOC (2021).

Table 2.3. Types of Trademark Applications in Cambodia, 2018–2022

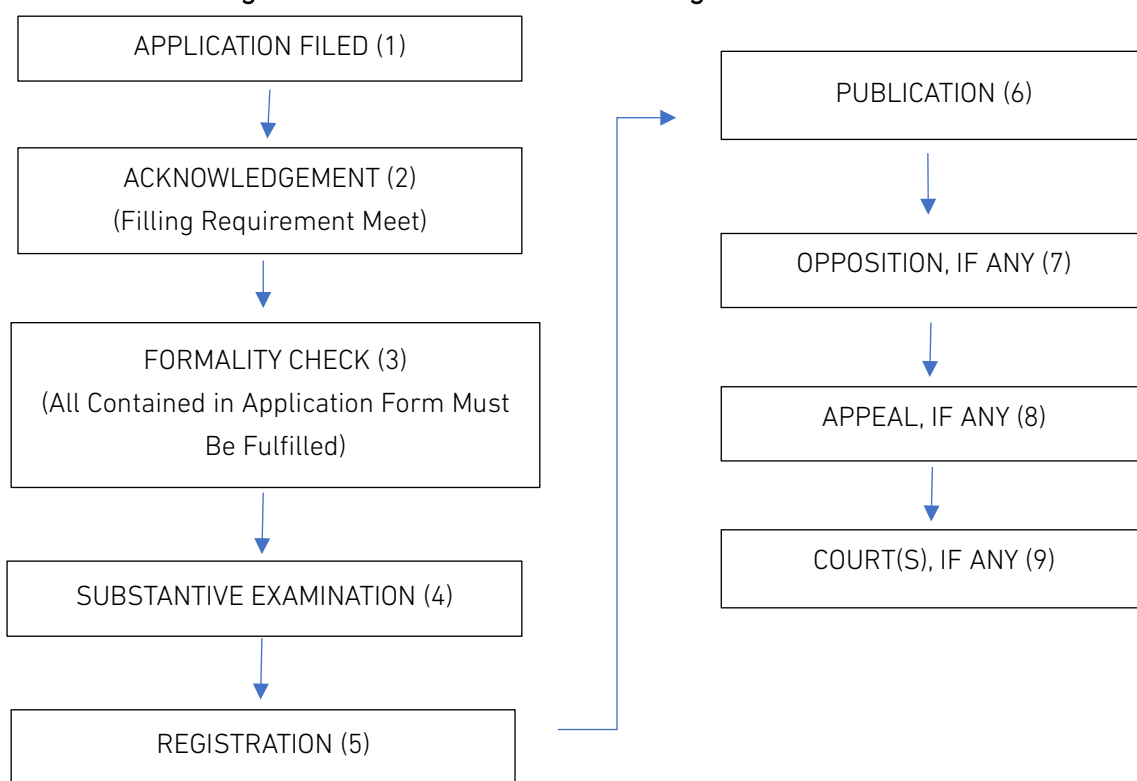
Application Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Domestic applications	2,123	2,545	3,588	3,015	4,196
Overseas applications	3,145	3,300	2,528	2,264	
International applications	2,401	3,159	2,978	2,610	5,092
Total	7,669	9,004	9,094	7,889	9,288

Sources: Author; MOC (2021); Chea (2023).

Due to the impact of the pandemic, the number of domestic applications decreased in 2021. However, except for this dip, there has been a steady figure of around 3,000 applications through the Madrid system over the past 5 years. This indicates the effectiveness of the Madrid system for filing trademark applications compared to conventional methods. The ratio of trademark applications filed show near-equal numbers amongst domestic, overseas, and international applications. For trademark applications filed with MOC, 27,039 were registered from 2018 to 2021, and 6,616 were unregistered, including those pending further examination. The number of domestic applications was 896 fewer than international applications, indicating the effectiveness of

the Madrid system for filing trademark applications compared to conventional methods.

Figure 2.2. Flow of Trademark Registration Process



Source: MOC (2023).

Both individuals and legal entities can file trademark applications. Documents purporting to be signed on behalf of a legal partnership must contain the full names of all partners and be signed by all partners or by each partner authorised to sign, certifying that he/she is signing on behalf of the partnership, or by any third person who satisfies the registrar that he/she is authorised to sign the document.³ Such persons will bear the seal of the legal entity. The registrar may require proof of authorisation to sign (Article 6 of Sub-Degree No. 46).

An application for registration of a trademark in Cambodia may be filed by (i) submitting a completed physical application form to MOC, or (ii) using an online application tool provided by Prakas No. 125 dated 4 May 2017.⁴ Copies of the printed forms are furnished free by the registrar. Payment of the application fees are in Table 2.4.

³ The power of attorney to appoint an agent to file the application may be attached to the application or filed with the registrar within 2 months after the date of filing. The appointment must be signed by the applicant and duly certified (Articles 7 and 28 of Sub-Decree No. 46).

⁴ Trademark e-Filing System, <https://efiling.cambodiaip.gov.kh/efiling/>

Table 2.4. Trademark Application Fees

Content	Fee (KHR)	Validation (No. of Years)
Application registration, examination, registration, and declaration of mark	420,000	10
Renewal of application registration and declaration of trademark	420,000	10
International trademark registration	600,000	10

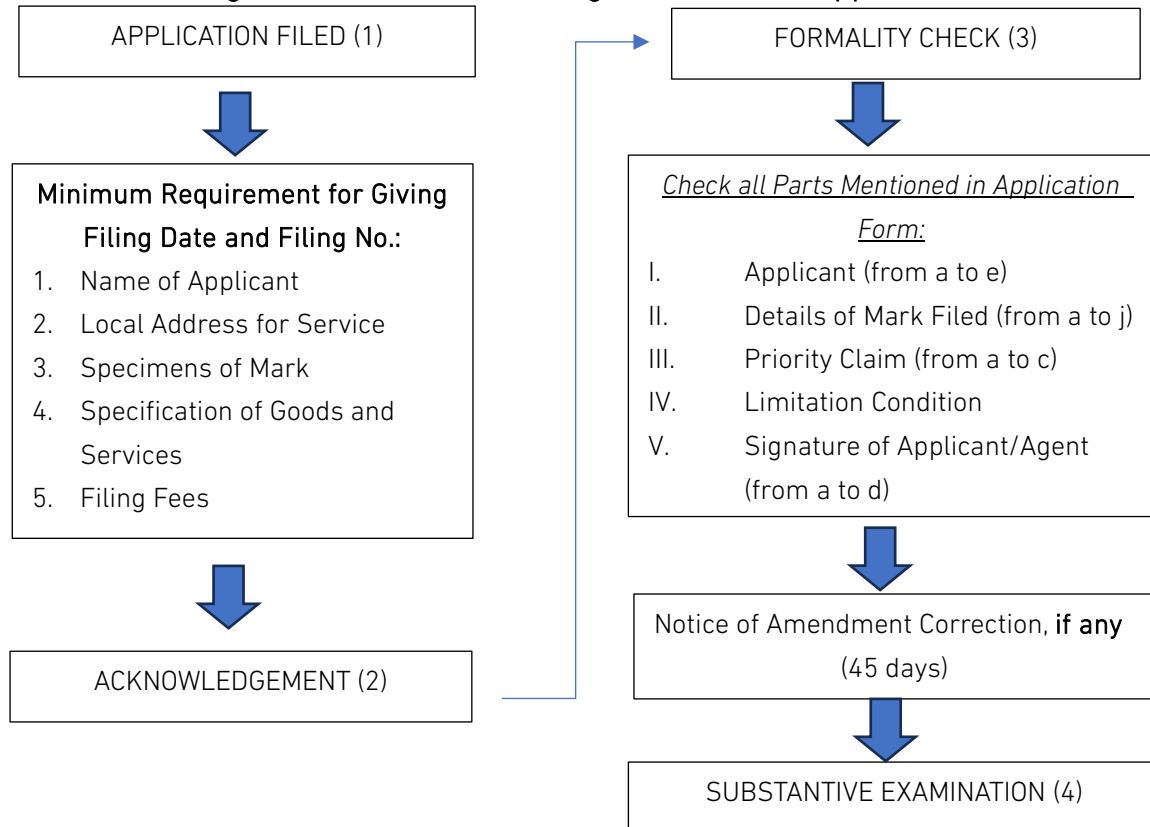
Source: Prakas No. 125.

In accordance with Joint Prakas No. 1643, the examination period for a trademark application is 5–7 months for registration application, examination of registration, and declaration of the trademark, and 60 days for renewal of registration.

After receiving the application, the registrar or other authorised official performs a formal examination to ensure that it contains name of applicant, address for correspondence, sample brand request for registration (i.e. reproduction of the trademark), description of the products or services included in each class, and filing fee for each category of goods or services. If it is found to be complete, the registrar notifies the applicant of the filing date and application number (Article 16 of Sub-Decree No. 46).

Pursuant to Article 69 of the Trademark Law, any person who provides false information to the registrar in an application, opposition, amendment, renewal, or cancellation of a trademark may be fined up to KHR5 million and/or sentenced to jail for 1–6 months.

Figure 2.3. Initial Processing of Trademark Application



Source: MOC (2023).

The applicant or his/her representative is also informed by the registrar if the formal requirements have not been met. After receiving this notification, the applicant has 45 days to request a hearing or to amend the application; otherwise, the application is presumed to be withdrawn (Article 17.1 of Sub-Decree No. 46).

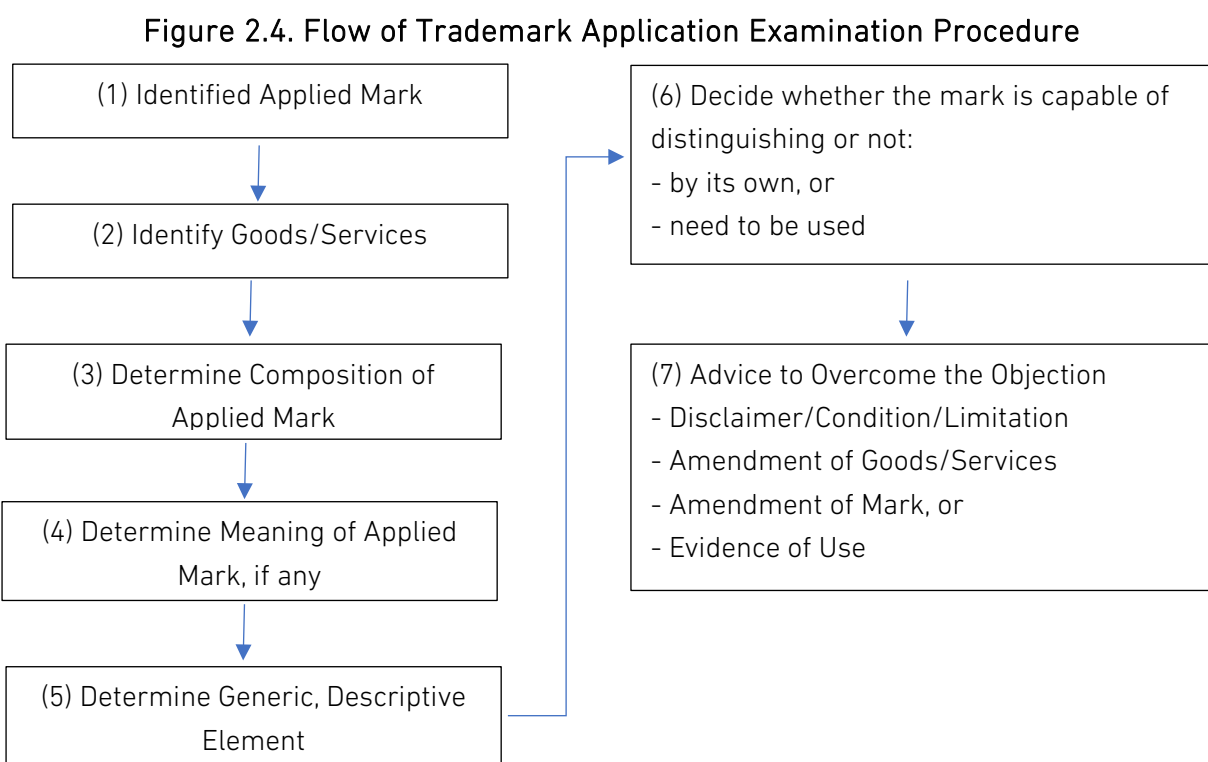
According to Article 8(b) of the Trademark Law, if, after consideration, the registrar decides to accept the application after any amendments, modifications, conditions, disclaimers or limitations, or other terms, he/she notifies the applicant of the decision in writing. If the applicant objects to the modifications, the applicant can request a hearing or submit written comments within 60 days of the receipt of the registrar's notice. He/she should also notify the registrar if he/she agrees with the modifications; if he/she does not, the application is deemed to be withdrawn (Article 17.2 of Sub-Decree No. 46).

If, after considering the applicant's written amendments or comments, the registrar still refuses or grants the application, the registrar must notify the applicant in writing. The applicant may, within 1 month from the date of such notification, request that the registrar confirm in writing the reasons for the decision and the documents used by the registrar in reaching the decision.

An applicant who is dissatisfied with the examiner's decision may appeal to the Appeal

Board of MOC⁵ or to a court within 3 months from the date of the decision (Article 18.2 of Sub-Decree No. 46). A party who has concerns about the examiner's decision may then appeal the decision of the Appeal Board to a court within 3 months of the date of that decision.

Upon acceptance of the application, the registrar registers the trademark, issues a certificate of registration to the applicant, and publishes the registration in the official gazette (Article 19 of Sub-Decree No. 46). Within 90 days of the publication date, a person affected by the registration can file an objection through a form created by MOC, accompanied by supporting documents (Article 20 of Sub-Decree No. 46).



Source: MOC (2023).

According to Article 4 of the Trademark Law, trademarks cannot be registered if (i) one company's goods or services cannot be distinguished from those of other companies; (ii) they violate public order, morality, or good custom; (iii) can mislead the public or professionals, in particular as to the geographical origin of the goods or services in question or regarding their nature or characteristics; (iv) are identical to, imitate, or contain an element of an armorial bearing, flag, or other emblem, or any name or abbreviation or initials of the name of any country, intergovernmental organisation, or organisation established by international agreement unless approved by the authority of

⁵ The composition and jurisdiction of the Appeal Board and the procedure for dispute settlement will be determined by MOC prakas (Article 24 of Sub-Decree No. 46).

such country or organisation; (v) they are identical, confusingly similar to, or a translation of a trademark or trade name known and registered in Cambodia for goods or services that are not identical or similar to those for which registration is sought, where use of the mark for those goods or services indicates a connection between those goods or services and the owner of the mark whose reputation would be adversely affected by such use; or (vi) they are identical to a mark owned by another owner, already on the register, have an earlier filing date or priority date for the same goods or services or closely related goods or services, or are similar to such a mark as to deceive or to cause confusion.

Any person may file a declaration of opposition of the registration of a trademark to MOC within 90 days of the date of publication in the official gazette. The declaration grounds must follow the conditions set forth in Articles 2(a), 4, and 5 of the Trademark Law. The registrar then decides to invalidate the registration, maintain the registration, or amend the registered trademark (Article 24.7 of Sub-Decree No 46). Any person who is not satisfied with this decision may appeal to the courts within 3 months (Article 62 of the Trademark Law).

From 2018 to 2021, there were 73 cases of opposition to trademark registration applications, and 49 cases were accepted. Trademarks were cancelled in 175 cases, and the acceptance of the applications numbered 97 cases (MOC, 2018-2021).

1.3. After Receiving a Trademark and Enforcement

The trademark owner can search for his/her registered trademark on the official website.⁶ The platform also offers relevant trademark and owner information such as logo, mark, original filing number, registration number, filing date, registered date, class, applicant, representative name, and application sub-type.

Trademark rights are safeguarded for a set amount of time – 10 years following the filing date of registration – and then can be renewed for another 10 years. Trademark owners can renew their trademark 6 months before it expires. They are required to pay the appropriate renewal charges while renewing their trademark (Article 12 of the Trademark Law).

According to Article 10 of Sub-Decree No. 46 dated 12 July 2006, the registration of a trademark in Cambodia does not necessitate a documented history of use or a demonstrated intention for use but is instead based on the principle of registration. However, MOC must receive a 'Declaration of Use or Non-Use' within 1 year of the fifth anniversary of the trademark's registration date. Otherwise, the trademark will be erased from the registrar (Article 21). The declaration must be made before a consul, notary public, or licensed attorney (Article 35).

