



**RESULTS REPORT
2019–2023
UNITED NATIONS
CAMBODIA**

March 2024





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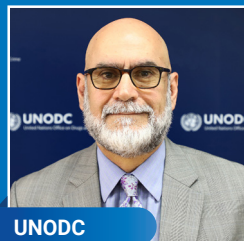
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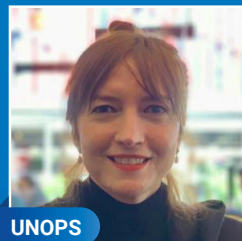
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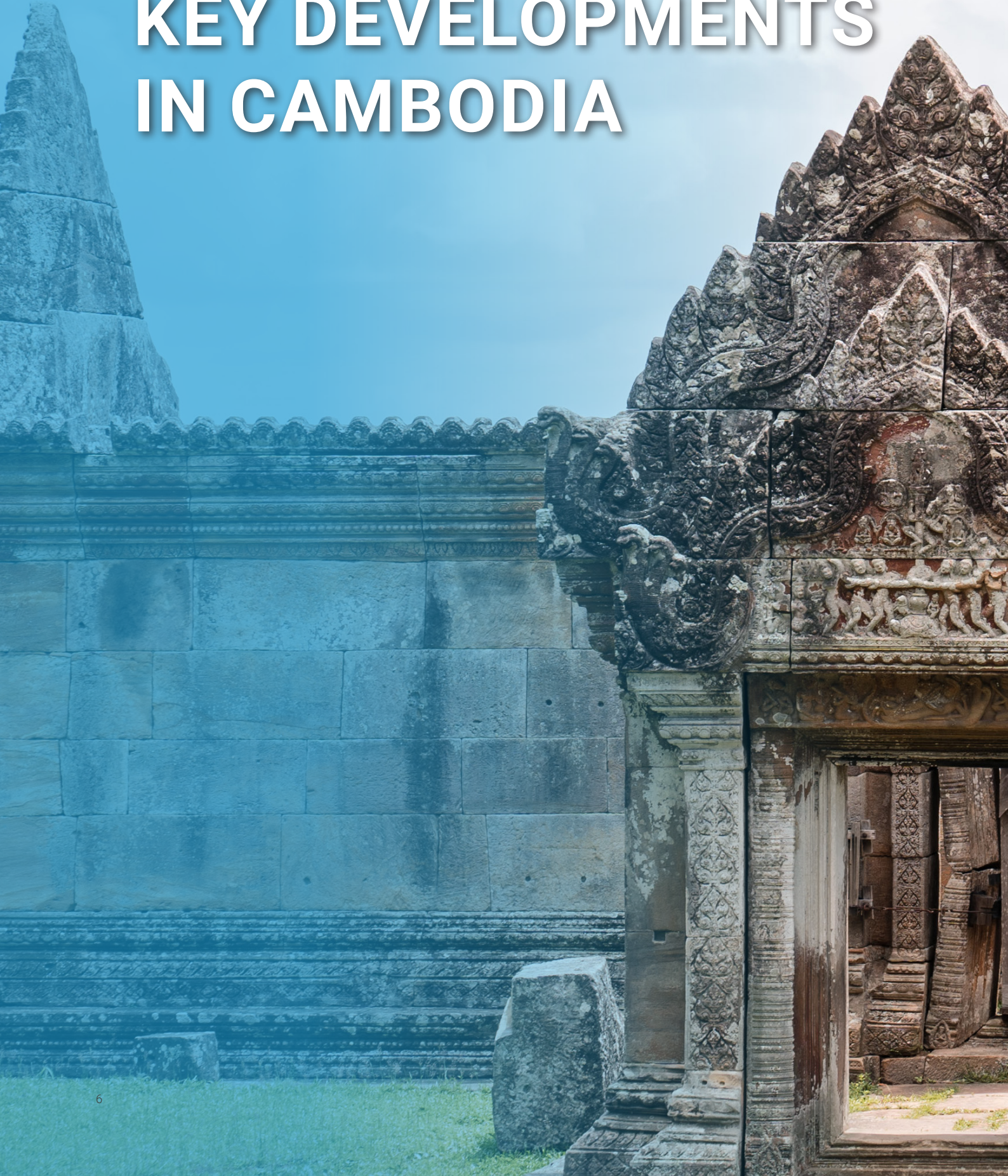
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KEY CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN CAMBODIA

- 
European Commission
- 
United States Agency for International Development
- 
Australian Agency for International Development
- 
Korea International Cooperation Agency
- 
Government of Japan
- 
Royal Government of Cambodia
- 
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- 
Capacity Development Partnership Fund
- 
Global Environment Facility
- 
Government of New Zealand
- 
Children's Investment Fund Foundation
- 
Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
- 
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria
- 
German Agency for International Cooperation
- 
Adaptation Fund
- 
Global Agriculture and Food Security Program Fund
- 
United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund
- 
United States Department of Agriculture
- 
Asian Development Bank
- 
Climate and Clean Air Coalition
- 
ChinaAid

CHAPTER 1

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN CAMBODIA





SDG SCORE

63.8

107 out of 163
(2022)¹



Population:

Approx. **17 million** (2024 estimate).

Ethnic Groups:

Khmer **97.6%**, others **2.4%**.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Government Type: Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy.

Administrative Divisions:

25
provinces, including the
capital city

Number of seats at National Assembly (2023):

125
(CPP 120 and FUNCINPEC 5)

National Assembly is headed by
a woman, with

12.8%
of parliamentarians are
women (2023)

Number of seats at Senate (2023):

62
seats (58 CPP, 2 voted by
National Assembly, 2
appointed by the King)

ECONOMY

Major Industries:

Textiles,
tourism,
agriculture,
construction.

Export Commodities:

Clothing, timber,
rubber, rice, fish,
tobacco.

Import Commodities:

Petroleum
products,
cigarettes, gold,
construction
materials.

SOCIAL INDICATORS

Literacy Rate:
Approx
87.5%.

Life Expectancy:
Approx.
69 years.

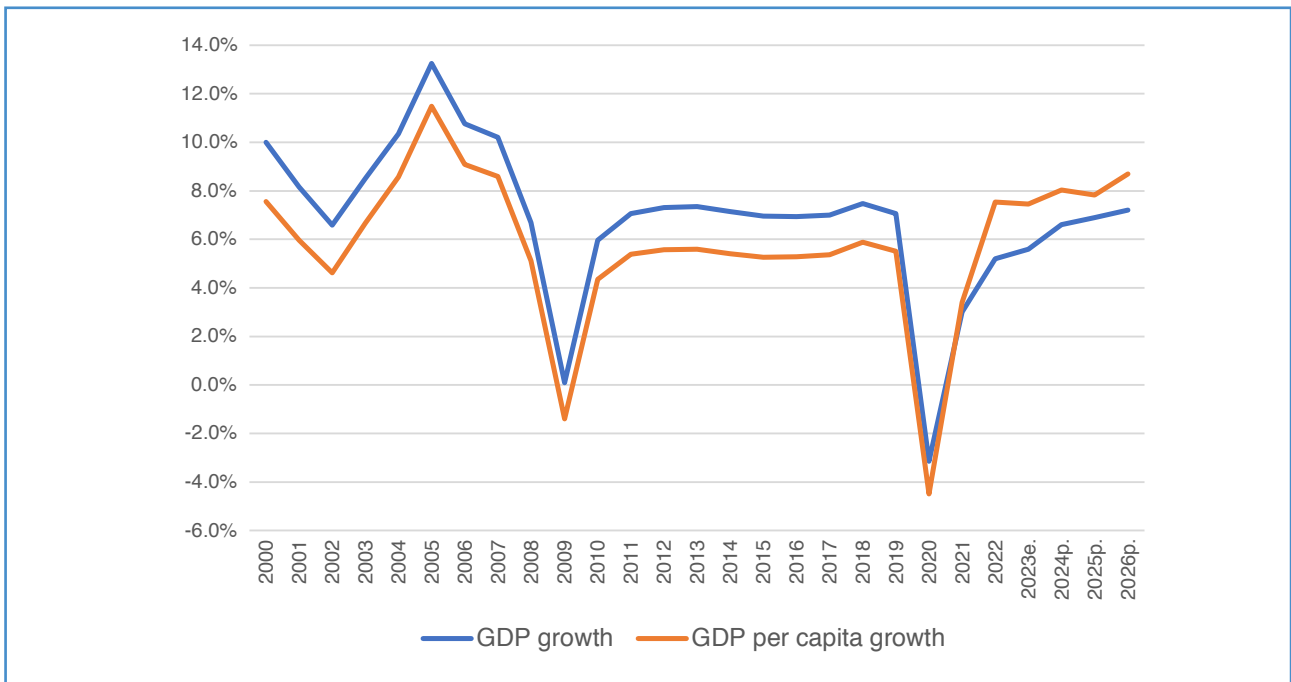
Infant Mortality Rate:
12 deaths/
1,000 live births.

Access to Clean Water:
Approx.
76% of the population.

Internet Usage:
Approx.
40% of the population.

