



UNITED NATIONS
CAMBODIA



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UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR CAMBODIA 2024 - 2028



**UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION FRAMEWORK**



CAMBODIA 2024–2028

TABLE OF CONTENTS


JOINT STATEMENT	4
ACRONYMS	7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	9


CHAPTER


1	COUNTRY PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA	
	1.1 Country Context	14
	1.2 Gaps and Challenges	16
	1.3 National Vision for Sustainable Development	18
	1.4 Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals	19

2	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030 AGENDA	
	2.1 Consultations and Analysis Informing Cooperation Framework Priorities	25
	2.2 The Cooperation Framework Core Principles	27
	2.3 Risks and Assumptions	28
	2.4 United Nations Comparative Advantages	29
	2.5 Alignment of the Cooperation Framework and National Development Priorities	29
	2.6 Priority Areas, Outcomes and Outputs	31

	Priority Area 1: Human Development	32
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	Priority Area 2: Economic Transformation	39
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	Priority Area 3: Environment	47
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	Priority Area 4: Social Transformation	52
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3	COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	
	3.1 Cooperation Framework Governance	60
	3.2 Implementation Strategy	60
	3.3 Partnerships and Financing	63
	3.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	63

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Results Framework	65
Annex 2. Cambodia Overall Sustainable Development Goal Progress	73
Annex 3. Status of Human Rights Treaty Ratification and Environmental Convention Agreements	74
Annex 4. Detailed Theory of Change	76
Annex 5. Legal Annex	77
Annex 6. Programme Management and Accountability	80

JOINT STATEMENT

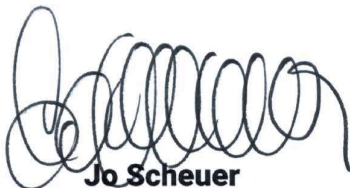
The United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia embark on this United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (“Cooperation Framework”) at a significant moment marking the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (“2030 Agenda”). Through enhanced collaboration and strengthened partnerships, we seek to accelerate inclusive, sustainable and resilient development and to showcase Cambodia’s important contribution to national and international development. Our shared intention for this Cooperation Framework is “transformational change at scale”.

The United Nations has remained a dedicated partner to Cambodia over many decades. Both as a result of this close partnership and in pursuit of furthering it, the development aspirations set out in this Cooperation Framework are closely aligned with Cambodia’s national development priorities delineated in the Royal Government’s 2050 Vision for Cambodia and the Pentagonal Strategy – Phase I.

This Cooperation Framework has been designed to support the country and its people to recover from the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda and the corresponding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and secure Cambodia’s long-cherished objective of graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by 2027. Anchored on a human rights-based and people-centred approach, this Cooperation Framework supports the Royal Government of Cambodia in its long-term sustainable development trajectory through which no one is left behind. It also ensures a strong commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment and seeks to support strengthened institutions and empowered communities at all levels, alongside a whole-of-society shift towards adaptation to climate change, which remains the greatest risk to future human well-being and development.

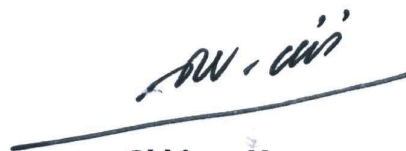
Critically, this Cooperation Framework represents the main tool to realise United Nations reform at the national level and the touchstone from which the United Nations derives its collective results. Through this, the United Nations will draw upon the comparative advantages of its respective agencies, combining its individual and collective capabilities to ensure the United Nations delivers as one.

On behalf of the United Nations
in Cambodia



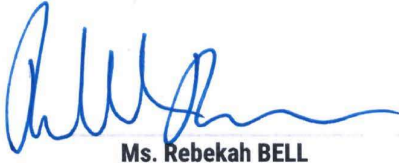
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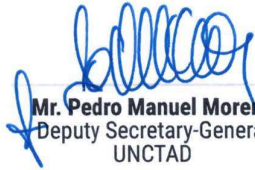
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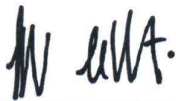
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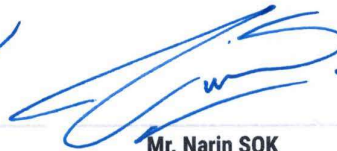
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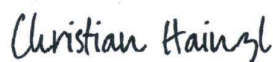
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ACRONYMS

2030 Agenda	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAU	Business As Usual
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CO2eq	Carbon dioxide equivalent
Cooperation Framework	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CSDG	Cambodian Sustainable Development Goals
CSO	Civil society organization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GBV	Gender-based violence
GDP	Gross domestic product
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GNI	Gross National Income
GTG	Gender Theme Group
HDI	Human development index
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JWP	Joint workplan
LDC	Least developed country
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
LNOB	Leave no one behind
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MSMEs	Micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises
NCD	Non-communicable diseases
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PSEA	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small- and medium-sized enterprises
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) represents a collaborative strategy between the United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia to address structural development challenges affecting the country and facilitate a pathway towards development. It outlines the key focus areas and interventions proposed by the United Nations, working in concert with a wide range of development actors to accelerate Cambodia's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The development backdrop to this Cooperation Framework stems from two decades of impressive economic growth, which contributed to a considerable reduction in Cambodia's poverty rate¹. As a result of these and other development gains, the country is currently expected to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2027. However, challenges remain. The COVID-19 pandemic had an acute impact on both the economy and Cambodia's 15.6 million people, with aftershocks still lingering today. Despite a well-coordinated response that resulted in one of the highest vaccination rates globally and an unprecedented expansion of social assistance to support poor households, thousands of workers lost their jobs and around 460,000 additional people fell back into poverty². Access to essential services, such as nutritious food, health care and education, was affected with rural communities hardest hit.

Despite these setbacks, Cambodia remains poised to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. To do so, however, entails tackling a number of structural barriers and gaps, including Cambodia's large informal economy, which constrains public revenue collection and reduces access to social protection. Dependency on agriculture³ places Cambodia in a position of vulnerability, especially to extreme weather events, as it remains one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change⁴.

Although the incidence of multidimensional poverty continues to decline, uneven alleviation of poverty coupled with limited economic opportunities, particularly for marginalised and ethnic groups and along geographic and gendered lines, are still apparent. These continue to prevent segments of the population from overcoming barriers associated with inter-generational poverty. While Cambodia has ratified 13 international instruments, gaps between accepted principles and their implementation mean that the country is unable to effectively protect and promote human rights. Further work is required to lay the foundations for a human rights-based economy. Notably, women and girls continue to face inequalities and

1 "Economic growth (%) has been exceptional over the last three decades" and "Poverty (headcount %), regardless of measurement, continues to fall". United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2019). Human Development Report 2019: Sustaining Natural Resources for All (Draft), pp.23, 25. <https://www.undp.org/cambodia/publications/human-development-report-2019-sustaining-natural-resources-all-draft>

2 World Bank. (2022). Cambodia Poverty Assessment—Toward A More Inclusive and Resilient Cambodia (Full Report) (English), p. 107. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099155111222239793/P1735940c0e8b508d0b80e0c7375c89d9c0>

3 Asian Development Bank (ADB). (2021). Cambodia Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development Sector Assessment, Strategy, and Road Map. ADB. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/718806/cambodia-agriculture-rural-development-road-map.pdf>

4 Eckstein, D., Künzel, V., & Schäfer, L. (2021). Global Climate Risk Index 2021: Who Suffers Most from Extreme Weather Events? Weather-Related Loss Events in 2019 and 2000–2019. <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/19777>

discrimination, harmful gender norms, stereotypes, violence, and limited access to justice⁵. Despite these challenges, increased collaboration between the Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and the private sector can lead to strengthened trust, transparency and participation through reinvigorated strategic partnerships. SDG acceleration can be achieved with focused attention on transitions, generating greater synergies, and propelled by initiatives that leverage innovation and digital transformation. In addition, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches are needed to close implementation gaps and ensure well-formulated and well-intentioned national policies have impact at the local level. Not least, sub-regional, regional and international platforms will remain relevant to enable Cambodia to tackle ongoing transnational crime, notably fraud, extortion, money laundering, human trafficking, and illicit activities associated with drugs, and the smuggling of flora, timber and fauna.

The strategic priorities set out in this Cooperation Framework have been designed through a consultative process to address principal development issues in Cambodia. Alongside actors from the Royal Government of Cambodia, CSOs, NGOs, academia and the private sector, priority areas have been defined and are underpinned by a commitment to inclusive, people-centred, human rights-based development, and a determination to strengthen resilience and sustainability. The Cooperation Framework is based on robust analysis⁶ and an informed Theory of Change and benefited from thorough peer review and validation with all major stakeholders. Transitions were subsequently identified as priorities for transformation where Cambodia can contribute to national and global targets⁷. The core principles, outcome and output areas, illustrated in Figure 1 below, arose from these analytical and consultative processes.

The Cooperation Framework has been guided by a comprehensive approach to the principles of human rights. The four outcome areas integrate a strong focus on inclusion and participation, ensuring no one is left behind. Gender equality and empowerment feature prominently both as areas of concern and as opportunities for advancement. Sustainability, resilience, accountability and transparency underpin all United Nations efforts.

The Royal Government of Cambodia and the United Nations will continue to benefit from high-level consultations on priority issues. Meanwhile, the Council for the Development of Cambodia is the primary Government counterpart for joint coordination, implementation and monitoring of this Cooperation Framework and its Results Framework (Annex 1).

The UNCT will also prepare a Cooperation Framework partnership strategy and financing plan, as well as a joint workplan (JWP) to operationalise the Cooperation Framework. A final independent evaluation of the Cooperation Framework will be conducted in the penultimate year of implementation of the Cooperation Framework, in close consultation with the Government.

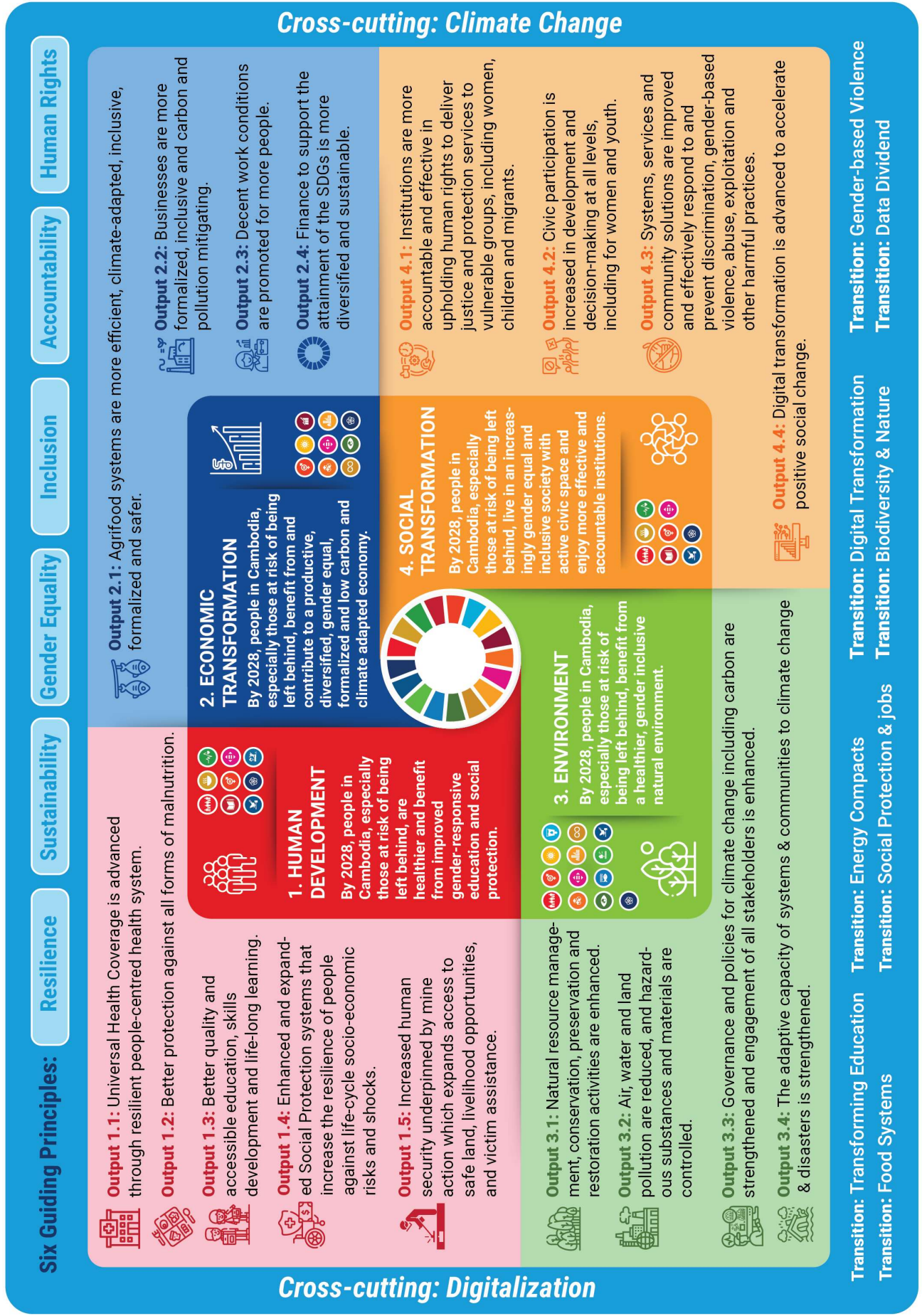
5 Wyatt, Z. (2022). "A Vulnerable Nation: The Intersection of Rural Poverty, Cultural Norms and Gender-Based Violence in Cambodia". *Asian Journal of Social Science Studies*, vol. 7, No. 5 (2022), p. 55. <http://journal.julypress.com/index.php/ajsss/article/view/1164/869>

6 United Nations. (2023). *Cambodia Common Country Analysis*. <https://cambodia.un.org/en/239810-cambodia-common-country-analysis>

7 These areas of national and global transformation are: i) energy; ii) environment and climate; iii) data; iv) digital transformation; v) education; vi) decent jobs; vii) food systems; and viii) gender-based violence (GBV). This Cooperation Framework contains special boxes for each area, with each area integrated into the Results Framework – Annex 1.

Figure 1: Diagram of the UNSDCF 2024–2028

United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) 2024 - 2028



Structure of the Cooperation Framework

Chapter 1 provides a short overview of Cambodia’s development context and the progress achieved, to date, towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (“2030 Agenda”) and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also identifies key gaps and challenges that remain and need to be alleviated in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030. This overview is followed by an introduction to the National Vision 2050 and the Government’s Pentagonal Strategy. Chapter 2 outlines the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (“Cooperation Framework”) Theory of Change, core principles, strategic priority areas, outcomes and outputs, while Chapter 3 outlines the primary oversight, management and accountability structures governing implementation of the Cooperation Framework. The annexes, which form an integral part of this Cooperation Framework, include the: 1) Results Framework; 2) a snapshot of Cambodia’s progress towards the SDGs, including performance with respect to each indicator; 3) the current status of human rights treaty ratifications and environmental conventions and frameworks; 4) the Theory of Change underlying this Cooperation Framework; 5) the Legal Annex; and 6) the Programme Management and Accountability.



CHAPTER 1

COUNTRY PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA



1.1 Country Context

Demographic snapshot

Cambodia has a total population of 15.6 million, with 39.4 per cent residing in urban areas. The average (median) age of the population is 27 years, with 29.4 per cent aged 15 years or younger, and 8.9 per cent aged 60 years or older. Nearly 62 per cent of the population is between 15 and 59 years of age, indicating a population dividend that could be leveraged to facilitate acceleration towards achievement of the SDGs. Khmer is the mother tongue of 95.8 per cent of the population, with ethnic minority languages constituting 2.9 per cent⁸. The 2019 census identified more than 23 ethnic minority groups, accounting for 2.9 per cent of the population.

Geography and natural environment

Cambodia is characterised by low-lying floodplains bordered by mountains and uplands. Two significant geographic features of the country are the Tonle Sap Lake and Mekong River Delta, which contribute enormously to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the country. Rice cultivation in the flooded fields of surrounding areas and rich biodiversity in the lake and delta regions are central to the country's prosperity and identity.

Governance

The Kingdom of Cambodia is a constitutional monarchy where the King reigns but does not govern, and the Constitution recognises the separation of powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary. The Kingdom has a parliamentary system with two houses – the National Assembly and the Senate – with the Royal Government led by the Prime Minister, who is nominated by the party that wins the National Assembly election. Cambodians elect members of the National Assembly through a direct and universal election every five years, whereas the members of the Senate are elected through indirect elections every six years. The two houses form the legislative branch. The executive branch implements the laws passed by the legislative branch and promulgated by the King. The judiciary is responsible for ensuring that laws are enforced.

Cambodia became a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1999, marking the Kingdom's commitment to collaboration and coordination in trade, labour mobility, peace and security.

Growth, human development and inequality

As a result of determined efforts, the country experienced rising wages and consistent economic growth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, with an increase of around 7.7 per cent between 1998 and 2019.⁹ This enabled a considerable reduction in the poverty rate, from 47.8 per cent in 2007 to 17.8 per cent in 2019.¹⁰ Cambodia is currently expected to graduate from

8 National Institute of Statistics (NIS). (2020). General Population Census 2019, pp. 13, 25, 30. Ministry of Planning.

9 World Bank, "The World Bank in Cambodia: Overview", 12 April 2023. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/cambodia/overview>

10 World Bank, "Cambodia: Reducing Poverty and Sharing Prosperity", 29 October 2019. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2019/10/30/cambodia-reducing-poverty-and-sharing-prosperity>

NB: There is a lack of disaggregated data indicating the level of poverty for women.

least developed country (LDC) status in 2027 and aims to reach high-income status by 2050.

Cambodia's Human Development Index (HDI) was 0.593 in 2021, ranking the country 146th globally, an improvement from a ranking of 148th in 2020.¹¹ This is reflected in Cambodia's life expectancy of 69.6 years,¹² 11.5 years of schooling,¹³ and gross national income (GNI) per capita at USD 4,079 purchasing power parity. Meanwhile, Cambodia's Gini coefficient in 2019 was 54.6¹⁴ and its rating on the World Economics Inequality Index was 48.9¹⁵, placing it lower in economic equality than most other Southeast Asian nations. These inequalities are perpetuated across gender, age, geographic location, ability, and socioeconomic lines, with those who experience intersectional challenges or vulnerabilities most likely to be left behind.¹⁶

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Cambodia enacted a timely, effective and well-coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including an exceptionally strong national vaccination campaign which resulted in one of the highest vaccination rates against COVID-19 globally (91 per cent of the total population, and 99 per cent of adults).¹⁷ The high vaccination rates and control of infection spread enabled the country to open travel and schools, and to lift testing and other restrictions in the latter half of 2021.

However, as a result of the pandemic, the economy contracted by 3.1 per cent.¹⁸ This led to a loss of jobs and income for thousands of workers, particularly impacting women and women-owned enterprises, children, informal sector workers, workers in the garment, footwear and tourism sectors, persons with disabilities, returning migrants and minority groups, and people living on the margin of and below the national poverty line. Women were among the most affected since cultural norms tend to hold them responsible for domestic care and household chores, requiring them to care for sick family members and to homeschool their children. This exacerbated existing inequalities for women who play a vital role in the social and economic fabric of Cambodia yet hold disproportionately limited roles in national and business decision-making. Furthermore, limited support received for the recovery of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) pushed many women out of the labour force.¹⁹ Young people were also negatively impacted by the disruptions to education, training and jobs due to the COVID-19 crisis, which further impaired pre-existing vulnerabilities of youth in the labour market.

The pandemic led to a global rise in violence against women and children, with Cambodia experiencing a seven-fold increase in the number of calls to violence hotlines after the lockdown of March 2021 compared to before November 2020. Internet searches on information for survivors increased 52 per cent, while searches for mental health increased by 39 per cent

11 UNDP. (2022). Human Development Report 2021–22. <https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2021-22>

12 66.8 years for men and 72.3 years for women. See: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=KH> and <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

13 <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

NB: School attendance rate Boy/Girl: Primary 93.9%/95.1%; Lower secondary 51.4%/62.9%; Upper secondary 30%/37.6%. See UNICEF. (2023). "An Analysis of Sustainable Development Goal 4 Benchmark Indicators - Cambodia Socio-Economic Surveys 2015-2019".

14 UNDP, "Human Development Index (HDI)" n.d. <https://www.worlddeconomics.com/Inequality/Gini-Coefficient/Cambodia.aspx>

15 World Economics, "Cambodia's Inequality Index" n.d. <https://www.worlddeconomics.com/Inequality/Cambodia.aspx>

16 United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 33.

17 Government of Cambodia, Ministry of Health. (2022). Ad-hoc committee for COVID-19 vaccination (ACC-19).

18 UNDP. (2021). 2021 COVID-19 Economic and Social Impact Assessment in Cambodia. <https://www.undp.org/cambodia/publications/2021-covid-19-economic-and-social-impact-assessment-cambodia>

19 United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 7.

between August–December 2020 and January–July 2021.

This period also saw a 19 per cent increase in searches on mental health symptomatology, including depression and anxiety, and help-seeking searches increased 17 per cent. Women and girls, notably those with additional vulnerabilities related to youth, school enrolment, employment status, dis/ability, and/or immigration status, may have experienced higher exposure to violence throughout the pandemic. Although many sought information and services, few online resources and systems are reliable, provide actionable steps, and coordinate support.²⁰ As in other countries in the region,²¹ around 460,000 additional people in Cambodia fell below the poverty income threshold due to the pandemic's impact.²² Levels of household debt also increased with over 2.6 million Cambodians reportedly holding microfinance loans, collectively worth over USD 10 billion. The pandemic and efforts to control it also impacted access to essential services, such as nutritious food and health care, especially during periods of lockdown. In the education sector, many Cambodians, particularly those in the provinces, were left behind due to their lack of digital access.