In general, the registered trademark owner has the right to conduct business under the

⁶ Cambodia Trademark Database, <https://cambodiaip.gov.kh/wopublish-search/public/trademarks?1>

registered trademark for the term of its validity. Registered trademark owners have the complete right to use their trademarks in their company or to allow third parties to use the trademark with their consent (Article 11 of the Trademark Law). Every license contract that concerns the registration or application of a trademark must include provisions for effective control by the licensor over the quality of goods or services associated with its use (Article 19 of the Trademark Law).

A change in ownership of a registered trademark must be documented and disclosed by the registrar at the request of any interested party. Until such a recording is made, such an update or transfer has no effect on third parties (Article 48 of the Trademark Law). Moreover, the change in ownership of a trade name must be in writing and occur concurrently with the transfer of the enterprise or component of the enterprise identified by that name (Article 50 of the Trademark Law).

According to Article 24 of the Trademark Law, trademark infringement encompasses acts committed without the consent of the trademark owner, whether or not goods are actually sold or services are provided. In addition to any other rights, remedies, or actions available to him/her, the registered owner of a trademark has the right to file court proceedings against any person or legal entity who infringes the mark by using it without his/her permission or who acts in such a way that infringement is likely.

Every individual – other than the registered owner – must have the registered owner's permission to use the trademark in respect to any products or services. The right extends to the use of a sign similar to the registered trademark as well as usage in relation to products and services similar to those for which the trademark has been registered where public misunderstanding may occur. The rights conferred by registration of a trademark do not extend to acts in relation to items placed on the market in Cambodia by the registered owner or with his/her approval.

Infringement on a registered trademark includes (i) goods and services identical or similar to the goods and services for which the mark with a reputation is registered; or (ii) in relation to goods and services that are not identical or similar to those with the mark but use a sign in relation to those goods or services that indicate a connection between those goods and services and the mark owner, and that the interests or reputation of the owner may be adversely affected by such use (Articles 25 of the Trademark Law).

The court may issue an injunction to stop the infringement, threatened infringement, or unlawful act; award damages; and grant any other remedy allowed by law upon the request of the trademark owner or a licensee. If an authority or interested party requests it, a court may grant a similar remedy regarding unfair competition against producers, manufacturers, and distributors (Articles 27 and 28 of the Trademark Law). In addition, the trademark owner can (i) pursue civil remedies in civil court by suing for monetary damages and/or a particular remedy, (ii) urge customs authorities to halt clearance of

infringing imported products,⁷ and (iii) seek criminal prosecution and/or fines (BNG Legal, 2012b). Anyone who counterfeits a trademark may be fined KHR1 million–KHR20 million and/or sentenced to 1–5 years in jail (Article 64 of the Trademark Law). Imitating a trademark is punishable by a fine of KHR5 million–KHR10 million and/or a prison sentence of 1–12 months (Article 65).

Based on the applicant's request, the court may impose fast and effective interim remedies to avoid infringement or impending infringement or to preserve essential evidence in relation to the claimed infringement (Article 29 of the Trademark Law). If necessary – and particularly when any delay poses a danger of evidence being destroyed – the court may impose temporary remedies provided that the petitioner has submitted:

- (i) any reasonable accessible proof that satisfies the court that the applicant is the rights holder, that the applicant's rights are being infringed, or that such infringement is imminent; and
- (ii) necessary security or comparable guarantee to safeguard the defendant and prevent abuse (Article 30 of the Trademark Law).

If the provisional measures are revoked or the court decides in a proceeding that there has been no infringement or threat of infringement, the court will order the applicant to provide the defendant with appropriate compensation for any injury caused by the execution of the provisional measures (Article 34 of the Trademark Law).

The authority will notify the applicant within 10 days of receiving an application whether it has been approved, rejected, or deferred for further consideration (Article 37 of the Trademark Law). It may require that the applicant furnish security or an equivalent guarantee sufficient to protect the importer, consignee, exporter, or owner of the goods (Article 38 of the Trademark Law).



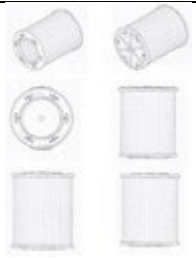
⁷ To secure legal protection for their trademark, owners of a brand may request that customs, appropriate authorities, or courts suspend the clearance of products that are considered to be counterfeit (Article 35 of the Trademark Law). All applications must be made in writing and include (i) a certificate of the registration of the mark; (ii) declaration of the grounds for the application, in particular, prima facie proof that the items covered by the mark are fakes; (iii) excerpt from the trademark register; (iv) detailed description of the products on or in connection with which the mark is used, along with a sample of the genuine goods; (v) applicant's or his/her representative's names and addresses; and (vi) power of attorney from the registered trademark owner if a designated representative submitted the application (Article 36 of the Trademark Law). Customs and other authorities will notify the rights holder of the place and date of suspension of customs clearance (Article 44 of the Trademark Law). If the authorities determine that an infringing good originates from an illegal source, they may order the destruction of the goods. Customs will not allow re-exportation of counterfeit trademark goods or subject them to different customs procedures (Articles 46 and 47 of the Trademark Law).

2. Industrial Design

Background


An industrial design constitutes the ornamental aspect of an article, which may consist of three-dimensional features (e.g. the shape) or two-dimensional features (e.g. patterns, lines, or colour).⁸ Industrial design is different from a trademark because it is inherent to the product. Article 89 of the Law on Patents, Utility Model Certificates and Industrial Designs (i.e. the Patent Law),⁹ promulgated under Royal Decree No. NS/RKM/0103/005 on 22 January 2003, defines industrial design as any composition of lines or colours, three-dimensional form, or material whether or not associated with lines or colours, provided that such composition, form, or material gives a special appearance to a product of industry or handicraft and can serve as a pattern for a product of industry or handicraft, and appeals to and is judged by the eye.

Figure 2.5. Types of Industrial Design in Cambodia

Type	Example
Textile Design	
Shape and Configuration Design	
Shape and Ornamental Design	

⁸ WIPO, Industrial Designs, <https://www.wipo.int/designs/en/>

⁹ The Patent Law was amended in 2017 regarding Articles 37, 38, 109, and 136 (i.e. Amended Patent Law). Additionally, the detailed procedures for registration of industrial design are provided under Prakas No. 707 dated 29 June 2005 on the Procedures for Registration of Industrial Design.

Type	Example
Ornamental Design	

Source: WIPO, Global Design Database, <https://designdb.wipo.int/designdb/en/?q=%7B%22filters%22%3A%7B%22fi%22%3A%22SOURCE%22%2C%22te%22%3A%22KHID%22%7D%5D%7D>

An industrial design is not protected if the owner does not register nor submit an application to the authorities – much like a trademark. The exploitation of a registered industrial design by those other than the registered owner requires the owner's consent, and the owner of a registered industrial design has the right to prevent others from making, importing, offering for sale, selling, and using the product (Article 125 of the Patent Law).

Industrial Design Applications and Process

No reports are published by MISTI on the numbers of applications for industrial design.¹⁰ However, based on the Design Database of WIPO, the number of industrial design applications filed in Cambodia are in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5. Industrial Design Applications in Cambodia, 2018–2022

Application Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
International application	43	81	75	65	44
International application (sub-design)	29	61	109	115	30
Domestic application	102	36	72	238	83
Total	145	117	147	303	127

Sources: WIPO, The Hague Express Database, <https://www3.wipo.int/designdb/hague/en/#>; and WIPO, Global Design Database, <https://www3.wipo.int/designdb/en/?q=%7B%22filters%22%3A%7B%22fi%22%3A%22SOURCE%22%2C%22te%22%3A%22KHID%22%7D%5D%7D>

¹⁰ The Patent Law was under the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy. In 2014, this ministry was renamed the Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts; in 2020, it was changed again to MISTI.

According to MOC, three types of applications were available in 2022: (i) regular applications (91), (ii) registration of a design (83), and (iii) renewal of a design (59).

The number of industrial design applications varied. Domestic application numbers in 2018 and 2022 were approximately 40% higher than international applications; domestic applications in 2021 were more than triple the number of international applications. In contrast, international applications slightly increased in 2019 and 2020 compared to domestic applications. Currently, based on the Design Database of WIPO, 11 designs are in the process of registration, and all are international. There were no data from MOC of examination pendency in Cambodia.

At the time of filing, the application for registration of an industrial design in Cambodia may include a request that the publication of the notification of the industrial design, upon registration, be deferred for not more than 12 months from the date of filing or, if priority is claimed, from the date of priority of the application.¹¹ In this case, upon registration of the industrial design, neither the representation of the design nor any file relating to the applications can be open to public inspection. DIP of MISTI publishes the deferment and information identifying the registered owner, indicating the filing date of the application, the period for which deferment has been requested, and any other particulars. At the end of the period of deferment, DIP publishes the registered industrial design (Ken Fox Law and IP Office, 2021).

The right to industrial design registration is no different in Cambodia from other countries; it belongs to the creator. Cambodia has adopted a 'first-to-file' system; thus, where two or more persons have independently arrived at the same design, the registration is awarded to the applicant with the earliest filing or priority date (BNG Legal, 2012). The application for industrial design must indicate (i) date of filing of the earlier application; (ii) number of earlier application; (iii) symbol of the International Industrial Design Classification allocated to the earlier application; (iv) country in which the earlier application was filed or, where the earlier application is a regional or an international application, the country or countries for which it was filed; and (v) where the earlier application is a regional or an international application, the office where it was filed. If the number of earlier applications is not known, that number must be furnished within 3 months of the priority date.

The use of a registered industrial design by persons other than the registered owner requires the agreement or consent of the owner. The owner of a registered industrial design has the right to prevent others from making, importing, offering for sale, selling, and using the product (Article 125 of the Patent Law). Article 108 of the Patent Law states that the registered owner of an industrial design has the right to institute court proceedings against any person who infringes on the industrial design by using it without

¹¹ The declaration of priority referred to in Article 27 of the Patent Law is made at the time of filing.

his/her agreement, or who performs acts that make it likely that infringement will occur. Designs can be registered if they are new (Article 91 of the Patent Law). An industrial design is considered new if it has not been disclosed to the public, anywhere in the world, by publication in tangible form or by use or in any other way, prior to the filing date or, where applicable, the priority date of the application for registration (Article 92, paragraph 2). In addition, the design must be original.

Design applications are filed with DIP physically or using the online tool for the Hague system¹² in Cambodia provided by WIPO. The application form and any documents forming a part of an application must be submitted in Khmer (Article 7 of Prakas No. 707). They should contain a request, drawings, photographs, or other adequate graphic representations of the article embodying the industrial design and an indication of the kind of products for which the industrial design is to be used (Article 95 of the Patent Law). In addition, based on Article 5 of Prakas No. 707, it must contain (i) each applicant's name, address, nationality, and residence, and be signed by each applicant; (ii) where applicant is the creator, a statement to that effect, and, where he/she is not, each creator's name and address and be accompanied by a statement justifying the applicant's right to registration; (iii) if the applicant is represented by an agent, indication of this and the agent's name and address; and (iv) a request by the applicant for deferment of publication of the industrial design or designs in writing and the period of deferment requested.

Further documents must also be provided: (i) drawings (or photographs, tracings, or other adequate graphic representations) showing the different sides of the industrial design; these cannot exceed 10 centimetres x 15 centimetres and must be affixed on four sheets of cardboard of A4 size; (ii) power of attorney (notarisation is required); (iii) deed of substitution (if any); (iv) deed of assignment or assignment; and (v) certified copy of priority documents and English translation thereof), which can be submitted no later than 3 months from the filing date. As soon as the required information and documentation

¹² The purpose of the Hague system is to protect industrial designs in multiple countries by completing them at one office. In addition, the Hague Agreement is under the auspices of WIPO, which allows nations or enterprises established in member states to obtain protection of industrial designs in many countries through simple, easy-to-complete procedures. The applicant can file a single international application at DIP or at WIPO, in a single language (English), and pay fees in a single currency (Swiss franc) (ARISE+, 2021). If filing under the Hague system, once the design(s) have been recorded by WIPO in the International Registration for Industrial Design, each of the designated Hague Union members is notified (ARISE+, 2021:11). Those members must decide whether to grant protection to the design in their territories within very strict time limits. If a designated member does not communicate any objection within a prescribed period, the design under the international registration is deemed protected within the territory of that member as if it had been registered directly with the IP office of that member (ARISE+, 2021:11).

are submitted and the fee is paid to DIP, the registrar provides an application number and filing date to the applicant.¹³

If the applicant or his/her agent provides a false statement in any document filed to the registrar, he/she may be subject to a fine of KHR1 million–KHR5 million and/or imprisonment of 1–6 months. The maximum penalty for a repeated offense committed within 5 years from the date of previous conviction can be doubled (Article 132 of the Patent Law).

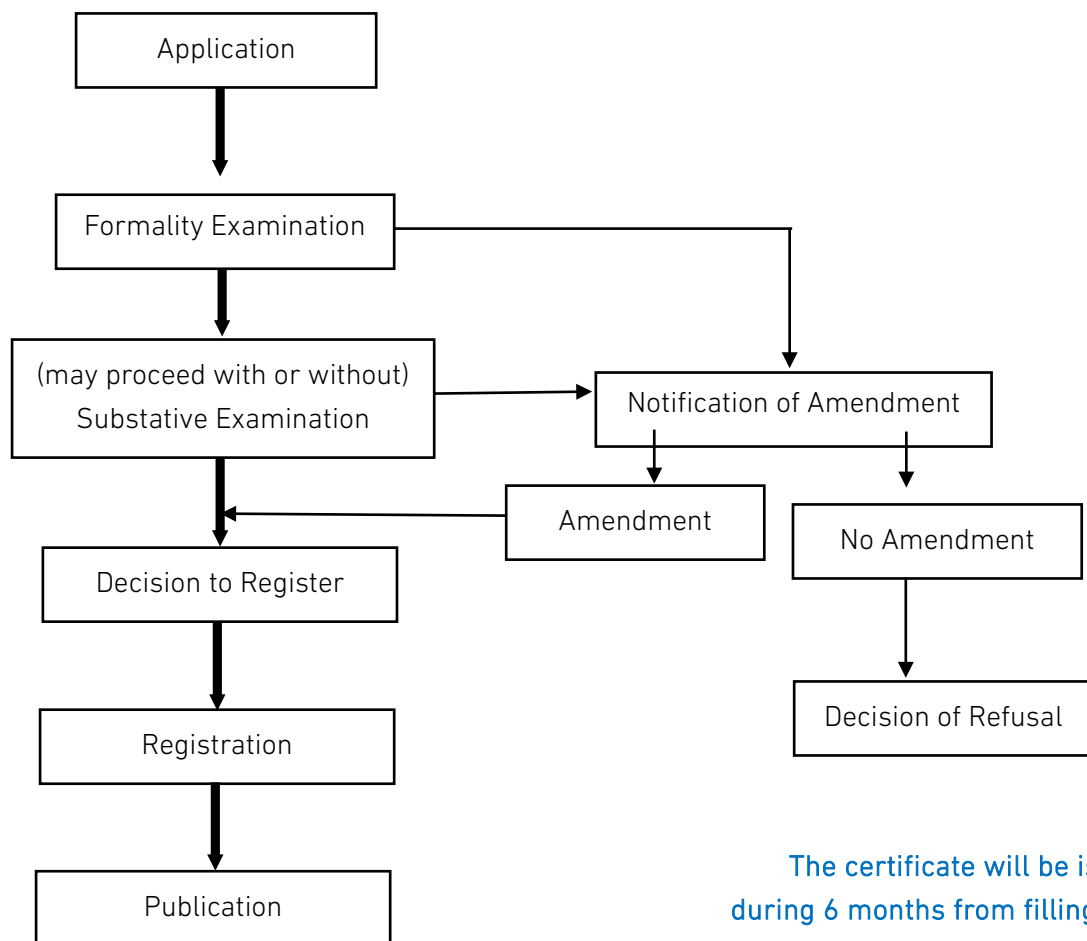
There are two phases of examination:

- (i) **Formality examination.** If DIP determines that an industrial design application does not meet the formality requirements at the time of receipt (e.g. lacking required documents), the applicant is invited to file the required correction and use the date of receipt of the required correction as the filing date. If no correction is filed, the application is treated as if it had not been filed.
- (ii) **Substantive examination.** Here, compliance is examined pertaining to adequacy of the required documents as set out in Article 95 and availability of a statement justifying the applicant's right to the registration of the industrial design if the applicant is not the creator as provided in Article 96; payment of the application fee; and 'unregistrability' of an industrial design as set out in Articles 89 and 90, and 'unprotectability' of an industrial design as provided in Article 93.

