

Too few businesses registered

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A MAJORITY of small and medium enterprises in Cambodia were not registered, despite the advantages it offered to businesses, participants at a workshop on business registration procedure, intellectual property and business etiquette for women heard yesterday.

Referring to 2011 statistics, Chan Sorey, vice-minister of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, said about 94 per cent of the estimated 505,000 enterprises in Cambodia were not registered. She said 61 per cent of these enterprises were run by women.

"Business registration is important for the development of an enterprise," Sorey told the Phnom Penh workshop, saying it allowed enterprises to be legally protected.

The workshop was organised by the Cambodia Women Entrepreneurs Association and supported by the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. It included advice on how to register businesses and protect intellectual property, and proper business etiquette.



Chan Sorey, vice-minister of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, speaks in Phnom Penh yesterday. HONG MENEA

CWEA president Seng Takakneary said she organised the workshop because many small and medium-sized enterprises still did not recognise the benefits of registration and intellectual property, and feared the time and costs of the registration process.

Takaneary said she wanted to increase awareness and encourage enterprises, mainly run by women, to register and make them realise that once a business was operating, it was essential to protect its intellectual property.

Mom Thana, deputy director at the Department of Intellectual Property Rights at the Ministry of Commerce, said intellectual property rights protected ideas, innovations and "what we invent".

She said one advantage was that it allowed enterprises to have their own trademark and go to court if someone else abused that trademark.

Local entrepreneur Tev Romdoul, who runs a business with her husband, agreed that the knowledge women lacked most was about registra-

tion and intellectual property. "We always think the registration process is quite complicated," she said.

Romdoul also said that because of their limited capital, some small enterprises were also reluctant to register and pay taxes.

According to Sou Mang, chief of bureau at the Department of Business Registration at the Ministry of Commerce, the registration of a business takes three to four days on average if all documents are correct. ■