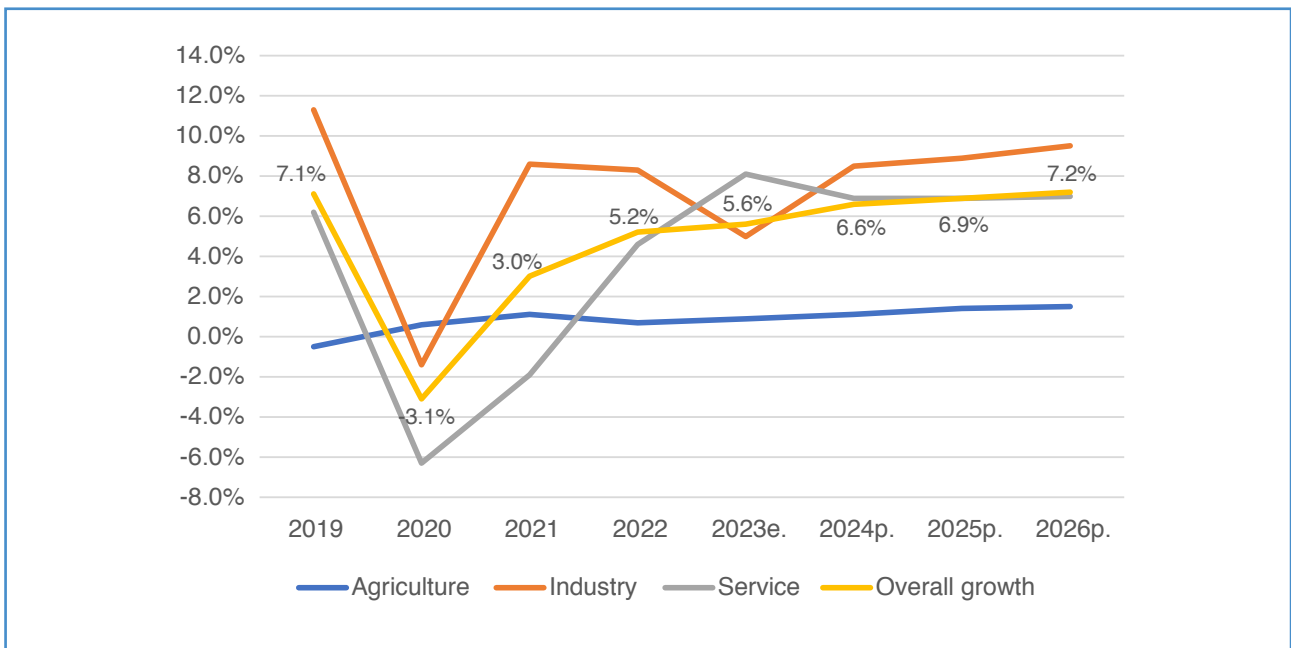
¹ Available at Sustainable Development Report 2022 Dashboards (<https://www.sustainabledevelopment.report/reports/sustainable-development-report-2022/>).

Figure 1. GDP growth performance 2000–2026



Source: World Development Indicators from the World Bank, and Macroeconomic Framework for 2024 Budget Formulation from the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Figure 2. GDP growth by sector 2019–2026



Source: Macroeconomic Framework for 2024 Budget Formulation from the Ministry of Economy and Finance.²

² GDP rebasing from 2000 to 2014 will capture new emerging sectors and may enlarge GDP volume.

SDG PROGRESS

Cambodia ranked 107 out of 163 countries in the 2022 global SDG index with a score of 63.75, which is below the East and South Asia regional average of 65.9.³

Cambodia has made extraordinary progress in reducing the prevalence of poverty (SDG 1) from 33.9 per cent in 2009 to 17.8 per cent in 2019;⁴ this figure was up only slightly to 19 per cent in 2023, despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵ This demonstrates a significant boost in national economic and social progress, placing Cambodia in a stronger position than 20 years ago. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic saw an uptick in the poverty rate by 2.8 percentage points in 2020, with an estimated 460,000 people falling back into poverty.⁶ This reversal notwithstanding, hunger levels in Cambodia have continued to fall (SDG 2),⁷ although obesity rates have conversely increased.⁸ Despite these relative improvements, the prevalence of wasting among children under 5 years of age has remained largely unchanged, at around 10 per cent.⁹

Health and well-being (SDG 3) have improved, evidenced by reductions in the infant mortality rate – from 28 deaths per 1,000 live births to 12 deaths per 1,000 live births – and the under-5 mortality rate –

from 35 deaths per 1,000 live births to 16 deaths per 1,000 live births – between 2014 and 2021/22.¹⁰ However, preventable newborn deaths still comprise a high proportion of child deaths under 5 years. A reduction in the maternal mortality rate from 170 deaths per 100,000 live births to 154 deaths per 100,000 live births was also recorded alongside a steady increase in access to, and use of, family planning.¹¹ However, there remains a large unmet need for family planning. For example, gaps remain in women's access to maternity benefits, and in the protection, promotion and fulfilment of the right to social protection.

The country is on track to eliminate malaria by 2025¹² and tuberculosis by 2030.¹³ HIV treatment coverage has increased from 77 per cent in 2018 to 86 per cent in 2022 for all people living with HIV, meaning 99 per cent of those who know their HIV status are being treated for it.¹⁴ Treatment of non-communicable diseases remains a major challenge, however, with the percentage of deaths caused by non-communicable diseases increasing from 64 per cent in 2015 to 68 per cent in 2019.¹⁵

While population health has improved with increased health service coverage, universal health coverage

³ Available at Sustainable Development Report 2022 Dashboards (<https://www.sustainabledevelopment.report/reports/sustainable-development-report-2022/>).

⁴ World Bank, Cambodia Poverty Assessment 2022: Toward A More Inclusive and Resilient Cambodia (Washington, D.C., 2022). Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/cambodia/publication/cambodia-poverty-assessment-2022-toward-a-more-inclusive-and-resilient-cambodia>.

⁵ Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation (Phnom Penh, 2022), p. v. Available at <https://data.opendevelopmentcambodia.net/en/dataset/e82593f9-8563-47ff-8aca-db6ddc49394d/resource/d12f0827-2a90-4253-8052-6edcd7262ea2/download/mtr-2021-publish-final-eng.pdf>.

⁶ Ibid., p. 20.

⁷ Available at the 2023 Global Hunger Index (<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/cambodia.html>).

⁸ Available at the Global Nutrition Report's Country Nutrition Profiles (<https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/south-eastern-asia/cambodia/>).

⁹ National Institute of Statistics (NIS) [Cambodia], Ministry of Health (MoH) [Cambodia] and ICF, Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021–22: Final Report (Phnom Penh and Rockville, Maryland, 2023). Available at https://www.nis.gov.kh/nis/CDHS/2021-22/Cambodia_DHS2021-2022_Final_Report_EN.pdf.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 147–148.

¹¹ Contraceptives are available to around 45 per cent of married women; yet, many women lack access to modern contraceptives, highlighting the importance of addressing barriers and expanding availability of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, maternal health care, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, and reproductive rights education. Prioritizing and improving sexual and reproductive health, including family planning services, maternal health care, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, is a crucial pathway towards achieving universal health coverage in Cambodia while promoting overall well-being, empowerment and equitable access to comprehensive health care.

¹² World Health Organization (WHO), "Malaria Elimination: Cambodia's Legacy for the Mekong and the World", 25 April 2022. Available at <https://www.who.int/cambodia/news/detail/25-04-2022-malaria-elimination-cambodia-s-legacy-for-the-mekong-and-the-world>.

¹³ National Institute of Statistics (NIS) [Cambodia], Ministry of Health (MoH) [Cambodia] and ICF, Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021–22: Key Indicators Report (Phnom Penh and Rockville, Maryland, 2022). Available at <https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/PR136/PR136.pdf>.

¹⁴ Joint United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), "Despite Impressive Treatment Results, Cambodia's HIV Response Must Address Inequalities Affecting Children and Young Key Populations", 5 April 2023. Available at <https://unaids-ap.org/2023/04/05/despite-impressive-treatment-results-cambodias-hiv-response-must-address-inequalities-affecting-children-and-young-key-populations/>.

¹⁵ World Bank, "Cause of Death, by Non-Communicable Diseases (% of Total) – Cambodia", Open Data database. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DTH.NCOM.ZS?locations=KH> (accessed 22 April 2024).

has not yet been attained and coverage remains lower than the regional average.¹⁶ In addition, mental health treatment capacity is exceptionally low, with only around 60 psychiatrists in the country in 2018 and no psychologist or social worker posts in public hospitals.¹⁷ Already-low treatment rates for mental health have been declining. The percentage of the adult population with depression receiving treatment decreased from just 2.1 per cent in 2019 to a mere 0.7 per cent in 2021.¹⁸

Regarding educational improvements (SDG 4), primary school completion rates rose from 82.1 per cent in 2018/19 to 86.8 per cent in 2022/23.^{19,20} Gender parity in schooling has advanced (SDGs 4 and 5), with primary school completion of female students increasing from 78.2 per cent in 2018/19 to 85.3 per cent in 2022/23. However, the COVID-19 pandemic posed a major threat to education, with many schools unable to provide services to students due to limited and unequal digital access and resources, digital capabilities and teacher competencies.²¹

There have been limited advances in gender equality (SDG 5), including increased female participation in the labour force. The Third National Action Plan on the Prevention of Violence against Women (2019–2023) was approved and more women joined the civil service, comprising 41 per cent of government civil servants in 2020.²² Accompanying an increase in the number of women joining the workforce, employment-based social protection also expanded, with one in five women now in receipt of maternity benefits. However, women continue to account for 90 per cent of the total time spent on unpaid domestic and care

work,²³ and gender-based violence (GBV) and health inequalities remain major challenges to Cambodia's pursuit of SDG 5. Gender and rural-urban disparities in educational outcomes also remain. For example, the adult literacy rate for women is 84.8 per cent, compared to 90.9 per cent for men. This gender gap is slightly wider in rural Cambodia, where the female adult literacy rate is 80.2 per cent and the male adult literacy rate is 87.8 per cent.²⁴ Social attitudes that discriminate against women in leadership persist, hindering the full participation of women in decision-making roles in both the public and political institutions, resulting in a stagnation in progress towards SDG 5.²⁵

Sustained but moderate progress has been achieved in making clean water and sanitation more accessible (SDG 6), reaching 84 per cent and 77 per cent of the rural population respectively, compared to around 60 per cent for both in 2018.²⁶ Access to energy expanded from 72.2 per cent in 2018 to 88.4 per cent by 2022, and the use of renewable energy increased from 48.9 per cent to 61.1 per cent over the same period.