If DIP determines that the conditions for registering an industrial design in Cambodia are fulfilled, it registers the industrial design, publishes a reference to the registration in the official gazette, and issues to the applicant a certificate of registration of the industrial design (ARISE+, 2021:11). Information to be published in the gazette includes the deadline for application, registration date, priority date, certification date, re-registration date, applicant, industrial design number, industrial design classification, preferred country, name of industrial design, type of product used for industrial design, and drawing of industrial design (ARISE+, 2021:11).

¹³ If registering at DIP, upon receipt of the application, the registrar marks – on each document making up the application – the actual date of receipt and the application number allotted in the sequential order in which applications are received; where any corrections or other later filed documents are received on different dates, the registrar marks their actual date of receipt in the appropriate place of the request for registration of industrial design (Article 13 of Prakas No. 707). The application number is quoted in all subsequent communications concerning the application. See Abacus IP, Industrial Design Law in Cambodia, https://km.abacus-ip.com/files/ugd/3e39e9_edea5b8938e045589b0ebb0398ea9274.pdf

Figure 2.6. Industrial Design Application Examination Flowchart



The certificate will be issued during 6 months from filling date

Source: MOC (2023).

According to the Patent Law, registration will not be granted for an industrial design when it (i) serves solely to obtain a technical result and to the extent that it leaves no freedom regarding arbitrary features of appearance (Article 90 of the Patent Law), and (ii) is contrary to public order or morality (Article 93 of the Patent Law).

According to Article 111 of the Patent Law, a court can invalidate the registration if a person requesting the invalidation proves that any of the requirements of registration of the industrial design in question is not fulfilled or if the registered owner of the industrial design is not the creator or his/her successor in title. Any industrial design invalidated by the court is regarded as null and void from the date of the registration. The final decision of the court is notified to the registrar who records it and publishes a reference thereto as soon as possible.

Article 123 of the Patent Law provides that the court has jurisdiction in cases relating to the application of the law and regulations. Moreover, any person who believes that he/she may be injured by the registration of a certain design may file a lawsuit within 3 months of registration (Article 124 of the Patent Law).

After Registration and Enforcement

Industrial design rights are no different from other IP rights. Industrial design must be protected for a certain period of time – 5 years after the date of registration, which can be renewed for 2 consecutive periods of 5 years (Article 109 of the Patent Law). Thus, the maximum period of design protection in Cambodia is 15 years. In the re-registration process, a fee is required. If the owner of the industrial design fails to pay the renewal fee, rights on the industrial design may be lost.

The owner of an industrial design has the right to do business on the registered industrial design for the duration of its validity. Registered industrial design owners have the full right to use the industrial design through their own business or to transfer part or all of their rights to third parties to use the industrial design through a specific contract or agreement. It should be noted that any transfer of the rights of the industrial design must be in writing, be deposited with the registrar for reference, and be recorded by the registrar (Article 114 of Patent Law). Otherwise, the contract for the transfer of rights will not be effective.

The Industrial Design Registration Certificate is a document that confirms the exclusive right of the industrial design owner for use and prohibits third parties from using the industrial design by any means. Any use of an industrial design by a third party without the prior permission of the registered industrial design owner may be considered a violation of the legal rights of that industrial design owner (Article 105 of the Patent Law).

The owner of a registered industrial design gains the exclusive right to prevent others from making, selling, or importing articles incorporating the industrial design. Infringement occurs when a registered industrial design has been exploited by any person without the agreement or consent of the owner (Article 125 of the Patent Law). Upon the request of the owner, a court may grant an injunction to prevent infringement or imminent infringement, award damages, or grant any other remedy provided for in the general law (Article 126 of the Patent Law). A licensee whose license contract has been recorded with the registrar may also request the competent court to take immediate action when the owner has refused or failed to do so. Any person who knowingly performs infringement is subject to fines of KHR5 million–KHR20 million, imprisonment of 1–5 years, or both. A double fine and/or imprisonment will be imposed if the offense occurred within 5 years from the date of a previous conviction (Article 133 of the Patent Law).

3. Geographical Indication

3.1. Background

GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or reputations that are due to that origin. To function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating from a given place.¹⁴ In addition, the qualities, characteristics, or

¹⁴ WIPO, Geographical Indications, https://www.wipo.int/geo_indications/en/

reputation of the product should be due to the place of origin. Since the qualities depend on the geographical place of production, there is a clear link between the product and its original place of production, including natural and human resources.

According to Article 4 of Royal Decree No. NS/RKM/0114/006 dated 20 January 2014 on the Promulgation of the Law on Geographical Indications (i.e. the GI Law), GI refers to a distinctive name, symbol, and/or any other sign that is a name for or represents a geographical origin and identifies the goods as originating in such a geographical area where a given quality, reputation, or other characteristic of the good is attributable to its geographical origin.

3.2. Applications for Geographical Indication Status

Only four GI products are currently registered with DIPR: Kampot pepper, Kampong Speu palm sugar, Koh Trung pomelo, and Mondulkiri wild honey. Kampot pepper and Kampong Speu palm sugar were registered for GI status in 2010 when the GI Law had not yet been adopted. The following year, the European Union (EU) awarded GI certification to Kampot pepper (Heng and Chheang, n.d.:2). In 2019, Kampong Speu palm sugar was registered for GI certification in the EU (Kampong Speu Palm Sugar, 2020). In Cambodia, Koh Trung pomelo and Mondulkiri wild honey were registered on 15 June 2018 and 10 December 2020, respectively. From 2018 to 2022, there were 64 applications for GI status in total in Cambodia: 4 domestic applications, 4 international applications, and 56 applications under the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications.¹⁵

During the ceremony to award GI status to Koh Trung pomelo in Cambodia, the Minister of Commerce stated that MOC applied for GI status for the Koh Trong pomelo with WIPO as well (Sok, 2018c). When launching Mondulkiri wild honey GI registration in 2022, MOC noted that this registration also provides protection of IP rights for the Mondulkiri Wild Bee Conservation Association, which is the owner of Mondulkiri wild honey and helps identify the unique traditional work of people in Mondulkiri Province (MOI, 2022).

MOC is preparing to register Kampot-Kep salt as a domestic GI product as well as Takeo giant river prawn and Kampot-Kep fish sauce.¹⁶ DIPR is collaborating with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to identify three other products for

¹⁵ The act provides protection for names identifying the geographic origin of products such as coffee, tea, cheese, wine, pottery, and cloth (WIPO, 2021). Names include Bordeaux, Champagne, Armagnac, Cantal, Neufchâtel, Bleu d'Auvergne, and Rocamadour (MOC, 2021). Through one single registration procedure under the Lisbon system, a product has protection from all contracting parties to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, allowing producers to enforce their rights in more than 30 countries, including EU member states.

¹⁶ Kampot-Kep salt will be registered with assistance from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and WIPO, while registration of Takeo giant river prawn and Kampot-Kep fish sauce is supported by ASEAN Regional Integration Support by the EU (ARISE+) (Nhoek, 2023).

GI registration: Kampong Som dried shrimp, Koh Kong dried shrimp, and Siem Reap prahok. MOC is also requesting evaluation of Koh Kong stone crab as a possible GI and to register Battambang rice (Nhoek, 2023).

The owner of a GI registered at MOC is authorised to use the registered GI (Article 22 of the GI Law). A GI registered in Cambodia is protected against any of following acts:

- (i) direct or indirect commercial misuse in respect to identical or comparable goods to those of the registered GI where the misuse benefits or would benefit from the reputation of the GI;
- (ii) unauthorised use, imitation, evocation, or translation even if the true origin of the goods is accompanied by expressions like 'style', 'type', 'method', 'manner', 'imitation', or translations of such expressions, or of similar expressions likely to mislead the public;
- (iii) false or misleading indication as to origin, nature, or specific quality of the goods appearing on packaging, in advertising materials, or on other documents concerning the goods that are likely to mislead its origin; and
- (iv) other practices likely to mislead the public as to the true origin of the goods (Article 23 of the GI Law).

In accordance with Article 7 of the GI Law, a GI association, producers' group, producer, and/or operators' organisation is entitled to file an application for registration under GI. The applicant is the owner of the GI after such registration. Producer groups, operators, institutions, and/or interested persons intending to apply for the registration of a Cambodian GI can form a GI association based on a geographical area and a specific type of goods and administer it on a non-profit basis. The association must ensure that its members comply with the book of specifications¹⁷ and other obligations designated by the GI Law and related regulations.¹⁸

¹⁷ A book of specification refers to a document noting the production geographical area, production conditions, and quality control process of GI goods, which is compiled by the applicant (Article 4 of GI Law).

¹⁸ When registering at DIPR as an GI association, applicants must submit the following documents: (i) measures and internal rules of the organisation or association; (ii) information used to evaluate the representative status of producers and/or operators, and the format representing various type of producers; (iii) information on the organisation and resources contributed; and (iv) implementation of the decisions of MOC or GI board related to GI matters. Moreover, DIPR may request applicants provide additional information on the recognition of the association and the operators willing to adhere to the GI without causing any obstacle to become a member of the association. In some cases, a person may be considered a GI association or group if (i) the relevant person is the only producer who intends to apply for registration; and (ii) the defined geographical area has different characteristics from neighbouring geographical areas, or the characteristics of the product are different from those produced in neighbouring geographical areas. This GI association must remain open for new producers or operators intending to implement the GI (Article 6 of Prakas No. 422).

A GI application must be filed with DIPR by the applicant or through his/her agent in Khmer or English or have an attached translation in Khmer or English. A sample of an application for GI registration form is on the DIPR website.¹⁹ The form must include (i) information related to use, including reference of the examiner, local agent for service, date of filing, and application number; (ii) information related to the applicant, including name and address, or name and address of the agent if the application is filed through an agent; (iii) type of application, including application for registration, application for amendment or revision of the GI, application for invalidation or cancellation of the GI, or other related application for GI; (iv) name, symbol, or sign of the GI; (v) type of goods covered by the GI; (vi) description of the product; (vii) class of goods or service (i.e. NICE classification); (viii) GI area; (ix) description of the method of production; (x) elements establishing the link between the GI product and its geographical origin; (xi) methods for GI product control; (xii) information concerning the labelling of the GI product; and (xiii) date and signature of the applicant. In accordance with Inter-ministerial Prakas No. 315 dated 12 May 2021 on the Provision of Public Service of MOC, the examination, registration, and publication of the GI application fee is KHR420,000.

The book of specifications for compliance must contain (i) name to be protected as a GI, as used, whether in trade or in common language; (ii) description of the product, for which the GI is applied, including the raw materials, if appropriate, as well as the physical, chemical, microbiological, or organoleptic characteristics of the product; (iii) definition of the geographical area delimited; (iv) evidence that the product originates in the defined geographical area; (v) description of the method of obtaining the product; (vi) details establishing the link between a given quality, reputation, or other characteristic of the product and the geographical origin; (vii) name and address of bodies verifying compliance with the provisions of the product specifications; (viii) method used to control the products according to the process of production and in accordance with the general rules defined by MOC; and (ix) any specific labelling rule for the product in question (Article 10 of Prakas No. 422).

The applicant may withdraw the application at any time by notifying its decision in writing to DIPR. After the application is deemed withdrawn, all fees that have been paid to MOC cannot be reimbursed (Article 10 and Article 11 of Prakas No. 422).

According to Articles 5 and 6 of Prakas No. 422, applicants must provide evidence of their ability to defend and to manage the GI by (i) drafting a book of specifications; contributing to its implementation by producers, members, and operators; and participating in the implementation of control plans, mainly by performing internal controls; (ii) filing a list of producers and/ or operators of the GI, which must be submitted to the control body and DIP; and (iii) joining any activities related to the protection of the GI, especially regarding the name, territory, valuation of product, as well as knowledge of the value chain.

¹⁹ See <http://www.cambodiaip.gov.kh/>. In accordance with the Article 9 of Prakas No. 422, the layout and content of the GI application form is decided and updated by DIPR.

After receiving a GI application, DIPR reviews it in accordance with the required conditions and responds within 45 days from the filing date (Article 9 of the GI Law). During the examination, MOC conducts a substantive examination of the content to confirm the accuracy of detailed information as mentioned in Articles 7 and 8 of the GI Law; any preclusion to registration; that an actual production site exists for the Cambodian GI; and that homonymous GIs are in compliance with conditions determined by MOC (Article 11 of GI Law). MOC may invite the applicant to provide more explanation and evidence, if necessary. According to Article 12 of Prakas No. 422, the filing date of the application is the time when it has fulfilled the required conditions.

After it is found that the application fulfils all required conditions, MOC issues an acknowledgment of the official submission (Article 9 of the GI Law). From the date of fulfilling the required conditions, DIPR must conduct a substantive examination of the application within 60 days (Article 14 of Prakas No. 422). The GI Law does not stipulate an onsite inspection of a GI application; however, according to MOC, a control body is required in the investigation process.

Under Article 9 of the GI Law, after the MOC examination, if the application is incomplete, MOC will issue a notification to the applicant specifying the point to be added or adjusted in the application. Additionally, Article 14(3) of Prakas No. 422 requires that the notification be in written form. After obtaining the notification, the applicant may adjust the application within 6 months. The applicant may also request an extension of another 6 months by providing a valid reason to MOC (Article 9, paragraph 3 of the GI Law). The application will be deemed abandoned if there is no adjustment or response within this period. MOC then checks the adjusted documents and responds within 45 days.

A GI cannot be accepted for registration if it is (i) contrary to laws and regulations, morality, religion, good customs, or public order; (ii) likely to mislead or to confuse the public with respect to the characteristics, nature, quality, place of origin, production process of the goods, and/or use; (iii) used as a name of a plant variety or animal breed; and/or (iv) a generic term (Article 10 of the GI Law). Furthermore, the name of GI proposed that is wholly or partially homonymous with a GI that is already on the list of GIs may not be registered unless there is sufficient distinction in practice between the conditions of local and traditional usage and relevant producers and consumers are not misled. MOC may determine any additional requirements for the homonym to enable the GIs to become distinguishable before deciding to register that GI (Article 18 of Prakas No. 422). If an application is refused, all fees that have been paid to MOC will not be reimbursed, and the substantive examination will still be subject to payment.

If the application is fulfilled, the GI will be registered, and a certificate will be issued by MOC to the applicant (Article 12 of the GI Law). The certificate issued will contain the date of registration, registration number, reference to the concerned registrar, name of the GI, number of the application, date of application, type of product covered by the GI, name and

address of the applicant, reference of the examiner, agent for service, national logo of the GI, and signature and stamp of MOC (Article 16 of the GI Law).

After the application has been registered,²⁰ MOC publishes the registration of the GI within 30 days in the official gazette to allow interested parties to oppose the registration. The publication must include a summary of the book of specifications; the book will be filed at DIPR for consultation upon request of any interested person (Article 15 of Prakas No. 422). In accordance with Articles 15 and 21 of the GI Law, any interested person may oppose the GI to MOC within 90 days from the publication date. Grounds for opposition will be assessed in compliance with the laws and regulations of Cambodia (Article 25 of Prakas No. 422).

After receiving a notice of opposition, MOC will notify the applicant in writing. The applicant must submit a counterstatement within 45 days, which can be extended for 45 days upon request. Upon the request of any party, MOC will organise a hearing. After MOC has made a decision, it will notify the applicant or the opponent. The decision will be published in the official gazette (Article 17 of GI Law).