The Government responded to many of the above challenges with an unprecedented expansion of social assistance to support poor households through cash transfer programmes, wage subsidies, skills programmes for suspended workers in garments and tourism, and relief packages (e.g. for businesses), notably the Cash Transfer Programme for poor and vulnerable households provided over three years during the COVID-19 pandemic with Government spending exceeding USD 1 billion. Nonetheless, significant efforts are still required to further develop the social protection system.

1.2 Gaps and Challenges

While Cambodia's overall development trajectory has been impressive, the country continues to experience challenges that hamper further progress towards the SDGs:

- **A large informal economy:** The majority (88.3 per cent) of the population, 75 per cent of whom are female, remains in informal employment,²³ reducing their ability to access social protection, and constraining public revenue collection.
- **Perpetuation of multidimensional poverty:** Although the incidence of multidimensional poverty fell from 36.7 per cent to 16.6 per cent of the population between 2014 and 2022,²⁴ poverty remains differentiated along ethnic, geographic and gender lines, and within certain segments of the population, especially vulnerable and marginalised groups.²⁵

20 United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 25.

21 Asian Development Bank, "COVID-19 Pushed 4.7 Million More People in Southeast Asia Into Extreme Poverty in 2021, But Countries are Well Positioned to Bounce Back", 16 March 2022. <https://www.adb.org/news/covid-19-pushed-4-7-million-more-people-southeast-asia-extreme-poverty-2021-countries-are-well>

22 World Bank. Cambodia Poverty Assessment—Toward A More Inclusive and Resilient Cambodia, p. 107.

23 Kingdom of Cambodia, NIS Ministry of Planning. (2019). Report on the Cambodia Labour Force Survey 2019. https://www.nis.gov.kh/nis/CLFS/CLFS19_Final_Full%20Report_EN.pdf

24 UNDP. (2023). 2023 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – Unstacking global poverty: Data for high impact action, p. 15. <https://hdr.undp.org/content/2023-global-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi/#/indicies/MPI>

25 Marginalised groups remain at greatest risk as unequal access to social protection, health and legal support prevent them from overcoming intersectional barriers associated with entrenched inter-generational poverty. Children, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees and women in Cambodia remain especially vulnerable. This vulnerability is exacerbated where individuals have not been registered in the civil registration system and lack legal identity. For both the United Nations and the Government, challenges remain due to limited data utilization, disaggregation (see below) and shared analysis when seeking to develop integrated strategies and services and determining how to best address the needs of those at greatest risk of being left behind.

- **Dependency on agriculture:**²⁶ Agriculture remains a vital pillar of the Cambodian economy, comprising 22 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and 35.7 per cent of total employment.²⁷ There remains a risk that global market fluctuations and climate change impacts could adversely impact the sector and increase Cambodia's vulnerability due to its dependence on agriculture. This would likely disproportionately impact women, who represent an increasing proportion of rice farmers.²⁸
- **Strategic partnerships and strengthened implementation capacities:** Greater collaboration between the Government, CSOs, NGOs, academia, the private sector and the United Nations is recognised as necessary to achieve the SDGs. An implementation gap also persists despite well-formulated and well-intentioned policies at the national level.
- **Education system:** Despite progress in achieving universal access to primary education, learning quality, high dropout rates and an under-qualified teaching workforce persist.²⁹
- **Vulnerability to climate change:**³⁰ As one of the world's most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, Cambodia currently has limited capacity for adaptation and faces heightened risks of increased frequency of extreme weather events due to its dependence on agriculture.
- **Progress on human rights:** While Cambodia has ratified the majority of core human rights treaties,³¹ important gaps remain between adopted principles and their implementation.
- **Discrimination and Gender-based violence (GBV):** Women and girls in Cambodia face significant inequalities and discrimination alongside negative gender norms and stereotypes, violence, and limited access to justice.^{32/33/34/35}
- **Civil registration:** Substantial gaps in Cambodia's civil registration and identity system have important implications for vulnerable, harder-to-reach communities, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities.
- **Cross-border issues:** An intensification in transnational criminality across a range of

26 ADB. (2021). Cambodia Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development Sector Assessment, Strategy, and Road Map. ADB. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/718806/cambodia-agriculture-rural-development-road-map.pdf>

27 World Bank. (2023). Cambodia Economic Update – Post-COVID-19 Economic Recovery: Special Focus – From Spending More to Spending Better: Toward Improved Human Development Outcomes (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099051523221517821/P17734003f2bcf02b0a89500f61b1f3ff7b>

28 NIS. (2019). General Population Census 2019, p. 68.

29 United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, pp. 10, 24.

30 Eckstein, D., Künzel, V., & Schäfer, L. (2021). Global Climate Risk Index 2021: Who Suffers Most from Extreme Weather Events? Weather-Related Loss Events in 2019 and 2000–2019. <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/19777>

31 See Annex 3. Only the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families remains to be ratified. The Constitution of Cambodia also incorporates human rights norms and standards into Cambodia's domestic legal system and confirms that the human rights treaties ratified by the Kingdom form part of domestic laws. In 2019, Cambodia voluntarily accepted 173 recommendations during the Universal Periodic Review, 69 of which are related to SDG 16.

32 Wyatt, Z. (2022). "A Vulnerable Nation: The Intersection of Rural Poverty, Cultural Norms and Gender-Based Violence in Cambodia". *Asian Journal of Social Science Studies*, vol. 7, No. 5 (2022), p. 55. <http://journal.julypress.com/index.php/ajsss/article/view/1164/869>

33 UNDP. (2021). The Gender Wage Gap in Cambodia, p. 4. <https://www.undp.org/cambodia/publications/gender-wage-gap-cambodia>

34 MacPhail, F. (2021). Women, work, and gender inequalities: with illustrations from Cambodia and China. In *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies*, pp. 205–212. Routledge.

35 United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, pp. 12–13, 42.

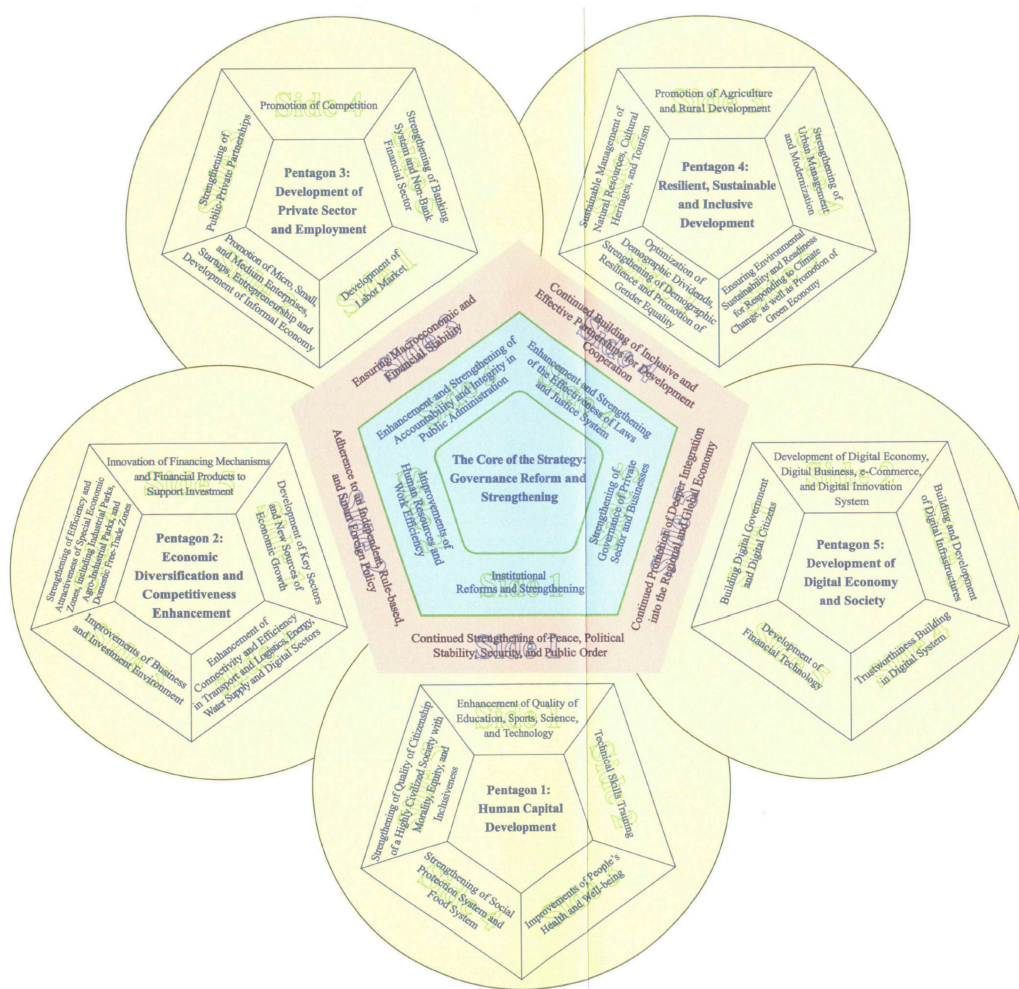
issues has been reported, requiring strengthened capacities and sub-regional collaboration.

- **Paucity of data:** Over 20 per cent of indicators are currently immeasurable but are critical for LDC graduation, SDG achievement and targeted implementation.
- **Exposure to external factors:** External factors impacting Cambodia include successive strains and variants of COVID-19 and the impact that the war in Ukraine is having on global markets and inflation, notably food, fertiliser and fuel. These factors have implications on Cambodia’s manufacturing, tourism and agriculture sectors, in particular.

1.3 National Vision for Sustainable Development

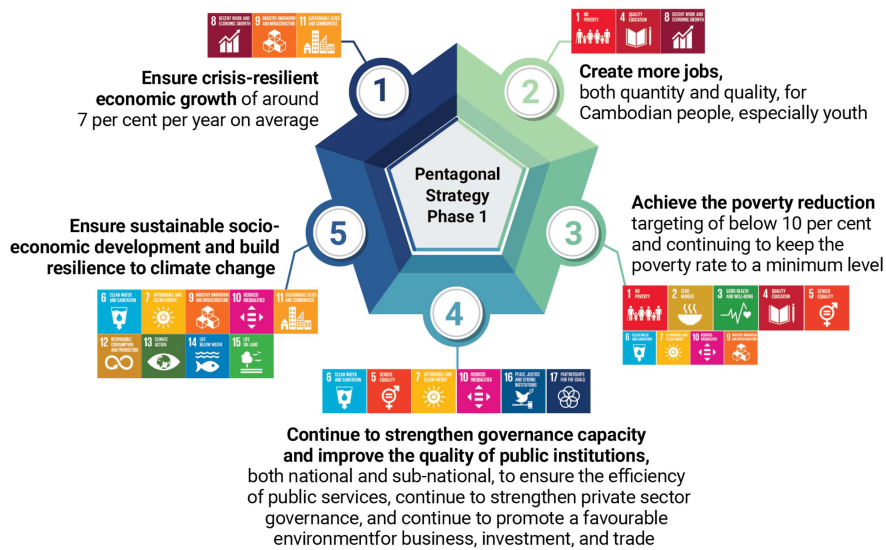
Cambodia’s Vision 2050 is broadly aligned with the “5 P’s” of the 2030 Agenda through its pursuit of Peace, Prosperity, Planet and Partnership, with emphasis on the human rights, dignity and equality of its People.³⁶ To implement Vision 2050, Phase 1 of the Pentagonal Strategy (2024–2028) outlines five Strategic Goals set out in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Diagram of “The Pentagonal Strategy-Phase I”



36 Royal Government of Cambodia. (2023). Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1 for Growth, Employment, Equity, Efficiency and Sustainability: Building the Foundation Towards Realizing the Cambodia Vision 2050, pp. 18–19.

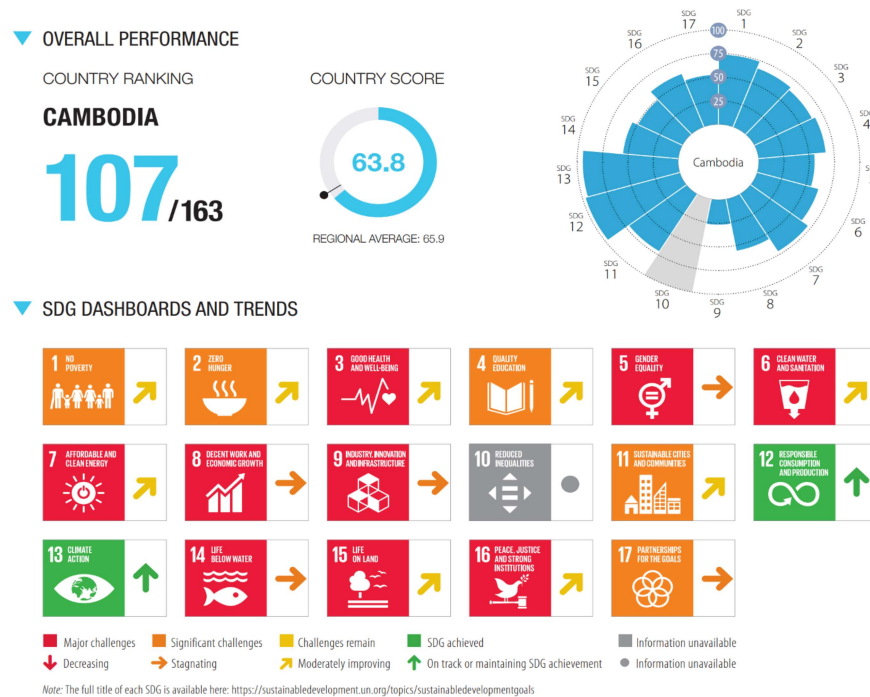
To implement Vision 2050, the Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1 outlines five Strategic Goals³⁷, which are aligned with the 2030 Agenda:



1.4 Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals

Cambodia ranked 107 out of 163 countries in the 2022 global SDG Index with a score of 63.8, placing it just below the East and South Asia regional average of 65.9 (see Figure 3 below).³⁸

Figure 3: Snapshot of SDG progress



37 In addition, the Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1 identifies the following five Priority Areas: Pentagon 1: Human Capital Development (SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 10, SDG 16); Pentagon 2: Economic Diversification and Competitiveness Enhancement (SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 16, SDG 17); Pentagon 3: Private Sector and Employment Development (SDG 1, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 17); Pentagon 4: Resilient, Sustainable and Inclusive Development, (SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15); Pentagon 5: Digital Economy and Society Development, (SDG 7, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 16, SDG 17).

38 Sachs, J., Lafortune, G., Kroll, C., Fuller, G., Woelm, F. (2022). Sustainable Development Report 2022: From Crisis to Sustainable Development, the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://www.sustainabledevelopment.report/reports/sustainable-development-report-2022/>. See Annex 2 for all indicators.

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 2019³⁹ and 19 per cent in 2023, despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁰ 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.⁴¹ This notwithstanding, hunger levels in Cambodia have continued to fall (SDG 2),⁴² although obesity rates have conversely increased.⁴³ Despite these relative improvements, the prevalence of wasting among children under 5 years old has remained largely unchanged, at around 10 per cent.⁴⁴

Health and well-being (SDG 3) have improved, evidenced by reduced infant mortality rates (IMR), from 28 to 12 per 1,000 live births, and the under-five mortality rate fell from 35 to 16 per 1,000 live births, both between 2014 and 2021–2022.⁴⁵ However, preventable newborn deaths still comprise a high proportion of child deaths under 5 years. A reduction in the maternal mortality rate (MMR) from 170 to 154 deaths per 100,000 live births was also recorded alongside a steady increase in access to, and use of, family planning. However, there remains a large unmet need for family planning.⁴⁶ For example, gaps remain in relation to women receiving maternity benefits, and the obligation to protect, promote and fulfil the right to social protection. Treatment of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) remains a major challenge, with the percentage of deaths caused by NCDs increasing from 64 per cent in 2015 to 68 per cent in 2019.⁴⁷ The country is on track to eliminate malaria by 2025⁴⁸ and tuberculosis by 2030.⁴⁹ HIV treatment coverage has increased from 77% (2018) to 86% (2022) for all people living with HIV, meaning 99% of those who know their HIV status are being treated for it.⁵⁰ While population health has improved with increased health service coverage, universal health coverage has not yet been attained and coverage remains lower than the regional average.⁵¹ 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.⁵² Already low treatment rates for mental health have been declining. The percent-

39 World Bank. (2022). Cambodia Poverty Assessment—Toward A More Inclusive and Resilient Cambodia (Full Report) (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

40 Royal Government of Cambodia. (2022). Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. v.

41 Ibid, p. 20.

42 17.1 on Global Hunger Index in 2022 compared to 20.1 in 2014, 26.1 in 2007 and 41.1 in 2000. See: 2022 Global Hunger Index.

43 Global Nutrition Report, "Country Nutrition Profiles – Cambodia: The burden of malnutrition at a glance", n.d. <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/south-eastern-asia/cambodia/>

44 NIS, Ministry of Health, and the DHS Program ICF. (2023). Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021–22, Final Report, p. 217. https://www.nis.gov.kh/nis/CDHS/2021-22/Cambodia_DHS2021-2022_Final_Report_EN.pdf

45 Ibid, pp. 147–148.

46 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. Prioritising 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.

47 World Bank "Cause of death, by non-communicable diseases (% of total) – Cambodia", "[d]erived based on the data from Global Health Estimates 2020". <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DTH.NCOM.ZS?locations=KH>

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

49 NIS, Ministry of Health, and the DHS Program ICF. (2023). Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021–22 Key Indicator Report.

50 UNAIDS. "Despite Impressive Treatment Results, Cambodia's HIV Response Must Address Inequalities Affecting Children and Young Key Populations", 05 April 2023. <https://unaids-ap.org/2023/04/05/despite-impressive-treatment-results-cambodias-hiv-response-must-addressinequalities-affecting-children-and-young-key-populations/>

51 World Bank, World Bank Blogs. "Cambodia: Progressing toward Universal Health Coverage", 06 May 2021. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/health/cambodia-progressing-toward-universal-health-coverage>.

52 Olofsson, S., Sebastian, M. S., & Jegannathan, B. (2018). "Mental health in primary health care in a rural district of Cambodia: a situational analysis". *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, vol. 12, No.

age 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 September of 2021.⁵³

Regarding educational improvements (SDG 4), primary school completion rates rose from 82.1 per cent in 2018/2019 to 86.8 per cent in 2022–2023.^{54/55} Gender parity in schooling has advanced (SDGs 4 and 5), with increased completion of male students in primary schools from 78.2 per cent in 2018–2019 to 85.3 per cent in 2022–2023. 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.⁵⁶ The quality of the education sector remains both a key concern and opportunity for Cambodia, as identified in the gaps and challenges section of Chapter 1 above.

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 in 2020.⁵⁷ 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 devote 90 per cent of the total time spent on unpaid domestic and care work,⁵⁸ and 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. The 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.⁵⁹ Social attitudes that discriminate against women in leadership are upheld, hindering the full participation of women in decision-making roles in both the public and political spheres, resulting in a stagnation in progress towards SDG 5.⁶⁰

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 2018.⁶¹ Access to energy expanded from 72.16 per cent in 2018 to 88.41 per cent by 2022, and the use of renewable energy increased from 48.93 per cent to 61.06 per cent over the same period. Cambodia has made only relative progress towards the creation of decent jobs (SDG 8). The minimum wage rose from USD 182 to USD 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 following a technical review of economic and social indicators, allowing

7. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5782361/pdf/13033_2018_Article_185.pdf

53 Royal Government of Cambodia. Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 34.

54 Government data from the annual Education Congress report, 2022.

55 World Bank, “Primary completion rate, total (% of relevant age group) – Cambodia”. UNESCO Institute of Statistics, Accessed 24 October 2022. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.CMPT.ZS?locations=KH>

56 Royal Government of Cambodia. Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 31.

57 Ibid, pp. 37–39.

58 United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 18.

59 NIS. General Population Census 2019, p. 44.

60 Royal Government of Cambodia. Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 40.

61 Ibid, p. 61.

adjustments and improvements to the minimum wage policy. There was a 23.4 per cent increase from 2015 to 2022 in the purchasing capacity of minimum wage earners.⁶² 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.⁶³

Cambodia continues to grapple with increasing investments in innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), including the requisite human and physical capital sectors of education,⁶⁴ health,⁶⁵ transport,⁶⁶ tourism products⁶⁷ and digital infrastructure.⁶⁸ Innovation is promoted as a national goal,⁶⁹ including through provisions of digital public services and the expansion of on-line training.⁷⁰ Overall, levels of industry and enterprise innovation have been limited; yet, the Pentagonal Strategy places more significant prioritisation on digital transformation.