Cambodia has made only modest progress towards the creation of decent jobs (SDG 8). The minimum wage rose from \$182 to \$200 per month between 2019 and 2023. The National Council for Minimum Wage in Cambodia – which includes workers, employers, and government representatives – conducts annual adjustments and improvements to the minimum wage policy following a technical review of economic and social indicators. There was a 23.4 per cent increase from 2015 to 2022 in the

¹⁶ Ziauddin Hyder and Nareth Ly (World Bank Blogs), "Cambodia: Progressing Toward Universal Health Coverage", 6 May 2021. Available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/health/cambodia-progressing-toward-universal-health-coverage>.

¹⁷ Sofia Olofsson, Miguel San Sebastian and Bhoomikumar Jegannathan, "Mental Health in Primary Health Care in a Rural District of Cambodia: A Situational Analysis", *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, vol. 12, No. 7 (2018). Available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5782361/pdf/13033_2018_Article_185.pdf.

¹⁸ RGC, Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 34.

¹⁹ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) [Cambodia], *Education Congress: The Education, Youth and Sport Performance in the Academic Year 2020–2021 and Goals for the Academic Year 2021–2022* (Phnom Penh, 2022). Available at https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/cambodia_education_congress_report_2021-2022_eng.pdf.

²⁰ World Bank, "Primary Completion Rate, Total (% of Relevant Age Group) – Cambodia", Open Data database. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.CMPT.ZS?locations=KH> (accessed 22 April 2024).

²¹ RGC, Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 31.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 37–39.

²³ United Nations in Cambodia, *Cambodia Common Country Analysis* (Phnom Penh, January 2023), p. 18. Available at https://cambodia.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/FINAL_CCA%202022_CAMBODIA.pdf.

²⁴ National Institute of Statistics (NIS) [Cambodia] and Ministry of Planning (MoP) [Cambodia], *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019* (Phnom Penh, June 2019), p. 44. Available at <https://cambodia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/PopCen2019-PrevReport%20-Final-Eg-27%20July%202019.pdf>.

²⁵ RGC, Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 40.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

purchasing capacity of minimum wage earners.²⁷ However, as the majority of employment is not covered by the minimum wage or is in the informal economy, the minimum wage increase alone may not be sufficient to ensure decent work.²⁸

There is limited information on the reduction of inequalities (SDG 10) in Cambodia; however, there are some minor indications that inequalities have reduced due to a rise in the percentage of the population covered by social and health protection systems (e.g., Health Equity Funds and Social Health Insurance schemes), which increased from 38.5 per cent in 2019 to 39.5 per cent in 2020.²⁹ Additionally, emergency programmes providing assistance to victims of disasters, the poor, homeless and other vulnerable populations have been implemented, and further support is available to persons with disabilities, including subsidized health screenings, rehabilitation services, vocational training, employment policies and the social security fund.³⁰ Further opportunities to reduce inequalities remain, including providing support to orphans and vulnerable children for which there is no data, increasing opportunities for rural people and workers,³¹ and efforts to address stigma and discrimination against marginalized populations, such as community members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex (LGBTQI+).³²

There has been limited progress towards SDG 11 due to limited action to create sustainable cities and communities. The Sustainable City Strategic Plan 2020–2030³³ for Seven Target Cities and the Phnom

Penh Sustainable City Development Plan 2018–2030 were both approved but have not been fully implemented. Greenhouse gas emissions rose from 2.80 GgCO₂eq to 2.84 GgCO₂eq³⁴ between 2018 and 2019. At the same time, the rate of communities vulnerable to climate change dropped marginally from 38.0 per cent in 2018 to 36.5 per cent in 2020.³⁵ Linked to this, there has been progress towards SDG 12, for example, in terms of national recycling rates.³⁶ In addition, Cambodia has seen improvements in the co-ordination of the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve.

Cambodia, like many countries, must continue its efforts for climate action (SDG 13). The most recent nationally determined contribution (NDC) shows increased mitigation ambitions, with an emissions reduction target of 41.7 per cent by 2030, and a target of attaining carbon neutrality by 2050.³⁷ There appears to be a focus on limiting the rise in carbon dioxide emissions nationally; yet, rates of deforestation – although poorly recorded – are concerning, despite the country being poised to increase forest coverage through reforestation.³⁸ Aspirations to build a low-carbon society are demonstrated, such as through a recent increase in national budget allocations for climate change responses.³⁹

Efforts to protect life below water (SDG 14) appear to be stagnating as exploitation continues to be leveraged for tourism and sustenance;⁴⁰ however, the wild fish catch fell from 601,000 tonnes in 2019 to 531,600 tonnes in 2022.⁴¹ Cambodia faces the challenges of illegal fishing⁴² as well as marine and

²⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO), Policy Brief: Minimum Wage Response to COVID-19 and Inflation Crises – An Asia-Pacific Region Overview (Bangkok, June 2023). Available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--asia/--ro-bangkok/documents/briefingnote/wcms_887949.pdf.

²⁸ Available at the Asian Development Bank's Economic Forecasts for Cambodia (<https://www.adb.org/countries/cambodia/economy/>).

²⁹ RGC, Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 34.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³⁶ Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), Cambodia's Voluntary National Review 2019 on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Phnom Penh, June 2019). Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23603Cambodia_VNR_SDPM_Approved.pdf.

³⁷ General Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development [Cambodia] and Ministry of Environment (MoE) [Cambodia], Cambodia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (Phnom Penh, 2020). Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/20201231_NDC_Update_Cambodia.pdf.

³⁸ RGC, Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 95.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. vi.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

freshwater governance and sustainability. In terms of life on land (SDG 15), Cambodia has made progress in slowing rates of deforestation and expanding protected areas to 41 per cent of total land.⁴³ Long-standing concerns remain regarding illegal logging, wildlife trafficking, biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation.

In governance (SDG 16), as set out in national plans and strategies, Cambodia needs to strengthen the human rights basis of institutions, public administration, systems and services for SDG gains. This includes tackling corruption, upholding the rule of law, strengthening access to civil registration and legal identity, and improving participation and

transparency, alongside strengthened press and media freedoms. Meanwhile, Cambodia has sustained international cooperation through high levels of political, social, economic and cultural engagement in advancing regional, subregional and cross-border collaboration, chiefly via ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Subregion.⁴⁴ Cambodia pursued important national and local partnerships (SDG 17) with stakeholders from all tiers of government, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector; yet, these need to be further strengthened to advance the whole-of-society approach needed to ensure progress towards the SDGs.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid., p. 68.

⁴⁴ This includes via the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) and the Mekong Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control, among other programmes. In addition, several important multi-country and bilateral joint border committees with neighbouring Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vietnam and Thailand are in place. There are a number of high priority cross-boundary issues, as mentioned above (e.g., trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, organized drugs and crime syndicates, and money laundering).

⁴⁵ RGC, Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 28.

CHAPTER 2

KEY RESULTS OF UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES



Coca-Cola Cambodia Beverage Company

AEON MALL

AIX ARMANI EX



2.1 UNDAF ACHIEVEMENTS

OUTCOME 1: INCREASING SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY

Outcome Statement:

By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular those marginalized and vulnerable, have their basic needs addressed equitably as they benefit from and utilize expanded, quality social services and social protection in a more resilient, fairer and sustainable society.



Contributing Agencies:



From 2014 to 2021 there were significant health improvements in maternal and reproductive health



Maternal mortality declined 9% (170 to 154 deaths /100,000 live births).



Live births assisted by a skilled provider increased to 99% from 89%.



Under-5 mortality reduced 54% (35 to 16 deaths /1,000 live births).



Neonatal mortality declined 56% (18 to 8 deaths per 1000 live births)



% of women who received four or more antenatal care visit increased to 86% from 75.6%.



10,075 female entertainment workers accessed to sexual reproductive health services and information



Modern contraceptive prevalence rate had increased to 45% from 39%.



Unmet need for **family planning** had slowly declined to **11.5% from 12.5%.**



AIDS related deaths decreased by 1/3. % of people living with HIV on Antiretroviral Therapy were on multi-month dispensing for at least 3 months had increased from 33.8% to 81% from 2020-2023.



Tuberculosis incidence decreased by 25% from 2015-2020 and Cambodia transitioned out of the list of high TB burden countries.



Since 2018, there have been no **recorded malaria deaths**, achieving the goal of ending malaria mortality by 2020.



Human papillomavirus vaccination was successfully introduced in 2023 with the national coverage at 99%.



4,062,691 children, adolescents, parents and caregivers **accessed to community based mental health and psychosocial support** from 2019-2023

NUTRITION



Childhood stunting decreased from **32% to 22%** between 2014 and 2021.



The coverage of Severe Acute Malnutrition treatment increased from 8.5% to 11.7%, directly benefiting almost 30,000 children (49% girls) and 1,106 health personnel from 2019-2023.



The number of health facilities capacitated and equipped to manage SAM increased from 518 to 605 from 2020-2023.

EDUCATION



Lower secondary gross enrolment rate increased from **59.1%** (54.9% male, 63.8% female) in 2018/19 to **64.8%** (60.6% male, 69.4% female) in 2022/23.



A national **continuous professional development** system has been developed and institutionalized to upgrade knowledge and skills of 130,000 teachers once rolled out nationwide.



Five-years old children enrollment in any form of early childhood education program increased from **63.1%** (63.6% male, 59.8% female) in 2018/19 to **64.8%** (65.5% male and 64.4% female) in 2022/23.



11 Provincial Teacher Training Centres were renovated with upgraded facilities and favorable digital learning environments from 2018-2022, benefiting over **1,300** teachers and educators annually.



More than **150,000 students** (50% female) in grades 7-9 had access to information about Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Comprehensive Sexuality Education and gender



Over **48,300 adolescents and youth** had accessed to information and services on sexual reproductive health (SRH), gender equality, SRH clinic/service providers, and mental health psychosocial support through Youth Health Mobile App.



300,000 school children (49% female) benefited from school meals



Over **2,000 school infrastructures** such as kitchens, storerooms, fuel-efficient stoves and hand-washing stations were constructed or rehabilitated



1.5 tonne of seeds supplied to support school gardening



The government-managed national Home Grown School Feeding programme reached **427 schools** and incorporated 137 schools from the United Nations.