Article 26 of Prakas No. 422 provides further opposition procedures:

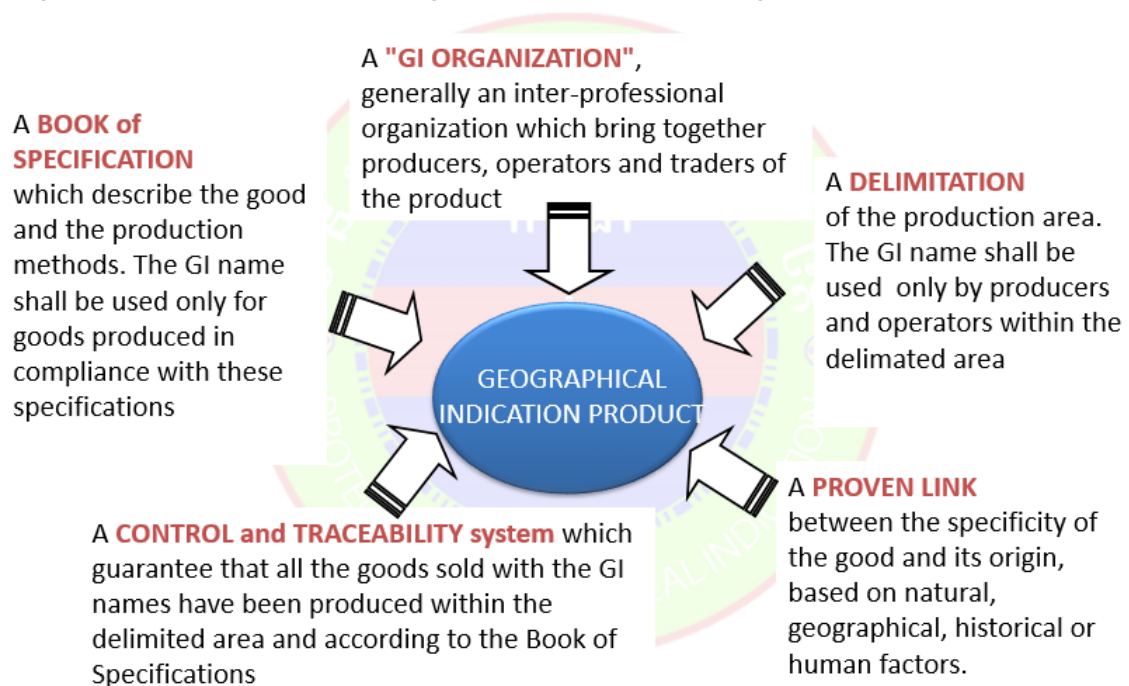
- (i) A notice of opposition must contain a declaration that the GI application is applicable to the grounds for opposition laid down in laws and regulation. If the notice of opposition does not contain such a declaration, it will be voided.
- (ii) If a notice of opposition is filed with DIPR following a statement on the grounds for opposition, DIPR will check the admissibility of such a statement of opposition.
- (iii) Within 90 days of receiving an admissible statement of opposition and appeal from applicant, DIPR will invite both parties to engage in appropriate consultations for a period not exceeding 90 days.
- (iv) Both parties will start such appropriate consultations, providing the relevant information to assess whether the application for registration complies with the law and regulations.
- (v) During the consultation period, DIPR will organise a hearing during the opposition procedure within 30 days of the date of submitting the information of disagreement. If there is no request for a hearing during this period, DIPR may invite concerned parties for a hearing. DIPR will notify in writing the date of hearing, at least 7 working

²⁰ A foreign GI in Cambodia can be registered as long as the foreign GI is registered in accordance with the local provision in its country of origin (Article 19 of the GI Law). The registration of a foreign GI is not allowed if it is not or has ceased to be protected in its country of origin or has fallen into disuse in that country (Articles 19 and 20 of the GI Law). The application must be made by a legal agent, administrative representative, or foreign representative. Under the GI Law, the procedure for domestic GI registration is also applicable to the foreign GI, after an application has been filled accordingly. MOC reserves the right to order an applicant to submit any subsequent foreign registration information that may affect registration in Cambodia.

days in advance, to the party who has requested the hearing and other interested parties. If no request for a hearing has been made, DIPR may make a decision without a hearing or invite parties of opposition to a hearing if it is deemed necessary.

- (vi) DIPR will decide within 2 weeks. Upon request of the applicant, DIPR may extend the deadline for the consultations by 90 days. The decision made by DIPR will be published in the official gazette. If there is no opposition, or a final decision is made to dismiss the opposition, DIPR will maintain the registration of the GI.

Figure 2.7. Five Pillars of Geographical Indication Registration and Protection



GI = geographic indication.
Source: MOC.

Figure 2.8. Geographical Indication Examination Flowchart



GI = geographical indication, MOC = Ministry of Commerce.
Source: ASEAN (2020).

If a refusal for a GI application from MOC is obtained, the applicant may appeal that decision as well (Article 17 of the GI Law). In addition, any interested person or their agent may file an appeal to the GI Board or to the courts. The appeal decision of the GI Board will be published in the official gazette (Article 18 of the GI Law). According to Article 27 of Prakas No. 422, the appeal petition must be filed with the GI Board or to the courts within 90 days, and payment of an official fee must be made. When the GI Board receives a petition, it will notify its decision to the applicant or any interested person within 30 days. From the date of official receipt of the appeal petition, the GI Board will examine it within 90 days. From the issuance date of the decision, the GI Board will issue a written notice within 15 days.

If the applicant or interested person does not agree with the decision, either party has the

right to file a complaint to the court within 90 days from the date of receiving the decision. If a party fails to file a complaint, the decision of the GI Board is deemed final. Based on the GI Board's decision, DIPR will implement the decision of the GI Board or court (Article 28).

3.3. After Registration and Enforcement

The registration of the GI is valid from the date of receiving the application unless the registration is cancelled or invalidated according to the GI Law (Article 24 of the GI Law). Only members of GI associations, producers, and/or operators are authorised to use the registered GI. Under Article 22 of the GI Law, the GI right is not transferable.

After registration, an applicant may select a certification body or control body that is legally registered in Cambodia and approved by MOC to verify compliance after registration in accordance with its book of specifications. If it fails to comply with the book of specifications, the certification body or control body will report to MOC, which will take appropriate measures and sanctions including remarks and advice; warnings; disqualification of operator or producer for any lot of products; temporary revocation of the operator or producer rights from using the GI; and definitive revocation of the operator or producer rights from using the GI. The GI association must comply with the MOC decision and report to MOC on the implementation of those measures (Article 26 of the GI Law).

According to Article 7 of the GI Law, all members of a GI association are obliged to comply with the other obligations designated by laws and regulations and book of specifications, specifying the production geographical area, production conditions, and quality control process of GI goods.

After registration, the owner may request to amend the book of specifications, particularly regarding development of technologies and sciences and delimitation of the geographical area. This amendment can be made if it does not vitally affect the decision of GI registration (Article 28 of the GI Law). According to Prakas No. 422, the application of an amendment to a book of specifications from a registered product must provide reasons for the amendments requested. In case the amendment involves one or more amendments to the book of specifications that are not minor, an amendment application must follow the GI Law. If the proposed amendments do not vitally affect the decision on the GI registration, DIPR will approve or reject the application for amendment.

In the event of the approval of amendments implying a modification of the elements referred to in a former opposition procedure, DIPR will publish those elements in the official gazette. For an amendment to be regarded as minor, it cannot relate to the essential characteristics of the product; alter the book of specifications; include a change to the name, or to any part of the name of the product; affect the defined geographical area; or represent an increase in restrictions on trade in the product or its raw materials (Article 41).

If there is suspicion of goods infringing on the GI rights of the owner, courts have the authority to order the detention of the goods. Those infringing goods imported, exported, sold, or offered for sale will be confiscated by the competent authorities through the courts' decision whether anyone has been convicted of the offence (Article 37 of the GI Law).

According to the GI Law, any person conducting any GI-related offences is liable for imprisonment 1–5 years and to a fine of KHR2 million–KHR20 million. These include:

- (i) misuse of a registered GI for direct or indirect commercial purposes in respect of identical or comparable goods to those of the registered GI where that misuse benefits or could benefit from the reputation of the GI.
- (ii) unauthorised use, imitation, or evocation or translation of the GI even if the true origin of the goods is accompanied by the expression such as 'style', 'type', 'method', 'manner', 'imitation', or translations of such expressions, or of similar expressions likely to mislead the public.
- (iii) false or misleading indication as to the origin, nature, or specific quality of the goods appearing on packaging or in advertising materials or on other documents concerning the goods that are likely to mislead as to its origin.
- (iv) other acts likely to mislead the public as to the true origin of the goods (Article 38).

Moreover, any legal entity will be declared criminally responsible for the above and be fined KHR20 million–KHR50 million and may be subjected to one or more of the following penalties in the Criminal Code: (i) dissolution and liquidation of legal entities; (ii) placement under the court surveillance; (iii) one or more of the prohibitions against pursuing activities; (iv) expulsions from public marketplaces; (v) confiscation of objects or funds subject of the offence related to the confiscation of ownership, selling, and destroying confiscated objects, confiscation and the rights of a third party, and confiscation of revenue or assets resulting from the offence; and (vi) posting or broadcasting the decision of the penalties in the press or other publication by means of audio-visual communications (Article 39 of the GI Law).

In addition, any interested person may request that MOC invalidate an established GI registration. The GI registration will be invalidated if the registered GI is different from the definition of the GI under the GI Law, fails to comply with registration of applicant, cannot be registered, or the owner of the registered GI is not the legitimate owner. Moreover, MOC will cancel the registered GI if the owner requests cancellation; goods of the registered GI have lost their special characteristics as GI goods; the owner fails to respect and to follow to the requirements in the application; a foreign GI ceases to be protected in its country of origin; the owner in Cambodia cannot be contacted at least three times by all means within 3 months; the owner of the registered GI has not complied with the requirements of the supporting documents related to the procedure of opposition; or the owner acts against the law and regulations related to GI (Article 29 of the GI Law).

After MOC examines reasons for invalidation or cancellation by verifying the facts, the invalidation of GI registration will be deemed to have been effective from the date of registration. Cancellation of GI registration will be deemed to have been effective from the date of the decision. All invalidations and cancellations of GI registration are recorded and published in the official gazette immediately (Article 30 of the GI Law).

According to Prakas No. 422, after applying for cancellation, DIPR will check the admissibility of this request within 90 days. The party that lodged the request and the GI owner will then engage in appropriate consultations for a reasonable period not exceeding 90 days. If no agreement is reached, this information will be provided to DIPR. During the consultation period and if required or at the request of any party, the official in charge will organise a hearing during the cancellation procedure.

The request for a hearing must be made after 30 days of the date of submitting the information of disagreement to the official in charge. If there is no request made, a hearing can still be held. Upon receiving the request for hearing, the official will notify in writing the date of hearing within 7 working days to the parties. After notifying to the parties, the hearing must be organised within 30 days. Upon the request of applicant or based on its discretionary power, the deadline of consultations may be extended 90 days. The decision of DIPR on the cancellation of GI will be published in the official gazette (Article 42).

Chapter 3

Branding in Cambodia

1. Concept

In modern times, no established concept of a brand²¹ exists, but it generally follows that a brand is an emblem such as a name, logo, mark, symbol, or package design for an enterprise to identify or to differentiate its products (METI, 2002). This approach is similar to the concept of trademarks. The American Marketing Association also mentioned that a brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service from those of others.²² This definition seems broader, making room for concepts – other than trademarks – to be regarded as a brand or an element of a brand.

It is also essential to understand the modern economic function of a brand. For enterprises, it functions as a tool to connect the value of the good or service that the enterprise provides to the consumer for that consumer to select that good or service. For the consumer, a brand serves as a landmark, providing a sense of security and becoming the basis for the selection of the good or service.

For the brand to work as a tool to denote the value of a certain good or service, various elements are utilised. In addition to typical elements such as names, logos, marks, characters, slogans, package designs, or jingles (i.e. short music used before or after commercials or at the beginning of television or radio programmes), brand elements can include colour or a combination of colours, scents, or specific movements, which may come under the classification of a trademark.

Based on the above concept of a brand, 'branding' is defined as all activity to fulfil the function of a brand, which work as tools to implicate the value of a specific good or service. Today, the scope of branding is expanding. A seller of a good or service conducts branding activities; the area, region, or country where the good is produced or service is delivered also can conduct such activities.

2. Utilisation

Along with changes in the economic environment – such as the softening of the economy, globalisation, information technology, and regulatory reforms – companies are shifting from management strategies based on tangible management resources such as financial assets, equipment, and land to those centred on intangible management resources such

²¹ The term 'brand' is thought to have been derived from the word 'brand' in ancient Frisian, 'brant' in Althochdeutsch, or 'brandr' in ancient Scandinavian, denoting a mark used to distinguish one's livestock (METI, 2002).

²² American Marketing Association, Branding, <https://www.ama.org/topics/branding/>

as IP, research and development (R&D), and know-how. Intangible management strategies also work to increase the value of a brand, which is the fifth-most important management resource after people, goods, money, and information (Tanahashi, 2013).

The fact that a brand becomes a tool that implicates value means that through it, consumers see both the physical and functional aspects of a product and rely on the brand when purchasing a product. A competitive advantage based on a brand is thus obtained. Three common benefits of branding are as follows.

- (i) **Price advantage.** Branded products can be sold at higher prices than non-branded products, even if the functions are the same.
- (ii) **Loyalty.** Consumers will be loyal to a brand and will purchase associated products repeatedly. By securing regular customers, sales will be stable in the long term, and reliance on short-term discounts are reduced, resulting in higher profits. In addition, since attractive brands have designated buyers, companies can transact with distributors in an advantageous manner.
- (iii) **Brand expansion.** A company can leverage its brand image to create opportunities to expand into related product areas, new businesses, or overseas business (Tanahashi, 2013).

Other merits of branding can lead to the strengthening of the business and internal organisation. By focussing on branding, the direction that a company is headed can be clarified, which can lead to strong business development. A business culture of the company can be cultivated, resulting in loyal employees and a thus a stronger organisation.

3. Methods

There are numerous methods of branding; there is no official categorisation regarding such methods. Common methods, however, are as follows.

- (i) **Product branding.** Product branding is the most popular method of branding, which focusses on making a single product distinct and recognisable. Symbols or designs are an essential part of product branding to help consumers identify the product. Various product branding activities include advertisements in media such as through magazines, television, newspapers, signage, and social media. The focus is not only on the specifics of a product but on a specific group of consumers – since the ultimate goal of product branding is to connect the appropriate consumers to the product.
- (ii) **Corporate branding.** Corporate branding is a method in which a company promotes itself as entity with core values, a mission, personality, and other fundamentals, to curate a distinctive identity in the market – as opposed to promoting a specific product or service that it provides. Once the objectives of corporate branding are

fulfilled, the public will connect the company's name with a promise of positive performance. Successful corporate branding has long-term effects, as customers tend to trust any new product associated with the recognised brand.²³ Corporate branding can also be beneficial for a company's employees; the idea of working at a place with many benefits can be like a brand, which surely is beneficial in creating a strong organisation composed of motivated and happy employees.²⁴

- (iii) **Personal branding.** Personal branding refers to branding for a certain person, as opposed to branding a whole business or a specific product. Personal branding is often done by movie stars, celebrities, politicians, and those in sports and is strongly linked with online branding via platforms such as Facebook, X, and Instagram.²⁵ Personalisation can be seen on the consumer side as well.²⁶
- (iv) **Geographical branding.** Geographical branding aims to attract consumers to purchase a product because of its geographical association. If the quality of a certain product is distinct due to its geographical location, geographical branding can be quite effective. The concept of appellation in the wine industry can be seen as traditional geographical branding. Geographic branding can also entail branding for certain countries.²⁷
- (v) **Online branding.** One of the most accessible and effective methods of branding is online branding. Online branding refers to how a product is positioned online via websites, social media, and blogs.
- (vi) **Offline branding.** Offline branding refers to any branding activity that happens off the internet. Traditional offline branding is still active through billboards, printed advertisements, car wraps, video material in vehicles, and trade shows. Retail branding can be an important part of this; creating good store experiences through décor, lighting, music, display pictures, service, and/or food samples can keep consumers coming back – key when online shopping is becoming more dominant.
- (vii) **Co-branding.** Co-branding is a branding method where more than one brand is involved for a specific product or service with the objective to create high quality. This helps each brand impact each other in a positive way and may also result in

²³ An example of a corporate brand is Apple; long queues occur at stores any time a new Apple product is released.

²⁴ Google is famous for providing employee perks such as free meals and snacks, medical care, and generous paid leave.

²⁵ Examples include Elon Musk for Tesla and Ryan Reynolds for Aviation American Gin.

²⁶ One example of a successful personal branding campaign was the Coca-Cola bottle customisation project – the Share a Coke campaign – where different names appeared on drink cans and bottles all around the world.

²⁷ For example, the Eiffel Tower is a national icon for France, and many businesses use its image in the brands showcasing its association with Paris or France.

the growth of business and spreading of brand awareness.²⁸

- (viii) **Service branding.** Service branding is when a branding activity is conducted for services. Service branding can provide additional value to another delivered service (e.g. hotels offering free welcome drinks at the time of check-in, banks providing free snacks for clients, and restaurants providing playgrounds for children). By providing additional services, the enterprise is trying to associate the brand with a good user experience, so customers are motivated to repeatedly use such services.

4. Examples in Cambodia

As an agriculture-rich country, Cambodia – through the efforts of the government, trade associations (i.e. the Cambodian Rice Federation, Kampot Pepper Promotion Association [KPPA], Koh Trong Pomelo Producer Association, and Kampong Speu Palm Sugar), and individual companies – has collaboratively branded several Cambodian agriculture products through GI registration, collective marks, or certification marks both locally and internationally. The advantages of having GI tags and similar IP assets for indigenous products help protect the interests of producers and their communities, foster greater export potential, and improve the profile of Cambodian goods internationally (Hin, 2023). GI status also improves consumer confidence, inspires investment in the products, and helps prevent counterfeit copies of protected goods – especially those to be exported – thanks to domestic consumer protection and fair competition laws (Hin, 2023).