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 (i.e. Health Equity Funds and Social Health Insurance schemes), which increased from 38.5 per cent in 2019 to 39.5 per cent in 2020.⁷¹ 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 subsidised health screenings, rehabilitation services, vocational training, employment policies, and the social security fund.⁷² Further opportunities to reduce inequalities remain, including in support of orphans and vulnerable children for which there is no data, alongside increasing opportunities for rural people and workers⁷³ and efforts to address stigma and discrimination against marginalised populations, such as community members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex (LGBTQI+).⁷⁴

There has been limited progress towards SDG 11 due to limited action to create sustainable cities and communities. The Sustainable City Strategic Plan 2020–2030 for Seven Target Cities and the Phnom Penh Sustainable City Development Plan 2018–2030⁷⁵ were both approved but have not been fully implemented. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions rose from 2.8 GgCO₂eq to 2.84 GgCO₂eq⁷⁶ between 2018 and 2019. At the same time, the rate of communities vulnerable to climate change dropped marginally from 38 per cent in 2018 to 36.5 per cent in 2020.⁷⁷ Linked to this, there has been progress towards SDG 12, for example, in terms of national recycling rates.⁷⁸ In addition, Cambodia has seen improvements in the coordina-

62 International Labour Organization (ILO). (2023). Minimum wage response to COVID-19 and inflation crises: An Asia-Pacific region review, Policy Brief, p. 14. https://www.ilo.org/wcms-sp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/briefingnote/wcms_887949.pdf

63 ADB. "Cambodia and ADB: Economic forecasts for Cambodia". <https://www.adb.org/countries/cambodia/economy/>

64 Royal Government of Cambodia. Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 81.

65 Ibid, p. 83.

66 Ibid, p. 87.

67 Ibid, p. 49.

68 Ibid, p. 89.

69 Ibid, p. 52.

70 Ibid, p. 77.

71 Ibid, p. 34.

72 Ibid, pp. 40–41.

73 Ibid, p. 94.

74 Ibid, p. 94.

75 Ibid, p. 72.

76 Ibid, p. 31.

77 Ibid, p. 73.

78 Royal Government of Cambodia. (2019). Cambodia's Voluntary National Review 2019 on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, p. 55. <https://sustainabledevel->

tion 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 2050.⁷⁹ 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.⁸⁰ Aspirations to build a low-carbon society are witnessed, including through a recent increase in national budget allocations for climate change responses.⁸¹

Efforts to protect life below water (SDG 14) appear to be stagnating as exploitation continues to be leveraged for tourism and sustenance,⁸² however, the wild fish catch fell from 601,000 tonnes in 2019 to 531,600 tonnes in 2022.⁸³ Cambodia faces challenges of illegal fishing,⁸⁴ and marine and 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.⁸⁵ Long-standing concerns remain with regard to 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, sub-regional and cross-border collaboration, chiefly via ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Sub-region.⁸⁶ Cambodia pursued important national and local partnerships (SDG 17) with stakeholders from all tiers of Government, NGOs, CSOs, and the private sector; yet, these need to be further strengthened to advance the whole-of-society approach to ensure progress towards the SDGs.⁸⁷

opment.un.org/content/documents/23603Cambodia_VNR_SDPM_Approved.pdf

79 Ministry of Environment. (2020). Cambodia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution, p. 22.

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/20201231_NDC_Update_Cambodia.pdf

80 Royal Government of Cambodia. Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 95.

81 Ibid, p. 97.

82 Ibid, p. 67.

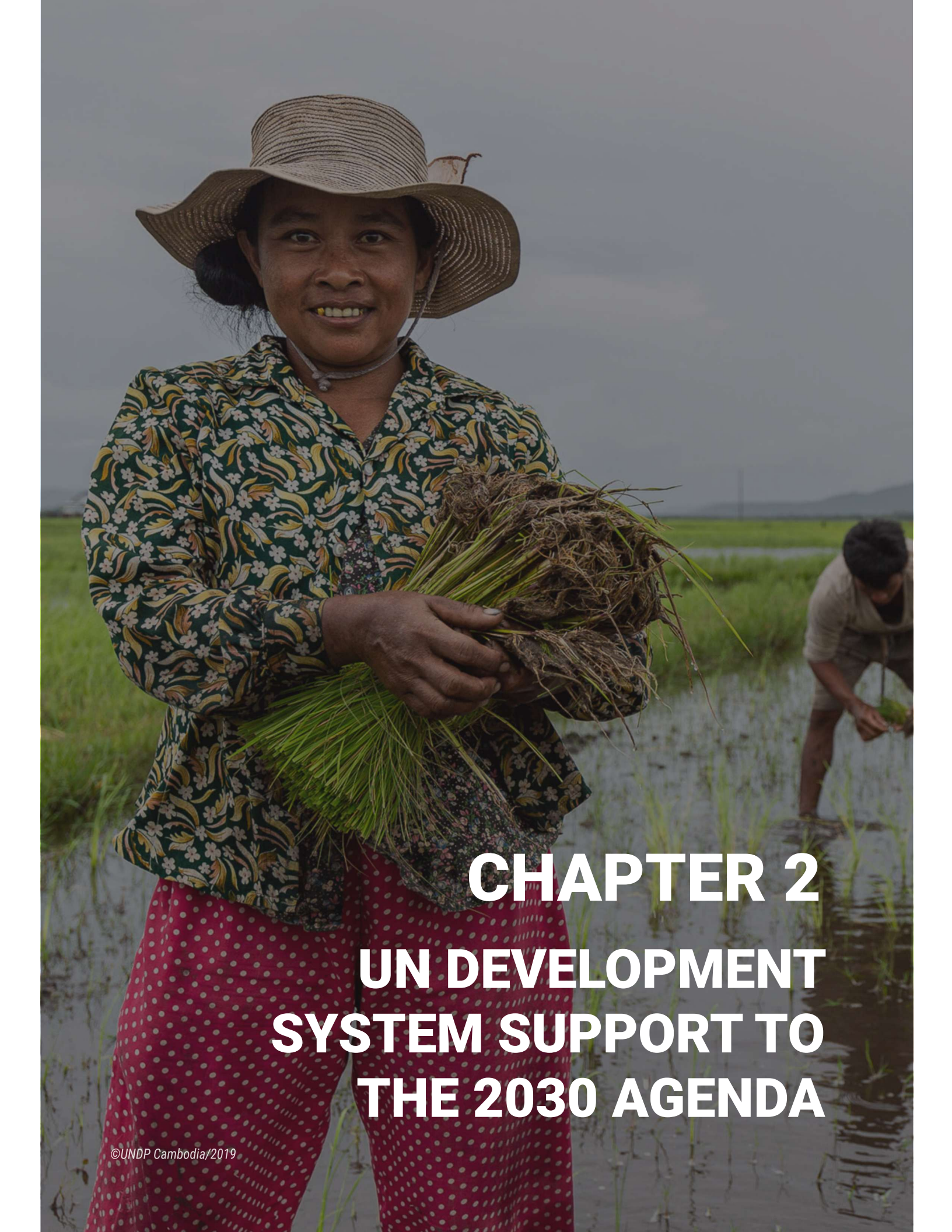
83 Ibid, p. vi.

84 Ibid, p. 64.

85 Ibid, p. 68.

86 This includes via Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), the Mekong Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control, among others. 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. human trafficking, sexual exploitation, organized drugs and crime syndicates and money laundering).

87 Royal Government of Cambodia. Mid-Term Review 2021 of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 Implementation, p. 28.



CHAPTER 2
UN DEVELOPMENT
SYSTEM SUPPORT TO
THE 2030 AGENDA

2.1 Consultations and Analysis Informing Cooperation Framework Priorities

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Cambodia facilitated an extensive process of consultations to inform the development of this Cooperation Framework with the objective to make the formulation process as inclusive and participatory as possible. Consultations were framed by key issues arising from the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and priorities set out in the Government's National Vision 2050 and the Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1.

An independent evaluation of the preceding United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2019–2023 provided an important source of learning with respect to the areas that were working well and the adjustments needed when conceptualising the current Cooperation Framework. Chief among the lessons learned and recommendations were the needs to strengthen co-ownership with the Government, reinforce partnerships with the private sector and civil society, and support strategic positioning, while also better utilizing the convening power of the United Nations. In addition, the United Nations was requested to expand its current portfolio of joint programming and support further investment in data and digital transformation in favour of evidence-based approaches and more effective implementation.

The CCA provided the analytical rigor for understanding the underlying, structural and root causes of Cambodia's development challenges. As noted above, the CCA informed both the Visioning and Strategic Prioritisation Retreat consultations and United Nations technical teams in constructing a

robust Theory of Change (see below) upon which the priorities, outcomes and collaborative outputs for United Nations intervention are constructed. In addition to the CCA, the Human Rights Strategy (2021–2028) and the Gender Deep Dive report of the United Nations in Cambodia ensured that both a human rights perspective and a transformative approach to gender informed the development of the Cooperation Framework.

To explore and validate the analytical foundations, a two-day retreat took place in November 2022, hosting around 180 representatives from the Government, development partners, CSOs, think tanks, academia and community organizations, as well as the private sector. The retreat resulted in four priority areas and the main development pathways required for a successful outcome in each area, including the identification of obstacles to be overcome.⁸⁸ A series of consultations were subsequently held between January and April 2023 with the Prime Minister, Government ministries, CSOs, development partners and international financial institutions, as well as with groups focused on the Leave No One Behind agenda and at-risk communities.⁸⁹ These led to a Cooperation Framework based on four outcome areas, each with four to five outputs (see Figure 1 above). Each outcome and output is underpinned by a commitment to inclusive, people-centred, human rights-based development, and a determination to strengthen resilience and sustainability. To complete formulation of the Cooperation Framework, the UNCT also conducted internal consultations on eight areas for transformation that contribute to national and global targets and reconfirm the ambitions and contributions of the United Nations to the 2030 Agenda.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ This sequence of steps provided the basis for the Cooperation Framework Theory of Change.

⁸⁹ For example, as a result of these consultations, cooperation framework outputs 3.4 and 4.4 were added, respectively on disaster risk management and digital transformation. Energy transition and mine action were also strengthened.

⁹⁰ These areas of national and global transformation are: i) energy; ii) environment and climate; iii) data; iv) digital transformation; v) education; vi) decent jobs; vii) food systems; and viii) GBV. This Cooperation Framework contains special boxes for each area, and integrated these into the Results Framework – Annex 1.

Figure 4: Cooperation Framework Overarching Theory of Change

The overarching Theory of Change underpinning this Cooperation Framework outlines a development pathway for Cambodia that is comprehensive, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient, with the intention to catalyse transformation. It identifies the main development priorities that aim to address the social needs of the population and support economic transformation and formalisation towards LDC graduation. It sets out the measures required to restore Cambodia's natural environment and biodiversity with an increased effort and investment to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. Moreover, the Theory of Change speaks to essential human characteristics needed to advance a socially cohesive and inclusive society for all people in Cambodia, supported by more effective and accountable institutions at all levels. Within this context, it also illustrates the cross-cutting nature of development interventions, such as digital transformation, reliable data, innovation and financing, and critically gender equality and the empowerment of women. Not least, it sets out the human rights foundations upon which all forms of lasting and inclusive development depend. Within this overall context, the key assumptions to this model of development are outlined, together with the risks that pose the greatest threat to development progress.

IF the rights to social protection, health, education, food and nutrition are realised through better quality and more equitable services and systems, and positive practices at the community, family and individual levels, **THEN** the population will be able to lead more fulfilling lives and contribute to social and economic progress nationally and locally; and **IF** the economy in Cambodia is more diversified, formalised and made circular, **THEN** this would encourage greater levels of engagement, investment and financing, thereby supporting key industries and sectors at all levels, while more equitably empowering people nationwide in preserving the natural environment; and **IF** climate resilience and adaptation are advanced through natural resource and waste management, supported by capacities, especially at the sub-national level for the effective implementation of legal and policy frameworks, alongside the performance of carbon markets, **THEN** inclusive social and economic development would be better integrated and harmonised with the preservation and restoration of the natural environment; and **IF** public and private sector institutions, policies and practices are more closely aligned with universal human rights, and made more effective and accountable to people in Cambodia, **THEN** greater opportunities and platforms for meaningful participation and dialogue would exist; and **IF** women, youth, people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations are empowered and represented to contribute to social and economic progress while having increased access to quality protection against discrimination and violence, **THEN** this would contribute to enhanced social cohesion and a reduction in harmful social norms; and **IF** Cambodia strengthens partnerships for private and public financing for the SDGs, facilitates the digitization of key sectors, including the transition to green technologies and opportunities for the future, supported by improved disaggregated data for evidence-based planning, **THEN** the overarching development aspiration of an inclusive, sustainable and resilient Cambodia will be realised.

The Detailed Theory of Change can be found as Annex 4 to this Cooperation Framework.

2.2 The Cooperation Framework Core Principles

The development of this UNSDCF has been guided by the following principles:

- a comprehensive **human rights**-based approach to development, with a strong focus on inclusion, LNOB, and reaching those the furthest behind first;
- **Gender equality** and women's empowerment;
- **Sustainability** and **resilience**;
- **Accountability** and **transparency**.

Each of these principles is summarised below to give a strong sense of the level of commitment of the UNCT and the Government of Cambodia to the centrality of these operating principles.

Human Rights and Sustainable Development

This Cooperation Framework is underpinned by a human rights-based approach to development⁹¹ across each of the four outcomes and throughout all phases of programming, planning and implementation, as well as in monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The United Nations will continue to work towards strengthening the institutional capacities of “duty-bearers” to meet their obligations and of “rights-holders” to access, protect and exercise their rights. The human rights-based approach enables the central aspiration of the 2030 Agenda – LNOB – to be realised. This includes the commitment to “reach the furthest behind first” and to secure gender equality and the empowerment of women.⁹² Rights-based social transformation also aims to prevent and address inequalities, discrimination, exclusion, poverty and exploitation.⁹³

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The report of the United Nations Gender Theme Group (GTG) acknowledges that, although Cambodia has made advances in gender equality over the past 25 years, significant impediments to further progress remain. Five challenges that will be tackled in this Cooperation Framework are outlined below.

- **Harmful social norms:** Harmful social norms represent the root cause of gender inequality and uphold unequal power relations that disadvantage women, girls and LGBTQI+ people.
- **Unpaid work:** Cambodia has one of the world's most unequal distributions of unpaid care work, which acts as a barrier to women's employment and can limit participation in education, training, and leadership.
- **GBV and harassment:** More than one in five Cambodian women have experienced physical and sexual violence

91 The Cooperation Framework Theory of Change diagram illustrates how human rights form the foundation of all United Nations interventions across the outcomes.

92 The UNCT will also ensure that human rights continue to remain at the heart of the COVID-19 response and recovery. For example, through the implementation of this Cooperation Framework by ensuring that those with the greatest need are able to access health, social protection, labour rights, education, nutrition, housing, land, justice and the rule of law, among others. The UNCT will promote and protect the human rights of minorities and groups, such as returning migrants and indigenous groups, in accordance with international norms and standards. Not least, the UNCT will maintain a coordinated effort to enable those most affected and most at risk during the COVID-19 pandemic to access vital services.

93 Within the framework of human rights, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) is among the top priorities. There is special focus on putting victims first and ensuring senior management is accountable for PSEA. While noting the disproportionate effects on women, children, and vulnerable persons in Cambodia, the UNCT is committed to collectively approach PSEA in order to safeguard beneficiaries/survivors of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). The United Nations system adopts a strategic focus on building systems to strengthen its structures, processes and accountabilities and providing support to Government and other partners and service providers in establishing efficient organizational capacities to prevent and respond to SEA.

from a partner, one in three Cambodian women have experienced emotional abuse, and one in three Cambodian men have perpetrated physical or sexual violence against their partner.

- **Labour market inequalities:** Women are overrepresented in lower paid, less valued positions in the informal sector and underrepresented in senior and higher paid roles in the formal economy, increasing their vulnerability due to job insecurity, unfair wages and potentially unsafe working environments.⁹⁴
- **Underrepresentation of women in decision-making:** The limited representation of women in decision-making roles represents both a cause and a consequence of gender inequalities.⁹⁵

Sustainability and Resilience

Sustainability and resilience are pivotal to the success of this Cooperation Framework. Inclusive human development, social protection, health and education systems need to be resilient to extreme stress (Outcome 1), as exemplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, they need to be fiscally sustainable and climate-adapted. The economic model (Outcome 2), which generated tremendous wealth over the last few decades is now a growing liability to stability in Cambodian society due to the resulting inequalities in wealth and opportunity, and the degradation of the natural environment (Outcome 3). As Cambodia seeks to manage a just transition to a sustainable risk-informed, low-carbon economy, the relationship between economy and environment needs to be rapidly recalibrated. Food systems too must become more resilient. As a result, issues of sustainability and resilience are given heightened consideration across the Cooperation Framework.

⁹⁴ Women contribute significantly to Cambodia's economy, including as owners of 62% of micro-enterprises and 26% of small- and medium-sized enterprises. ESCAP. "Cambodia social enterprise tackles challenges faced by women owned micro and small enterprises", 27 June 2023. <https://www.unescap.org/story/cambodian-social-enterprise-tackles-challenges-faced-women-owned-micro-and-small-enterprises>

⁹⁵ Women's representation at the National Assembly increased to 21%, while female senators remained stagnant at 16%. Indigenous women face increased barriers to representation at the commune level. Women remain significantly underrepresented in management positions across sectors, trade unions, political parties and all levels of government.

Accountability and Transparency

The Cooperation Framework serves as a core accountability tool between the United Nations and the Government of Cambodia. Importantly, the Cooperation Framework is collectively owned by the UNCT members and reflected in entity-specific country programmes. The UNCT commits to an annual meeting with the Government and key development partners to report on progress, financial statements and accountability of results (see Chapter 3 below).

2.3 Risks and Assumptions

The main risks associated with the implementation of this Cooperation Framework include:

- **Climate Risks** (increased extreme weather events, leading to, and compounded by, biodiversity losses due to the climate crisis; adverse impacts on the agriculture sector and consequently on nutrition and livelihoods, leading to potential insecurity; limited adaptive capacities that prevent resilience to disasters)
- **Economic Risks** (multidimensional poverty, which leaves many vulnerable; high rates of informality, which exacerbate vulnerabilities, constrain government revenue and reduce access to safe working conditions and social protection)
- **Human and Social Risks** (difficulty protecting freedoms of expression, press and assembly; overburdened justice system; discrimination, GBV and social exclusion exacerbated among vulnerable communities, including the poor, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities)

The main assumptions underlying the Coop-

eration Framework are that: a human rights-based approach, which places people at the centre of development and prioritises the furthest behind first is applied with resilience, sustainability and inclusion as the leading principles for policies; health, nutrition, education and social protection systems can be reformed for social transformation; food systems can be transformed to provide decent work, improve livelihoods and ensure environmental sustainability; natural resources can be protected, pollutants reduced, and financing utilized to preserve biodiversity and expand adaptation measures for resilience; and institutional capacities and civic participation will advance alongside response mechanisms and digital solutions to enable preventative and supportive actions for equity and inclusion.

2.4 United Nations Comparative Advantages

The United Nations has a long-standing commitment to the Government and people of Cambodia, and is able to provide substantial support across all sectors to help Cambodia advance towards an increasingly inclusive, resilient and sustainable development future. Not only does the United Nations facilitate leadership of the international community in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda, it also provides a range of support to the Government, provincial authorities and development partners. Specifically, the United Nations convenes platforms, facilitates dialogue, generates knowledge, policy products and advice, strengthens institutions, builds capacity and provides technical assistance. Further, it provides support in the wake of crises in the form of service delivery and humanitarian assistance.

The United Nations supports implementation of universal human rights-based treaties and conventions to which Cambodia is party, embracing economic, social, environmental and cultural development based on the principles of equality, inclusion, resilience and sustain-

ability. The United Nations will support Cambodia's smooth graduation from LDC status by leveraging its global network of development expertise and continuously drawing on this network to capitalise on the exchange of development best practices through South-South and Triangular Cooperation mechanisms.

The United Nations is also well positioned to support Cambodia within the sub-region and in regard to cross-border cooperation and partnerships. This includes a broad spectrum of activities including various ASEAN initiatives for social, economic, cultural and political development, support for the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), the Mekong Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control and the Mekong River Commission. In addition, several important multi-country and bilateral joint border committees are in place with neighbouring Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vietnam and Thailand and will continue to benefit from long-standing support from the United Nations. Transboundary challenges relate to human rights, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, organized drugs and crime syndicates, logging, wildlife trade and money laundering. Cross-border collaboration, supported and sometimes facilitated by the United Nations, is an integral part of ensuring Cambodia and its neighbouring states are able to progress and report in an accurate and timely manner against numerous treaty obligations to which they are mutually committed.

2.5 Alignment of the Cooperation Framework and National Development Priorities

The priority areas, outcomes, and outputs of the Cooperation Framework align closely with the priorities and objectives of the Royal Government of Cambodia's Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Alignment between the Cooperation Framework Priorities and the Royal Government of Cambodia's Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1

Cooperation Framework Outcomes

1. HUMAN

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, are healthier and benefit from improved gender-responsive education and social protection.

2. ECONOMY

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from and contribute to a productive, diversified, gender equal, formalized and low carbon and climate adapted economy.

3. ENVIRONMENT

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from a healthier, gender inclusive natural environment.

4. SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, live in an increasingly gender equal and inclusive society with active civic space and enjoy more effective and accountable institutions.

Cooperation Framework Outputs

- Output 1.1:** Universal Health Coverage is advanced through resilient people-centred health system.
- Output 1.2:** Better protection against all forms of malnutrition.
- Output 1.3:** Better quality and accessible education, skills development and life-long learning.
- Output 1.4:** Enhanced and expanded Social Protection systems which increase the resilience of people against life-cycle socio-economic risks and shocks.
- Output 1.5:** Increased human security underpinned by mine action which expands access to safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance.

- Output 2.1:** Agrifood systems are more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalized and safer.
- Output 2.2:** Businesses are more formalized, inclusive and carbon and pollution mitigating.
- Output 2.3:** Decent work conditions are promoted for more people.
- Output 2.4:** Finance to support the attainment of the SDGs is more diversified and sustainable.