SOCIAL PROTECTION



COVID-19 Cash Transfer programme had benefited **2.8 million** IDPoor people (976,105 households) from 2020-2023, including



124,832

children aged 0-5



67,599

people with disabilities



424,826

elderly aged 60 and above



2,157

people living with HIV (PLHIV)

The government launched two cash transfer programmes for at-risk households (the near-poor households affected by global inflation and severe floods) benefiting



561,898
households



1.8 million
people



250,000 people with disabilities (47% female) registered for disability identification cards, allowing them to fully access the disability allowance and other support.



The government cash transfer program had benefited 262,147 pregnant women and children under 2 years old between December 2022 and July 2023.



22,853 PLHIV registered in IDPoor by end of 2023, enabling access to free healthcare.



A pension scheme for private sector workers was launched and will benefit **1.4 million** workers **895,000** female



As of 2022, modernisation efforts of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) have benefited **2.56 million members** with improved services.



The government launched the NSSF for self-employed people in April 2023.

79,479 people (49,496 female) enrolled in this scheme as of December 2023.

HOPE IS A WAKING DREAM: THE STORY OF A WOMAN-HEADED HOUSEHOLD

Despite living in poverty, Rorn, a 40-year-old single mother of four, has never given up on sending her children to school. She hopes that education can get them out of poverty.

Rorn is a farmer and an agricultural labourer living in Banteay Srei District of Siem Reap province in Cambodia. With an unstable income, she works tirelessly to provide for her children and take care of her elderly mother.

Sitting outside her poor makeshift house, made of plastic sheets for a roof and no walls, Rorn shared with us her story, **"I had no money, and my family situation was so dire. I needed money for my children's education and my mother's medical expenses."**

"Before, I used to regularly borrow money from my relatives and sometimes from my neighbours" she explains.

However, in June 2019, Rorn's situation changed positively when the commune council registered her family in the Identification of Poor Household (IDPoor) system. This targeting mechanism identifies poor and at-risk households for receiving social assistance. Eligible households receive a monthly cash transfer of USD 20 and can access free healthcare and other social services. In addition, registered households receive top-up amounts for pregnant women, children under 2, the elderly, persons with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDS.

With the money received, Rorn was able to pay for her children's education and her mother's medical expenses and buy seeds and fertilizers for farming. **"I am happy because I receive monthly assistance from the government to cover my basic family needs. I am also working. So, I am no longer afraid of how to end the month,"** Rorn says.

The cash transfer programme is one of several initiatives supported by UNDP in partnership with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to assist vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19, inflation, and flooding and enhance their resilience. The provided technical and capacity development assistance contributed to enhancing the access of 707,575 households, including 87,841 persons with disabilities and 20,612 people living with HIV/AIDS to social assistance. Rorn's family is one of the beneficiaries of this public programme.



United Nations Technical Assistance provided to the Royal Government of Cambodia on Law, Policy, and Strategic Plans under Outcome 1

5 Laws and Policies

- M&E framework for Pentagonal Strategy Phase 1 2023-2028
- Tobacco Control Law
- Social Security Law
- National Policy on School Meals
- National Policy and National Strategic Plan for Migrant Health 2022-2030

13 National strategic plans and master plans

- Strategic Framework and Programs for Economic Recovery in the Context of Living with COVID-19 in a New Normal 2021–2023
- National Strategy on Informal Economic Development 2023–2028
- Education Strategic Plan 2019–2023
- National Strategic Plan for Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases in Cambodia 2021–2025
- National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019–2023
- Out-of-School Comprehensive Sexuality Education Strategic Plan 2022–2026
- National Strategic Plan to End TB in Cambodia 2021–20203
- National Strategic Plan for Viral Hepatitis B and C control in Cambodia 2020–2024
- National Strategic Plan for Dengue and Arboviral Disease Control 2022–2030
- Strategic Plan for HIV and STI Prevention and Care in the Health Sector 2021–2025
- National Mental Health Strategic Plan 2023–2032
- National Action Plan for Oral Health 2023–2030
- National Strategic Plan for prevention and control of NCDs 2022–2030

19 Strategies, frameworks, roadmaps and action plans

- National Strategy for Reproductive and Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights 2020–2023
- National Strategy for Development of Education Statistics
- Cambodia's Education 2030 Roadmap
- Cambodia's Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development 2030
- National Continuous Professional Development Framework for Teachers and School Directors
- National Social Protection Policy Framework
- National Policy Framework on Shock-Responsive Social Protection
- Fast Track Roadmap for Improving Nutrition 2014–2020
- Country Operational Roadmap on the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting
- Draft Roadmap for Reform of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims
- Inclusive Education Action Plan 2019–2023
- National Multisectoral Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases 2018–2027
- Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care Improvement Plan 2021–2025
- National Action Plan on School Health 2021–2030
- National Immunization Strategy 2021–2025
- National Malaria Elimination Action Framework 2021–2025
- Teacher Policy Action Plan 2024–2030
- Final Evaluation of the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2019–2023
- Primary Health Care Booster Implementation Framework



OUTCOME 2: INCREASING SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY

Outcome Statement:

By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular those marginalized and vulnerable, benefit from expanded opportunities for decent work and technological innovations; and participate in a growing, more productive and competitive economy that is also fairer and environmentally sustainable.



Contributing Agencies:



DECENT WORK AND SKILLS



Basic Education Equivalency

Programme was operationalized and expanded its geographical coverage to

28 learning centres in 17 provinces, providing youth outside of formal education with skills training and enables them to seek decent employment opportunities and enroll in formal TVET programmes for further skills development. Over 2,300 youth (36% female) have enrolled in the programme, with more than half having completed and proceeded to TVET.



~ 31,000 young people (55%

female) benefited from entrepreneurship programmes that have been integrated into the national curriculum for general education in grades 10-12 and the national curriculum for TVET.



Supported the development and implementation of the

workplace-based **Factory Literacy Programme**, which benefited over 3,100 garment workers (95% female) with literacy, skills training and lifelong learning opportunities at 25 partner factories.



88,413 young people

(48,392 female) accessed to a wide array of public and non-public in-school and out-of-school employment services.

UNESCO'S FLEXIBLE EDUCATION EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMME CONNECTS CAMBODIAN YOUTH TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Once a top student at her secondary school in Koh Kong province, Sovanvortei paused her education in Grade 8 due to financial struggles. Amidst working in an array of jobs, she remained determined to continue her education and eventually discovered BEEP, a UNESCO initiative. BEEP is a flexible online education equivalency and skills development programme for out-of-school youth implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training and MoEYS.

"I was immediately interested in the programme as I saw how it could be a bridge for continued opportunities for C1, C2, C3 (levels of technical and vocational certification) and beyond." Battling with poor eyesight that had previously hindered her classroom experiences, she now revels in the accessibility of online learning. "It is convenient for me now to study online from my phone."

After graduating from BEEP, Sovanvortei enrolled in a C1 TVET programme, highlighting the relevance of BEEP subjects such as mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) to her ongoing C1 computer science programme. Furthermore, the elective on gender empowered her in the pursuit of a career in the male-dominated landscape of computer science. ***"I want to tell girls to be proud as a woman and not to give up. Women can do the same things as men can do."***

Sovanvortei is currently working as an ICT and English teacher while advancing through her C1 programme. Her ambitions soar even higher, as she dreams of a future as a computer programmer. Her transformative journey is emblematic of Cambodian youth's struggles – only half of Cambodians aged 18–24 have completed at least lower secondary school. Recognizing this untapped potential and these unfulfilled educational aspirations, BEEP offers an alternative pathway for these youth to a brighter future.

Since 2019, BEEP has expanded to operate at 28 learning centres in 17 provinces across Cambodia, benefiting over 2,300 young Cambodian women and men. BEEP is part of the Decent Employment for Youth in Cambodia programme, with financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and contributions from the Royal Government of Cambodia and telecommunication operator Smart Axiata.



ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY, COMPETITIVENESS, AND INNOVATION



National fishery quality infrastructure system is strengthened through developing a pool of food safety trainers and food safety inspectors and launching the Cambodia Quality Seal for fishery products. To promote safety and meet the exporting requirements, the **Food Safety Information Management System was developed.**



Provided support and technical assistance to the development of a Policy/Strategic Framework for the Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chains in Cambodia for 2023-2030 and the National Laboratory Policy.



Supported 20 partner SMEs and factories with the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, resulting in direct and indirect annual reductions 100,000 tonne of CO₂eq, energy efficiency improvements of 42,500 MWh, and material efficiency improvements of 4,300 tonne from 2019-2023.



In 2023, **25 out of 55 SMEs/factories** had improved their management practices and 30 out of 55 have adopted new technologies that are more efficient compared to the conventional technologies ranging from more efficient LED Lamp, greener boiler, efficient motor, efficient compressors, and solar panel. A flow of investment up to US\$10 million was made by linking the private sectors to SMEs/factories to accumulate investment for SMEs/factories to upgrade their facility and infrastructure in green technologies and solar energies for cleaner manufacturing such as solar PV, efficient technologies and cleaner technologies such as wastewater treatment plan.

ECONOMIC INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE



Support to clearing landmines has resulted in releasing **132.8 km²** of land for safe use for agriculture, housing, and community development benefiting **278,300 people** (49% female).



7,436 persons with disabilities, including 3,436 survivors of landmines/Explosive Remnants of War, received rehabilitation services at Battambang Physical Rehabilitation centre and through its outreach services.

DEVELOPMENT FINANCING



The United Nations continued to promote the shift from funding to financing in Cambodia, a priority that has become more relevant in the face of Cambodia's probable graduation from the Least Developed Country category by 2027. The **government bond mobilized up to US\$75 million in 2022 from private sector/ capital markets and** the amount mobilized in 2023 contributed to around **0.64%** of the total government revenue.