Rice has been grown for thousands of years in Cambodia and is regarded as 'white gold'.²⁹ Cambodia grows many varieties of rice, divided into two main types: fragrant rice (i.e. jasmine rice) and white rice. Cambodia exported its first measurable milled rice surplus in 2008, meeting stringent inspection and certification requirements, thereby allowing access to key markets such as China, the EU, and the United States.³⁰

As mentioned previously, Cambodia has a few products currently under GI status – Kampot pepper, Kampong Speu palm sugar, Koh Trong pomelo, and Mondulkiri wild honey. MOC has implemented a GI reputation building plan for these products; however, no further description of the plan is known (MOC, 2021).

Amongst the registered GI products of Cambodia, Kampot pepper and Kampong Speu palm sugar were both registered in 2010. They subsequently received protection in Viet Nam (December 2016), Thailand (March 2017), and the EU (February 2016 for Kampot pepper; pending application for Kampong Speu palm sugar) (IPLF, 2022). Four products – Kampot-Kep salt and flower of salt, Kampong Som dried shrimp, Koh Kong dried shrimp,

²⁸ Fashion retailer Uniqlo has created co-branded products with Disney, Hello Kitty, LEGO, and Marvel.

²⁹ CRF, Development of Rice Sector, http://crf.org.kh/?page=api_location_detail&menu1=592&menu2=845&id=845&lq=en

³⁰ *Ibid.*

and Siem Reap fish prahok – are in the process of being registered as GI products (Chea, 2022b). Kampot-Kep salt, Kampot-Kep fish sauce, and Takeo giant river prawn are in the final stages of domestic GI registration, while Koh Kong Scylla crabs (also known as stone crabs) are at an earlier process of registration (Hin, 2023).³¹

Beyond GI products, many agriculture products have been registered under collective marks. Two collective trademarks have been registered for Kampong Thom ambok³² and Preah Vihear rice (MOC, 2021). In total, five products are registered under collective marks, including Kampong Thom ambok, Siem Reap noodles, copper silver sculpture in Kampong Luong Commune in Kandal Province, clay pottery of Kampong Chhnang Province, and Pong Tea Kon (i.e. duck foetus) from Takeo Province (Khorn, 2021). Further, MOC has been preparing three additional collective marks – including Pursat oranges.

Ratanakkiri ('gem mountain' in Khmer) Province is the only source of zircon³³ a blue gemstone from Baw Gaew District (Roger Dery Gem Design, 2018). The stones are naturally orange or brown when found, and heating turns them blue or colourless. Zircon has been growing in popularity for jewellery, and Ratanakkiri Province is the only large-scale commercially viable source for them (Roth, 2021). Locals have invested much time, money, and energy into mining zircon, transforming families, communities, and the local economy. There is, however, no official report on zircon mining in Cambodia as well as its export. In the future, it may be explored as warranting a collective trademark.

³¹ Only prawn from Takeo Province will be able to be sold under the name Takeo giant river prawn as a guarantee of quality and origin. The inclusion of this prawn in the list of GI is to improve the price and confidence of buyers as well as to prevent the mislabelling of prawns not from Takeo Province. It is also hoped to attract national and international tourists to the province and to enable the prawn to compete in upcoming national and international food fairs in China, Thailand, and Viet Nam. MOC has now prepared procedures to place Kampot-Kep fish sauce under GI status by collecting information and meeting with stakeholders to establish a professional association. MOC will increase the price of Kampot-Kep fish sauce in both domestic and foreign markets. In addition, traditional production skills will be preserved (*Khmer Times*, 2022).

³² Ambok is pounded rice, and Kampong Thom is Cambodia's second-largest province, bordering Tonlé Sap Lake. Cambodian ambok became well known in late 2019 after Prime Minister Hun Sen's initiation of an ambok eating day under the slogan, 'Eating Ambok to Protect the Nation, Religion and King' (Khorn, 2021).

³³ Many Cambodians do not recognise the name 'zircon' as it is widely known as *t'bong baw gaew*. Zircon is sometimes confused with cubic zirconia, which is a factory-made stone (Open Development Cambodia, 2015).

Chapter 4

Current State of Digital Transformation in Cambodia

1. Regulatory Development

The legal framework for DX in Cambodia is in the *Rectangular Strategy Phase IV* from 2018, which aims to develop the digital infrastructure to prepare for and to promote the digital economy in the country as well as Industry 4.0 (GOC, 2018). The government has also prioritised the establishment of a legal framework to support digital development, including the implementation of a digital government and information security strategy, E-Commerce Law, Cybercrime Law, and amendments to related regulations (GOC, 2018:30). It is encouraging the infusion of digital technology into education and training programmes, focussing on the broad use and awareness of digital technology and development of entrepreneurship and digital ecosystems for startups, promotion of digital systems in businesses, and establishment of an entrepreneur cooperation mechanism with the government or through public–private partnership frameworks (GOC, 2018:30). It is also working to develop the financial sector by encouraging the use of FinTech.

Additionally, the *National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023* sets out mechanisms that support startups to register, coordinate services, disseminate market information, and mainstream new technologies in an effort to open up markets for Cambodian products (GOC, 2019). The government also adopted a science, technology, and innovation policy in December 2019 to strengthen national science, technology, and innovation foundation and to nurture an innovation ecosystem conducive to sustainable and inclusive development.

The *Cambodia Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework 2021–2035* was introduced in May 2021. It aims to build a vibrant digital economy and society by promoting digital adoption and transformation to accelerate new economic growth and social welfare. It encourages entrepreneurship, and the startup ecosystem is one of its strategies to help enable digital businesses (GOC, 2021:21). To improve favourable conditions for the digital economy and to embrace production chains and values, the framework aims to

- (i) strengthen the implementation of and revise the supporting mechanisms and/or initiatives in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation amongst enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups.
- (ii) build, continue to revise, and implement the regulatory framework and principles to spur confidence and trust amongst investors, and establish a strong investment network.

- (iii) create a national strategy on promoting R&D and innovation aimed at providing direction and enhancing initiatives, programmes, and/or projects.
- (iv) promote IP registration and strengthen the protection of IP rights regarding inventions and innovation by enterprises and startups.
- (v) improve the environment for R&D and innovation by strengthening policies related to science, technology, and innovation; promoting and enhancing the quality of public research centres on digital R&D; and establishing a digital innovation fund to incentivise the private sector in investing in digital research and development for trade.
- (vi) foster a culture of entrepreneurship, invention, understanding of digital markets, and opportunities for digital business in SMEs by developing SME clusters in priority sectors.
- (vii) develop mechanisms for effective cooperation and facilitation amongst national and international stakeholders through establishing agencies and a digital entrepreneurship ecosystem fund as well as the use of regulatory technology.
- (viii) create a framework to attract investments and participation from the private sector in high-tech investment projects, combined with training, use and transfer of technologies, as well as R&D and innovation.
- (ix) enhance the support services for startups, including incentivising investments on accelerators in the digital enterprise ecosystem, establishing information centres for startups, encouraging private companies to provide consultations and other services for startups, organising marketing campaigns for startups, developing laws and regulations to lessen the burden of compliance and to protect IP rights in startups, encouraging co-development of and matching IP rights, establishing a FinTech framework, creating regulatory sandboxes for startups, providing financial support and guidance for entrepreneurial network development, and developing an incentive strategy for digital businesses that can support other enterprises and accelerators in the digital enterprise ecosystem.

Further, for policy measures on digital value chains, the framework aims to

- (i) develop training programmes and promote businesses to enhance understanding of digital markets and commerce, technical skills on technologies, digital production and value chains, logistics, inventory management, customer management, customer rewards, support partners, and study of international business infrastructure in the digital sector.
- (ii) promote interactions harnessing information technology systems amongst enterprises in production and value chains.
- (iii) encourage the provision of information on each type of good or service in the production and value chains to facilitate interactions across systems.

- (iv) promote bilateral and multilateral digital economy agreement frameworks aimed at expanding markets for local enterprises and supporting cross-border investment, business, and trade activities.
- (v) establish mechanisms as well as bilateral and multilateral digital economy agreements to boost the export–import flow of goods as well as to assist enterprises in e-commerce and cross-border trade.
- (vi) establish digital platforms to manage the exchange of information on the flow of goods, especially in free economic zones.
- (vii) establish mechanisms supporting enterprises – especially SMEs – in evaluating, developing, and strengthening the capacity of production and value chains; and
- (viii) enhance the accuracy, sharing, and security of standardised data to facilitate the seamless integration of production and value chains as well as to support effective coordination in the private sector (GOC, 2021:44).

Several development roadmaps have been prepared by each relevant ministry and governing entity to develop DX in each sector. The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) established the *Fintech Development Roadmap (2020–2025)* to facilitate the smooth transition and advancement of FinTech, including for under-resourced and unbanked communities (NBC, 2021a). MISTI adopted a science, technology, and innovation road map. In 2022, road maps for agriculture technology, health care technology, and education technology were also issued.

Several new laws and regulations are applicable to tech startups. In 2019, the Law on Consumer Protection was promulgated to create and to maintain trust transparency, fair treatment, reliability, data privacy, data security, and handling of customer complaints. The E-Commerce Law was promulgated in 2020 to regulate domestic and cross-border activities in Cambodia, including commercial and civil acts, documents, and transactions executed electronically. Under this law, tech startups are required to obtain applicable permits from MOC and the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications before carrying out their business activities.

2. Institutional Frameworks and Initiatives

To ensure the acceleration of the digital economy and social welfare, the government has established the National Digital Economy and Society Council, chaired by the prime minister. The deputy prime minister is the permanent vice chair, and leaders of relevant ministries and institutions are members (GOC, 2022). This council has three committees – the Digital Economy and Business Committee (DEBC), Digital Government Committee, and Digital Security Committee. It is responsible for leading, facilitating, and fostering the development of a vibrant economy and society by laying the digital foundation, adoption,

and transformation of all social actors.³⁴ The DEBC is responsible for leading, preparing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating the implementation of policies, strategies, measures and action plans, and investment in the development of the digital economy. In addition, it is responsible for leading, organising, and coordinating public investment related to the development of the digital sector as well as for supporting the council on monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy framework.³⁵

The government has introduced a series of inter-institutional policies and measures, including an industrial development policy, SME development policy, SME incentives, an online business registration platform, and various funds and institutions (e.g. Skills Development Fund, Entrepreneurship Development Fund, and SME Bank) to promote the participation of enterprises and startups in the adoption and use of new digital technologies (GOC, 2021). The Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) is the leader for tech startups and has initiated several projects to support digital startups and skills development for SMEs:

- (i) **Techno Startup Center.** The Techno Startup Center (TSC) was launched in early 2019 and transformed into a public institution in July 2020 under Sub-Decree No. 96. It runs incubation and acceleration programmes for early-stage tech startups in agriculture, finance, and SME digitalisation. The centre also focusses on policy research support and has offered mentorship on business and technical topics to 10 early-stage startups.
- (ii) **Khmer Enterprise.** Established in February 2019 as the implementation unit of the Entrepreneurship Development Fund, Khmer Enterprise aims to mobilise, invest, and manage resources to support the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and to provide financial and non-financial support to related entrepreneurial ecosystem builders, including entrepreneurs, innovative startups, SMEs, and partner institutions that participate in promoting entrepreneurial activities.³⁶ It provides capacity upgrading in terms of incubation, acceleration, mentorships, innovation labs, training, an R&D centre, and coworking space. Khmer Enterprise also supports entrepreneurial cultural promotion by organising national awards, an entrepreneurial portal, an annual summit, and community nights. It provides networking support and seed funding (i.e. matching grants and co-investment) to startups, prioritising those in the services, agriculture, manufacturing, and information and communications technology sectors. Working closely with local and international partners, it has implemented more than 40 programmes (Ek and Vandenburg, 2022).
- (iii) **Startup Cambodia.** Officially launched in 2021, Startup Cambodia was incorporated as a policy measure in the digital framework. Led by MEF, its mission is to support

³⁴ DEBC, About DEBC, <https://digitaleconomy.gov.kh/about>

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Khmer Enterprise, <https://khmerenterprise.info/about-us>.

local startups and to build a vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem in Cambodia.³⁷ Startup Cambodia is not just a website that provides information about the startup ecosystem but is also a testbed for exchanging living data in line with government guidelines on DX (Startup Cambodia, 2023:3).

- (iv) **Enterprise Go Digital.** Enterprise Go Digital seeks to strengthen enterprises' digital capabilities to play a more active role in the digital economy and business. It provides support to enterprises through digital adoption, connectivity, consultations, and training for adoption of digital solutions.³⁸ Enterprise Go Digital has five action plans for promotion of digitalisation of general business and marketing functions – the Enterprise Go Digital Platform, Enterprise Go Digital Hub, nationwide marketing and awareness-raising campaigns, sector-specific support to priority sectors, and cluster technology transformation and digitalisation.

The government has also initiated digital platforms to support digital business and to strengthen public services provision by governmental agencies.

- (i) **CamDX.** Also known as Cambodia Data Exchange, CamDX has adopted the model of Estonia's X-Road.³⁹ It is a unified yet decentralised data exchange layer between information systems that offers a standardised and secure way to provide and to consume services.⁴⁰ It was also founded on the once-only principle, which ensures that data are collected from citizens, businesses, and government only once, adhering to data protection laws/regulations with user consent.⁴¹
- (ii) **CamDigiKey.** For access to various government digital services running through CamDX, CamDigiKey is a secure mobile app to authenticate oneself digitally. The government's Online Business Registration System was the first government portal to use CamDigiKey to authenticate user digital identity developed and run by the TSC.⁴² Currently, it is available for individual user and business users as well as public and private institutions as a government-initiated, trustworthy know-your-customer (KYC) solution and authentication system. CamDigiKey can help businesses with fast customer onboarding to the business platform, obtain verified customer information, reduce business operation costs and time, and connect to everyone. Currently, there are two possible ways to integrate with CamDigiKey. Full solution integration allows users to go onboard with digital services by using the CamDigiKey app. The platform provides a set of basic functions like token verification and user information retrieval in a client library package. The second alternative is Open KYC APIs Integration, which provides a set of open KYC

³⁷ Startup Cambodia, What Is Startup Cambodia?, <https://startupcambodia.gov.kh/>

³⁸ Enterprises Go Digital, <https://enterprisedigital.gov.kh/en> [in Khmer]

³⁹ This is infrastructure for secure data exchange amongst Estonian residents, businesses, and public institutions.

⁴⁰ CamDX, <https://camdx.gov.kh/>

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² CamDigiKey, <https://camdigikey.gov.kh/>

verification APIs for the client.⁴³ This provides information extraction from Khmer identity cards and validation scores on user data. Currently, there are seven successfully integrated institutions and five processing integrated institutions, which all are financial institutions and insurance companies.⁴⁴

- (iii) **Online Business Registration System.** As mentioned above, the system is the government's information technology system for business registration. It was first launched in 2020 by Sub-Decree No. 84 dated 10 June 2020 on Business Registration through the Information Technology System.⁴⁵ Any business can register by logging in to CamDigiKey. The system offers two phases of business registration: (a) registration with MOC, General Department of Taxation, and Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training; and (b) Phase II, which enables applicants to apply for specialised licenses from competent ministries after completion of the first phase, including MISTI, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, Ministry of Tourism, Insurance Regulator of Cambodia, and Real Estate Business and Pawnshop Regulator of Non-Bank Financial Services Authority.⁴⁶
- (iv) **CambodiaTrade.** A business-to-business-to-consumer platform, CambodiaTrade, was launched under MOC with financial support from the Enhanced Integrated Framework of the United Nations Development Programme.⁴⁷ CambodiaTrade offers made-in-Cambodia products and helps Cambodia's SMEs to sell their products online to potential clients in the domestic and cross-border markets.⁴⁸ The platform aims to develop the business environment for e-commerce firms through a highly visible national e-marketplace with fully integrated payment gateways and logistic solutions, adhering to international standards and best regulatory practices.⁴⁹
- (v) **Khmer Agriculture Suite.** This suite, through MEF, aims to address key issues in productivity and distribution in the agriculture value chain.
- (vi) **Digital Platform for Business.** Functioning as an information centre for businesses since 2022, this is the central hub providing all information about doing business in Cambodia, making it easier for businesses to access information related to requesting business certificates, licenses, and permits (DEBC, 2022a).