- Output 3.1:** Natural resource management, conservation, preservation and restoration activities are enhanced.
- Output 3.2:** Air, water and land pollution are reduced, and hazardous substances and materials are controlled.
- Output 3.3:** Governance and policies for climate change including carbon are strengthened and engagement of all stakeholders is enhanced.
- Output 3.4:** The adaptive capacity of systems & communities to climate change & disasters is strengthened.

- Output 4.1:** Institutions are more accountable and effective in upholding human rights to deliver justice and protection services to vulnerable groups, including women, children and migrants.
- Output 4.2:** Civic participation is increased in development and decision-making at all levels, including for women and youth.
- Output 4.3:** Systems, services and community solutions are improved and effectively respond to and prevent discrimination, gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices.
- Output 4.4:** Digital transformation is advanced to accelerate positive social change.

Supporting Royal Government's Pentagonal Strategy- Phase 1

- Pentagon 1.1:** Enhancement of quality of education, sports, science, and technology.
- Pentagon 1.2:** Technical skills training.
- Pentagon 1.3:** Improvements of people's health and well-being.
- Pentagon 1.4:** Strengthening of social protection system and food system.
- Pentagon 4.3:** Promotion of agriculture and rural development.

- Pentagon 1.4:** Strengthening of social protection system and food system
- Pentagon 4.3:** Promotion of agriculture and rural sector
- Pentagon 2.1:** Development of key sectors and new sources of economic growth
- Pentagon 3.2:** Promotion of micro, small and medium enterprises, startups, entrepreneurship and development of informal economy
- Pentagon 2.3:** Improvement of business and investment environment
- Pentagon 4.5:** Ensuring environmental sustainability and readiness for responding to climate, as well as promotion of green economy
- Pentagon 3.1:** Development of labour market
- Pentagon 5.2:** Development of digital economy, digital business, e-commerce, and digital innovation system

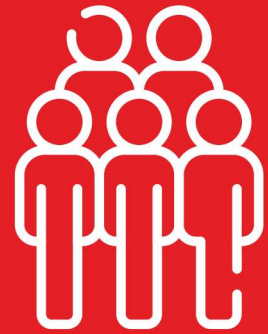
- Pentagon 3.1:** Development of labour market.
- Pentagon 4.3:** Promotion of Agriculture and Rural Sector
- Pentagon 4.5:** Ensuring Environmental Sustainability and Readiness for Responding to Climate, as well as Promotion of Green Economy.
- Pentagon 4.5:** Ensuring environmental sustainability and readiness for responding to climate change, as well as promotion of green economy.

- Pentagon 1.5:** Strengthening of quality of citizenship of a highly civilized society with morality, equity, and inclusiveness.
- Pentagon 4.1:** Optimisation of demographic dividends, strengthening of demographic resilience, and promotion of gender equality.
- Pentagon 5.1:** Building digital government and digital citizens.
- Pentagon 5.3:** Building and development of digital infrastructures.
- Pentagon 5.4:** Trustworthiness building in digital systems.

2.6 Priority Areas, Outcomes and Outputs

**PRIORITY
AREA** **1**

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



OUTCOME 1: By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, are healthier and benefit from improved gender-responsive education and social protection.



United Nations Contribution to Outcome 1

Based on the theory of change for Outcome 1,⁹⁶ the United Nations has identified five areas for collaborative work to deliver transformative results that achieve impact at scale. These areas are strongly aligned with the national long-term goals of expanded social protection, universal health coverage, better protection against all forms of malnutrition, better quality education and skills development, and mine action. In this regard the United Nations will partner with the Government and other relevant stakeholders to support delivery of the following outputs with the aim to significantly advance progress in favour of human development in Cambodia:



Output 1.1: Universal Health Coverage is advanced through a resilient, people-centred health system.



Output 1.2: Better protection against all forms of malnutrition.



Output 1.3: Better quality and accessible education, skills development and lifelong learning.



Output 1.4: Enhanced and expanded social protection systems that increase the resilience of people against life-cycle socioeconomic risks and shocks.



Output 1.5: Increased human security underpinned by mine action which expands access to safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance.





Output 1.1: Universal Health Coverage is advanced through a resilient, people-centred health system.

The United Nations will reinforce national, subnational and local capacities to strengthen primary health-care systems and services,⁹⁷ enabling higher quality, better integrated, people-centred care with appropriate referral mechanisms. Services, particularly in the public sector, will be supported to reach those most in need, with lowered risk of financial hardship. The United Nations will support health systems to be better prepared for, and resilient to, the full range of public health threats, including through support for improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and stronger multisector coordination with ministries (e.g. through the One Health⁹⁸ platform) to mitigate and respond to global health threats across people, animals and the environment. In addition, the United Nations will help enhance health-care services to be better able to respond to Cambodia's evolving health burdens and needs, including prevention and care of NCDs and injuries. The United Nations will support population health through universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and across all aspects of life not just the treatment of illness. In parallel, the United Nations will support individuals, families and communities to engage more actively and become empowered to preserve their health and well-being.⁹⁹ Under this output, the social, environmental, economic and behavioural determinants of health will be addressed through stronger intersectoral collaboration and action, as well as stronger community engagement and participation in health planning.



Output 1.2: Better protection against all forms of malnutrition.

The United Nations will strengthen national, subnational and local capacities to design, implement, coordinate and monitor food security and nutrition strategies, programmes and guidelines with the aim to prevent all forms of malnutrition. It will support the transformation of food systems in line with the 2021 Food Systems Roadmap to ensure healthy diets and safe food and to aid in breaking the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition. The United Nations will help localise implementation by supporting provincial food security and nutrition working groups. Through Cambodia's Scaling Up

⁹⁷ Support will be provided for a range of health-care systems and services (mental, sexual and reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition, as well as tuberculosis, HIV-AIDS and other infectious, communicable and non-communicable diseases).

⁹⁸ "One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of humans, animals, plants and ecosystems. It recognises the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and inter-dependent".

⁹⁹ Support in this area will also include for public health and health promotion for healthy lifestyles, including the reduction in risky behaviours, anti-tobacco use, among other public health campaigns and initiatives in support of nationally agreed health priorities and targets.

Nutrition (SUN) movement, the United Nations Nutrition Network and the SUN Business Network, the United Nations will help coordinate a multisectoral approach to nutrition improvement and help mobilise the private sector in support of public-private partnership for nutrition.

The United Nations will provide support, focusing particularly on vulnerable populations (pregnant women, children, persons with disabilities), to access essential nutrition services, including safe, affordable and nutritious food throughout the year as part of primary health care. The United Nations will work with the Government on strategies and policies to address sociocultural norms on feeding, care and diet for better nutrition, including social behaviour change interventions for healthier practices and the promotion of healthy foods, particularly those marketed to young children and adolescents. Nutrition-sensitive interventions across other sectors will be strengthened to address underlying causes of all forms of malnutrition. The United Nations will support coordination and implementation of multisectoral plans and nutrition-sensitive programmes across systems (e.g. food, health, WASH, social protection, education). Scale and impact will be achieved through United Nations joint agency programming, particularly in key areas with high malnutrition and food insecurity, documenting impacts and learnings critical for sustained scale-up by the Government.

Output 1.3: Better quality and accessible education, skills development and lifelong learning.



The United Nations will support the Government and service providers in the pursuit of improved learning outcomes through capacity-building, planning, management and implementation at the national and subnational levels. Advocacy, policy analysis and South-South and Triangular Cooperation will seek to increase domestic investments in systems and partnerships, which enable improved and equitable access to inclusive, quality and relevant educational services and enhanced management information systems to ensure strengthened education policymaking, planning, management and monitoring, including through leveraging technology to lead the digital transformation of education. This will extend skills development and lifelong learning opportunities for all people in Cambodia. It also aims to expand the current cohort of appropriately qualified, well-trained and supported educators equipped with digital skills and access to continuous professional development, incorporating new teaching and learning materials, for the increased resilience of knowledge institutions.

The United Nations will provide focused support for female students, with initiatives that target reducing dropout rates and improving learning outcomes, as well as targeting out-of-school youth and lower-skilled women working in the garment industry with better access to skills development and life-

long learning. The United Nations will support expanding education to directly address the needs of vulnerable learners, including out-of-school youth, returning migrants, persons with disabilities, and children in ethnic minority communities. This will include multilingual education for ethnic minority children, scholarships and school-feeding programmes. Education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions will be supported to equip people in Cambodia with the full range of skills needed for life, work and their healthy and inclusive participation in Cambodia's development future. This will include supporting the ongoing recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic while addressing the digital divide within the education system. Education will also be used to catalyse support for civic engagement, including through volunteering initiatives, that accelerates Cambodia's progress towards SDG achievement.



Transforming Cambodia's Education System within the Global Context

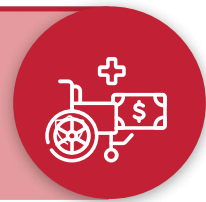
The global disruption to education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted learning. The crisis brought global education systems to a halt, with school closures affecting more than 1.6 billion learners. While nearly every country in the world offered remote learning opportunities, the quality and reach of such initiatives varied greatly and were at best partial substitutes for in-person learning. Evidence of the detrimental impacts of school closures on children's learning offer a harrowing reality; learning losses are substantial, with the most marginalised children and youth disproportionately affected.

At the same time, education has the potential to transform social, economic and environmental realities; yet, many continue to lack access to this human right. Over the last decade, Cambodia has made progress in increasing access to education. Nationally, Cambodia was close to achieving universal access in primary education, with the primary net enrolment rate reaching 97 per cent

in 2020. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic saw this drop to 91.9 per cent in 2021. Moreover, low student learning outcomes, inadequate preparation and professional development of teachers, low teaching quality, high dropout and low retention rates remain persistent challenges, which have only been further exacerbated by the learning losses of the pandemic. The three key challenges to be addressed with the United Nations collective support are: i) low learning quality; ii) lack of qualified teaching workforce; and iii) high dropout rates.

Evidence also shows significant disparities and inequalities among different regions and socio-economic groups in terms of both access to education and learning outcomes. Further strengthening the use and analysis of education data is critical to identify and implement effective strategies and interventions that address the specific needs of disadvantaged populations. Digital education strategies also need to be accelerated. Output 1.3 seeks to address these challenges within the Cambodia context.

Output 1.4: Enhanced and expanded social protection systems that increase the resilience of people against life-cycle socioeconomic risks and shocks.



The United Nations will support Government institutions to strengthen increasingly integrated, environmental and climate shock-responsive and adaptive social protection systems, ensuring nutrition-sensitivity and designed to meet the needs of all, including women-headed households. As noted in the Theory of Change, data and digitalization will play important roles in enabling sharper targeting for service delivery, and better analysis based on disaggregated data. This will help reduce rural and urban poverty and vulnerability using multiple life-cycle pathways taking a multidimensional approach to promote improved social outcomes across sectors and ensure more Cambodians access opportunities for improved livelihoods, skills, formal economy and coverage of social protection across their life cycle. Through United Nations interventions, people in Cambodia in greatest need, including women, migrants, persons with disabilities, indigenous populations and ethnic minorities, become better protected from economic, climate, health and other social shocks and have better access to decent jobs through their economic inclusion and empowerment, thereby bridging the coverage and policy gap between social assistance, employment-based social security and social health protection. The United Nations will work progressively towards a harmonised system, ensuring reduction in poverty and vulnerability are linked to livelihood skills, economic inclusion and empowerment with increasing access to family-friendly policies, and a focus on gender and dis/ability. Meanwhile, communities in Cambodia will grow more resilient, cohesive and better able to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country.

Output 1.5: Increased human security underpinned by mine action which expands access to safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance.



The United Nations will collaborate with local authorities and mine action organizations to identify and clear areas contaminated by landmines and unexploded ordnance. This effort will directly contribute to the removal of immediate threats to civilian safety, allowing communities to move freely, work, and live without fear. Through support to risk education programmes, the United Nations will assist in educating vulnerable populations on the dangers of explosive remnants, empowering them to make informed decisions that protect their well-being, and increasing their resilience. Through mine clearance activities, the United Nations will increase safety for agricultural activities, housing construction, and infrastructure development, removing a barrier, which will create opportunities for communities to expand their economic activities, thereby fostering greater food security, improved

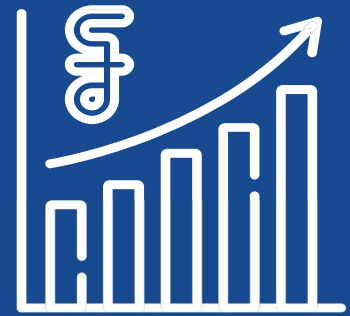
nutrition, and increased income generation. The United Nations will work alongside local community organizations to ensure that cleared land is effectively utilized for productive purposes and implement gender-responsive mine action standards. This may involve providing technical expertise, supporting agricultural initiatives, facilitating access to microfinance, and promoting small business development, thereby contributing to the creation of diverse livelihood opportunities for individuals and communities.

The United Nations will work with the Royal Government of Cambodia and medical practitioners to provide comprehensive support to survivors of landmine accidents and their families, including acute medical care, rehabilitation services, psychological counselling, and skills training to help survivors reintegrate into society and regain their livelihoods. The United Nations will also advocate for the rights of survivors and ensure their inclusion in community and development activities.



PRIORITY
AREA **2**

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION





OUTCOME 2:

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from and contribute to a productive, diversified, gender equal, formalised and low carbon and climate-adapted economy.

United Nations Contribution to Outcome 2

Based on the theory of change for Outcome 2,¹⁰⁰ the United Nations has identified four areas requiring collaborative work for transformative results. To realise these goals, the United Nations will partner with the Government and private sector to facilitate a shift towards a more inclusive, efficient, climate-adapted and formalised economy, by assisting in agrifood, commercial and manufacturing systems. The United Nations will support businesses and workers in all sectors of the economy, including women working in the informal sector and women-owned micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Policy and technical interventions will support and promote decent and safer working conditions, improved performance of labour markets, innovation, value chains, the reduction of pollution, and the transition to cleaner energy. The United Nations will support comprehensive financing frameworks and partnerships with the private sector to accelerate attainment of the Cambodian SDGs. In addition, the United Nations will support a structural transformation that is driven by the private sector and enabled by low-carbon technological gains and investments. The United Nations will focus on the delivery of the following outputs in order to significantly advance progress in this outcome area:



Output 2.1: Agrifood systems are more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalised and safer.



Output 2.2: Businesses are more formalised, inclusive and carbon and pollution mitigating.



Output 2.3: Decent work conditions are promoted for more people.



Output 2.4: Finance to support the attainment of the SDGs is more diversified and sustainable.



Output 2.1: Agrifood systems are more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalized and safer.



The United Nations will support the agrifood sector to become more productive, efficient, climate-adapted and people-centred with a focus on climate adaptation and mitigation to address the adverse effects of climate-related shocks on agriculture. Supply-side interventions will be promoted, through support to local agricultural producers, to increase the availability and affordability of nutrient-dense foods, particularly focused on increasing access for those most vulnerable to malnutrition, including those living in poverty, women, particularly pregnant women, and children. In addition, the United Nations will work with the Government on behaviour change policy implementation to increase the demand for food diversity and the consumption of more micronutrient dense foods within diets. Access to diverse foods will be enhanced through education and infrastructure assistance that focuses on the proper storage, packaging, handling and transportation of fresh and safe products, reducing losses in produce. Supply chains will also be developed to allow further expansion into global markets. To support transformational change, the United Nations will work with the Government on its Agricultural Development Plan 2030 to streamline the agrifood system by linking agricultural production to value chains through the promotion of a sustainable food system, agro-industry development and digitalization, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the food system and contributing to resilience.

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Transforming Cambodia's Food Systems within the Global Context

The world faces a global hunger crisis of unprecedented proportions. In just two years, the number of people facing, or at risk of, acute food insecurity increased from 135 million in 53 countries pre-pandemic, to 345 million in 82 countries. Fuelled by conflict, climate shocks and the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis is escalating as the war in Ukraine drives up the costs of food, fuel and fertilisers. Millions of people are struggling to put food on the table and are being driven closer to starvation in staggering proportions. We are at a critical crossroads. We need to rise to the challenge of meeting people's immediate food needs, while also supporting programmes that build long-term resilience. The alternative is hunger on a catastrophic scale.

While Cambodia has exhibited sustained and broad-based economic development, inequalities persist and progress on nutrition and equal access is needed for Cambodia to become a middle-income country. Food systems need strengthening to improve diets and livelihoods and to adapt to climate change. Achieving these multiple benefits requires support at both systems and household levels to support adaptation, resilience and improved nutrition outcomes.

Agriculture remains central to Cambodia's economy, accounting for about 22 per cent of the GDP. About 2 million households or 57 per cent of all households rely on agriculture for their livelihoods and most are smallholder farmers, concentrating on low value-added activities. In 2019–2020, 18 per cent of the population (23 per cent in rural areas) was living below the national poverty line. Significant investment and support are needed to support this large segment of the population in the face of climate change to allow Cambodia to realise its SDG targets and national vision to transform into a higher middle-income country by 2030.

The Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development 2030 envisages that: "By 2030, all Cambodians will have access to healthy diets and safe food, with an initial focus on women and children, to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition and address the nutrition transition." This Cooperation Framework seek to address these challenges within the Cambodia context and support Cambodia to achieve this vision:

- Output 2.1 focuses on making agrifood systems more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalised and safer; and
- Output 1.2 focuses on better protection against all forms of malnutrition.



Output 2.2: Businesses are more formalised, inclusive and carbon and pollution mitigating.

The United Nations will support policies and techniques that lead to increasing levels of formalisation of value chains and that expand better, more productive working conditions, where rights at work are realised. Support will be granted to the implementation of policies for business registration, ensuring the extension of social protection, particularly to youth, women and persons with disabilities. The United Nations also aims to contribute to national policy efforts to ensure the economy generates more productive enterprises with

opportunities for formal employment, with particular attention on guaranteeing equitable access to these opportunities. Efforts will be made to regulate and monitor the accessibility of local finance, macroeconomic investment and financing environment with analysis into the gender dimensions and vulnerable groups to identify accelerating factors for formalisation within Cambodia. Formalisation and diversification of economic growth, while addressing the impacts of climate change and job creation, will be pursued through the acceleration of start-ups and MSMEs. Furthermore, multisectoral efforts with the Government, civil society and local organizations will support a shift towards skills that respond to the needs of a green and digital economy, with attention given to reducing carbon emissions and pollution of all kinds, and supporting higher productivity gains within safer workplaces, while promoting socioeconomic resilience. Key sectors will benefit from innovation through digital transformation and investment in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The United Nations will specifically support enterprise diversification in the manufacturing, construction and tourism sectors, including to strengthen national and sub-national technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems and public-private partnerships.

In addition, the United Nations will support a structural transformation that is driven by the private sector and enabled by low-carbon technological gains and investments. This entails support for a just and inclusive transition towards sustainable energy, agriculture, forestry, land-use, and food systems.

Accelerating Cambodia's Energy Transition within the Global Context

Global expansions of energy coverage and reliance on fossil fuels have brought great benefits to populations and nations but are causing destruction of the natural environment and placing future generations at risk. According to the United Nations Secretary-General's report, Our Common Agenda, all United Nations Member States and all stakeholders must present more ambitious plans, policies and actions to shift towards a net zero future, away from fossil fuel subsidies and towards renewable energy.

Cambodia endeavours to contribute to the energy transition to support its graduation from LDC status and mitigate its contributions to climate change by reducing dependence on energy imports and fossil fuels. The Government is committed to reduce total energy consumption and expand clean energy usage. Although Cambodia announced that there will be no new hydro proj-

ects on Mekong River and no new coal power plants, except those signed before 2019, the recent commissioning of a coal-fired powerplant reflects its reliance on foreign direct investments in the energy sector, mainly fossil fuel-based power generation.

The updated NDC submitted by Cambodia to UNFCCC in December 2020 called for 25 per cent of the renewable energy share in energy (solar, wind, hydro, biomass) by 2030. The NDC is due to be further updated in 2024. It is expected that Cambodia will increase its share of variable renewable energy on its grid, mainly solar, from its current 4 per cent to beyond 15 per cent.

This Cooperation Framework seeks to address these challenges within the Cambodia context. The entirety of Outcome 2 is dedicated to accelerating Cambodia's energy transition, with a particular focus on Output 2.2: Businesses are more formalised, inclusive and carbon and pollution mitigating.





Output 2.3: Decent work conditions are promoted for more people.

The United Nations will partner with the Government, private sector and industry associations to support implementation of a decent work agenda in Cambodia. This will include support that enables the formalisation of more jobs and value chains, ensuring that more people are protected by better working conditions where their rights at work are realised. Technical advice will be provided to enhance safer and healthier workplaces, family-friendly work arrangements and care infrastructure for the reduction and redistribution of unpaid work services. The United Nations will provide support aimed at empowering young Cambodians to ensure inclusive economic participation, through the promotion of rights at work, improved skills development, volunteer opportunities, skills-matching, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and mentorships. This will further support the people of Cambodia by ensuring increased financial sustainability and resilience to economic shocks.

The United Nations will ensure no one is left behind, introducing measures and tailored interventions in synergy with Output 1.4, supporting labour market inclusion and safety for women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups, to facilitate their economic inclusion and empowerment. Interventions will focus on the integration of vulnerable populations to support access to skills, resources, entrepreneurship opportunities and platforms needed to secure a foothold in the labour market. In addition, attention will be given to the prevention of child labour, through support to policy implementation with focus given to those industries, including the garment and textile industry, struggling to maintain the minimum age for employment. Efforts will be made to return children to education and support the families of child labourers through social protection measures (Output 1.4) to prevent children from returning to underage work.