The United Nations provided technical and financial support to the Credit Guarantee Corporation of Cambodia (CGCC) for the design of a blended Financing Facility to de-risk private investments in energy efficiency sector. The CGCC has invested US\$1 million in the Facility as part of the \$3 million target of the first phase of the Facility. The Facility will provide loan guarantees for green investments.

United Nations Technical Assistance provided to the Royal Government of Cambodia on Law, Policy, and Strategic Plans under Outcome 2

15 Laws and Policies

- Food Safety Law
- Fishery Law
- Agricultural Development Policy
- Lifelong Learning Policy
- National Food Safety Policy
- National Cassava Policy 2020-2025
- National Policy on Science Technology and Innovation 2020–2030
- Cambodia Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework 2021–2035 emphasizes gender equality in human resource development and participation in the digital sector
- Biogas policy on Biodigester Development in Cambodia 2021–2030
- Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategic Framework in Agriculture Sector 2022–2026
- Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation of Industrial Development Policy
- National Laboratory Policy
- National Employment Policy
- TVET Law
- Policy Framework on the Development of Government Securities 2023–2028

11 Strategies, frameworks, roadmaps and action plans

- Draft E-Agriculture Strategy
- National Action Plan for Inspection and Control of Fish and Fishery Products 2020–2024
- Framework for the Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chains in Cambodia for 2023–2030
- Chemical Management Guidelines and adopting the Cambodia Green Industrial Award Guidelines
- Environmental Management System and Environmental Management Accounting roadmaps for SMEs/factories
- Green and Digital Technology TVET Policy Framework
- Social Marketing Strategic Plan in Technical and Vocational Education Training Sector
- National Strategy for Informal Economic Development 2023-2028
- E-commerce Strategy
- National Mine Action Strategy
- Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan 2018–2025

5 National strategic plans and master plans

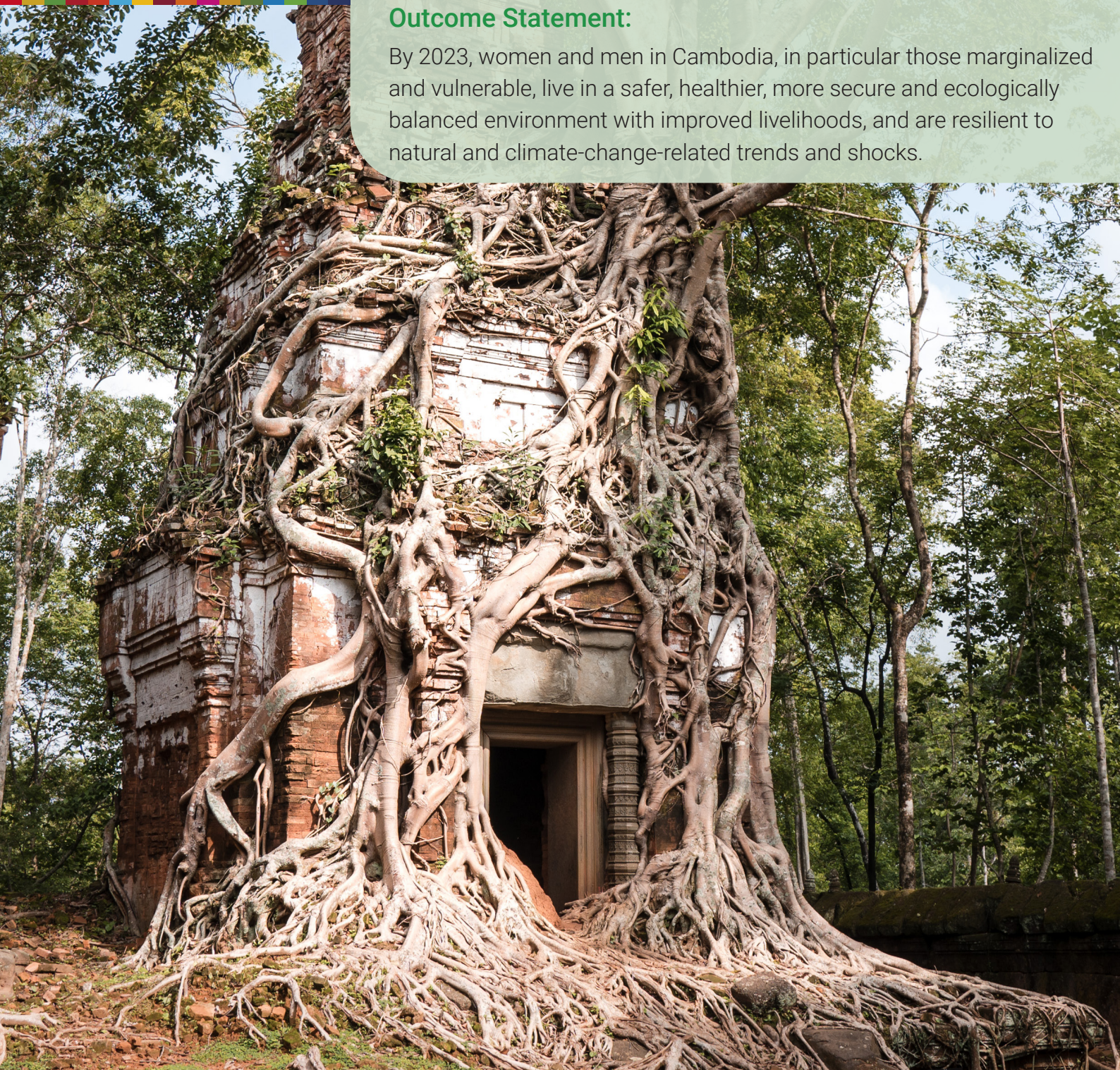
- Agricultural Sector Master Plan 2030
- CARDI's Strategic Development Plan 2023–2027 for Agricultural Research and Technology Development
- Tourism Development Master Plan Siem Reap 2021–2035
- TVET Strategic Action Plan 2019–2023
- TVET Strategic Action Plan for 2024–2028



OUTCOME 3: SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Outcome Statement:

By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular those marginalized and vulnerable, live in a safer, healthier, more secure and ecologically balanced environment with improved livelihoods, and are resilient to natural and climate-change-related trends and shocks.



Contributing Agencies:



INCREASED RESILIENCE AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Climate resilient technologies introduced to improve access to basic sanitation, particularly within the poorest households in flood prone districts, benefitting about



16,000 households which will prevent latrines from collapsing and contaminating the environment during the monsoon season.



1,146 communities (as of 2023) certified free of open defecation, rising from 78 communities in 2019.



193 target schools met SDG basic sanitation and hygiene service levels.

INNOVATION, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Provided technical assistance and support for agriculture value chain development including development of **e-extension, tele based services and virtual market place solutions** for agricultural value chains as well as a draft e-agriculture strategy.



Supported an **early warning system** 'EWS1294' that disseminated 53,000+ flood advisory alerts to at-risk households across the country during the 2023 flood monsoon season.



Sub-decree on **plastic management** was developed to strengthen the enabling environment for the circular economy. In addition, vital measures (ban on some single-use plastic items) and an Extended Producer Responsibility scheme were further advanced through a public-private partnership.

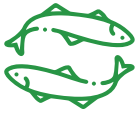


A quota policy to promote investments in rooftop solar photovoltaic panels was approved, while energy efficiency design guidelines are being incorporated into the Building Technical Regulations. In partnership with the Credit Guarantee Corporation of Cambodia, a blended finance facility was established to de-risk private investments in clean energy solutions (in particular, energy efficiency).



11,000 people (5,173 female) in remote rural areas accessed to clean energy through solar mini-grids and about **14,500 households of farmers** can now access water for subsistence farming and irrigation through solar water pumps as of 2023.

PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Supported the establishment and strengthening of the **Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve coordination mechanism** with enhanced capacities to promote harmonization with nature through scientific solutions and improved Environmental Conservation and Management, including fisheries.



Continued technical assistance to strengthen **Fisheries Conservation and Management** contributing to the growth and sustainability including **350 Community Fisheries** and the supporting of the FiA to develop a sustainable financing guideline and related training to strengthen and ensure sustainable operation of the Community Fisheries.



Supported to define an ambitious agenda, through the update of the Nationally Determined Contribution and the adoption of a **Long-Term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality**.



The government initiated national level processes to refine the country's strategic direction on climate change in line with the Pentagonal Strategy (development of new **Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan**) and strengthen planning for disaster risk reduction



Strengthened the national capacity of **animal health, transboundary disease surveillance and antimicrobial resistance** demonstrated by the joint roadmap of corrective measures and strategic investment to improve the work at the animal-human-environment interface in the prevention, detection and control of zoonotic diseases alongside the advanced development of the One Health joint priority action plan to strengthen collaboration at the animal-human-environment interface.



31,630 people (15,972 female, 7,910 youth, 860 indigenous people and 230 people with disabilities) were assisted to manage **39,519 hectare of forest** in a sustainable manner and 4,698 households adopted improved livelihoods in harmony with nature.

WOMEN'S ROLES IN RESTORING CAMBODIA FLOODED FORESTS

Cambodia is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to its high dependence on agriculture, water resources, forestry, and fisheries, which form the foundation of its economy and support the livelihoods of its population. Life in the villages around the Tonle Sap Lake is deeply interlinked with natural resources especially water, and the impacts of ecological changes.

“Without the forests, we are exposed to climate change, to drought and heat. Without rain, we cannot grow crops to eat”, says Ms Tao Srey Mao, a villager in Svay village, Sasar Sdam commune, located in the Northwestern part of Tonle Sap Lake.

Srey Mao, 23, a member of a community fisher patrolling group and a Commune Administrative Assistant at Sasar Sdam Commune, has dedicated herself to preserving the flooded forest around Tonle Sap Lake by patrolling it and educating people about the importance of the flooded forest for both peoples and animals.

“I often patrol the forest to make sure there is no illegal activity, especially related to logging and fishery.” says Srey Mao.

Srey Mao received trainings on forest patrolling techniques, and flooded forest seed production and management from a flooded forest conservation project funded by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility through UNDP and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries.