⁴³ Example of Open KYC APIs include Khmer identity card information extraction; user info validation; user info and identity card image validation; user info, identity card image, and face validation; and user info, identity card image, and liveness validation.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Registration Services, <https://registrationservices.gov.kh/home-en/>

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ CambodiaTrade, About CambodiaTrade, <https://cambodiatrade.com/view-page/about-cambodiatrade>

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

3. Tech Startups

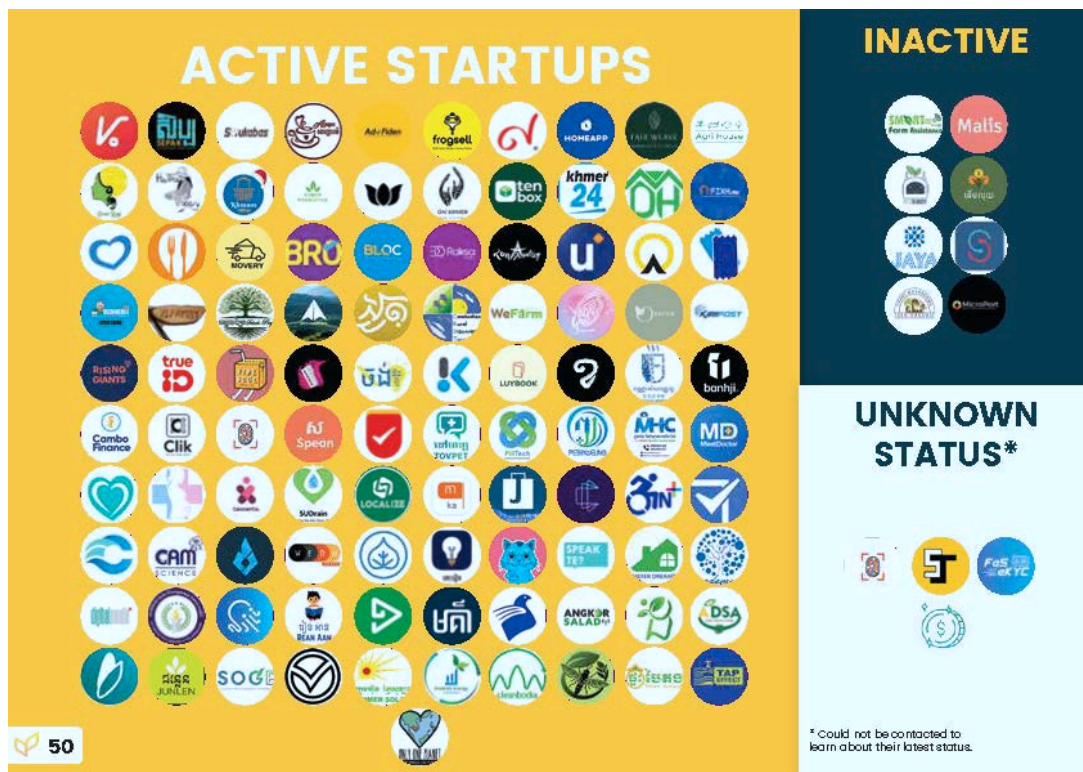
From 2018 to 2022, many in-depth studies and reports on the tech startup ecosystem in Cambodia were conducted; however, none exist from a branding point of view except for some information on marketing and branding experiences during the development of various startups.

A startup can be defined as a company in the early stages of operation; a technology startup can be any company leveraging technology as a core part of its product or having significant digitally enabled channels (MSP and Raintree, 2019). The TSC defines a startup as the early stage of a company – during the development of an innovative product or service –that has yet to produce a market-fit product (TSC, 2022). Cambodia defines a startup as an institution in the process of establishing and managing a business that harnesses innovations under unclear conditions with higher risks but with potential to grow (GOC, 2021). According to Sub-Decree No. 102 on Digital Startup Management and Incentives dated 29 June 2021, a digital startup is in the process of managing and developing prototype digital products or services that have potential fast growth or in uncertainty state of business. It also defined digital businesses as a conducive environment for the ecosystem of the digital economy by modernising the private sector, promoting startups, and ensuring the participation of key stakeholders (GOC, 2021).

In Cambodia, tech startups emerged in the early 2010s, growing from fewer than 50 in 2013 to around 300 by 2018 with involvement in FinTech, media and advertising, e-commerce, development services, and digital marketplaces (Vanderberg and Ek, 2022). There were 98 startups from various industries registered with Startup Cambodia in 2022, rising to 114 currently (Startup Cambodia, 2023). Business models include business-to-business, business-to-business-to-customer, or business-to-customer.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Startup Cambodia, Ecosystems, <https://startupcambodia.gov.kh/ecosystem>

Figure 4.1. Active, Inactive, and Unknown Status of Startups in Cambodia



Source: Startup Cambodia (2023).

Agriculture technology. By 2021, there were 10 active agriculture technology startups in Cambodia. There is potential for future growth given the interest of the government, development partners, large land companies, and sector-specific incubators (Ek and Vanderberg, 2022:6). As mentioned previously, a digital platform for the agriculture value chain, Khmer Agriculture Suite, was initiated under the support of Khmer Enterprise and the TSC in partnership with International Fund for Agricultural Development to support such startups. Additionally, Khmer Enterprise runs a 3-year incubation programme to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the agriculture sector. It partnered with the Cambodia Agricultural Value Chain programme to improve the competitiveness and resilience of the country’s agriculture sector through the Assistance Package Program, one of Khmer Enterprise’s flagship programmes (Ek and Vanderberg, 2022:11).

Health care technology. Similarly, health care technology startups in Cambodia offer platforms and apps to help patients find specialists, provide hospital and clinic management systems, and offer telehealth consulting services. Although there are few, their numbers have increased in recent years (Ek and Vanderberg, 2022:6).

Digital e-commerce platforms. As tech startups have emerged, several existing e-commerce platforms provided by private companies such as Nham24 and Muuve aim to engage with existing customers and scale up their business (TSC, 2023). Prior to the establishment of the Digital Platform for Business, Ngeay Ngeay, and KOTRA Riel were

private platforms aimed at providing business information and support for companies, sharing information on how to register a business and functioning as a bookkeeping app for Cambodian micro entrepreneurs, respectively. Further, the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Cambodia offers Biz, which provides policy and company registration information.

Another platform, Belaws, provides one-stop service solutions for legal, corporate, accounting, and taxes, while Banhji and Kiu provide accounting solutions for SMEs (TSC, 2021). Banhji is a Cambodian cloud-based accounting platform that was founded in April 2016 to help SMEs ensure that their accounting and bookkeeping comply with relevant regulations, including taxes. In addition, Banhji developed an e-invoicing module to provide paperless billing services for SMEs.

Morakot Technology has offered a cloud-based core banking system for banks, microfinance institutions, and credit operators since 2014. Its system offers fully integrated and automated accounting and supports multi-branch and multi-currency records (NBC, 2021a).

4. FinTech

The DEBC defines FinTech as technology and innovation in the financial sector – banking and non-banking – established to improve the use, delivery, and access to financial services broadly and inclusively.⁵¹ Indeed, as DX continues, FinTech in Cambodia has witnessed the rapid surge of mobile connections; higher percentages of mobile money accounts, online purchases, and digital payments; and changing attitudes towards digital payments (NBC, 2021b).

According to NBC, FinTech is leading the sector into a new era of digital-driven banking and financial services by re-shaping traditional banking channels (i.e. online or mobile banking versus branch and over-the-counter services), transforming back-end processing through machine learning and big data analytics, and promoting blockchain (e.g. distributed ledger technologies) (NBC, 2021b:6). Accordingly, the DEBC is drafting a FinTech development policy for Cambodia (DEBC, 2022b).

FinTech in the banking sector is more developed than that in the non-banking sector because the majority of the FinTech business models in Cambodia are centred on digital payments, which fall under the banking sector (TSC, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, e-payment systems played an important role in sustaining business operations. The continuous development and modernisation of such payment systems – as well as the facilitation of cross-border payments and trade settlements – have made payments much more secure, fast, and easy throughout the country (NBC, 2022a).

To support the growth of digital financial services, NBC has developed various payment

⁵¹ DEBC, FinTech, <https://digitaleconomy.gov.kh/fintech?lang=en>

and settlement systems for wholesale and retail payments, including Bakong, Cambodian Shared Switch, Fast Payment Service, National Clearing House, NBC Online Banking System, and Retail Pay MPS. Currently, a real-time gross settlement system is being developed to facilitate large-value transactions in the financial system (NBC, 2022b). The following sub-sections detail the key FinTech activities carried out throughout Cambodia, both by banking institutions and non-banking institutions.

4.1. Online and Mobile Banking

The number of banks and microfinance deposit-taking institutions offering e-banking is on the rise in Cambodia. As of September 2022, the Cambodian banking system consisted of 59 commercial banks, 9 specialised banks, 5 microfinance deposit-taking institutions, 82 non-deposit-taking microfinance institutions, 5 third-party processors, 1 credit information provider, and 6 representative offices of foreign banks (NBC, 2023a; 2023b; 2023c; 2023d). A total of 68 financial institutions were operating online banking services – 46 commercial banks, 3 specialised banks, 6 microfinance deposit-taking and non-deposit-taking institutions, 12 payment service providers, and MEF.

As of the first quarter of 2021, 35 banking and financial institutions were providing internet banking services, and 29 banking and financial institutions were offering mobile banking services. There were 4.4 million transactions carried out through internet banking, and 254.1 million transactions from mobile banking services (NBC, 2022b:44). Advancements in FinTech and its rapid adoption amongst the public have encouraged more banks and financial institutions to develop and to provide internet and mobile banking services to enable customers to perform a wide range of digital banking operations, including loan repayments, fund transfers, bill payments, phone top-ups, payroll, and balance inquiries (NBC, 2022b:43).

QR code payments also gained popularity. In 2021, digital payments through QR codes accelerated to 4.4 million operations (NBC, 2022b:44). On 4 July 2022, NBC launched KHQR, a banking QR code to facilitate smoother QR payments (NBC, 2022b:28). It uses the Europay, Mastercard, and Visa standard and was developed to support the government's digital policy (NBC, 2022c).

4.2. Payment Service Institutions

FinTech development and the market's need for payment instruments urged payment service institutions to expand their services to meet customer needs and to contribute to financial inclusion in Cambodia (NBC, 2021b). The large share of young people in the population, high mobile phone and internet penetration rates, and supportive regulatory framework have encouraged banks and financial institutions to introduce innovative digital payment services nationwide (NBC, 2022b:42). As FinTech has advanced, NBC has encouraged the innovation and provision of digital financial services to reduce costs, improve interoperability, and promote financial inclusion (NBC, 2022b:43).

As of 2021, 24 payment service institutions were licensed to provide diverse, e-wallet-based mobile payment services in Cambodia, and 2 financial institutions were permitted to provide payment services (NBC, 2021b:26). The number of licensed payment service institutions increased to 34 as of September 2022 (NBC, 2023c). NBC has shown that payment services have significantly advanced to meet client needs for variable services with innovation, convenience, safety, and lower cost. As of 2022, e-wallet accounts reached 17.9 million customers (NBC, 2023f). These services are categorised as fund transfers, cash in/cash out, retail payments, utility payments, remittances, acquirers for international credit card schemes, and online payments (NBC, 2021a).

Marketing strategies and their brands are the biggest strengths amongst payment service institutions (TSC, 2020). Based on their interviews, the two most-cited marketing strategies were (i) improved quality of products and services; and (ii) creating solid brands by building more functions in their apps, developing them to become one-stop shops, and increasing the number of agents to improve customer accessibility. By building their brands, some companies have created unique services, products, or values that differentiate their companies. e-KYC, flexibility between online and offline status for apps, and financial inclusion are building their brands in the market (TSC, 2020:63).

4.3. Peer-to-Peer Lending

In July 2016, Karprak was launched as Cambodia's first online person-to-person lending platform, facilitating low-cost loans for borrowers while increasing returns and managing risk for lenders.⁵² It combines traditional lending practices with social networking to create a platform for borrowers and lenders to transact. Komchey was launched in October 2016 as a loan-matching platform offering person-to-business loans from investors to micro and SMEs in Cambodia. Operating as a stealth mode startup, Komchey assesses the borrower's credit criteria and KYC as well as loan repayments, enabling micro and SMEs to raise working capital without the need for property as collateral.

In January 2019, Spean Luy launched a microloan mobile app, which allows users to apply digitally for a microloan without the need for a physical visit or paperwork. Machine learning is used to create a credit scoring system that calculates the repayment ability of users and then recommends the approved amount of the microloan (US\$50–US\$1,000) and repayment terms (2 weeks–4 months). To strengthen the safety and efficiency of such e-credit operations, NBC is drafting a prakas on management procedures of digital credit operation and operators through e-systems (NBC, 2021b:31).

The TSC found that marketing strategies – trust, customer centrality, advertisements, and product–market fit – are also key success factors for lending service providers (TSC, 2020:60). When existing customers have trust in companies, they will refer new customers (TSC, 2020:60). Understanding customers is important to make a business a

⁵² Person-to-person lending is regulated by the Law on Banking and Financial Institutions.

success, a companies should design products for the right targets. Businesses can grow because they various different media channels – rather than one – to make their company known.

5. Handicrafts

Cambodia was once famous only for its gems and *krama* (i.e. scarves) but has now added carvings, other textiles, lacquerware, and paintings popular arts and crafts for sale (*Asia Highlights*, 2024). Additionally, jewellery and fashion apparel have gained popularity as have recycled products, such as spent cartridges and pieces of mines and bombs, fashioned into such items. Some social enterprises produce creations from coconut shells, crocheted beads, polymer clay beads, cotton wrap beads, sterling silver snake chains, and paper beads (AAC, 2022). Many workshops, employing 10–50 persons, are producing small series of high-quality clothing or accessories such as handbags, scarves, and purses (AAC, 2022:3).

In 2020, Cambodia exported handcrafted ceramics worth \$134,000, the main traditional importer being the United States (AAC, 2022:3). As with other traditional crafts, artisans are beginning to experiment with different techniques and styles, adding rice grains, eggshells, rice stalks, and sandstone chips to produce modern and striking effects. Cambodian companies like Stocker Studio use vegetal lacquerware and polychrome painting, eggshells, and straw marquetry techniques for boxes, bowls, furniture and wall-decor. In 2021, Cambodia exported around \$380,000 of lacquered furniture, decoration, and pots (AAC, 2022:2).

For traditional textiles, one category is focussing on weaving natural fibres including silk, cotton, lotus, banana, and kapok fibres (e.g. Samatoa Lotus Textiles, Khmer Golden Silk, and Cotton Club) while others focus on natural textile dyes (e.g. Institute for Khmer Traditional Textiles, Goel Community, and Kei Khmer) (AAC, 2022:2). Silk is the most important textile fibre; Cambodian silk products are appreciated for their various designs, quality, and hand-weaving techniques. SMEs in the handicrafts sector do face some challenges due to the lack of a transparent and effective regulatory regime, and they have difficulty regarding standards, registration, technical measures, licensing, certification, and export processes.

Along with the continuously rapid economic growth, Cambodia's dynamic and diversified business conglomerates are responsible for their vast expansion under their nationwide reputable brand names. Such conglomerates are under the leadership of domestic investors, *oknha*, and *neak oknha* (a social status given by the government to business tycoons), Vattanac Group, Royal Group, and Chip Mong Group. They are expanding their businesses under one brand or through a similar approach in various industries including property development, construction, media and entertainment, banking and financing, hotels, resorts, and trade.

Chapter 5

Case Studies of Branding in Cambodia

1. Introduction

This section examines leading Cambodia products and services in agriculture, DX, and other areas that are considered successful or to be potentially successful with respect to branding. Malys Angkor and Kampot pepper represent agriculture; Agribuddy and MeetDoctor are tech startups; Bakong, ABA, and Wing Bank are in the FinTech sector; and Vattanac is a corporation. These studies are based on internet research, published reports, journal articles, and official websites of targeted entities. Further, direct interviews on the actual utilisation of branding were conducted with persons in charge of Agribuddy and KPPA.

2. Agriculture

2.1. Rice

At the Sixth Rice Forum in 2018, a new unified rice label – Malys Angkor – was released. The Malys Angkor rice brand is a certification mark, under the ownership of the Cambodian Rice Federation. Its new branding strategy is pivotal to boosting the reputation and demand for Cambodian rice abroad, ensuring that the product meets high quality standards and is produced only in certain areas (Sok, 2018a). The Malys Angkor label helps differentiate this rice from other types in the region.

Figure 5.1. Label of Malys Angkor Premium Aromatic Rice



Source: Cambodia Rice Federation (2023).