Cambodia's Accelerator for Decent Jobs and Social Protection within the Global Context

In addition to claiming more than 6.3 million lives, the COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented loss of jobs and livelihoods. This exacerbated low levels of income around the world, particularly for more than half of the global population without any access to social protection, including the 2 billion workers in the informal economy. It also led to significant vulnerability, poverty and insecurity.

Meanwhile, Cambodia's labour market has evolved significantly in recent years, with the expansion of the wage labour market and emerging employment opportunities in services, manufacturing and construction. Nevertheless, challenges remain with respect to the quality of employment, as reflected by a very high share of informal employment, accounting for just over 88 per cent of total employment in 2019. People in informal employment lack labour and social protection, and their incomes and employment status are

highly vulnerable to economic or environmental shocks, including the recent shocks related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The overriding cause of such high incidence of informality (e.g. employment in informal economic units) accounted for approximately 80 per cent of total employment. Furthermore, around two thirds of employment takes place in rural areas, where poverty persists.

While the national framework is already in place, the formalisation of economic activities and employment requires an integrated policy approach based on an understanding of constraining and enabling factors in individuals and in business units. Formalisation can happen through at least three channels whereby the economy: (i) generates more productive enterprises and formal employment opportunities and ensures equitable access to these opportunities; (ii) transforms current informal employment into formal employment, including with the extension of social protection; or (iii) prevents the informalisation of formal jobs.



Output 2.4: Finance to support the attainment of the SDGs is more diversified and sustainable.



The United Nations will engage strategically with the Government and all development partners across Cambodia's development landscape to support comprehensive and innovative financing for development, maximising the available resources to support transformational development for the accelerated progress of Cambodia's SDGs. Support will be provided for an Integrated National Financing Framework, including for the effective, transparent and responsible use and management of public finances. As a result, Cambodia will benefit from improved domestic revenue collection, a more progressive tax system, and a budget allocation and execution process that directs more public and private sector financing to SDGs that are lagging behind, or those within the Cambodia context that have the greatest multiplier effect. The United Nations will also support the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) to become a unified, cross-ministerial data platform and system by promoting a sustainable financing structure rather than an output-based donor

support structure. This will enable the increased availability of national data and statistics, providing cross-cutting benefits to overall M&E for development, presenting further avenues through which sustainable financing can be mobilised, and highlighting vulnerable pockets of the population to ensure the needs of those at risk are met. Financing strategies accompanying provincial development plans will also be supported by the United Nations, ensuring strong linkages between planning, financing, implementation and evidenced-based M&E of the SDGs at the local level.



Data Transformation in Cambodia within the Global Context

At the global level, serious data gaps remain in assessing country-level progress towards the SDGs. Although progress has been made in increasing the availability of internationally comparable data for SDG monitoring, huge data gaps remain in geographic coverage, timeliness, and the level of disaggregation required. For example, an analysis of the indicators in the Global SDG Indicators Database reveals that less than half of 194 countries or areas have internationally comparable data for 4 of the 17 goals. This lack of country-level data is particularly worrisome for SDG 5 (gender equality). Country-level data deficits are also significant in areas related to sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12) and to climate action (SDG 13). Further, even countries with available data have only a small number of observations over time, making it difficult for policymakers to monitor progress and identify trends. Central to the accurate, quality formulation and implementation of policies and initiatives, data is often unavailable or poorly coordinated.

At the national level, support is needed to strengthen and coordinate the NIS both internally within the Government and with partners, including to

enhance its sustainable financing to improve the systematisation of data collection. Access to high-quality, timely and accessible data is essential for guiding national policy formulation and evaluating the progress towards realisation of the SDGs. In 2020, the United Nations, supported by several development partners (German Agency for International Cooperation [GIZ], Swedish International Development Cooperation [SIDA], European Union), collaborated on an assessment of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics 2019–2023 leading to the requirement for a more coordinated approach to the statistical reform process in Cambodia.

These challenges were echoed by a more recent United Nations report on harmonised M&E mechanisms for the Cambodia SDGs 2016–2030 (CS-DGs) which noted the limitations of the national data reporting platform, CAMSTAT, as well as capacity and coordination challenges. To address these issues, data strengthening actions will be mainstreamed and reflected across all pillars of the Cooperation Framework with specific actions at the output level (e.g. under Cooperation Framework Output 1.4 on social protection, Output 2.4 on financing and Output 4.4 on digital transformation).

PRIORITY
AREA **3**

ENVIRONMENT





OUTCOME 3:

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from a healthier, gender-inclusive natural environment.

United Nations Contribution to Outcome 3

Based on the theory of change for Outcome 3,¹⁰¹ and in line with the United Nations Secretary-General's statement on the triple planetary crisis, the United Nations will support the conservation, preservation and restoration of Cambodia's precious natural resources, ensuring that air, water and land pollution are reduced, and that hazardous substances are better controlled. The United Nations will step up its support for strengthened policies related to the governance and operation of climate change, including carbon markets in line with Cambodia's long-term Carbon Neutrality Strategy.

The United Nations will focus on the delivery of four outputs to significantly advance progress in this outcome area:



Output 3.1: Natural resource management, conservation, preservation and restoration activities are enhanced.



Output 3.2: Air, water and land pollution are reduced, and hazardous substances and materials are controlled.



Output 3.3: Governance and policies on climate change including on carbon, are strengthened and the engagement of all stakeholders is enhanced.



Output 3.4: The adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened.



¹⁰¹ Contained in the Overarching Theory of Change (see Figure 4).

Output 3.1: Natural resource management, conservation, preservation and restoration activities are enhanced.



The United Nations will work with all relevant partners and sectors at the national and sub-national levels to support and reinforce measures to protect and preserve Cambodia’s natural and cultural resources. This will include measures to: strengthen partnerships and governance systems to increase the scale of climate action and the sustainable use of natural resources, including improved partnership and management arrangements to ensure forests and water are better managed and Cambodia’s rich natural biodiversity and cultural and natural heritage are preserved, generating sustainable and productive livelihoods (e.g. through ecotourism); and preserve and promote inclusive access to quality ecosystem goods and services to generate livelihoods and improve human well-being and create a safety net to address multidimensional development challenges, particularly for vulnerable populations (women, children, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups), who will be supported to obtain communal land titles, ensuring equitable access to land rights and assisting in the management of Cambodia’s natural resources. Actions will work to ensure a whole-of-society approach, harnessing private sector partnerships and community participation (especially leveraging youth as volunteers) for environmental governance, biodiversity and climate action. Addressing the challenges posed by crimes that affect the environment – including wildlife trafficking, illegal logging, crimes in the fisheries sector, illegal mining and trafficking in precious metals, and waste crimes – is a critical component to strengthen the rule of law, by disrupting and dismantling transnational organized criminal groups profiting from Cambodia’s natural resources.

Output 3.2: Air, water and land pollution are reduced, and hazardous substances and materials are controlled.



Working with all partners, the United Nations will promote a whole-of-society shift to advance the principles and practices of a circular economy in Cambodia. With particular focus on the leading contributors to pollution and waste, including garment and textile factories, brick kilns, rice mills and rubber processing facilities,¹⁰² the United Nations will support a transition towards increasingly sustainable production and waste management. The United Nations will help to reduce the exposure and vulnerability to environmental health risks and all forms of pollution (air, water, land, carbon, plastic,

102 The Mirror. “Environmental Pollution Has to Be Reduced in Four Industrial Target Areas.” Expat Advisory Services. 23 February 2010. Accessed 13 April 2023. <http://www.expatservices.com/articles/southeast-asia/cambodia/environmental-pollution-has-be-reduced-four-industrial-target-areas>

toxic elements, etc.). This will include the improved control and management of solid and liquid wastes, including hazardous chemical substances and materials used in the agricultural and industrial sectors, as well as human waste, in line with international environmental conventions. Working with the full range of Government agencies, the United Nations will assist the development of policies and their implementation to reduce emissions, support sustainable consumption and production, promote green digital innovation to increase supply chain efficiencies thereby reducing waste, and ensure Cambodia's alignment to regional and international environmental commitments. Furthermore, the United Nations will support research, policy development, and capacity-building to counter waste trafficking, and will facilitate the establishment of platforms for relevant authorities to collaborate on regional and inter-regional mechanisms of law enforcement cooperation and governance, fostering a coordinated approach in combating environmental crimes. Lastly, the United Nations will organize events related to crimes that affect the environment with the aim to raise awareness on efforts to counter waste trafficking.



Output 3.3: Governance and policies for climate change including carbon are strengthened and engagement of all stakeholders is enhanced.

The United Nations will support Cambodia to become a leading green market in the sub-region as its economy advances. The United Nations will ensure that Cambodia is able to access global leadership and technical expertise for the comprehensive evolution of mechanisms, policies and regulations in favour of the effective governance of climate change including carbon. This includes accelerating implementation of Cambodia's climate commitments through continuous mainstreaming of gender-inclusive climate change response strategies across sectors, enhancing transparency in line with the requirements of the Paris Agreement, and scaling up climate finance (including carbon markets). According to the updated NDC,¹⁰³ Long Term-Strategy for Carbon Neutrality, climate change mitigation actions have the potential to create 449,000 jobs by 2050.¹⁰⁴ This will require investments in skilling, reskilling and upskilling youth and workers, efforts which are still at an early stage (with links to Output 1.3 and Output 2.3) and, in parallel, the United Nations will pursue resource efficiencies to be accelerated in the industrial, transportation and infrastructure sectors. The United Nations will provide added value to these sustainability gains by ensuring this transition adequately engages all segments of the population and is accompanied by socioeconomic opportunities for women and youth, and populations at the margins of development, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities.

¹⁰³ According to the updated Nationally Determined Contribution, in the Business-as-Usual scenario.

¹⁰⁴ United Nations (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 35.

Transforming Cambodia's Environment within the Global Context

The United Nations has globally declared a triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. It is estimated that severe flooding and droughts due to climate change could reduce Cambodia's GDP by roughly 10 per cent by 2050. As a result, the United Nations and the Government have prioritised and mainstreamed climate mitigation and adaptation in this Cooperation Framework due to the high dependence of many communities on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods.

In terms of nature, the forest coverage of terrestrial ecosystems has been declining for decades

and shrank from 57 per cent to less than 47 per cent of national territory from 2010 to 2018. The annual cost of land degradation due to the change in land coverage and decline of ecosystem services provision is estimated at USD 677 million (2.8 per cent of GDP). Pollution and waste are also significant issues. Cambodia has already tripled its national budget for climate change mitigation efforts and set the goal of a 41.7 per cent reduction of emissions by 2030. In October 2022, the Prime Minister cited green development and climate change mitigation as key components to create a resilient economy post-pandemic.

Ambitious results to counter these challenges are included in this Cooperation Framework through outputs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.



Output 3.4: The adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened.



The United Nations will support a comprehensive approach to strengthen resilience across all dimensions of the Cambodian economy and society. Resilience to all forms and types of risks and shocks will be considered, including the impact of human-made hazards, natural disasters and climate change and their subsequent contribution to gender inequality. The United Nations will strengthen the capacities of national and local institutions to advance evidence-based planning and the implementation of measures for disaster preparedness, risk reduction and response. This will include all aspects of harmonised and migration-informed prevention, preparedness, mitigation, emergency response and recovery. It will also include systematic analyses of risk and vulnerabilities that support capacity-building to strengthen climate- and shock-responsive and resilient systems, in close consultation with the local communities. Key sectors will be prioritised, including agriculture, food and nutrition systems, health, education, transportation and social protection. Key environments that the United Nations will support include the Tonle Sap and Mekong River upon which much of the country's food and livelihoods depend.

In addition, the United Nations will support increasing community access to climate resilient services (e.g. WASH) and livelihoods. Mechanisms and digital technologies that improve coordination and synergies between sectors, tiers of government, and communities will be supported, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Engagement of youth as community volunteers in community-based and climate risk management initiatives will also be mainstreamed.

PRIORITY
AREA **4**

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION



OUTCOME 4:

By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, live in an increasingly gender equal and inclusive society with active civic space and enjoy more effective and accountable institutions.



United Nations Contribution to Outcome 4

Based on the theory of change for Outcome 4,¹⁰⁵ the United Nations will support the development of effective and accountable institutions that foster an inclusive, cohesive society, and a strengthened social contract, underpinned by the safeguarding of human rights and the rule of law. Opportunities for expanding participation in development, civic space and decision-making will be explored at all levels. Improved systems and services will enhance gender equality and women's empowerment, responding to and preventing discrimination, violence and other harmful practices. The United Nations will integrate persons who identify as LGBTQI+, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and other minority groups within its human rights-based approaches, and ensure equal access to participation in activities and opportunities. The United Nations will focus on the delivery of the following outputs in order to significantly advance progress in this outcome area:



Output 4.1: Institutions are more accountable and effective in upholding human rights to deliver justice and protection services to vulnerable groups, including women, children and migrants.



Output 4.2: Civic participation is increased in development and decision-making at all levels, including for women and youth.



Output 4.3: Systems, services and community solutions are improved and effectively respond to and prevent discrimination, gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices.



Output 4.4: Digital transformation is advanced to accelerate positive social change.





Output 4.1: Institutions are more accountable and effective in upholding human rights to deliver justice and protection services to vulnerable groups, including women, children and migrants.

The United Nations will support strengthening institutional capacities for implementing and regulating legal and policy frameworks, where there is an expressed need, in particular to advance effective implementation of legal and judicial reforms, strengthen the rule of law, and guarantee fundamental freedoms while expanding access to justice, protection and legal aid, and combating marginalisation, discrimination, counter-trafficking, money laundering, illicit goods and transnational organized crime.

The United Nations will also support the sequenced implementation of decentralisation and deconcentration reform, social accountability and public financial management for more transparent, accountable and equitable service delivery. Further support provided under Output 4.4 below will be integrated to enable the rollout of digital governance and related legislation to prevent and reverse inequalities and exclusion. This includes support to improve access to authoritative information and integrated services on labour migration, including through the use of technology. Support to service reach and delivery will include assistance to LGBTQI+ communities, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and other minority groups as well as to the most marginalised populations, including refugees and the stateless population.

In addition, the United Nations will collaborate with partners to counter disinformation, hate speech and discrimination, which otherwise serves to exacerbate societal tensions. The United Nations will support the Government¹⁰⁶ in enhancing transparency and accountability of public services and in promoting ethics and integrity frameworks for government officials. Support will be provided for the empowerment of women to work as judges and prosecutors, especially in leadership positions, including the implementation of a legal aid policy and improved legal education in Cambodia. Furthermore, the United Nations will provide assistance as requested to further develop and maintain the case database system in Cambodia's justice system and will continue to support Cambodia in regard to transnational organized crime.



Output 4.2: Civic participation is increased in development and decision-making at all levels, including for women and youth.

The United Nations will work in partnership with the Government and CSOs at all levels, to support cooperation and the deepening of mutual trust for the expansion of opportunities in favour of the constructive engagement of citi-

¹⁰⁶ For example, the Anti-Corruption Unit and other law enforcement authorities.

zens in society. This includes enhancing the capacity of CSOs, youth, women and vulnerable groups for advocacy, representation and participation in decision-making processes at all levels, and promoting diversity of voices and plurality in the media. The United Nations will use its convening powers to strengthen partnerships between and across all development stakeholders, including Government, CSOs, media, associations, labour unions, the private sector, and citizens, both online and offline. Support will be provided to the formulation and drafting of laws, policies, and frameworks to ensure greater inclusion, participation and gender-responsiveness at all levels so that LGBTQI+ communities, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and other minority groups are provided equal opportunity. Additionally, the United Nations will support the implementation of laws and policies at all levels, in alignment with international normative obligations to enable all people in Cambodia to be granted equal opportunities to express their opinions and meaningfully participate in decision-making. The United Nations will work with the national and local governments to ensure strong financing structures are aligned with programming and increasingly resilient, inclusive and gender-responsive, and will support civil society and academia in monitoring the implementation of legislation and policies, enabling greater accountability and data collection and analysis to strengthen and support the implementation. The United Nations will work with local organizations to support grassroots disaster risk reduction and management that supports increased resilience and response capacities in communities.

Output 4.3: Systems, services and community solutions are improved and effectively respond to and prevent discrimination, gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices.



The United Nations will assist in the expansion and implementation of a comprehensive protection system comprised of: i) a solid legal framework aligned to international human rights standards that is implemented and monitored; and ii) gender-sensitive and resilient prevention and response services operating at national and subnational levels to protect vulnerable people, especially migrants, women and children, from abuse, violence and exploitation. The United Nations will place emphasis on timely services, accessible to survivors and those at risk, including the hardest to reach, vulnerable and marginalised people, in collaboration with the Government, civil society and international community. This will include the LGBTQI+ population, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, minority groups, refugees and the stateless population. The United Nations will also support Cambodia to strengthen its responses to GBV through a three-pronged approach while raising awareness on support mechanisms available to GBV survivors. Policy implementation support will enable preventative actions, promoting equality and inclusion alongside response systems, offering support and resolve to those experiencing discrimination, prejudice and violence. Coordination measures will be scaled up alongside efforts to build capacities

of systems, services and local institutions to increase the standards of essential services, align with Cambodia's global commitments and harmonise responses to GBV and violence against children. Through improved disaggregated data collection, the United Nations will consistently apply a gender lens and analysis to support the integration and empowerment of women within safer spaces of decision-making, free of discrimination.



Tackling Gender-Based Violence in Cambodia within the Global Context

GBV and violence against women and girls, is a global pandemic that affects 1 in 3 women in their lifetime. The numbers are staggering:

- 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.
- Globally, 7 per cent of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner.
- Globally, as many as 38 per cent of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner.
- 200 million women have experienced female genital mutilation/cutting.

This issue is devastating for survivors of violence and entails significant social and economic costs. In some countries, violence against women is estimated to cost up to 3.7 per cent of GDP – more than double what most governments spend on education.

In Cambodia, GBV is a serious and widespread

problem. Over one in 10 women (13 per cent) reported physical, sexual or emotional intimate partner violence in the prior 12 months and one in five (21 per cent) had experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence by their current or most recent intimate partner in their lifetime. GBV is vastly underreported due to strong patriarchal social norms combined with a lack of adequate reporting systems.

Social norms and beliefs that restrict women's participation and give women less value and power than men are pervasive. Reports from men in Cambodia confirm that intimate partner violence is prevalent with more than one in three (36 per cent) ever-partnered men reportedly perpetrating physical and/or sexual violence against a female partner. Despite significant progress in reducing child marriage, 35 per cent of girls aged 15–19 years are pregnant with no education and 49.2 per cent of girls in Cambodia's north-eastern provinces were married as children. Other forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment in the workplace, sexual exploitation and abuse through trafficking, and technology-facilitated GBV persist and exemplify the severity of the challenge.

Output 4.4: Digital transformation is advanced to accelerate positive social change.



The United Nations will support the Government in the formulation and implementation of policies for inclusive digital transformation, including a focus on expanding national and subnational digital platforms for improved access to vulnerable populations, particularly focused on women, youth, persons with disabilities, and rural, indigenous and ethnic minority communities. This will ensure that those requiring protection from discrimination, and access to information, health care, nutrition, education and social protection services are included and the system is better able to equitably meet their needs. The expansion of digital platforms will assist in protecting human rights through increased connectivity between rights-holders and duty-bearers, alongside efforts to build digital reliability. The United Nations will focus on increasing the capacities of the public sector through upskilling and re-skilling to support the civil service at all levels, including the local level, in adapting to and managing the digital transformation. In addition, the United Nations will work with partners to address and avoid digital harms, including harassment, exploitation, cybercrime privacy violations and barriers to entry for vulnerable populations, by promoting digital literacy and creating safe online spaces and legal protections to help close the tech gender gap and empower the participation and contribution of women on digital platforms.

The United Nations will work with the Government to ensure that digitalization increases information and communication, improving the availability of disaggregated data for evidence-based policymaking that protects vulnerable populations through both preventative and responsive actions, while fostering foresight to address the challenges derived from frontier technologies, including the ethical dimensions of artificial intelligence (AI) and the regulation of Internet platforms. Furthermore, the digitalization of key industries, including food, garment and textiles, and tourism, will be supported to enhance sustainability efforts through the promotion of modernised, energy-efficient technologies and infrastructure to reduce pollution and waste, and ensure safe working conditions. Digital technologies will be supported to make health systems more responsive and sustainable, reducing costs to patients, improving quality and enhancing efficiency. Cambodia's expected graduation from LDC status is attracting new investments in innovation, which the United Nations will support by promoting the digital transformation and energy transition as avenues for social change and increased access to funding.



Digital Transformation in Cambodia within the Global Context


Digital technologies offer opportunities for, and benefits to, the achievement of the SDGs; yet, many countries continue to lack access to modern digital tools. Cambodia remains hindered by relatively low Internet broadband penetration, particularly in remote areas, high connectivity costs against gross national income (GNI) per capita, and limited software spending and adoption of emerging technologies. Nonetheless, digital transformation in Cambodia has an optimistic projection, largely owing to significant tech talents in the formal sector, the rapid growth of Internet users and its widespread adoption by the business sector. Yet, the country's digital readiness ranks only 102nd out of 141 countries. Only an estimated 30 per cent of Cambodians have basic digital skills for Internet searches, communications, and information-sharing. Adequate strategies, planning, and coordination among stakeholders are essential to mitigate potential negative effects, avoid deepening social and economic inequalities, and ensure that no one is left behind in the digital transformation.