Since 2019, UNDP has supported the Royal Government of Cambodia in protecting and restoring the flooded forests and their biodiversity within Tonle Sap Lake to improve fishing productivity, reduce carbon emissions and prevent erosion.

“During the past few years, there have been positive changes in our community. We have planted Sal Trees on many hectares of land to rehabilitate the degraded biodiversity in our area. These trees are growing, and we are using their seeds to plant even more! This project has helped the fishery community in my village to have more trees, which are home to our fish and wildlife.”

The project has contributed to strengthening community capacity to manage approximately 7,000 hectares of community fisheries flooded forests and to plant over 60,000 native species, positively impacting the lives of over 1,000 communities.



United Nations Technical Assistance provided to the Royal Government of Cambodia on Law, Policy, and Strategic Plans under Outcome 3

12 National strategic plans and master plans

- Reviews of MAFF's Climate Change Priority Action Plan 2016–2020
- Resource Efficiency and Cleaner Production Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2030
- Long-Term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality
- National Cooling Action Plan
- Clean Air Plan
- Multi Sectoral Action Plan for AMR revised for 2024-2028
- Development of MAFF's National Marine Fisheries Management plan
- Management of Boeng Tonle Chhmar Ramsar Site with the integration of TSBR core zones
- Draft Roadmap for Preparing a National Plan for Sustainable Beekeeping and Native Honey Bee Conservation in Cambodia
- Mid Term Review of National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019–2023
- National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (NAP-DRR) 2019–2023
- Gender Sensitive NAP-DRR 2024–2028.



OUTCOME 4: PARTNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Outcome Statement:

By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular those marginalized and vulnerable, benefit from more transparent and accountable legislative and governance frameworks that ensure meaningful and informed participation in economic and social development and political processes.



Contributing Agencies:





INCREASED RESILIENCE AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES



Supported the Disability Action Council to sensitize **4,349 officials** on the protection of rights of persons with disabilities, in line with international human rights law.



The United Nations Plan of Action for the Safety of Journalists and the issue of Impunity was operationalized in Cambodia, training more than 600 prosecutors, law enforcement actors and policy-makers and facilitating their meaningful engagement with and protection of media professionals and civil society actors.



703 garment, footwear and travel goods factories with a total of **650,000 workers** (78%female) have been supported to improve working conditions and compliance with the Cambodian Labour Law and core labour standards.



1,590 cases of collective labour dispute complaints (334,114 workers including 2,020 migrant workers) submitted to the grievance mechanisms, of which 1,200 cases were successfully resolved.



The proportion of women and girls aged between 15 and 49 who experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional violence by their intimate partners in the past 12 months has decreased from **19.6% to 13%** between 2014 and 2021.



887 gender-based violence (GBV) survivors received essential services through strengthened survivor-centered mechanisms and capacities to respond to GBV



The capacity of **7,036 social service workers** were strengthened



1,551,304 key populations including youth, women migrant workers, LGBTQI+, persons with disabilities sensitized and engaged on GBV, LGBTQI+ and youth empowerment topics.



Operational child protection mechanisms at district level were established nationwide.



16,078 children (female 7,712) including 181 children with disabilities, **2,143 youth** (female 1,139) at risk or affected by violence, abuse and/or exploitation received child protection services.



Over half a million pages of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum archives on Khmer Rouge were preserved, digitized and made public.

KEOPHON: FROM PASSIONATE ADVOCATE TO CHANG MAKER

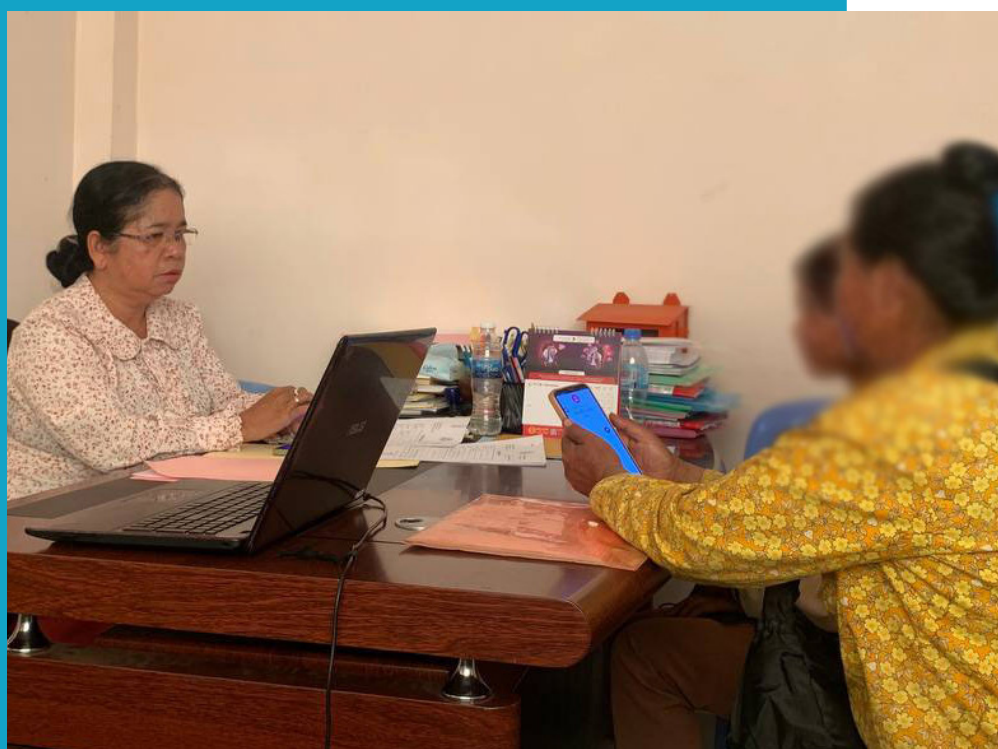
In the last five years, Mrs. Phorn Keophon, a Deputy of the Department of Women's Affairs (PDOWA) in Preah Vihear, has been a force for good in the fight against gender-based violence (GBV). Keophon saw a critical need for coordinated action against GBV since the initiation of the strengthening GBV multi-sectoral coordination programme was introduced in her province and three others including Tboung Khnum, Kampong Cham and Stung Treng. Through a program supported by UNFPA, she received vital training on the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (ESP GBV). Following the training, she spearheaded the creation of the Provincial Working Group on GBV (PWG-GBV), mobilizing the sectors that respond to gender-based violence to collaborate.

Keophon's efforts did not stop there. She replicated the model in three districts, securing local budgets (one district) and ensuring frontline service providers had basic GBV response knowledge. The results were tangible: more cases were received compared to the previous year. In 2023 she supported coordinated services to 65 GBV cases (30 sexual violence cases and 35 domestic violence cases) this was compared to 30 cases the previous year before the training. Looking beyond policies, Mrs. Keophon provided direct support to survivors. In one case, she facilitated medical care, legal representation, and vocational training for a young survivor of rape providing her the services and support needed to rebuild her life. Mrs. Keophon's story is a powerful testament to the impact dedicated individuals can have. Her model of bringing services together in a survivor centered and coordinated approach offers a blueprint that can be replicated across the country towards ensuring that all survivors of violence get the services, support, and care they need.

"I am happy to help women and girls who are survivors to get the services they need. I provide basic counseling to find out more about their needs on other services such as legal, health, psychological support, and safe shelter."

Despite the success, hurdles remain. Remote areas pose logistical challenges, and poverty and remoteness can exacerbate women's vulnerability. Yet, Ms. Keophon remains undeterred, actively seeking solutions to equip even the most isolated communities.

Ms. Phorn Keophon's story is a testament to the transformative power of individual leadership alongside coordinated multi-sectoral approaches. Ms Keophon's role offers hope, support, and positive change in Preah Vihear to those impacted by gender-based violence. Her journey proves that change is possible when communities, institutions, and individuals unite to combat GBV.



HEALTHCARE WORKERS TREAT VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Midwife Ms. Phin Sophally does much more than deliver newborn babies. When 10-year-old Dara (not his real name) arrived at Sampov Lun Referral Hospital in Battambang last year, his parents saying he had been sexually assaulted by a neighbour, it was Sophally that was there to take on the case. Because he had an intellectual disability and was unable to speak, it was difficult to understand what had happened.

It's thanks to a recent UNICEF-supported training for healthcare professionals on treating child victims of violence and abuse that she knew how to treat cases like this on her own. "If I had not received the training, when the boy came I may not have taken the case because I didn't believe that this kind of sexual abuse could happen to a boy," she says.

Trainings on the Clinical Handbook for Healthcare for Children Subjected to Violence or Sexual Abuse, developed by the Ministry of Health with UNICEF's support and funding from the Australian Committee for UNICEF, have empowered over 900 medical practitioners across 18 provinces to intervene effectively, impacting more than 4,000 children since 2017. It supports healthcare practitioners to promptly and adequately respond to cases of violence and abuse through providing guidance on first line support, medical treatment, psychosocial support, and referral to key social and legal protection services.

In Cambodia, two-thirds (66%) of children aged 1-14 have experienced violent discipline.

Ms. Phin Sophally and Ms. Chan Sophea say that the four-day trainings have taught them that violence can take many forms, that abuse can go far deeper than physical bruises, and that the consequences on a child's development can last a lifetime.

"For me, if there are more cases in the community, I really want them to be here," says pediatrician Sophea. "We can guide them on how to seek other services as well as give them medical support. We are ready to provide treatment for those people."

"This kind of violence against children should not happen. Childhood is the time for them to learn, to grow, to be protected, to get good care."