The brand Malys Angkor is registered with MOC, WIPO, and 100 countries (CRF, 2021). It contains the varieties of Phka Romdeng, Phka Romduol, Phka Romeat, and Phka Malis, with a purity of 92% (AMS, 2020). It won the World's Best Rice award for the fifth time in 2022; the Cambodia Rice Federation mentioned that the award will boost the country's image, add value to Cambodian rice, and help promote the Malys Angkor brand – as well as other Cambodian rice – to the international market. It has promoted the relevant stakeholders to use the Cambodian branding 'Malys Angkor' to cover more Cambodian premium fragrant rice in local and international markets (Sok, 2018c).

2.2. Kampot Pepper

Kampot pepper⁵³ has been registered by MOC since April 2010 as a GI product in Cambodia, in Viet Nam since December 2016, in Thailand since March 2017, and in the EU since February 2016. The registration of Kampot pepper as a protected geographical indication (PGI) in the EU allows all producers located within the geographical area who meet the conditions defined in the specifications to use the protected designation of origin, references, and symbols of the EU and association labels (Lao, 2017). Kampot pepper is the first Cambodian product and the only pepper in the world that has acquired this status.⁵⁴ This status is also a guarantee that the pepper has been grown in appropriate

⁵³ Kampot pepper is named after the southern province of Kampot, the region which provides exceptional qualities and unique attributes to fruits and plants, specifically pepper. It is grown in some districts of Kampot Province and of the neighbouring province of Kep. The main elements of the brand are its special geographical conditions (i.e. the sea, mountains, and land), its varieties, the traditional technique for planting, and its reputation.

⁵⁴ KPPA, Production, <https://www.kampotpepper-kppa.com/production/>

climatic conditions, complying with strict standards of farming methods and techniques.⁵⁵

Cambodia has recorded Kampot Pepper as the first GI registered via the Geneva Act of WIPO's Lisbon system, which provides protection for names identifying the geographic origin of products such as coffee, tea, cheese, wine, pottery, and cloth (WIPO, 2021). Kampot pepper's international registration under the Lisbon System will further contribute to this success internationally. Through one single registration procedure with the Lisbon system, Kampot pepper obtained protection in all contracting parties to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement; local producers can enforce their rights in more than 30 countries, including the EU Member States (WIPO, 2021).

The Kampot pepper GI is managed by KPPA.⁵⁶ It was officially established in 2009 with the support of MOC, Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques, and Cambodian Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture.⁵⁷ The current membership of KPPA is nearly 500 and increases yearly.⁵⁸ Being the GI owner of Kampot pepper, KPPA protects and promotes Kampot pepper, the farmers, their plantations, and the rich history of Kampot pepper and offers its members educational resources and networking opportunities, while encouraging the highest standards of pepper production to ensure quality and authenticity.⁵⁹ KPPA also serves as the governing body tasked to ensure that all pepper sold under the Kampot pepper brand passes all requirements in the book of specifications. KPPA works with farmers and processors to help them become members, as well as towards continued maintenance and inspections to guarantee the product – from planting and fertilisation to irrigation, pest control, harvesting, processing, and storage.⁶⁰

The Cambodia Pepper and Spice Federation⁶¹ is also aiming to promote pepper production in line with safety and organic standards. The trend of using such standards has increased; in addition, the federation will further promote organic pepper in the EU that is not under GI (Chea, 2022b).

Authentic Kampot pepper must be accompanied by four compulsory certificates that determine its quality, uniqueness, and origin: a trademark proves the origin and quality,

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ KPPA is not directly involved in the trade of Kampot pepper; this is carried out by purchasing companies, which are members of KPPA. The purchasing companies have marketing strategies and directly provide or export the products to their target customers, although these were not included in the scope of this survey.

⁵⁷ KPPA, <https://www.kampotpepper-kppa.com/>

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*





⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ This was established in November 2018 by several key players in the pepper sub-sector to be a national-level coordinator promoting Cambodian pepper and support body that functions for the benefit of local producers, processors, and exporters. See CPSF, Pepper, <https://cpsa-growasia.org/en/pepper/>

the PGI, specification of a given PGI (i.e. a guarantee that the pepper has been grown in the most appropriate climatic conditions in the world, complying with the strictest standards of farming methods and techniques), and an external control that certifies the product contains natural materials resulting from organic farming.⁶² In addition, a lot number must be on the packaging.

Table 5.1. Four Certifications for Kampot Pepper

Kampot Pepper Logo	European Union Geographical Indication	National Geographical Indication	Organic Status
			

Source: Author.

Currently, about nine companies worldwide buy Kampot pepper.⁶³ All of the 100–130 tonnes of Kampot pepper produced each year – exclusively by KPPA members – have been bought despite commanding higher prices than other varieties due to the GI tag and the crop’s superior quality. Indeed, following national GI registration, the product witnessed a steep increase in its export sales, with about 70% of the production addressed to the international market, as well as a three-fold increase in its average purchase price (at farm gate), rising from an average of US\$7.50 pre-registration to US\$22.70 10 years after registration (WIPO, 2021).

Kampot pepper is mostly exported to the EU, but KPPA is looking to expand its market to other countries – China, Japan, and South Korea – to boost production (Chea, 2022a). In 2021, KPPA supplied about 110 tonnes to exporting companies, which are partners of the association. Although the export of Kampot pepper declined in 2022⁶⁴ – perhaps due to consumers cutting spending on non-essential goods as Europe’s economy slowed down

⁶² KPPA, Production, <https://www.kampotpepper-kppa.com/production/>

⁶³ A Czechia-based private company signed a contract to purchase 35–40 tonnes of Kampot peppercorn from more than 200 households under KPPA. Last year, the same company ordered around 18–19 tonnes (Sok, 2022).

⁶⁴ Cambodia exported only 79 tonnes of Kampot pepper, down 30.7% from 114 tonnes 2021, while 85.0% of the pepper was shipped to the EU and the remaining 15.0% was sold to other countries, including the United States, Canada, China, Japan, and South Korea.

– Cambodia and China signed a memorandum of understanding in November 2022 on the phytosanitary requirements for pepper export. This is paving the way for the direct shipment of Cambodian pepper to China (China.org.cn, 2023). Additionally, a brand selling Cambodian pepper will be bringing their products to the international market via Alibaba (*Khmer Times*, 2023). In January 2023, Cambodia and China will complete the processes, and Cambodia will be able to officially export pepper to China.

3. Tech Startups

3.1. Agribuddy

Agribuddy, founded in 2015, connects the rural agriculture ecosystem by providing farmers with access to crop financing while assisting them with modern agriculture practices. Agribuddy also leverages its technology platform to process data, aggregate market information, and manage supply chain risks (*Khmer Times*, 2018).⁶⁵ Currently, Agribuddy operates in a few regions of Banteay Meanchey, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kratie, Pailin, Siem Reap, and Tbongkumum, which produce the major crops of maize and paddy rice. The future goal of Agribuddy is to penetrate 100% into every province across Cambodia. To date, Agribuddy has provided services to over 10,000 individuals, who must be smallholder farmers and be under 65 years of age. The number of customers selected has been roughly 30% of the total customers approached.

Agribuddy's digital platform is both a mobile application and a web application, which farmers use alongside a 'buddy', who serves as the main source of data input⁶⁶ into the system and is mentor to farmers who are learning to use the digital platform.

The motto of Agribuddy is 'making farmers happy'; it has an orange brand colour with a logo. The persona of Agribuddy is all about convenience and assurance. Its unique one-stop agriculture solution is divided into three broader dimensions – agriculture inputs, agri-services, and harvesting – that cover the entire plantation cycle. Agriculture inputs supply farmers with top-quality branded products involving seeds, organic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. For agri-services, Agribuddy provides ploughing and drone services, whereas drone sprays eliminate the long-term hazards of pesticides and insecticide. Ultimately, Agribuddy also owns a top-notch harvester from Japan and offers its customers better – and help with their – harvests.

Most farms need to run their business for 4–6 months without any income – a significant investment for often the poorest people. Agribuddy thus provides farmers with tools to

⁶⁵ The chief executive officer saw potential in the young economy of Cambodia, primarily in the agriculture sector, where there was a lack of infrastructure and development, and discovered a solution to improve the rural economy through his experience of operating a 1,000-hectare cassava plantation. He established a brand focussing on improving the rural economy and contributing to a sustainable food supply in the future.

⁶⁶ As many farmers in Cambodia often fail to record their agriculture data or economic history, Agribuddy acts as a one-stop solution, noting capital, inputs, agronomy, and crop sales.

obtain financial loans, which they can pay back with their harvests, while still making a profit. This is bundled with some extra benefits of expert agronomy advice technology and best industry practices, which helps them yield quality crops. It supports financial institutions as a facilitator and helps suppliers of agriculture input as well as agriculture service providers assist processing companies, such as rice millers (*Phnom Penh Post*, 2019). Agribuddy also collects and transports all farmers' crops, upsells them to multi-national partners, pays off farmer debts, and then disperses the profits (Ravn, 2020).

For this, Agribuddy actively promotes and uses digital cashless fund transfers using third parties across Cambodia, ensuring financial security within the entire ecosystem, and prohibits using cash in rural areas as a part of its strict internal policy. Farmers who join Agribuddy need no investment upfront to buy the products; they can offset the payment of purchases of goods and services from their crops at harvest time.⁶⁷

Throughout the years, it has grown its connection with its customers. Relying on word of mouth, a responsible person (e.g. the district chief of the provincial department of agriculture) becomes a solid contact to enhance the brand's position in a customer's mind. Its practical strategy in rural areas is rooted in its connection with certain agriculture cooperatives and working with specific agriculture influencers to promote its brand. Indeed, due to the low penetration of smartphones in rural areas, digital marketing has not been effective for Agribuddy.

In addition, Agribuddy demonstrates visibly authentic products to farmers, including actual specimens of seeds that farmers buy from Agribuddy. Agribuddy also uses digital videos, projectors, tablets, and speakers to train its team internally and to maintain a standardised and consistent brand message to its potential customers. It has pamphlets, booklets, and brochures as a part of internal marketing collaterals, which showcase the experience and final products of those who have been part of the Agribuddy ecosystem.

Since the commencement of its enterprise, Agribuddy has been aware others copying its business model. Some former employees began their own company with a similar name and business model, which initially caused much confusion amongst farmers. Today, Agribuddy is working to retain its reputation in the market. Since 2015, Agribuddy has been the company's only brand and has not been diverted into any productions, reverse integration, or private labels. Agribuddy has no plans to change the brand direction from the agriculture sector, although it does hope to expand the business model to establish its multiple product lines and to reverse integrate to produce numerous agriculture product brands.

⁶⁷ This is unlike the traditional method, where people request loans with high interest rates and offer their agriculture land as collateral to buy products from local un-branded stores.

3.2. MeetDoctor

MeetDoctor is a digital platform that connects patients with doctors in Cambodia. It also offers a variety of services, including online consultations, medicine delivery, and home lab testing.⁶⁸ People can access MeetDoctor via its website, Telegram, and Facebook. It ultimately aims to assist individuals living in the provinces to see health care professionals whenever and wherever needed as well as to promote digital medical knowledge to doctors (Mao, 2022). It desires to provide medical care available to every single citizen, at an affordable cost, from urban areas to the most remote area, while also improving quality of treatment by connecting with doctors and hospitals abroad.

MeetDoctor currently offers doctors from 18 specialisations, from internal medicine to brain surgery. Dermatologists, psychiatrists, and internists are three of the top specialisations. Since February 2021, MeetDoctor has received more than 30,000 patients; most are from Phnom Penh as they have better access to the internet and tend to understand telehealth (Mao, 2022).

In 2022, MeetDoctor received an investment from IG Group, a startup, innovation, transformation, and trading conglomerate (*Cambodianess*, 2022). This investment fully funded the pre-seeding ask in form of capital investment and support for tech development, strategic business growth, and expansion.

4. FinTech

4.1. Bakong

Bakong⁶⁹ is a mobile payment and banking platform initiated by NBC for peer-to-peer fund transfer services available to customers of local banks, financial institutions, and payment service providers in Cambodia. It allows customers of all participating banks to transfer funds easily by scanning QR codes and keying in phone numbers to send/receive money or to make QR payments to other local financial institutions. In addition, Bakong offers customers the possibility to link their e-wallets to bank accounts, enabling fund transfers from Bakong accounts to other bank accounts and vice versa (NBC, 2021a). It was designed to modernise the payment system in Cambodia and to respond to the growth of the economy and FinTech. Bakong is not the central digital currency of NBC, but it is a backbone payment system enabling interoperability between institutions, enhancing the efficiency and security of a payment system, encouraging financial

⁶⁸ MeetDoctor was initiated by a 27-year-old graduate of medicine, Nit Buntongyi. He came up with the idea after visiting the United States and discovering how accessible the health care system is there for individuals who have difficulty accessing services (Mao, 2022).

⁶⁹ The name 'Bakong' comes from a famous Khmer temple from the 9th century whose architecture was replicated to build the Cambodian Independence Monument in 1958. The name represents the independence, territorial integrity, and pride of the Khmer nation. The logo of the Bakong system is also based on the structure of the Bakong temple as seen from the top down.

inclusion, and promoting the use of the riel.

Bakong aims to address the issues of interconnectivity and interoperability across platforms of payment operators, eliminating the need for non-digitised banks and payment service institutions to develop their own mobile applications while allowing those with existing mobile applications to easily integrate through OpenAPI.

In 2016, NBC established a working group to explore the use of blockchain and distributed ledger technology in payment systems. NBC studied the degree to which blockchain technology can be adopted in Cambodia to bring about benefits. By early 2017, the group had developed use-cases under the auspices of Project Bakong, which embraced the use of blockchain technology to modernise its national payment system. Bakong was officially launched in October 2020 with participation from many banks and payment service institutions (NBC, 2020).

To ensure smooth implementation of Bakong, the platform preserves most existing payment system features, including the Fast Payment Service, and was upgraded by using Hyperledger Iroha – a permissioned blockchain network – as a core system (The Asian Banker, 2020). It also maintained existing user interfaces, the application programming interface, and client module of the current Fast Payment Service. Bakong preserved existing business processes and authentication requirements, utilising Hyperledger Iroha's roles based on an access control permission system and native multi-signature capabilities to model processes. Finally, Bakong enabled plug-and-play mode for participating in the new payment platform; existing participants can join the platform without re-investing in system integration.

Upon joining the Bakong network, the participant receives a domain that allows it to create accounts for its customers. Customers can access their accounts via the Bakong mobile or desktop apps or via a participant's custom app. Transactions can be carried out in a decentralised manner (i.e. end-users can conduct transactions directly with other end-users in the same or with different participating institutions) where NBC performs the validation of the transactions within the permissioned blockchain network. Initiating and settling payment transactions are in real time with final settlement, and the transaction time drops to less than 5 seconds with high transaction throughput. The sender's balance is debited, and a receiver's balance is credited in a single, automatically executed operation. Finally, all payment transaction data are stored in distributed storage (i.e. Hyperledger Iroha blockchain network).

According to NBC, there are 70 members participating in Bakong, including 46 banking members⁷⁰ and 24 members in technical integration (NBC, 2023g). The number of

⁷⁰ ABA Bank, Acleda, Agriculture and Rural Development Bank, AMK, Amret, APD Bank, Asia Wei Luy, Bank of China, BIC Bank, BIDC, Bongloy, Bred Bank, Cambodia Asia Bank, Cambodia Post Bank, Cambodian Public Bank, Cathay, Canadia Bank, Chief Bank, ChipMong, Cool Cash, E-Money, FTB, Hattha Bank, Hong Leong Bank, iPay88, Kookmin Bank, LOLC, Ly Hour Pay Pro,

Bakong subscriber accounts reached 254,000, with transactions in riels and US dollars totalling 1.7 trillion and 1.9 billion, respectively (NBC, 2023g).

Figure 5.2. Bakong Banking Members



Source: Bakong, Home, <https://bakong.nbc.gov.kh/en/>

On 4 January 2022, Nikkei announced that Bakong had won an award for excellence in the 2021 Nikkei Superior Products and Services Awards for its innovative technology and impact on the country's economic and social development (Kunmakara, 2023).