Limited clarity regarding information and communications technology (ICT) functions in line ministries could hinder progress towards digital governance, especially when integrating different systems within the same ministry, coordinating across ministries, centralising data, and ensuring digital security. The Digital Government Policy 2022–2035 recognises the need for improved coordination, gaps in connectivity infrastructure, the need to improve the quality of services and access to financial resources, the lack of a common national platform, and fledgling digital security.

The United Nations will support a whole-of-society approach to digital transformation. A human rights-based approach places responsibility on the duty-bearer to provide a safe enabling environment to ensure participation, equality, access and

benefits to the people. Working as one, the United Nations will support the Government of Cambodia in the implementation of the Digital Government Policy 2022–2035 through system strengthening, policy development, capacity development of government policymakers, and sectoral support in education, health, social assistance, businesses, environment, etc. This will be accomplished by supporting connectivity, overcoming the digital divide and adopting, deploying and scaling digital government services utilizing the digital building blocks approach towards an inclusive, accessible, transparent and efficient government. Coordination is managed through the United Nations Task Team on Digital Transformation, established in 2022. Three key lines of action will be pursued, as outlined below.

- **Digital transformation as an accelerator:** There is ample opportunity to leverage digital innovation and tools to accelerate the delivery of the Cooperation Framework as a cross-cutting theme (as demonstrated in the Cooperation Framework Theory of Change) in order to maximise development outcomes across all four pillars.
- **Promoting rights and inclusion:** Digital solutions should also leverage technological innovation to address existing inequalities in education, rural connectivity, access to health care, education, skills development, social protection services and economic opportunity, while protecting privacy, fundamental freedoms and rights.
- **Digital capacity development with a focus on LNOB and at-risk populations:** There is a need to enable Cambodians, particularly the vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalised populations, who are deprived of digital literacy, by building their skills to access the dividend of the digital transformation.

A large, weathered stone face carved into a tower, surrounded by lush green trees. The stone is dark and textured, with the face having a serene expression. The tower is built from stacked stone blocks. The background is filled with dense green foliage and a grey sky.

CHAPTER 3

COOPERATION

FRAMEWORK

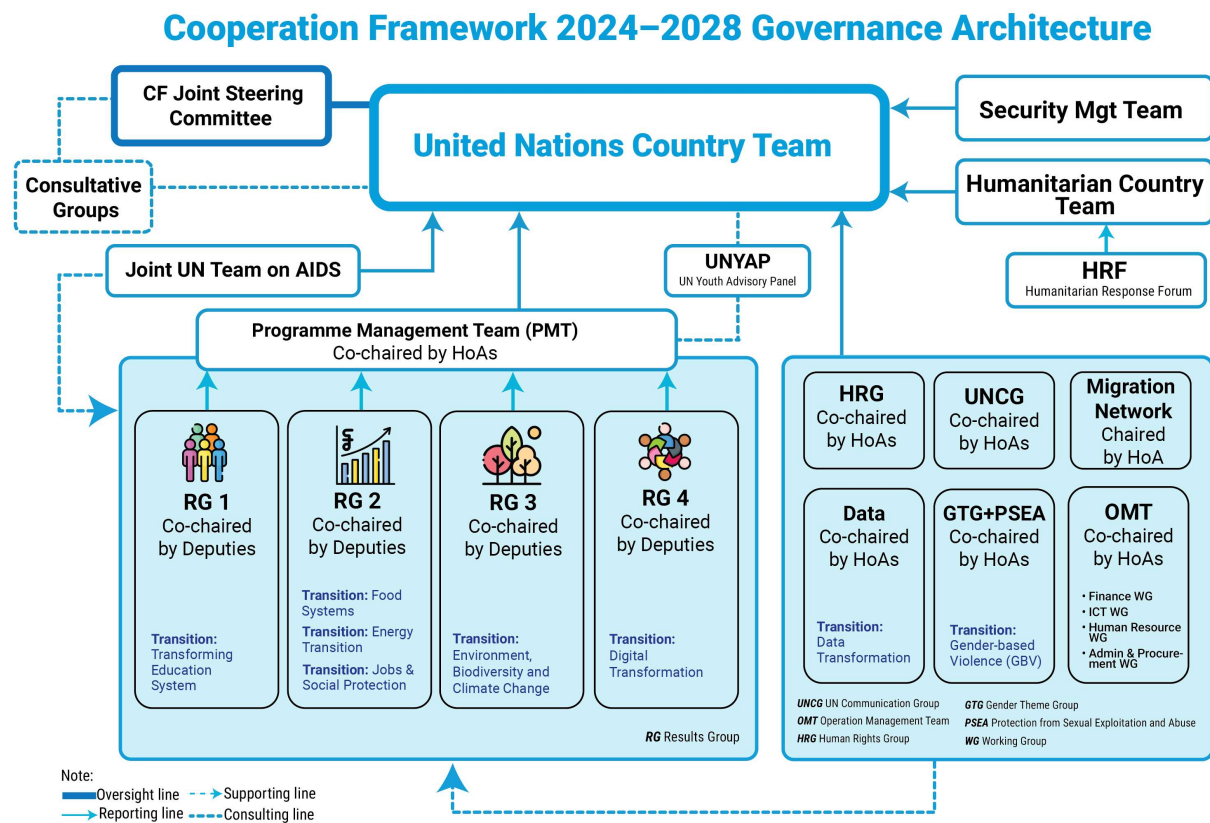
IMPLEMENTATION

PLAN

3.1 Cooperation Framework Governance

The Council for the Development of Cambodia is the primary Government counterpart for the joint coordination, implementation and monitoring of this Cooperation Framework. A Joint Steering Committee (JSC), co-chaired by a senior representative of the Council for the Development of Cambodia and the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC), will be responsible for strategic oversight and direction, ensuring overall coordination and interaction between the Government of Cambodia, partner entities and the United Nations. The JSC is linked with the overall United Nations coordination architecture, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Cooperation Framework 2024–2028 Governance Architecture



3.2 Implementation Strategy

Under the leadership of the UNRC, the UNCT for Cambodia is responsible for the preparation and implementation of this Cooperation Framework in collaboration with the Government of Cambodia and other stakeholders. Cooperation Frameworks are the most important instrument for planning and implementing United Nations development activities in each country. The UNRC leads and supports the UNCT in the development, monitoring and reporting of the Cooperation Framework and works with UNCT members to ensure alignment of United Nations entity programmes and inter-agency pooled funding for development with national development needs and priorities and the 2030 Agenda under the oversight of the JSC. The UNRC engages with the UNCT on the alignment of the country programme documents of their respective entities, related to development activities and ensures that the country pro-

grammes of each derive from the Cooperation Framework according to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guiding Principles and Guidance.¹⁰⁷ The UNRC reports to the United Nations Secretary-General, and ensures the coordination of all organizations of the United Nations engaged in operational activities for development at the country level, regardless of the nature of their presence in the country.

The Cooperation Framework will be translated into the joint workplan (JWP) of the UNCT as the primary vehicle for ensuring collaborative implementation and accountability for development results. Whereas the Cooperation Framework maintains a Results Framework (Annex 1) with indicators primarily at the outcome level, the JWP is designed to operationalise the entire Cooperation Framework and will include a more extensive range of indicators to benchmark and gauge progress at the output level, as well as sub-outputs that map the programmes and projects of the various United Nations agencies. The JWP will be presented to the JSC on an annual basis for consultation and approval.

Throughout implementation, the UNCT will remain mindful of synergies that exist across the Cooperation Framework. It recognises that human development (Outcome 1) is essential to create the foundations for sustainable economic development (Outcomes 2 and 3), and for affecting social transformation (Outcome 4). Similarly, Results Groups, outlined in Figure 5 above, recognise the critical interdependencies that exist between Output 1.2 (malnutrition) and Output 2.1 (agrifood systems). Furthermore, climate resilience cuts across all sectors, in particular Output 2.2 (business development). Likewise, key cross-cutting dimensions identified in the Theory of Change – social transformation through gender equality, strengthening the resilience of systems, leveraging financing and innovating digital solutions, and greater attention to evidence-based approaches, informed by accurate data – are all important parts of the Cooperation Framework implementation plan.

In accordance with the United Nations global theory of change for achievement of the 2030 Agenda,¹⁰⁸ the United Nations agencies in Cambodia will function effectively and collectively as “one”. Both the CCA and the Cooperation Framework will be living documents. During its five-year implementation, the Cooperation Framework, including the Results Framework at the outcome and output levels, should be reviewed and adjusted annually according to Cambodia’s evolving development landscape and priorities in the annual performance review meeting conducted by the JSC.

During implementation of the Cooperation Framework, the dialogue between the United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia will be conducted annually, co-chaired by the UNRC and the Prime Minister of Cambodia. The dialogue will serve as an important platform of the United Nations and the Government of Cambodia to express areas of support, strengthening and expanding collaboration to accelerate progress towards achievement of the SDGs by 2030.

Programme Management Team, Results Groups and Thematic Groups

Under the leadership of the UNRC, the Programme Management Team (PMT) – one of the Cooperation Framework management and implementation mechanisms along with the UNCT

107 In line with A/RES/72/279.

108 United Nations Development Group. (2016). A “Theory of Change” for the UN Development System to Function “As a System” for Relevance, Strategic Positioning and Results: Summary Paper Version 1.0 26 January 2016”.

Results Groups and theme groups – will be constituted to promote efficient coordination within the United Nations and to ensure achievements and measurable progress. The PMT will provide strategic guidance on programmes to the Result Groups on implementation of the Cooperation Framework with a focus on promoting coherence, complementarity and collaborative action, where possible (and by proactively identifying opportunities) to take action. The PMT will be chaired by United Nations Heads of Agency and comprise relevant partners.

Supporting the PMT, Results Groups will be constituted for the purposes of progressing implementation of the Cooperation Framework. Like the PMT, Results Groups will be chaired by United Nations Heads of Agency and comprise relevant United Nations partners to advance their outcome area and its collaborative outputs. Results Groups will contribute to the JWP and undertake joint monitoring and evaluation and reporting to PMT. The United Nations will also utilize UN INFO¹⁰⁹ to capture results.

Additional thematic groups will provide focused support on key issues to ensure a coherent, whole-of-United Nations approach to the important cross-cutting dimensions of the Cooperation Framework.

Human Rights Group



The Human Rights Group (HRG) will provide support to the UNRC and UNCT, including in monitoring progress of the UNCT Human Rights Strategy and its implementation via the Cooperation Framework.

Gender Theme Group

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse



The Gender Theme Group and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) (GTG/PSEA) will lead on ensuring the mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment and ensuring PSEA compliance across all aspects of the UNSDCF. The GTG/PSEA group is also the main architecture for monitoring and reporting on the Gender Scorecard and on joint action taken to improve gender mainstreaming.

Data Group



The Data Group will focus on improving the availability of disaggregated data, which is vital to systematically capture and reflect the joint LNOB and inclusion agendas of the UN and Government of Cambodia throughout the UNSDCF. Disaggregated data, broken down by geography, gender, socioeconomic status, disability status and membership of groups at greatest risk of being left behind, will be pursued and tracked regularly to improve analysis, evidence-based integrated policymaking, and programme implementation. The Data Group will develop a methodological note, which outlines the minimum and desired standards for the disaggregation of data, including by gender, age and persons with disabilities.

¹⁰⁹ UN INFO is part of the efforts of the United Nations to improve coordination, transparency and accountability for results by tracking the UNSDG's contributions to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

UN Communication Group



The UN Communication Group (UNCG), chaired by a UN head of agency and comprised of communication specialists from across UN agencies, will be constituted to: provide leadership on joint communications for the UNCT; communicate pertinent information and highlight overarching concerns; identify creative and innovative ways to raise public awareness of the UN's activities and results; support policy advocacy; and promote a coherent image of the UN among relevant stakeholders, including the UN system and partner organizations, the Royal Government of Cambodia, donors and international decision makers, media, community members and young people.

Operations Management Team



The Operations Management Team (OMT), under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, brings together the operations managers of UN organizations. It provides the UNCT with recommendations on common services and business-related issues, identifying opportunities for collaboration and innovation to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of UN programmatic work. It also provides recommendations on the harmonisation and simplification of operational procedures for the effective implementation of the Cooperation Framework.

3.3 Partnerships and Financing

While strong partnerships exist at the strategic level between the United Nations and the Government of Cambodia as well as with development partners – including donor countries, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society – a more detailed partnership and financing strategy will be crafted by the main signatories upon approval of this Cooperation Framework. The financing envelope will be devised as an integral part of the Integrated National Financing Framework for accelerating the SDGs in Cambodia.

3.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The UNCT will prepare an annual results report for presentation and consultation with the JSC. The attainment of SDG targets depends significantly on results-based monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, the United Nations, in close cooperation with the Government and key partners at all levels, will seek to foster a culture of learning and mutual accountability. Emerging new approaches and methodologies will be shared with development partners that work to strengthen the learning cycle through participatory evaluations. Monitoring of implementation of the Cooperation Framework will be based on the attached Results Framework (see Annex 1) and JWPs, and will be led by the UNCT in close collaboration with relevant Government agencies. The Results Framework is based principally on nationally established SDG indicators, baselines and targets relying on official Government data. A multi-year costed Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan will be prepared for the Cooperation Framework implementation period. The majority of baselines are sourced from the most recent

relevant government reports and/or available data from selected national SDG indicators in consultation with line ministries.

Through the UNCT Data Group referred above, the United Nations will partner with NIS within the Ministry of Planning, line ministries, and provincial authorities to strengthen the data ecosystem and fill data gaps. The Data Group will be chaired by the United Nations Head of Agency and consist of the data/M&E focal points of each United Nations agency, with the support of the UNRC Office. The Data Group strengthens accountability and assists the conveners of the Results Group to coordinate and compile reporting on an annual basis. United Nations agencies will continue to harmonise monitoring and reporting and strive for synergies in areas within which they are jointly invested, especially in each collaborative output area of the Cooperation Framework. Reviews will take place based on the Cooperation Framework MEL and generate shared knowledge and lessons learned throughout implementation of the Cooperation Framework.

Joint Annual Review

The JSC will conduct a strategic Joint Annual Review of the Cooperation Framework to assess progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and the outcomes agreed in the Cooperation Framework results matrix. Progress on the Cooperation Framework and SDGs will be measured against targets, as well as risks and assumptions made at the design stage, assessed and reviewed as needed. The Joint Annual Review will draw lessons and conclusions that feed into Cooperation Framework planning and implementation, including the development of subsequent UNCT JWP and theme group workplans, where applicable. To feed into the Joint Annual Review, an annual results report will be prepared to measure progress of the Cooperation Framework. Results of the Joint Annual Review will feed into the preparation of an annual dialogue between the UNCT and the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Cooperation Framework Independent Evaluation

The evaluation of the Cooperation Framework constitutes an integral part of accountability to the people and Government of Cambodia. Hence, a final independent evaluation of the Cooperation Framework will be conducted in 2027, the penultimate year of implementation. The evaluation will be commissioned by the UNCT in close consultation with the Government. The evaluation will be independently conducted in alignment with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards, norms and the guidelines for the evaluation of the Cooperation Framework. The evaluation process will ensure an inclusive and participatory approach involving all stakeholders, and with a strong emphasis on LNOB. It will include sectoral ministries and divisions, provincial authorities, development partners, the private sector, civil society, academia, and others. Finally, the country programme/document evaluations of individual United Nations agencies will be assessed on their contribution to the Cooperation Framework.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Results Framework

Priority 1: HUMAN – OUTCOME 1: By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, are healthier and benefit from improved gender-responsive education and social protection.					
National Development Priorities: Pentagonal Strategy – Phase I (Pentagon 1.1, Pentagon 1.2, Pentagon 1.3, Pentagon 1.4, and Pentagon 4.3) SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 16, 17					
Outputs contributing to the outcome	Key indicators	Baseline (year)	Target (2028)	Data source/method of verification	United Nations entities (lead in bold) responsible for (data collection) reporting
Output 1.1: Universal Health Coverage is advanced through a resilient, people-centred health system	Human Development Index (HDI)	Baseline: 0.596 (2020)	Target: TBC with the Government	Human Development Report	UNDP
	National Monetary Poverty Rate	Baseline: 17.8% (2020)	Target: 12.8%	Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey	UNDP
Output 1.2: Better protection against all forms of malnutrition	Universal Health Coverage service coverage index score (based on SDG 3.8.1)	Baseline: 58 (2023)	Target: 70	WHO / World Bank global Universal Health Coverage Monitoring Database (updated every two years)	WHO, FAO, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS
	Output 1.3: Better quality and accessible education, skills development and lifelong learning	a) 10%; ¹¹¹ 11% boys; 8% girls b) 22%; ¹¹² 25% boys; 19% girls	a) 5%; ¹¹³ b) 19%	Survey (DHS or national nutrition survey)	WFP, FAO, UNICEF, WHO
Output 1.4: Enhanced and expanded social protection systems that increase the resilience of people against life-cycle socioeconomic risks and shocks	Percentage of children who reach minimum proficiency in a) reading; b) mathematics	Baseline (2018): G3 Reading (2018/19): Total: 49.5%; Female: 56.0%; Male: 43.1% G3 Math (2018/19): Total: 59.1%; Female: 61.9%; Male: 56.4% G6 Reading (2020/21): Total: 63.7%; Female: 70.6%; Male: 55.6% G6 Math (2020/2021): Total: 25.7%; Female: 27.7%; Male: 23.5% G8 Reading (2021/22): Total: 82.1%; Female: 87.1%; Male: 75.7%	Target: a) TBC b) TBC To be aligned with the next ESP 2024–2028	National Learning Assessments (MoEYS)	UNESCO, ILO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP

¹¹⁰ Length/Height-for-age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards among children under 5 years of age.

¹¹¹ 2021 data. See: United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 10.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Gender disaggregation for the targets is not available as the aim is for a cumulative reduction in stunting and wasting.

action, which expands access to safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance	Proportion of population covered by (nationally appropriate) social protection floors/systems (SDG 1.3.1): a) children; b) newborns (0–18 months); c) elderly persons; d) persons with disabilities; e) pregnant women (1. Birth lump sum; 2. Maternity benefits); f) work-related injury victims; g) persons living with HIV	Baseline ¹¹⁴ : 40% (UN estimate) a) 12 % (2022) b) 11 % (2022) c) 9% (2022) d) 10% (2022) e) 41% (2022) f) 9% (2022) g) 17.88 % of all PLHIV registered	Target ¹¹⁵ : 50% (UN estimates) Target: 50% (UN estimates) a) 17.38% b) 40% c) 48.8% d) 13% e) 63% f) 14% g) 50%	NSSF and NSAF administrative and M&E data	UNICEF, FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, WFP, WHO
	Area of mine-contaminated land is cleared/released for safe access	Baseline (2023): 287,654 ha	Target: 290,033 ha	CMAA Annually	UNDP
Priority 2: ECONOMY – OUTCOME 2: By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from and contribute to a productive, diversified, formalised and low-carbon and climate-adapted economy.					
National Development Priorities: Pentagonal Strategy – Phase I (Pentagon 2.1, Pentagon 2.4, Pentagon 2.5, Pentagon 3.1, and Pentagon 5.5)					
SDGs: 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17					
Key indicators					
Outputs contributing to the outcome					
Output 2.1: Agrifood systems are more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalised and safer	Number of additional smallholder farmers (female and male) adopting improved and/or new climate-resilient livelihoods options brought under climate-resilient management and with greater knowledge on animal management, food safety standards and good agriculture practices, disaggregated by gender with United Nations support	Baseline: 0	Target (2028) Target: 150,000 (50% women)	Survey	United Nations entities (lead in bold) responsible for (data collection) reporting FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNCDF, UNDP, UNIDO, UN WOMEN, WFP
Output 2.2: Businesses are more formalised, inclusive and carbon- and pollution-mitigating	Share of non-dominant economic activities in the GDP ¹¹⁶	45.7% (2019)	55%	UN estimates based on National Accounts Department, NIS	UNDP, FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNCTAD, UNICEF, UNIDO
Output 2.3: Decent work conditions are promoted for more people	Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex (SDG 8.3.1)	Baseline: 88.3% (2019) Male: 89.0% Female: 87.6% Agriculture: 98.6%, Industry: 80.3%, Services: 85.3%	Target: 70% Male: 70%, Female: 70% Agriculture: 90%, Industry: 60%, Services: 65%	UN estimates based on Labour Force Survey	ILO, FAO, OHCHR, UNCDF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN WOMEN

¹¹⁴ Baseline: UN estimates based on the MTR of the National Social Protection Policy Framework 2021 and 2023 administrative data

¹¹⁵ Targets: UN estimates based on GS-NSPC.

¹¹⁶ Dominant: 1) agriculture; 2) garment factories (textile, apparel and footwear); 3) construction; 4) trade; and 5) real estate and business. Non-Dominant% = 100% - Dominant%. Baseline and target data will be recalculated if GDP is revised.