United Nations Technical Assistance provided to the Royal Government of Cambodia on Law, Policy, and Strategic Plans under Outcome 4

20 Laws and Policies

- Draft Access to Information Law
- Amendment of Trade Union Law 2016
- Amendment of Press Law
- Law on the Establishment and the Functioning of the National Human Rights Commission
- Child Protection Law and Standard Operating Procedures for child protection
- Draft Law on the protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Draft Law on National Protected Areas
- Draft Law on Forestry
- Budget Law
- Standard Operational Procedures and the Draft Law on the establishment of a National Committee against Torture
- Proposed amendments to the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations
- Explanatory notes for the Law on Prevention and Control of HIV and AIDS
- Guideline for Dispute Resolution of Migrant Workers
- Law on Prevention and Control of HIV and AIDS
- Gender Mainstreaming Policy for Ministry of Health
- National Policy on Gender Equality
- A policy commitment for women rape survivors to receive free forensic examinations
- Draft Law on Cyber Security
- Amendment of the Telecommunications Law
- Draft Data Protection and Privacy Law

40 Strategies, frameworks, roadmaps and action plans

- National Strategy on Disaster Risk Management for Health 2020–2024
- Development Cooperation & Partnership Strategy 2019–2023
- Sustainability Roadmap for National HIV response 2023–2029
- National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women 2019–2023
- National Child Protection Sector Implementation Plan 2022–2026
- National Action Plan on Youth Development 2022–2026
- National Programme for Public Administrative Reform 2019–2030
- National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2019–2023 and its Mid-Term Review
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Concluding Observations Action Plan
- Cambodia's Voluntary National Review in 2019 and 2023
- National Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Online Child Sexual Exploitation (2021–2025)
- National Digital, Media and Information Literacy Competency Framework
- 20 Provincial Child Protection Action Plans
- Action Plan for Addressing HIV related Stigma and Discrimination 2023–2028
- MTR of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics 2019-2023
- Orderly and Regular Migration
- Global Compact for Safe
- National Implementation Plan 2022–2024
- Draft Regulatory Framework on Recruitment Fees and Related Costs for Migration
- Code of Conduct for Cambodian Private Recruitment agencies

14 National strategic plans and master plans

- National Disability Strategic Plan (NDSP) 2019–2023 and draft NDSP 2024–2028
- Neary Rattanak V Strategic Plan 2019–2023
- Trafficking in Persons Strategic Plan 2019–2023
- Fast Track City Strategic Plan for Battambang, Phnom Penh, and Banteay Meanchey
- Mid-Term and Light Review of the 5th National Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive and Multi Sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS 2019–2023
- Development of 6th National Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive and Multi Sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS 2024–2028
- General Population Census of Cambodia 2019
- Economic Census of Cambodia 2022
- Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021–2022
- Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey
- Agriculture Survey



OUTCOME 5: MANAGING URBANIZATION

Outcome Statement:

By 2023, all women and men in Cambodia living in urban areas, in particular those marginalized and vulnerable, enjoy a safer, more secure and healthier life, utilizing quality public and private services, and benefiting from improved urban governance informed by their voice and participation.



Contributing Agencies:





United Nations’s technical support contributed to the Cambodian urban population with access to basic drinking water services a **1.5% increase** from **92.3% to 93.8%** from 2019-2022.



United Nations’s advocacy and technical assistance on evidence-based planning and budgeting on social services contributed to the increase of government budget allocated for social services benefiting more children and adolescents. The average percentage of annual budget for social services for provinces and capital city increases from 2.80% in 2019 to 8.46% in 2024. Likewise, the annual budget for social services of all communes/sangkats (CS) increases from 5% to 7% during the same period. Furthermore, the annual budget for social service and environment component of each commune/sangkat will gradually increase from 13% of the annual envelop in 2024 to 31% in 2028.



303 subnational administrators in **4 cities (Phnom Penh, Battambang, Siem Reap and Preah Sihanouk)** were provided capacity strengthening in the concepts of smart city development, sustainability, and inclusivity with an emphasis on the implementation of people-centered human security measures.



National capacity strengthened for **effective disaster risk reduction and management** at the newly enlisted Koh Ker World Heritage Site and the Angkor World Heritage Site. The International Coordinating Committee-Angkor and Sambor Prei Kuk has been extended for another 10 years until 2033 for the preservation and sustainable development of the historic sites of Angkor and Sambor Prei Kuk, and their surrounding environment.

United Nations Technical Assistance provided to the Royal Government of Cambodia on Law, Policy, and Strategic Plans under Outcome 5

3 Policies

- Development of the Labour Migration Policy for Cambodia 2024–2028
- National Urban Policy
- National Housing Policy.

10 Strategies, frameworks, roadmaps and action plans

- National Action Plan 2023–2025 to implement the 2017 ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers
- National Smart Cities Roadmap for the Sub-national Administration
- National Smart Cities Strategy 2025
- Smart City Concepts for Phnom Penh, Battambang, Sihanoukville and Siem Reap
- HIV Fast Track Cities Strategic Plan of Battambang and Phnom Penh
- Fast Track City Strategic Plan.

SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION IS POSSIBLE FOR RETURNING MIGRANT WORKERS AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE INSPIRING MIGRATION JOURNEY OF DARA

Only in the eleventh grade, Dara had already worked as a construction worker and a security guard. Not long after, he applied for a job in Thailand where he worked in a chicken and seafood factory. Here, he experienced challenges such as language barriers, age and racial discrimination, and inferiority.

Despite this, Dara was determined to perform his tasks well. He worked tirelessly, studied Thai on his own, and braved the criticism daily. After five years, Dara returned to Cambodia with the intention of renewing his passport – until a new employment opportunity came that paid better than his job in Thailand.

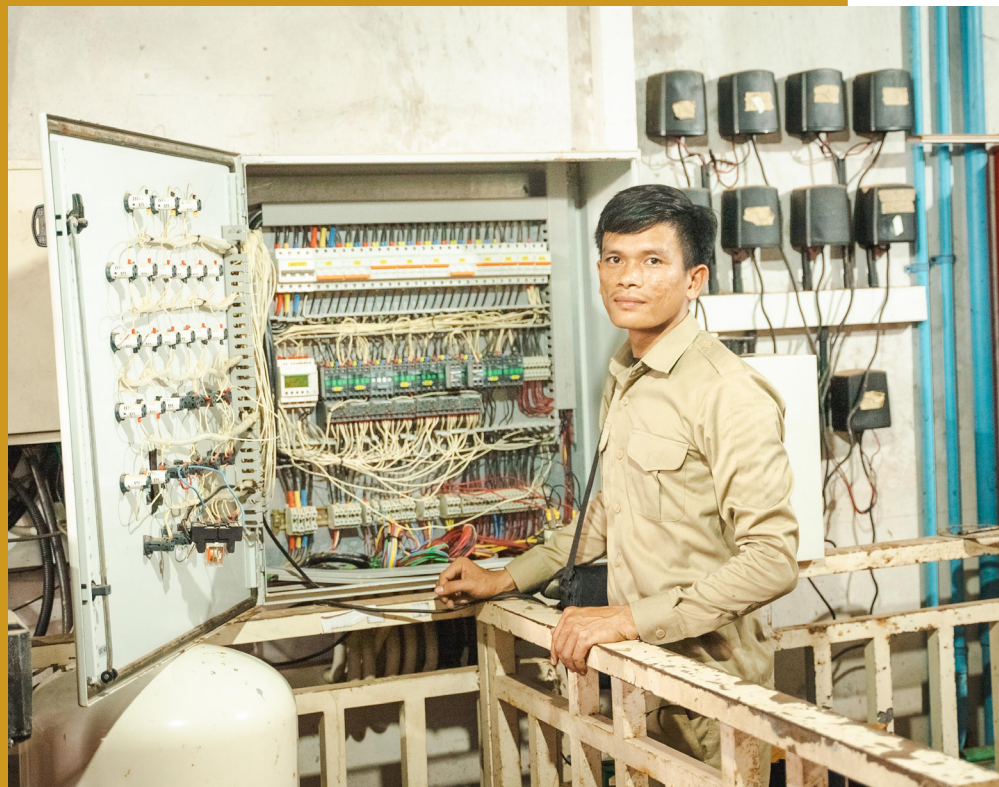
With the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Dara was able to complete a four-month technical and vocational training in air conditioner servicing at the National Polytechnic Institute of Angkor (NPIA). After this accreditation, Dara has found stable employment at the Temple Group as an engineer. Alongside this, Dara is pursuing his technical and vocational training levels 2 and 3 at NPIA.

Dara says, ***“I recommend for other [returning migrants] to go back to school and learn technical skills that can be used to earn a living. Like the Khmer proverb goes, ‘If you are not intelligent, you should acquire skills.’ Being an expert in something enables you to earn a living and have a stable income. Nowadays, companies prioritize people with certificates over those who only have experience. If you only have experiences and no certificate, you might get paid less”.***

In the future, Dara wants to open his own mechanical shop that provides maintenance services and sells spare parts. According to Dara, he contributed to the Thai economy when he was in

Thailand. Upon return to Cambodia, he can already contribute to his own country using his acquired expertise. Dara recognizes that everyone’s contribution both big and small can significantly contribute to the Cambodian economy.

With skills development and recognition, migrant workers like Dara can harness the potential of migration to drive sustainable development and improve the lives of many.



2.2 SUPPORT TO COVID-19 RESPONSE

Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, the United Nations system mobilized and repurposed its development portfolio to support the RGC's efforts to save lives and stop transmission of the virus; mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on the poorest and most vulnerable Cambodians; and recover better.



Support to COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 HEALTH RESPONSE



COVID-19

Evidence-based policy advice on COVID-19 response, and development and implementation of **Cambodia's COVID-19 Master Plan and the Strategy for Living in the New Normal within the Context of COVID-19.**



More than **3,000 rapid response team members** were trained on surveillance and contact tracing.



Number of national and subnational laboratory had increased from 1 to 20 from 2020-2023, that can test more than **12,000 samples per day.**



More than **7,000 frontline healthcare workers** were trained in intensive care and home-based recovery.



2,000 health centre and district hospital staff in 14 provinces were trained in mental health and psychosocial support in the context of the COVID-19 emergency.



1.5 million personal protective equipment provided.