4.2. ABA Bank

ABA Bank is one of Cambodia's premier banking institutions, founded in 1996 as the Advanced Bank of Asia Limited and originally set up to provide the limited number of corporate clients in Cambodia with commercial banking services.⁷¹ In July 2014, the National Bank of Canada became the major shareholder of ABA, holding 90% of the bank's

Maybank, Mohanokor MFI, Oriental Bank, PHB Bank, Phillip Bank, Pipay, PPCB, Prasac, Prince, Sathapana Bank, SBI Lyhour Bank, Shinhan Bank, Speedpay, True Money, Vattanac Bank, U-Pay Digital, Wing Bank, and Woori Bank. See Bakong, Home, <https://bakong.nbc.gov.kh/en/>

⁷¹ ABA, History, <https://www.ababank.com/about-us/history/>

shares in 2016.⁷² The National Bank of Canada acquired the remaining 10% stake in ABA Bank and increased its ownership to 99.99% in 2019.⁷³

ABA Bank launched the country's most technologically advanced internet banking service, ibank, in 2008. The Pay&Go payment system was implemented in 2013, allowing clients to top up their accounts through ATMs and bank branches. Cash-in machines also enabled repayment of loans and replenishment of deposit accounts with cash. In 2015, ABA Mobile was launched, the first full-scale mobile banking app in Cambodia. Then, in 2016, ABA in cooperation with NBC and 13 financial institutions officially launched FAST Payment, a new service that enables customers to receive funds immediately in response to their liquidity needs.

As a response to the growing demand for depositing cash within the self-banking outlets, ABA Bank installed advanced cash deposit machines also in 2016. To boost online business in Cambodia, the Payway e-commerce gateway was launched, and an online account opening web service was introduced to ease the client onboarding process in 2017. In 2018, ABA partnered with Visa and other Cambodian commercial banks to introduce QR payments in Cambodia.

The Payway mobile app turns any smartphone into a mobile point-of-sale terminal to generate QR codes and to accept cashless payments (ABA Bank, 2021). Additionally, the app offers the opportunity to share a payment link on a product or service via different messenger applications. Payway comes with sophisticated monitoring, reporting, business management, and refund features as well. An internet banking for the business platform was also redesigned, and with a newly introduced host-to-host solution, virtual account features, and integration with major online accounting platforms like QuickBooks and Xero, the platform became a tool for businesses to manage their finances (ABA Bank, 2021).

ABA also became a member of Bakong to enable domestic transfers and to promote financial inclusion and the use of local currency. It enhanced its mobile banking app with numerous features and services, such as Visa Direct, instant loans, Ria money transfers, special account numbers, MoneyGram transfers, and support of the Chinese language.

⁷² The logo of ABA was updated to denote membership in National Bank of Canada Group in 2017.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

Table 5.2. Establishment Information for ABA Bank

Information	Detail
Company registration	00010593 dated 29 December 2010
License number	B14 issued by the National Bank of Cambodia dated 25 January 2021
Disclosure document registration number	155/19 SECC dated 7 August 2019
Trademark registration	KH/2013/43445, KH/2013/43456 dated 13 February 2013

Source: Author.

In 2009, ABA was re-branded under the name of ABA Bank, and a new advertisement campaign was launched. ABA Bank updated its logo in 2017 to denote membership in National Bank of Canada Group and to emphasise its traditional strengths, innovation, reputation in the market, and credibility (ABA Bank, 2017). It demonstrates that one of the largest financial institutions from the North American continent securely backs up ABA Bank.

Figure 5.3. ABA Bank Logo



Source: Author.

ABA Bank has significantly strengthened its position in the market and has become Cambodia's largest commercial bank by assets, deposits, loans, and profitability.⁷⁴ It offers the entire spectrum of services to customer segments, including corporations, SMEs, micro businesses, and individuals with more than 80 branches, 1,200 self-banking machines, and advanced online and mobile banking platforms.⁷⁵ Its team that is committed to maintaining and improving the bank's performance, and its international

⁷⁴ ABA, About Us, <https://www.ababank.com/en/about-us/>

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

management team brings invaluable expertise and allows ABA Bank to comply with international standards of service and security.

The core values of the bank are honesty and respect, trust and partnership, ethics and morals, service quality, contribution, sustainability, and growth.⁷⁶ ABA Bank aims to be the country's number one supplier of dependable, easy-to-use, technologically advanced, and easily accessible banking services and to be the bank that Cambodians trust. Further, its mission is to help Cambodia, Cambodian businesses, and Cambodian people to build a bigger and brighter future by providing highly professional, technologically advanced banking services for all. The bank positions itself as a partner of the Cambodian community as well as private businesses and individuals (ABA Bank, 2021).

The development of their services is focussed on digitalisation (ABA Bank, 2017). ABA Bank is further investing in Payway, which it views as a good opportunity to increase penetration on the microbusiness level (ABA Bank, 2017). In 2018, ABA Bank deployed a new digital multi-channel platform, which introduces a new corporate internet banking service for the retail segment. Acknowledging the importance of FinTech, it believes that its innovations along with those of FinTech will help enhance the services the industry provides to customers (ABA Bank, 2017).

Currently, ABA Bank provides the following services: bank accounts and deposits; business loans; a mobile app; payment cards (i.e. debit cards, credit cards, point-of-sale terminals); trade finance (i.e. letters of credit, documentary collection, bank guarantees); money transfers; self-banking channels (i.e. ABA Mobile, internet banking, ATMs, off-site account openings, cash-in machines); Manulife Insurance; and tax collection.

ABA Bank has been recognised as the country's best bank several consecutive times by the world's most prominent financial magazines and has received the following awards:⁷⁷

- (i) Best Domestic Bank in Cambodia 2021 by *Asiamoney*;
- (ii) Domestic Retail Bank of the Year in Cambodia in 2021 and 2022 by *Asian Banking & Finance* for its improvement of digital banking platforms used to serve customers as well as its network expansion in 2020.
- (iii) Best Bank for Digital Solutions in Cambodia 2022 from *Asiamoney*; and
- (iv) Best Bank in Cambodia 2023 by *Global Finance* (ABA Bank, 2023).

ABA Bank's deposit portfolio equalled US\$6.7 billion in the first quarter of 2022, representing a 6% increase from the last quarter of 2021. The customer base in Q1 2022 grew by another 8%, and the number of customer accounts reached 2.2 million. During the period, it also continued improving its ABA Mobile app by bringing new convenient

⁷⁶ ABA Bank, Vision, Missions, Value, <https://www.ababank.com/about-us/vision-mission-values/>

⁷⁷ ABA, Awards, (<https://www.ababank.com/en/about-us/awards/>), last accessed on 14 March 2023.

service and features, such as an ID feature for easier transfers and payments; KHQR service to enable merchants to collect cashless payments from ABA Mobile users and customers of all other banks; service section to pay for different services while discovering special offers across various categories; and Mastercard and UnionPay card-to-card transfers.

In February, ABA Bank introduced the first-in-Cambodia card machine. It allows ABA customers to be issued a card immediately at an ABA branch or 24/7 self-banking spot without any involvement of bank staff. Within 3 months after the launch, customers have received 50,000 cards via the machines.

ABA's physical network has also expanded and improved. It opened its first branch in Oddar Meanchey Province and introduced five more ABA 24/7 self-banking spots in high-traffic areas in Phnom Penh (ABA Bank, 2022). In the first quarter of 2022, the profit for the period was KHR274,675 million, 42.54% higher than the first quarter of 2021. As a result, its return on average equity was 6.24% and return on average assets was 0.84% for the first quarter as of 31 March 2022 (ABA Bank, 2022).

4.3. Wing

Wing began as a third-party payment-processing company established in 2008, transforming to Wing (Cambodia) Limited somaited Specialist Bank in 2014 and ultimately a commercial bank in December 2020. Now, it is one of Cambodia's leading mobile banking service providers, providing money transfers, payroll services, bill payments, phone top-ups, international transfers, and partnerships with more than 55,000 merchants including global industry leaders like Mastercard, Visa, Western Union, MoneyGram, and Ria (B2B Cambodia, 2021). Wing is chaired by Kith Meng, who is also a chair of the Royal Group of companies of which Wing is a part.

Wing's founder was ANZ Bank, who aimed to facilitate financial services via mobile phones to Cambodians. However, within the first 3 years of operation, Wing could not reach its goal, leading the founder to sell the business. The Royal Group saw potential, although only less than 10% of Cambodians had bank accounts and the internet penetration rate was low (Luy Book, 2020). The direction of Wing was thus changed by adding more Wing agents to gain more trust as well as to help consumers with digital transactions. Since then, Wing has had an important role in contributing to financial inclusion in Cambodia (Luy Book, 2020).

The most popular amongst Wing's services is Wei Luy Express. If both the sender and receiver do not have a Wing account, they still can transfer and receive money easily through Wing agents and phone numbers. Currently, there are almost 10,000 Wing Cash Xpress agents nationwide.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Wing Bank, Wing Wei Luy, <https://www.wingbank.com.kh/en/personal/transfer-money/>

Table 5.3. Establishment Information of Wing Bank

Company Registration	18 August 2018
License Number	
Trademark Registration	19 October 2022 (Wing) 27 May 2022 (Wing Bank)

Source: MOC (2023).

Wing’s vision is to provide every Cambodian with convenient access to mobile financial services relevant to, and for the improvement of, their daily lives.⁷⁹ Wing Bank’s missions are as follows.

- (i) **Customer at the heart.** Engage and understand customer needs, provide best-in-class products and services, and be responsive and quick in resolving queries.
- (ii) **Employees as the pillar.** Provide a progressive work culture where career aspirations can be realised through consistent performance and demonstration of the bank’s core values.
- (iii) **Community as the cause.** Deliver robust and cost-effective mobile money services that promote financial inclusion, catalyse growth, and reduce social inequalities.
- (iv) **Deliver shareholder value.** Demonstrate strong corporate governance standards that protect and balance shareholder interests in the journey to achieving short- and long-term business goals.⁸⁰

Figure 5.4. Logos of Wing and Wing Bank



Source: Author.

Wing Bank has been a big proponent of green banking in Cambodia. With the largest digital ecosystem, Wing is living up to its vision of improving the lives of every Cambodian

⁷⁹ Wing Bank, About Us, <https://www.wingbank.com.kh/en/about-wing/#>

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

through convenient, relevant, and socially responsible banking products (Wing Bank, 2022). Indeed, financial inclusion and Cambodia's economic prosperity of the community are the key to Wing's activities, aiming to provide individual consumers and corporate customers, whether banked or unbanked, with a full array of financial products, services, and access, integrating them into broader digital ecosystem. Wing Bank also has innovative savings products that provide every Cambodian with the ability to plan for his/her financial needs and build their creditworthiness (Wing Bank, 2022). The more he/she uses Wing Bank Services, the closer he/she is to building up credit scores to be eligible for quick loans.

Generally, Wing Bank provides services (e.g. money transfers, phone top-ups, bill payments); accounts (e.g. cash in and cash out, savings, term deposits); cards (MasterCard, Visa); and other products (e.g. Ministry of Civil Service card, salary advances, and quick loans).

Wing Bank covers 100% of districts in Cambodia, with over 10,000 Wing Cash Xpress agents, over 55,000 merchants, and partnerships with industry giants such as Mastercard, MoneyGram, AliPay, WeChat Pay, Western Union, Visa, and Ria. Through its app, Wing Bank offers over 100 digital solutions. In 2021 alone, over 566 corporate companies, 2,777 SMEs, and 10 government agencies used its payroll and disbursement services (Wing Bank, 2021). In addition, over 80% of Wing's agents and 50% of customers are women, making Wing an example of gender inclusion in the region.

Wing Bank is the payment partner of CambodiaTrade, which was rolled out in mid-June 2021, providing a fully integrated platform for SMEs to expand their reach through e-commerce (Wing Bank, 2021). As of 2021, the net profit for the period was US\$12,683,814, an increase of 19%.

5. Vattanac

Vattanac Group and its subsidiaries were initiated by a leading Cambodian businessperson, Sam Ang.⁸¹ It began as a construction and real estate firm and expanded to a financial institution, beverage manufacturer, and resort owner.

⁸¹ The Vattanac brand was named after his son, Sam Ang Vattanac.

Table 5.4. Vattanac Businesses

Name	Activities	Website
Vattanac Brewery	Vattanac Premium Beer, Dragon Premium Dark Beer, Krud, manufacturer of beverages.	
Vattanac Group	Residence, construction of buildings	
Vattanac Investment	Retail sale of other goods in specialised stores, clothing, and accessories	https://www.vattanacinvestment.com/
Vattanac Properties	Real estate activities on a fee or contract basis	https://www.hrincjobs.com/company-profile/5137
Vattanac F&B	Retail sale of tea, coffee, and other beverages	
Vattanac Capital	Shopping centre, retail sale of other goods in specialised stores	https://www.vattanaccapital.com/
Vattanac Bank	Commercial bank	https://www.vattanacbank.com/
Vattanac Golf Resort	Resort, sports, amusement, and recreation activities	https://www.vattanacgolfresort.com/

Source: Author.

Amongst all business activities of Vattanac, Vattanac Capital – a commercial building shaped like a dragon's back and incorporating elements of feng shui and traditional Naga motifs – is Phnom Penh's most prestigious commercial address and is the most well-known of the Vattanac group.⁸² Vattanac Capital is the first Gold LEED-certified⁸³ tower in Phnom Penh, which set the benchmark for sustainable development, raised the bar for building environmental performance, and exceeded all occupants' expectations.⁸⁴ Vattanac Capital also offers the city's leading luxury retail space, defined by its iconic style and elegance to deliver global luxury brands to shoppers with the highest international standards.

⁸² Vattanac Capital, About Us, <https://www.vattanaccapital.com/company/about-us/>

⁸³ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Branding

I. History of Establishment of Rights

1. When was the brand established?
2. How was the brand established?
3. What kind of brand does your company have?
4. What was the main purpose when creating the brand?
5. Why did you name it xxxx?

II. Branding Concept

1. What does your company do for the brand?
2. What is the brand doing?
3. When did your company start to introduce the brand to the public?
4. What are the main elements of your brand?
5. What is your brand personality?
6. What makes your brand unique?

III. Marketing Aims

1. Who are your target customers?
2. After setting up the target customers, what is the ratio of target to untargeted customers?
3. What kind of customer does your company want?
4. How does your company grow the connection between your brand and consumers?
5. What is an effective way to attract customers? Why?
6. What is your brand direction (e.g. expansion or business trusting)?
7. Does your company have any plans to change the brand direction?
8. How does your product or service benefit the customers?

9. What are the plans that your company has for future branding?
10. Why do people choose to do business with your company rather than your competitors?
11. Does your company cooperate with others to operate your brand (e.g. international money transfer, online payment acceptance)?
12. How many branches does your company have in Cambodia?
13. Which product or service do your customers use the most?
14. What strategies do you use to keep your customers?
15. Have you ever thought to change marketing strategies? Why and what are they?
16. What are the strategies to promote/influence your brand into the market?

IV. Method of Branding

1. How did your company introduce the brand to the customers?
2. How is your company expanding your brand?
3. Does your company have any other future plans for brand expansion? What are they? Why?
4. What are the methods, and did your company brand products/services?
5. What are the methods used to make clients trust and continue to use the brand? Why? How?

V. Effectiveness of the Branding

1. What does your company see for the future of the brand?
2. What brand method seems to be the most successful?
3. How will you measure your brand's success?
4. Are you looking to update and to refresh the existing brand? If so, please describe.

Additional Question

1. Have you ever known if your brand is used or copied by another person/entity? How do you know?

Appendix 2

Relevant Laws

Type	Name	Definitions	Language
Law	Trademark Law	Royal Decree No. NS/RKM/0202/006 dated 7 February 2002 on the Promulgation of the Law Concerning Marks, Trade Names, and Acts of Unfair Competition	English and Khmer
	Patent Law	Royal Decree No. NS/RKM/0103/005 dated 22 January 2003 on the Promulgation of the Law on Patents, Utility Model Certificates, and Industrial Designs	English and Khmer
	Amended Patent Law	Royal Decree No. NS/RKM/1117/016 dated 22 November 2017 on the Promulgation of the Law on Amendment on Articles 37, 38, 109, and 136 of the Law on Patents, Utility Model Certificates, and Industrial Designs	English and Khmer
	GI Law	Royal Decree No. NS/RKM/0114/006 dated 20 January 2014 on the Promulgation of the Law on Geographical Indications	English and Khmer
Sub-Decree	No. 64	No. 64 dated 12 July 2006 on the Sub-Decree on Implementation of the Law Concerning Marks, Trade Names, and Acts of Unfair Competition	English and Khmer
Prakas	No. 707	Prakas No. 707 dated 29 June 2005 on the Procedures for Registration of Industrial Design	English and Khmer
	No. 125	Prakas No. 125 dated 4 May 2017 on Electronic Trademark Registration Procedures	Khmer
	No. 422	Prakas No. 422 dated 29 December 2016 on the Procedures for Registration and Protection of Geographical Indication	Khmer

	No. 315	Prakas No. 315 dated 12 May 2021 on the Provision of Public Service of Ministry of Commerce	Khmer
	No. 1643	Prakas No. 1643 dated 16 December 2014 on the Amendments to the Public Service Series of the Annex List Attached to Joint Proclamation No. 945.	Khmer

Source: Author.