<p>Output 2.4: Finance to support the attainment of the SDGs is more diversified and sustainable</p>		<p>Agriculture: 98.6%, Industry: 80.3%, Services: 85.3%</p> <p>Baseline: Cumulative</p> <p>a) 5,658 (2023)</p> <p>b) 38000 (2022)</p>	<p>Target: Cumulative</p> <p>a) 20,000</p> <p>b) 130000</p>	<p>Data from UN projects</p>	<p>UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN WOMEN</p>
<p>OI 7.3¹¹⁷ Number of people who, with UN support:</p> <p>a) Gained access to clean, affordable, and sustainable energy; and</p> <p>b) Benefitted from services from clean, affordable, and sustainable energy</p>	<p>A long-term national development strategy for a just transition to an environmentally sustainable economy/society that is inclusive, energy-efficient, job-rich, and pro-poor (SDG 8.1.1_1)</p>	<p>Baseline: No</p> <p>Dimensions are partly reflected in the current plan</p>	<p>Target: Yes</p> <p>All dimensions are fully reflected in the national plan</p>	<p>Pentagonal Strategy – Phase I; National Strategic Development Plan 2024–2028</p>	<p>UNDP, ILO, UNCDF, UNEP, UNESCO, UNIDO</p>
<p>Number of policy measures developed and implemented with United Nations support to facilitate:</p> <p>a) productive, freely chosen and decent employment and productivity growth;</p> <p>b) the transition of informal enterprises and workers in informal employment to the formal economy, including women-owned informal businesses; and</p> <p>c) the reduction and redistribution of the burden of unpaid care/domestic work on women (SDGs 8.3.1_2, 8.3.1_3, 5.4.1_1)</p>	<p>Number of policy measures developed and implemented with United Nations support to facilitate:</p> <p>a) productive, freely chosen and decent employment and productivity growth;</p> <p>b) the transition of informal enterprises and workers in informal employment to the formal economy, including women-owned informal businesses; and</p> <p>c) the reduction and redistribution of the burden of unpaid care/domestic work on women (SDGs 8.3.1_2, 8.3.1_3, 5.4.1_1)</p>	<p>a) Baseline: 1</p> <p>b) Baseline: 0</p> <p>c) Baseline: 0</p>	<p>a) Target: 5</p> <p>b) Target: 3</p> <p>c) Target: 2</p>	<p>Policy/programme/ project adopted, scaled up or replicated by the Government with UN support¹¹⁸</p>	<p>UNDP, FAO, ILO, UNCDF, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO</p>
<p>OI T7.2: Degree of alignment of national budgeting system with SDGs that enable tracking of budget allocation for the SDGs, including through gender-responsive budgeting, supported by the United Nations</p>	<p>OI T7.2: Degree of alignment of national budgeting system with SDGs that enable tracking of budget allocation for the SDGs, including through gender-responsive budgeting, supported by the United Nations</p>	<p>Moderate: Budget spending on some of the SDGs is clear¹¹⁹</p>	<p>High: Budget spending is linked/tagged to SDGs and budget spending on each of the SDGs can be tracked</p>	<p>SDG budget tagging report. Ministry of Economy and Finance Report.</p>	<p>UNDP, ESCAP, FAO, UNCDF, UNEP, UNICEF, UNIDO</p>
<p>OI T7.3: Data collection and analysis mechanisms/initiatives providing disaggregated data (inc. gender disaggregation) to monitor progress towards the SDGs and enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development,</p>	<p>OI T7.3: Data collection and analysis mechanisms/initiatives providing disaggregated data (inc. gender disaggregation) to monitor progress towards the SDGs and enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development,</p>	<p>Baseline: Moderate: A data collection mechanism is in place to monitor SDG data, but disaggregated data is limited, and policy implications are limited¹²⁰</p>	<p>Target: High: A data collection mechanism provides disaggregated data used to monitor progress towards the SDGs and enhance policy coherence</p>	<p>Study, survey, dashboard, dataset, or modelling tool</p>	<p>UNDP, ESCAP, FAO, ITC, UNCDF, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO</p>

¹¹⁷ OI is the output indicator from the DCOS standard indicator list

¹¹⁸ Including the FAO PEARL project, which aims to increase smallholder, under-contract farming arrangements and build the capacity of smallholder farmers and local communities to cope with climate change. Gender business plans should be prioritised to include specific gender considerations.

¹¹⁹ In 2022, UNDP and the Ministry of Economy and Finance developed SDG budget tagging guidelines and a corresponding tool, but these have not yet been fully adopted by the Government.

¹²⁰ Currently, SDG Investors map, SDG budget tagging, SDG insight report, and Cambodia's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2023 are available.

	established/implemented with United Nations support			
Priority 3: PLANET – OUTCOME 3: By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from a healthier, gender-inclusive natural environment.				
National Development Priorities: Pentagonal Strategy – Phase I (Pentagon 2.2, Pentagon 4.2, and Pentagon 4.5)				
SDGs: 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17				
Outputs contributing to the outcome				
Output 3.1: Natural resource management, preservation and restoration activities are enhanced	Environmental Performance Index ¹²¹	Baseline (year)	Target (2028)	United Nations entities (lead in bold) responsible for (data collection) reporting
	Vulnerability Index ¹²²	30.10 (2022)	31.55 (increase annual trend increase from 0.2 to 0.25 for 2024–2028)	UNDP, FAO, UNEP, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC
Output 3.2: Air, water and land pollution are reduced, and hazardous substances and materials are controlled		16.6% of communes “highly vulnerable” 18.2% of communes “quite vulnerable” (2021)	16.2% of communes “highly vulnerable” 16.5% of communes “quite vulnerable” ¹²³	UNDP, FAO
	Output 3.3: Governance and policies on climate change, including on carbon, are strengthened and the engagement of all stakeholders is enhanced	0	10	UNEP, FAO, OHCHR, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UN WOMEN
	Public expenditure for climate action as per cent of GDP	2.3% (2021) ¹²⁴	2.8%	UNDP, FAO, UNEP
	0		100,000 tonnes	UNIDO, UNDP, UNEP

¹²¹ The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) provides a data-driven summary of the state of sustainability around the world. The EPI combines data on climate change, biodiversity and pollution, and is measured and calculated annually by Yale University. For Cambodia, see: <https://epi.yale.edu/epi-results/2022/country/khm>. Baseline from website. The EPI uses 40 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, and ranks 180 countries on climate change performance, environmental health, and ecosystem vitality. These indicators provide a gauge at a national scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy targets. The EPI offers a scorecard that highlights environmental performance for countries that aspire to move towards a sustainable future.

¹²² The National Council for Sustainable Development, “Vulnerability to Climate Hazards”, n.d. <https://ncsd.moe.gov.kh/dcc/data-portal/vulnerability-climate-hazards>

¹²³ Ibid. Baseline from website. There is no national target for this index. The target is based on an estimate by an adaptation expert at the Ministry of Environment Cambodia Climate Change Alliance, based on trends and forecasts.

¹²⁴ Baseline from Cambodia Climate Public Expenditure Review for 2021 (Ministry of Economy and Finance 2022). There is no national target for this index. The target has been estimated based on trends from previous years. Baseline and target data will be recalculated when the GDP is rebased.

¹²⁵ This indicator (which corresponds to SDG OI 13.2) is intended to measure the GHG emissions that are reduced as a result of United Nations projects (e.g. GEF, GCF). However, as agencies are finding it difficult to estimate potential emission reductions from their projects, this may take more time.

<p>Output 3.3: Governance and policies on climate change, including on carbon, are strengthened and the engagement of all stakeholders is enhanced</p> <p>Output 3.4: The adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened</p>	Public expenditure for climate action as per cent of GDP	2.3% (2021) ¹²⁴	2.8%	Climate Public Expenditure Reviews produced by MoE and MEF and published on the MoE website	UNDP, FAO, UNEP
	<p>OI 13.2: Reduction of CO₂e emissions, with United Nations support¹²⁵</p> <p>a) basic water; b) sanitation</p> <p>Number of additional hectares under improved management of: a) terrestrial areas; b) natural and cultural heritage areas; and c) freshwater areas, with United Nations support</p>	0	100,000 tonnes	Project progress reports	UNIDO, UNDP, UNEP
<p>Priority 4: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION – OUTCOME 4: By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, live in an increasingly gender equal and inclusive society with active civic space and enjoy more effective and accountable institutions.</p> <p>National Development Priorities: Pentagonal Strategy – Phase I (Pentagon 1.5, Pentagon 4.1, Pentagon 5.1, Pentagon 5.3, and Pentagon 5.4)</p> <p>SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 16, 17</p>	<p>Number of additional a) national (sectors) and b) subnational (provinces/districts/communes) institutions with strengthened capacities, through United Nations support, to enhance adaptive migration-informed capacities to climate change and/or disasters, including specific actions for women, children and vulnerable groups, including people on the move</p>	<p>a) 84.60% (Male:41.19%; Female:43.41%)</p> <p>b) 81.83% (Male: 39.84%; Female:41.99%)</p> <p>1) Terrestrial: 0</p> <p>2) Natural and cultural heritage: 0</p> <p>3) Freshwater: 0¹²⁶</p>	<p>a) 94.89% (Male:46.20%; Female:48.69%)</p> <p>b) 93.62% (Male:45.58%; Female:48.04%)</p> <p>1) Terrestrial: 683,604</p> <p>2) Natural and cultural heritage: 1,558,864</p> <p>3) Freshwater: 2,500</p>	<p>Every 2 years, JMP [UNICEF/WHO]</p> <p>Project progress reports; National Forest Monitoring System; national biodiversity database; Cambodia Environment Management Information System</p>	UNICEF, WHO
	<p>Number of additional a) national (sectors) and b) subnational (provinces/districts/communes) institutions with strengthened capacities, through United Nations support, to enhance adaptive migration-informed capacities to climate change and/or disasters, including specific actions for women, children and vulnerable groups, including people on the move</p>	<p>a) Sectors: 0</p> <p>b) Subnational: 0</p>	<p>a) Sectors: 20</p> <p>b) Subnational: 25 provinces</p>	Project progress reports	FAO, IFAD, IOM, UNCDF, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, WFP, WHO
Outputs contributing to the outcome	Key indicators	Baseline (year)	Target (2028)	Data source/method of verification	United Nations entities (lead in bold) responsible for (data collection) reporting

¹²⁴ Baseline from Cambodia Climate Public Expenditure Review for 2021 (Ministry of Economy and Finance 2022). There is no national target for this index. The target has been estimated based on trends from previous years. Baseline and target data will be recalculated when the GDP is rebased.

¹²⁵ This indicator (which corresponds to SDG OI 13.2) is intended to measure the GHG emissions that are reduced as a result of United Nations projects (e.g. GEF, GCF). However, as agencies are finding it difficult to estimate potential emission reductions from their projects, this may take more time.

¹²⁶ 0 because we refer to "additional".

<p>Output 4.2: Civic participation is increased in development and decision-making at all levels, including for women and youth</p>	<p>districts, and Khan councils, relative to national distributions, by sex (SDG 16.7.1)</p>	<p>3. Capital and provincial councils a) Female: 20% 4. Municipalities, districts, and Khan councils a) Female: 17%¹²⁹</p>	<p>a) Female: 31%¹³⁰ 3. Capital and provincial councils a) Female: 25% 4. Municipalities, districts, and Khan councils: a) Female: 30% Target: 22</p>	<p>UN agencies/entities reporting</p>	<p>UNESCO, OHCHR, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UN WOMEN</p>
<p>Output 4.3: Systems, services and community solutions are improved and effectively respond to and prevent discrimination, gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices</p>	<p>Number of legislations, policies, strategies, plans and mechanisms developed, amended or adopted with United Nations support, in compliance with international human rights standards, to: a) deliver improved public services; b) end all forms of violence and discrimination against women, children, youth, people with disabilities, people living with HIV; LGBTQI+ persons; c) promote the rule of law, and ensure equal access to justice for all; d) manage migration and combat human trafficking; and e) improve women's representation and participation in decision-making.</p>	<p>Baseline: 14 A. 0 B. 6¹³¹ C. 5¹³² D. 2¹³³ E. 1¹³⁴</p>	<p>A. 3¹³⁵ B. 7¹³⁶ C. 5¹³⁷ D. 5¹³⁸ E. 2¹³⁹</p>	<p>UN agencies/entities reporting</p>	<p>UNESCO, ILO, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNV, UN WOMEN, WHO</p>
<p>Output 4.4: Digital transformation is advanced to accelerate positive social change</p>	<p>Number of United Nations-supported initiatives to increase civic participation in development and decision-making including: 1) media development; 2) consultation process for draft legislations</p>	<p>Baseline: 12 1) 3¹⁴⁰</p>	<p>Target: 35</p>	<p>UN agencies/entities reporting</p>	<p>UNESCO, ILO, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNV, UN WOMEN, WHO</p>

¹²⁹ Women hold 17% of seats on provincial, municipal and district/Khan councils and 14% of commune/sangkat seats – United Nations. (2023). Cambodia Common Country Analysis, p. 40.

¹³⁰ CSDGs 2016–2030, Revised list of targets and indicators by goal, 2022.

¹³¹ 1) National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women; 2) Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims (2005); 3) Draft Child Protection Law developed; 4) Law on Persons with Disabilities being amended; 5) National Disabilities Strategic Plan being drafted; 6) Decree on the National Committee against Torture being drafted.

¹³² 1) Access to Information Law drafted; 2) Press Law Amendment; 3) Law on the creation of the Cambodian Human Rights Commission (NHRI) being drafted; 4) Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (LANGO) being drafted; 5) Occupational Safety and Health Law (ILO) being drafted.

¹³³ 1) National Policy on Labour Migration 2024–2028 drafted (ILO); 2) New Prakas/Guideline to regulate Recruitment Fees and Related Costs for Migration drafted (ILO, IOM).

¹³⁴ Draft Gender Equality Policy.

¹³⁵ Accountability and participation improved in three municipalities and at the national level.

¹³⁶ 1) NAPVAW IV finalised (NAPVAW); 2) Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims updated in line with best practice in DV law; 3) Child protection law (UNICEF); 4) Law on Persons with Disabilities amended (UNDP, OHCHR); 5) National Disabilities Strategic Plan enacted (NDSP) (UNDP, OHCHR); 6) National Stigma and Discrimination Actions Plan (UNAIDS); 7) Decree on the National Committee against Torture enacted (NCAT) (OHCHR).

¹³⁷ 1) Press Law Amended (UNESCO); 2) Access to Information Law Enacted (UNESCO); 3) Law on the creation of the Cambodian Human Rights Commission (NHRI) enacted (OHCHR); 4) Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (LANGO) amended (OHCHR); 5) Occupational Safety and Health law enacted (ILO).

¹³⁸ 1) National Policy on Labour Migration 2024–2028 (ILO); 2) New Prakas/Guideline to regulate Recruitment Fees and Related Costs for Migration (ILO, IOM); 3) Draft Law on Labour Migration Management (ILO); 4) National Strategic Plan for Counter-Human Trafficking 2024–2028 (ILO, IOM); 5) Amendment on the 2008 Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation (ILO, IOM, UNODC).

¹³⁹ 1) National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security; 2) Gender Equality Policy.

¹⁴⁰ UNESCO (2), WHO (1).

	and policies on human rights-related issues; 3) gender equality and women's empowerment; 4) the engagement of youth, adolescents, and children; 5) community-led monitoring and empowerment; 6) local governance processes, including planning and budgeting, and 7) volunteering.	2) 2 ¹⁴¹ 3) 0 4) 5 ¹⁴² 5) 1 ¹⁴³ 6) 0 7) 1 ¹⁴⁴	1) 7 ¹⁴⁵ 2) 10 ¹⁴⁶ 3) 4 ¹⁴⁷ 4) 8 ¹⁴⁸ 5) 2 ¹⁴⁹ 6) 2 ¹⁵⁰ 7) 2 ¹⁵¹			
	Number of improved systems, services and prevention programmes through agreed policies, Standard Operating Procedures, protocols, action plans and frameworks, supported by United Nations agencies in line with global good practice which respond to violence and harassment	Baseline: 5 ¹⁵²	Target: 10 ¹⁵³	UN reports	UNFPA, ILO, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNICEF, UN WOMEN	
	Proportion of Cambodian population subjected to specific forms of violence: 1. a) women who have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent intimate partner in the last 12 months prior to the survey 1. b) women aged 15–49 years who have ever experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent intimate partner 2. children aged 1–17 years old who have experienced physical punishment and/or	Baseline: 1. a) 13% b) 21%	Target: 1. a) 10%; b) 20% (The target is not ambitious as it is lifetime prevalence)	CDHS	UNFPA, UNICEF, FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNODC, UN WOMEN, WFP, WHO	
		2. 66% (2021–2022)	2. 60% (2028)			

¹⁴¹ UNESCO (2).
¹⁴² UNFPA (1), OHCHR (1), UNICEF (3).
¹⁴³ UNAIDS (1).
¹⁴⁴ UNICEF (1).
¹⁴⁵ UNESCO (5), WHO (2).
¹⁴⁶ UNESCO (3), UN WOMEN (4), OHCHR (3).
¹⁴⁷ UN WOMEN (3), ILO (1).
¹⁴⁸ UNFPA (3), OHCHR (1), UNICEF (4).
¹⁴⁹ UN WOMEN (1), UNAIDS (1).
¹⁵⁰ UNDP (2).
¹⁵¹ UNDP (1), UNICEF (1).

¹⁵² 1) Positive parenting programme; 2) Comprehensive Sexuality Education; 3) Health manager response to intimate partner violence; 4) Guideline on the Limited Use of Mediation as Response to Violence; 5) Gender Based Violence Minimum Standards of Essential Services Monitoring Checklist.

¹⁵³ 1) Standard Operating Procedures for Helpline; 2) Case Management Protocol; 3) Standard Operating Procedures for GBV Coordination at the Sub-national level; 4) Prevention Framework; 5) Expansion of Comprehensive Sexuality Education; 6) Update Positive Parenting; 7) School Health Room Guidelines on Gender Based Violence; 8) Contextualise the Measuring of the Prevention Framework; 9) Best Practices for Engaging Men and Boys in Prevention; 10) The Secondary Data Analysis on Harmful Social Norms.

	<p>psychological aggression in the month prior to the survey (SDG 16.2.1)</p> <p>Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans and initiatives for digital transformation drafted, adopted or implemented with United Nations support, disaggregated by: a) sector; b) province/subnational; c) fundamental freedoms and rights online; d) media information and digital literacy; and e) women's access to and use of digital technologies</p>	<p>Baseline: 16</p> <p>a) 12¹⁵⁴</p> <p>b) 0</p> <p>c) 3¹⁵⁵</p> <p>d) 1¹⁵⁶</p> <p>e) 0</p>	<p>Target: 29</p> <p>a) 18¹⁵⁷</p> <p>b) 2¹⁵⁸</p> <p>c) 4¹⁵⁹</p> <p>d) 3¹⁶⁰</p> <p>e) 2¹⁶¹</p>	UN agencies/entities reporting	UNDP, ITU, OHCHR, UNCDF, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNODC, WHO
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¹⁵⁴ WHO: 2 (1-digital health strategy drafted, 2-digitalized malaria information system adopted); UNDP: 10 (skills and entrepreneurship for e-commerce; onboarding farmers into agritech platform; digital innovation in schools; digital pilot in health sector; Cambodia Environmental Management Information System (CEMIS); Cambodia Disaster Damage and Loss Information System (CamDI); Early Warning Systems; registration of poor households during the COVID-19 pandemic; digital IDPoor feedback mechanism; artificial intelligence (AI) for poverty mapping).

¹⁵⁵ UNESCO: 3 (Personal and Data Protection Law; Cybersecurity Law; Telecommunications Act Amendment).

¹⁵⁶ UNESCO: 1 (Media, Information, and Digital Literacy Competency Framework drafted).

¹⁵⁷ WHO: 3 (1-Digital health strategy finalised, 2-Digital health strategy implementation plan drafted, 3-digitalized malaria information system sustained); UNDP: 15 (digital leadership initiative, digital government and at least three digital initiatives/policies supported).

¹⁵⁸ 2 municipalities (UNDP).

¹⁵⁹ OHCHR: 1; UNESCO: 3 (Personal and Data Protection Law drafted; Cybersecurity Law drafted; Telecommunications Act amended).

¹⁶⁰ UNESCO: 3 (Media, Information, Digital Literacy Competency Framework adopted with two initiatives).

¹⁶¹ 1 (UNDP) and 1-OHCHR (Legal advice, capacity-building and technical assistance to authorities, CSOs, and other relevant stakeholders on digital human rights protection).

Annex 3. Status of Human Rights Treaty Ratification and Environmental Convention Agreements

Status of Treaty Ratification¹⁶²

TREATY	Signature Date	Ratification Date, Accession (a) Succession (d) Date
CAT – Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment		15 Oct 1992 (a)
CAT-OP – Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture	14 Sep 2005	30 Mar 2007
CCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	17 Oct 1980	26 May 1992
CCPR-OP2-DP – Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty	-	-
CED – Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	-	27 Jun 2013 (a)
CED, Art.32 – Interstate communication procedure under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	27 Jun 2013	-
CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	17 Oct 1980	15 Oct 1992
CERD – International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	12 Apr 1966	28 Nov 1983
CESCR – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	17 Oct 1980	26 May 1992
CMW – International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	27 Sep 2004	-
CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child	-	15 Oct 1992 (a)
CRC-OP-AC – Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	27 Jun 2000	16 Jul 2004
CRC-OP-SC – Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	27 Jun 2000	30 May 2002
CRPD – Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	01 Oct 2007	20 Dec 2012

Priority National Environmental and Climate Commitments that respond to Global Environmental Challenges

NDC commitments:

- Emissions reduction of 64.6 million tonnes of CO₂e/year expected by 2030, a 41.7 per cent reduction compared with the Business as Usual (BAU) case
- Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) 59.1 per cent GHG reduction compared to the BAU case
- Agriculture 9.6 per cent GHG reduction by 2030 compared to the BAU case
- 60 per cent increase in forest cover of national land area by 2030
- Adaptation actions committed to across sectors: agriculture – including agribusiness, animal health and production, agriculture/energy, and agriculture/gender (17 actions); coastal zones (2 actions); energy (2 actions); human health (5 actions); industry (1 action); infrastructure – including roads, buildings, and urban land use planning (15 actions); livelihoods, poverty, and biodiversity (7 actions); tourism (3 actions); water resources (6 actions)

In addition, the following national and international frameworks apply to the Cambodian Environmental Context

- The Royal Government of Cambodia launched the first **Climate Change Strategic Plan – 2014–2023** (CCCSP), which captures the main strategic objectives and directions for climate-smart development in Cambodia over the next 10 years.
- Cambodia has joined **The Global Methane Pledge** to reduce global methane emissions by at least 30 per cent by 2030 from its 2020 level.

