

# Leadership Chances for the Young Limited: Mentor

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Leadership roles in public institutions are lacking for today's youth, a development expert said Monday.

“In some institutions, young leaders who are well-educated both locally and overseas are not offered the chance to tap their full leadership potential,” Chheang Vannarith, executive director of the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace, told Hello VOA on Monday.

“Although some young people are offered the chance, they have to work on skills that are different from what they have obtained abroad,” he said “This is a waste of our valuable human resources.”

As many as 300,000 Cambodian youths are entering the labor force each year, but not many are in leadership roles in public institutions, which are dominated by their elders.

Many find no way into the labor market at all, according to the 2009 UN report on Cambodian youth.

Chheang Vannarith, who leads a young leader mentoring program, said youth leaders have longer-term visions for the development of the country.

“The simple reason is that younger leaders are going to live longer than the old, so they look at the long run,” he said.

Older public leaders should provide more experience to the young and offer them chances to develop their leadership potential, he said.

“Only until you give young people a chance to do so will you realize whether they can lead or make efficient and effective decisions,” he said. “How can you say they can't do it if you never offer them the chance to show their potential?”

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