4,100 pulse oximeters provided



As of 31 December 2023, 100% of eligible people 3 years old and above **had completed primary doses**, and **67% of total population received at least one booster dose.**



6,727,130 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine had been received in Cambodia through COVAX.

COVID-19 SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSE



Policy: The United Nations facilitated the integration of key policies into the government's Strategic Framework and Programs for Economic Recovery 2021-2023.



Risk Communication and Community Engagement: More than 10 million people were reached with COVID-19 risk and prevention messages through different channels.



Social Protection: United Nations provided significant technical and direct support to the government for the expansion of social protection programmes.

OTHER DIRECT SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSES:



~ **2.8 million students at primary school** and secondary school supported to continue learning during school closures caused by COVID-19.



Supported **82,000 schoolchildren** from vulnerable households and 1,700 volunteer school cooks with take-home rations.



198,669 (97,074 female) **returning migrants** from Thailand received assistance.



~ **760,000 Home Learning Packages**, including hygiene supplies, distributed country-wide to Grade 1 and Grade 2 students.



1,223 businesses/MSMEs were supported including during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3 SUPPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA

During the UNDAF cycle, the United Nations Country Team in Cambodia (UNCT) continued expanding partnerships with various stakeholders including development partners, international financial institutions, CSOs, private sector actors, universities and academia for collaboration and to leverage financing to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The UNCT supported the **Integrated National Financing Framework**, providing technical support to the regulatory framework governing SDG financing. As a result, RGC planning has become more responsive and thus able to catalyse blended financing in support of the 2030 Agenda by identifying investment opportunities in priority sectors with strong financial viability and potential to scale up impact for development. Under this partnership, a credit guarantee scheme was rolled out to facilitate access to loan financing for women-owned businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UNCT continued maintaining the **UN-Development Partners Forum**, which is a key platform for co-ordination and partnership between the United Nations system and development partners in Cambodia.

Partnerships with the **private sector** remain central for the UNCT in Cambodia. For the Factory Literacy Programme, a partnership with the Textile, Apparel, Footwear and Travel Goods Association in Cambodia and the Cambodian Garment Training Institute helped leverage the association's network of factories to promote participation in the programme. The UNCT mobilized support from the private sector for the Factory Literacy Programme implementation, with garment factories providing in-kind and financial support (e.g., learning spaces for literacy classes, paid wages for time in classes).

2.4 RESULTS OF THE UN WORKING MORE AND BETTER TOGETHER: UN COHERENCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

The year 2023 was the last year of UNDAF 2019–2023 implementation, and also the year to formulate the new United Nations Sustainable Cooperation Framework 2024–2028. The UNCT finalized the new Cooperation Framework through a consultative process to address principal development issues. The Cooperation Framework was co-signed in November 2023 by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the Senior Minister in Charge of Special Missions and Second Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Development of Cambodia. Strategic priorities, outcomes and outputs in the Cooperation Framework were identified through a close engagement and consultation with various stakeholders, including the RGC, CSOs, academia, development partners and the private sector.

In line with the Cooperation Framework formulation roadmap, a UNCT configuration exercise was conducted, confirming the new composition of the UNCT in delivering the new Cooperation Framework. As a result, 26 resident and non-resident agencies signed to support and implement the Cooperation Framework over the next five years.

Led by the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the UNCT co-convened the annual high-level dialogue with the RGC, chaired by Prime Minister Hun Sen and attended by representatives from over 15 government ministries. This dialogue serves as a crucial platform for reviewing joint contributions, discussing national development priorities, and assessing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2023 Annual Dialogue focused on accelerating SDG implementation, particularly in Strengthening Resilient Health Systems towards Universal Health Coverage and Expanding Coverage and Scope of Social Protection. This high-level dialogue is pivotal in addressing inclusivity and equitable progress, serving as the apex of engagement between the United Nations and the RGC. The commitments forged during this dialogue signify the transformative impact achievable through collaborative efforts,

highlighting the power of partnership in advancing shared objectives of sustainable development and inclusive growth.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator convened and co-hosted a dialogue on SDGs and human rights with the diplomatic community in Phnom Penh, focusing on a number of pressing issues including trafficking in persons and online scams in Cambodia. As a result of the dialogue, the UNCT developed a joint analysis of the situation of trafficking in persons and online scams in Cambodia and shared it with the National Committee for Counter Trafficking, who acknowledged and appreciated the cooperation and support of the United Nations. Moreover, the United Nations and the diplomatic community agreed on key messaging regarding the trafficking in persons that can be used for further dialogue with the RGC in finding ways to address the challenges and improve the situation.

Under the leadership and co-ordination of the United Nations Resident Coordinator and with technical support from Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Human Rights Group, two main submissions were jointly prepared and submitted by UNCT – namely, the Universal Periodic Review on Cambodia for the 4th cycle was submitted to the Human Rights Council, and the confidential submission on Cambodia was submitted to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

With support from the Common Country Analysis task team, the UNCT carried out the annual update of the Common Country Analysis for 2023, analysing development progress and challenges to support the United Nations system for well-informed decision making/programming.

In 2023 the UNCT successfully concluded two joint programmes funded by the Joint SDG Fund on: 1) strengthening Cambodia's socio-economic resilience

to global crises and food system shocks; and 2) an Integrated National Financing Framework to Catalyse Blended Finance for transformative SDG achievement. Another five joint programmes (Decent Employment for Youth; Accelerating Disability Rights in Cambodia; Health Compliant Border Response to limit the spread of COVID-19 variants of concern and meet the immediate needs of returning migrant workers from abroad due to COVID-19 pandemic; Partnership for Action on Green Economy; and Cities for All: Inclusive, smart and sustainable urban development in Cambodia) are still ongoing.

The UNCT worked effectively to support the RGC in preparing its second VNR for SDGs, which was presented at the high-level United Nations political forum in July 2023. The support from various United Nations agencies in technical assistance, SDG progress analysis, and reflecting human rights mechanisms in the report was co-ordinated by Resident Coordinator’s Office.

The Operation Management Team worked collaboratively to strengthen cooperation and better align operational arrangements among agencies

through common services and long-term agreements within the implementation of the Business Operations Strategy. The current common services – including premises management, security services, printing, ICT, travel services and vehicle rental services – continuously support all participating agencies in reducing administrative and financial costs.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UNCT have initiated dialogues with the RGC about setting up common premises. A formal request has been presented to the RGC to consider providing a building for the establishment of United Nations Common Premises in Cambodia.

Last but not least, the Country Common Premises Plan platform in UN INFO is updated with 2023 information on the premises’ situation, common premises projects and efficiencies achieved through the consolidation of service provision.

2.5 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Figure 3. Total commitments and expenditure (million USD) from 2019–2023

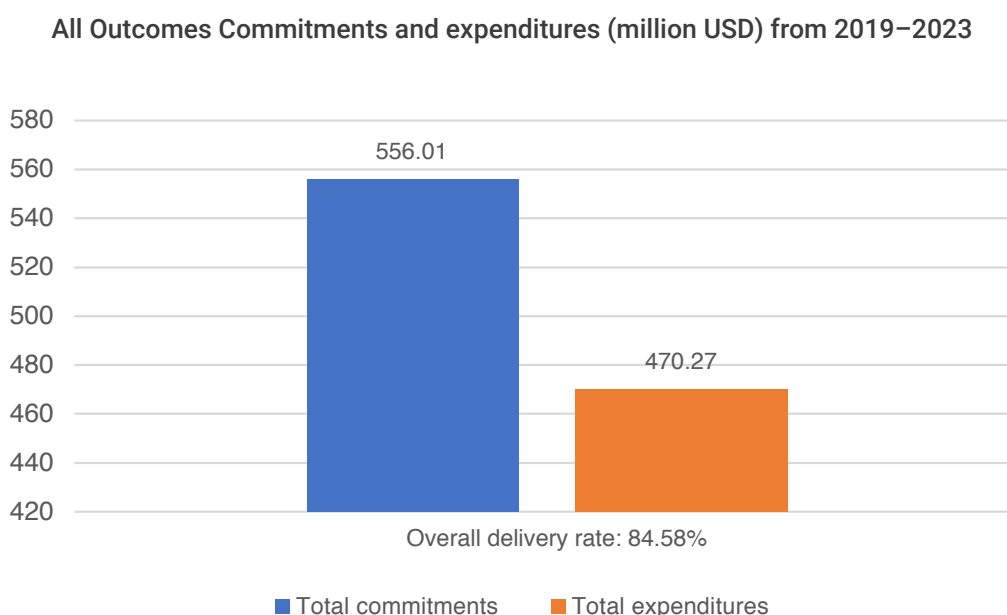


Figure 4. Commitments and expenditure (million USD) by outcome from 2019–2023



CHAPTER 3

UNCT KEY FOCUS AREAS 2024



OUTCOME 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- Advancing **Universal Health Coverage** through a resilient, people-centred health system
- Protection against **all forms of malnutrition**
- **Quality and accessible education, skills development and lifelong learning**
- Enhancing and expanding **social protection systems** including shock responsive social protection
- **Mine action** to expand access to safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance



OUTCOME 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

- Support **agrifood systems** to become more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalized and safer
- Support **businesses** to become formalised, inclusive and carbon- and pollution-mitigating
- Promotion of **decent work conditions**
- **SDGs Financing**



OUTCOME 3: ENVIRONMENT

- Enhancing **natural resource management**, conservation, preservation and restoration activities
- Reduction of **air, water and land pollution, and the control of hazardous substances** and materials
- Strengthening of **governance and policies on climate change including on carbon**
- Strengthening of adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters



OUTCOME 4: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

- **Strengthening institutional capacities** for implementing and regulating legal and policy frameworks to deliver justice and protection services to vulnerable groups, including women, children and migrants
- Increasing **civic participation** in development and decision-making at all levels, including for women and youth
- Improving **systems, services and community solutions** which effectively respond to and prevent discrimination, gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices
- Advancing **digital transformation** to accelerate positive social change

RESULTS REPORT 2019–2023 UNITED NATIONS CAMBODIA

March 2024