¹⁶² Source: OHCHR.

- Cambodia has joined the **Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use**, which aims to end deforestation by 2030.
- Cambodia has joined the **COP 27 Agricultural Breakthrough Agenda** and committed to a range of actions to scale up climate resilient and sustainable agriculture.¹⁶³
- Cambodia has committed to update its **National Biodiversity and Action Plan** in line with the newly adopted **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, in a bid to achieve the agreed-upon global goals and targets by 2030.
- Cambodia has committed to develop a **National Food Systems Action Plan**, including with a focus on nature-positive and climate-resilient agriculture.
- **Green Growth Roadmap 2013–2030** aims to develop a green economy through the effective use of natural resources, environmental sustainability, green jobs, green technologies, green finance, green credit, and green investment.
- **Roadmap for Sustainable Consumption and Production in Cambodia (2022–2035)** establishes a 14-year plan to improve the sustainability of Cambodia's consumption and production systems through five strategic pillars.
- The **Cambodia Clean Air Plan 2021** is a national strategic document aimed at identifying activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Cambodia. It provides information on the status of air quality (current situation and trends in 2030), major air pollution sources, regulations and measures to reduce emissions by sector.
- **Cambodia has a wide range of regional and international environmental** commitments through its participation in intergovernmental bodies and forums and regional and multilateral environmental agreements. MEAs can be found [here](#) and Cambodia has also committed to be part of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on *plastic* pollution.
- **Cambodia is also part of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris.** In addition, Cambodia is part of the following forums that support South-South and triangular cooperation and that develop joint action, including the: Regional Ministerial Forum on Environment and Health; Regional Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific; Asia Pacific Adaptation Network; East Asia Acid Deposition Network; and Coordinating Body for the Seas of East Asia.
- As a State Party to the **World Heritage Convention**, Cambodia has been implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and disaster risk reduction activities at its Cultural Heritage Sites.

¹⁶³ UNFCCC Climate Champions. (2022). "Agriculture Breakthrough: Priority International Actions for 2023". <https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Agriculture-Breakthrough-Priority-International-Actions-for-2023-FINAL-002.docx>

Annex 4. Detailed Theory of Change

THEORY OF CHANGE - UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK (2024 - 2028) CAMBODIA				
UNSCDF Pillar	Human Pillar	Economic Pillar	Environment Pillar	Social Transformation Pillar
UNSCDF Outcome Level Theory of Change	THEN this will provide the necessary environment for equitable and inclusive human development to advance.	THEN Cambodia's economy will become increasingly more productive, formalized, low carbon and climate adapted, whilst supporting the population through decent and productive work, increased inclusivity and equality achieved through diverse and sustainable financing.	THEN people in Cambodia will benefit from a healthier environment and will be more resilient to the harmful effects of climate change.	THEN discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices will be reduced and all people will be able to participate meaningfully in the life of society.
	IF rights-based and shock-resilient social protection frameworks and systems, with improved public and private financing and data are implemented effectively and efficiently, reaching the most vulnerable including children, women, people with disabilities; IF health services are universal and of better quality to address the needs of people across the life cycle, especially women and the most vulnerable, through improved skills of the health sector workforce, resilient health systems, and healthier practices; IF quality education and lifelong learning are universally and equitably available to all, particularly the most vulnerable, with qualified, competent, motivated and supported teaching workforce that continue to develop professionally, enhanced by improved relationships between educational institutions and industries; IF safe, affordable and nutritious food is accessible and consumed by all through strengthened food and nutrition systems that promote healthy diets and lifestyles, particularly for children and pregnant women, and are climate adapted and resilient to shocks; IF mine action enables safe land access, livelihood opportunities and victim support for greater socioeconomic inclusion and human security.	IF agrifood systems are more efficient, and safe through multisectoral efforts that drive the transformation to an inclusive and climate adapted agrifood system that is also diversified, digitalised, gender-equitable, pro-poor and resilient to shocks; AND IF businesses are more formalized ensuring a just transition to a diversified, resilient, low carbon economy, while meeting the needs of vulnerable and marginal populations and encouraging innovative data-based, digital solutions to climate change mitigation that generate skills, formal employment; supported by enabling policy frameworks, public campaigns, and outreach to business; AND IF all people, particularly women and the most vulnerable, have decent and productive employment, increased rights in the workplace that are protected through enabling mechanisms (such as policy frameworks), safe workplaces, fair wages, and opportunities for upskilling in addition to enabling climate adaptation and digitalisation; AND IF financing to support the attainment of the SDGs is strengthened, particularly at the national and sub-national level, through multisectoral partnerships, gender budgeting and green financing, alongside innovative and blended finance, sustainable revenue collection and an inclusive tax system.	IF Cambodia's natural resources are better managed including through public and private sector investments into nature-based solutions and active participation of local communities; AND IF all forms of pollution are reduced through increased national and sub-national capacities for safe waste management and intersectoral public-private partnerships, which prioritise adoption of technologies, mechanisms and social practices to better manage waste and pollutants; AND IF implementation of Cambodia's climate change commitments is accelerated through strengthened governance mechanisms, enhanced transparency, and well-developed and regulated climate financing mechanisms including carbon markets; IF adaptive capacities of communities and systems to climate change impacts and disasters are enhanced through strengthened disaster risk management mechanisms, resilient basic services and improved livelihood practices.	IF institutions become more effective at safeguarding fundamental freedoms and human rights through improved justice system and protection services that ensure transparency and accountability; AND IF actions that support increased opportunities for meaningful dialogue and participation in civic spaces are rolled out, enabling women and the most vulnerable to be involved in the development and decision-making; AND IF actions and community solutions are implemented to counteract and prevent discrimination, gender-based violence, stigma and negative social norms through the strengthening of disaggregated data, systems and Gov. and other actors are supported to establish and implement a digital policy with mechanisms and tools that enable women, youth and those at risk being left behind to participate in the development processes and decision-making.
Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment	Stronger focus on women and most vulnerable/ LNOB at risk populations. Health needs and rights to health, with a focus on women and LNOB populations are extended and met inclusively. More focus on women and girls, and marginalized and vulnerable populations. Improved diets, inc. for pregnant and lactating women, and children, for reducing in stunting and wasting, and other forms of malnutrition. Improved rights at work, access to social protection, improved work safety, climate adaptive and digital opportunities, with a focus on women / LNOB at risk populations. Empowerment, opportunities and engagement are provided to the population, with a focus on women and youth, and those most at risk of being left behind, including within increasingly digitised M&E systems.			
Financing	Increased access to public and private sources of financing for investment in human development, based on human rights and the SDGs at all levels. Access to and adaptation of green and innovative technologies, mechanisms, financing and services is expanded. Greater financing secured for risk informed development and DRM. Adequate capacities and budget for implementation (SDG planning, FFM, private sector/CSO partnerships). Improved strategic partnerships between the public and private sectors and IRs aligned for SDG acceleration and ESG goals. Macroeconomic sustainability provided by public financial institutions			
Digital Transformation	Increased use of digital solutions and improved data for evidence-based approaches that ensure the farthest are reached first and no one is left behind. Integrated digitization and data strategy (inc. safety/ standards/ digital rights etc.) pursued, with an inclusive focus on LNOB at risk populations, which underpin an evidenced base approach to policy formulation and sharpened implementation.			
Human Rights Based Approach prioritizes LNOB in line with international norms	Expanded universal social protection, healthcare, nutritional and educational services, that reach the farthest first, provided in accordance with international human rights-based conventions. Support from a human rights-based approach to the agri-food and economic sectors ensure outreach and inclusion to those in the lowest socio-economic groups and to rural populations at greatest risk of being left behind, supported by a just transition for decent jobs with gender equality and women's empowerment. Key sectoral policies/strategies/legal frameworks are compliant with DRM, climate and environmental agendas/ climate adaptation integrated, and are implemented in a more coordinated and inclusive fashion and which consciously considers the needs of LNOB at risk groups. Legal frameworks, policies and increased financing in place, compliant with human rights standards and which increasingly involve LNOB populations for strategic dialogue and participation in civic spaces and key areas of service delivery, and which counter gender based violence, discrimination, stigma and negative social norms, and which ensure digital platforms are safe, accessible and inclusive.			

Annex 5. Legal Annex

1. Whereas the Royal Government of Cambodia (the “Government”) has entered into the agreements listed below with the United Nations, including its Funds, Programmes and other subsidiary organs, and other organizations of the United Nations system (“UN System Organizations”), which are applicable to their programme activities in Cambodia (the “UN Agreements”) under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (the “Cooperation Framework”);
2. Whereas the UN Agreements, together with the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946 (the “General Convention”) and/or the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21 November 1947 (the “Specialized Agencies Convention”) as applicable, form the primary existing legal basis for the relationship between the Government and each UN System Organization for supporting the country to deliver on the Cooperation Framework, and are non-exhaustive and without prejudice to any other legal instruments the Government may enter into, including additional agreements with UN System Organizations for the purpose of their activities in the country:
 - a) With the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a basic agreement to govern UNDP’s assistance to the country, which was signed by the Government and UNDP (the “Standard Basic Assistance Agreement” or “SBAA”) on 19 December 1994. This Cooperation Framework, together with a joint results group work plan specifying UNDP programme activities further to this Cooperation Framework (which shall form part of this Cooperation Framework and is incorporated herein by reference), constitute together a “project document” as referred to in the SBAA. The implementing partner and UNDP will sign a project agreement containing the specific arrangements for each project further to the relevant project document.
 - b) With the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), a Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government and UNICEF on 1 June 1994.
 - c) With the World Food Programme (WFP), a Basic Agreement concluded between WFP and the Government on 12 January 2006.
 - d) With the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the UNDP SBAA concluded on 19 December 1994, ***mutatis mutandis***, applies to the activities and personnel of UNFPA, in accordance with the agreement concluded by an exchange of letters between UNFPA and the government, which entered into force on 6 August 1996.
 - e) With the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies signed on 15 October 1953 and its Annex 1 relating to the ILO signed on 2 July 2007 and the Standard Technical Assistance/Cooperation Agreements signed on 5 October 1956 as well as the UNDP SBAA signed on 19 December 1994
 - f) With the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the provisions of the UNDP SBAA signed on 19 December 1994, shall be applied, ***mutatis mutandis***, to UNSDCF and UNIDO projects and programmes in the country.

- g) With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), an Agreement for the establishment of the FAO Representation in Cambodia concluded between the Government and FAO on 21 December 1994.
 - h) With the World Health Organization (WHO), a Basic Agreement for the Provision of Technical Advisory Assistance signed by the Government and WHO on 10 February 1995.
 - i) With the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a Cooperation Agreement concluded between the Government and IOM on 10 June 2020.
 - j) The presence of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is governed by an **Accord de Siege** concluded between the Royal Government and UNESCO on 9 January 1995.
 - k) With the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and the UNEA's approval of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2022-25 and related Programmes of Work (PoWs).
 - l) The Office of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), directly derives its presence and mandate from Article 17 of the Paris Peace Accords of 1991, and subsequent annual and biennial resolutions of the former Human Rights Commission and then the Human Rights Council. Since 1996, the Country Office has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Royal Government of Cambodia subject to extension every two years. The current MoU is valid until 31 December 2024. The mandate is also provided under the OHCHR mandate established by General Assembly resolution A/RES/48/141 of December 1993, the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and subsequent human rights instruments.
 - m) With the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), an exchange of letters dated 18 September 2012 to the effect that the UNDP SBAA of 19 December 1994 be applied, **mutatis mutandis**, to activities and personnel of UN Women.
 - n) With the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government, signed on 19 December 1994, shall be applied, **mutatis mutandis**, to UNCDF projects and programmes in the country.
 - o) UNAIDS is a joint and co-sponsored programme of the United Nations system established by ECOSOC resolutions 1994/24 and 1995/2. The World Health Organization (WHO) is one of its co-sponsoring organizations and provides administration to it. Consequently, UNAIDS is covered under the terms and conditions of the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies through the World Health Organization.
3. With respect to all UN System Organizations: Assistance to the Government shall be made available and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions, decisions, rules and procedures of each UN System Organization.

4. Without prejudice to the above, the Government shall: (i) apply to each UN System Organization and its property, funds, assets, officials and experts on mission the provisions of the General Convention and/or the Specialized Agencies Convention; and (ii) accord to each UN System Organization, its officials and other persons performing services on behalf of that UN System Organization, the privileges, immunities and facilities set out in the UN Agreement applicable to such UN System Organization.
5. United Nations Volunteers performing services on behalf of a UN System Organization shall be entitled to the privileges and immunities accorded to officials of such UN System Organization.
6. Any privileges, immunities and facilities granted to a UN System Organization under the Cooperation Framework shall be no less favourable than those granted by the Government to any other UN System Organization signatory of the Cooperation Framework.
7. Without prejudice to the UN Agreements, the Government shall be responsible for dealing with any claims which may be brought by third parties against any of the UN System Organizations and their officials, experts on mission or other persons performing services on their behalf, and shall hold them harmless in respect of any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the Cooperation Framework, except where it is mutually agreed by the Government and the relevant UN System Organization(s) that such claims and liabilities arise from gross negligence or misconduct of that UN System Organization, or its officials, or persons performing services.
8. Nothing in or relating to this Cooperation Framework shall be deemed: (i) a waiver, express or implied, of the privileges and immunities of any UN System Organization; or (ii) the acceptance by any UN System Organization of the jurisdiction of the courts of any country over disputes arising from this Cooperation Framework, whether under the General Convention or the Specialized Agencies Convention, the UN Agreements, or otherwise, and no provisions of this Cooperation Framework shall be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent that is inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.

Annex 6. Programme Management and Accountability

Program Implementation

The programme will be nationally executed under the overall co-ordination of the Royal Government of Cambodia. Government Ministries, NGOs, INGOs and UN system agencies will implement programme activities. The Cooperation Framework will be made operational through the development of joint work plan(s) (JWPs) and/or agency-specific work plans and project documents as necessary which describe the specific results to be achieved and will form an agreement between the UN system agencies and each implementing partner as necessary on the use of resources. To the extent possible the UN system agencies and partners will use the minimum documents necessary, namely the signed Cooperation Framework and signed joint or agency-specific work plans and project documents to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary and appropriate, project documents can be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the Cooperation Framework and joint or agency-specific work plans and / or project documents.

Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers

All cash transfers to an Implementing Partner are based on the workplans (WPs) agreed between the Implementing Partner and the United Nations (UN) system agencies. Cash transfers for activities detailed in WPs can be made by the UN system agencies using the following modalities:

1. Cash transferred directly to the Implementing Partner:
 - a. Prior to the start of activities (direct cash transfer), or
 - b. After activities have been completed (reimbursement);
2. Direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the Implementing Partner;
3. Direct payments to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by UN system agencies in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partners.

Where cash transfers are made to the [national institution], the [national institution] shall transfer such cash promptly to the Implementing Partner.

Direct cash transfers shall be requested and released for programme implementation periods not exceeding three months. Reimbursements of previously authorised expenditures shall be requested and released quarterly or after the completion of activities. The UN system agencies shall not be obligated to reimburse expenditure made by the Implementing Partner over and above the authorised amounts.

Following the completion of any activity, any balance of funds shall be refunded or programmed by mutual agreement between the Implementing Partner and the UN system agencies.

Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may depend on the findings of a review of the public financial

management capacity in the case of a Government Implementing Partner, and of an assessment of the financial management capacity of the non-UN Implementing Partner. A qualified consultant, such as a public accounting firm, selected by the UN system agencies may conduct such an assessment, in which the Implementing Partner shall participate. The Implementing Partner may participate in the selection of the consultant.

Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may be revised in the course of programme implementation based on the findings of programme monitoring, expenditure monitoring and reporting, and audits.

In case of direct cash transfer or reimbursement, the UN system agencies shall notify the Implementing Partner of the amount approved by the UN system agencies and shall disburse funds to the Implementing Partner in ten working days.

In case of direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the Implementing Partner; or to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the UN system agencies in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partners, the UN system agencies shall proceed with the payment in ten working days.

The UN system agencies shall not have any direct liability under the contractual arrangements concluded between the Implementing Partner and a third-party vendor.

Where the UN system agencies and other UN system agency provide cash to the same Implementing Partner, programme monitoring, financial monitoring and auditing will be undertaken jointly or coordinated with those UN system agencies. A standard Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures (FACE) report, reflecting the activity lines of the WP, will be used by Implementing Partners to request the release of funds, or to secure the agreement that [UN organization] will reimburse or directly pay for the planned expenditure. The Implementing Partners will use the FACE to report on the utilization of cash received. The Implementing Partner shall identify the designated official(s) authorised to provide the account details, and request and certify the use of cash. The FACE will be certified by the designated official(s) of the Implementing Partner.

Cash transferred to Implementing Partners should be spent for the purpose of activities and within the timeframe as agreed in the WPs only.

Cash received by the Government and national NGO Implementing Partners shall be used in accordance with established national regulations, policies and procedures consistent with international standards, in particular ensuring that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the WPs, and ensuring that reports on the utilization of all received cash are submitted to [UN organization] within six months after receipt of the funds. Where any of the national regulations, policies and procedures are not consistent with international standards, the UN system agency financial and other related rules and system agency regulations, policies and procedures will apply.

In the case of international NGO/CSO and IGO Implementing Partners, cash received shall be used in accordance with international standards in particular ensuring that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the workplans (WPs), and ensuring that reports on the full utilization of all received cash are submitted to [UN organization] within six months after receipt of the funds.

To facilitate scheduled and special audits, each Implementing Partner receiving cash from [UN organization] will provide UN system agency or its representative with timely access to:

- all financial records which establish the transactional record of the cash transfers provided by [UN system agency], together with relevant documentation;
- all relevant documentation and personnel associated with the functioning of the Implementing Partner's internal control structure through which the cash transfers have passed. The findings of each audit will be reported to the Implementing Partner and [UN organization]. Each Implementing Partner will furthermore:
 - 1) receive and review the audit report issued by the auditors.
 - 2) provide a timely statement of the acceptance or rejection of any audit recommendation to the [UN organization] that provided cash (and where the SAI has been identified to conduct the audits, add: and to the SAI) so that the auditors include these statements in their final audit report before submitting it to [UN organization]; and
 - 3) undertake timely actions to address the accepted audit recommendations.

Report on the actions taken to implement accepted recommendations to the UN system agencies (and where the SAI has been identified to conduct the audits, add: and to the SAI), on a quarterly basis (or as locally agreed).

Where no assessment of the Public Financial Management Capacity has been conducted, or such an assessment identified weaknesses in the capacity of the Supreme Audit Institution]: The audits will be commissioned by the UN system agencies and undertaken by private audit services.

Mobilising Resources for the Cooperation Framework

The UN system agencies will provide support to the development and implementation of activities within the Cooperation Framework, which may include technical support, cash assistance, supplies, commodities and equipment, procurement services, transport, funds for advocacy, research and studies, consultancies, programme development, monitoring and evaluation, training activities and staff support. Part of the UN system entities' support may be provided to non-governmental [and civil society] organizations as agreed within the framework of the individual WPs and project documents.

Additional support may include access to UN organization-managed global information systems, the network of the UN system agencies' country offices and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to the support provided by the network of UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes. The UN system agencies shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support, technical assistance, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities.

Subject to annual reviews and progress in the implementation of the programme, the UN system agencies' funds are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the Cooperation Framework. These budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the WPs and project documents. By mutual consent between the Government and the UN development system entities, funds not earmarked by donors to UN development system agencies for specific activities may be re-allocated to other programmatically equally worthwhile activities.

The Government will support the UN system agencies' efforts to raise funds required to meet the needs of this Cooperation Framework and will cooperate with the UN system agencies including:

encouraging potential donor Governments to make available to the UN system agencies the funds needed to implement unfunded components of the programme; endorsing the UN system agencies' efforts to raise funds for the programme from other sources, including the private sector both internationally and in Cambodia; and by permitting contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations in Cambodia to support this programme which will be tax exempt for the Donor, to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law.

Cooperation Framework Monitoring and Evaluation

Implementing Partners agree to cooperate with the UN system agencies for monitoring all activities supported by cash transfers and will facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the UN system agencies. To that effect, Implementing Partners agree to the following:

1. periodic on-site reviews and spot checks of their financial records by the UN system agencies or their representatives, as appropriate, and as described in specific clauses of their engagement documents/contracts with the UN system agencies; and
2. programmatic monitoring of activities following the UN system agencies' standards and guidance for site visits and field monitoring.

Special or scheduled audits: Each UN organization, in collaboration with other UN system agencies (where so desired and in consultation with the respective coordinating ministry) will establish an annual audit plan, giving priority to audits of Implementing Partners with large amounts of cash assistance provided by the UN system agencies, and those whose financial management capacity needs strengthening.



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UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR CAMBODIA 2024 - 2028



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