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Mid-Term and Strategic Review of the  
National Strategy for Food Security and  
Nutrition 2014-2018

**I. Progress Inventory 2016**



December 2017

COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



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## Acknowledgement

His Excellency **Yim Chhay Ly**, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and Chairman of the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-SP&FSN), is pleased to launch the findings of the Mid Term and Strategic Review of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018 (MTRS-NSFSN). In so doing, he is pleased to acknowledge the importance of the contributions and active participation made by the staff of CARD, the line ministries, the sub-national authorities, the community representatives and NGOs who participated in the consultations of the MTRS-NSFSN. In addition, H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** wishes to thank the development partners who have assisted in every aspect of the Review, including the support received from the EU, USAID, GIZ, and UN agencies, including FAO, WFP and UNICEF, and the Civil Society Alliance of the SUN Network led by Helen Keller International. The critical review provided by the World Bank is also very much appreciated.

The work of the formally constituted Advisory Board for the MTSR, chaired by H.E. Mr. **Ngy Chanphal**, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of CARD was constituted from representatives of CARD and key ministries and development partners, has been fundamental in guiding the process and validating the results. The commitment of Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Ms. **Veena Reddy**, Acting Mission Director for USAID, has been very much appreciated. Many members of the TWG-SP&FSN have participated in the MTSR and their long-standing support is much valued in dealing with ongoing challenges for food security and nutrition in Cambodia. The Food Security and Nutrition Forum has served as a vital means of communicating progress with the review and discussing results.

After extensive consultation and review, the final documents were released by H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Mr. **David Kaatrud**, WFP Regional Director for Asia and Pacific Bureau on 6 February 2018. Three separate documents have been generated for the MTSR to include multiple inputs and these documents have been widely circulated and discussed in draft form. The three documents are also supported by a number of contributed papers and ongoing analysis. The three main components of the MTSR are:

1. **Progress Inventory 2016**
2. **Situation Update 2017**
3. **Strategic Directions Towards 2030**

Whilst these documents are released together, they are provided as separate documents on the grounds that each of these can stand as an independent analysis.

As evidenced by these documents, the MTSR has generated important findings and guidance for the way forward. It serves as a foundation for the drafting of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019-2023 and has given fresh impetus to national efforts to combat malnutrition. The process of consultation and discussion has also served as an important avenue for learning and capacity building at national and sub-national level.

Good progress towards the strategic objectives has been made to the end of 2016. Our directions going forward are clear. The existing strategy serves well to guide actions for the remaining period to the end of 2018. All sectoral policies and programmes should incorporate these directions and each contribute under their identified areas of responsibility and mandates. However, there is a need to strengthen the coordinating mechanisms for this work at national and sub-national levels, especially to ensure the capacity to monitor and evaluate progress is in place by the end of the strategic period. We must also ensure that all parties work together with renewed effort in order to meet the deadline for ending hunger in Cambodia by 2030. We are in a position to set an example globally, by working unfailingly towards that objective, working together with unity under wise leadership of **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the guidance of the Rectangular Strategy, the National Strategic Development Plan and other existing policies, strategies and plans.

## Acronyms

### Government Institutions

CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLVT	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MoWRAM	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
PDRD	Provincial Department of Rural Development
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia

### UN/NGOs/Institutions

CHAI	Clinton Health Access Initiative
CSA	Civil Society Alliance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HKI	Helen Keller International
NCDD	National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

### Others

CamREx	Cambodia Emergency Response and Review Exercise
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
CMDG	Cambodia's Millennium Development Goals
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
FTRM	Fast Track Road Map
HEFs	Health Equity Funds
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTSR	Mid-Term and Strategic Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSFSN	National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition
NSPPF	National Social Protection Policy Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SP	Social Protection
TWG	Technical Working Group
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

## Introduction

The National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN) 2014-2018 built on the existing strategies and plans and integrated elements of these strategies in one framework to enhance synergies and optimize outcomes for improvement of food security and nutrition for the people of Cambodia. The Goal of the NSFSN 2014-2018 was that by 2018, Cambodians will have substantially improved physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and optimize the utilization of this food to keep a healthy and productive life.

The Mid-Term and Strategic Review (MTSR) of the NSFSN 2014-2018 reviews progress made under the strategy until the end of 2016, provides a comprehensive situation update and shapes ongoing efforts to deal with future challenges. The MTSR involved a process of consultation, review, analysis and planning for the following objectives:

1. Review past achievements under the NSFSN to 2016.
2. Review of challenges and barriers preventing accomplishment of the strategy and ways to resolve these issues.
3. Consider outstanding actions under the strategy as of the end of 2016 and to update plans for completion by 2018.
4. Provide a concise situational analysis of the present situation for FSN built upon a wide-ranging analysis, incorporating cross sectional and multi-stakeholder perspectives.
5. Produce a roadmap towards 2030 and lay the foundations for the NSFSN 2019-2023.
6. Disseminate the results of the MTSR widely.
7. Ensure all data, tools employed and materials assembled for the MTSR are securely stored and widely accessible via a common information platform

The MTSR reflects the structure of the NSFSN 2014-2018 and addresses a detailed set of objectives clustered under three priority areas:

1. Food availability and food access at household level (specifically in rural areas)
2. Utilization and use of food resulting in improving child and maternal nutrition (focused on the first 1,000 days)
3. Vulnerability of the food insecure and their exposure to risks.

These priority areas (Figure 1) are the guiding structure for implementation of the NSFSN 2014-2018. Further consideration of the institutional arrangements for improving advocacy, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, information management and capacity building is critical for assessing the effectiveness of the strategy. The process of implementing the strategy must be addressed through

consideration of food security and nutrition governance as a cross cutting layer, including the institutional and legal framework and the involvement of the broader community.

In the first instance, the MTSR entailed a survey of the progress made with the priority actions identified in the NSFSN, collecting reports from the Ministries and other stakeholders with major responsibilities in each priority area. This document provides a summary of the progress made in each of the priority areas of the NSFSN 2014-2018. It is a consensus document embracing contributions received from all sources, allowing consultation and discussion of findings and summation of these materials. The contents are arranged in the form of a summary statement on progress, identification of challenges and a set of key recommendations.

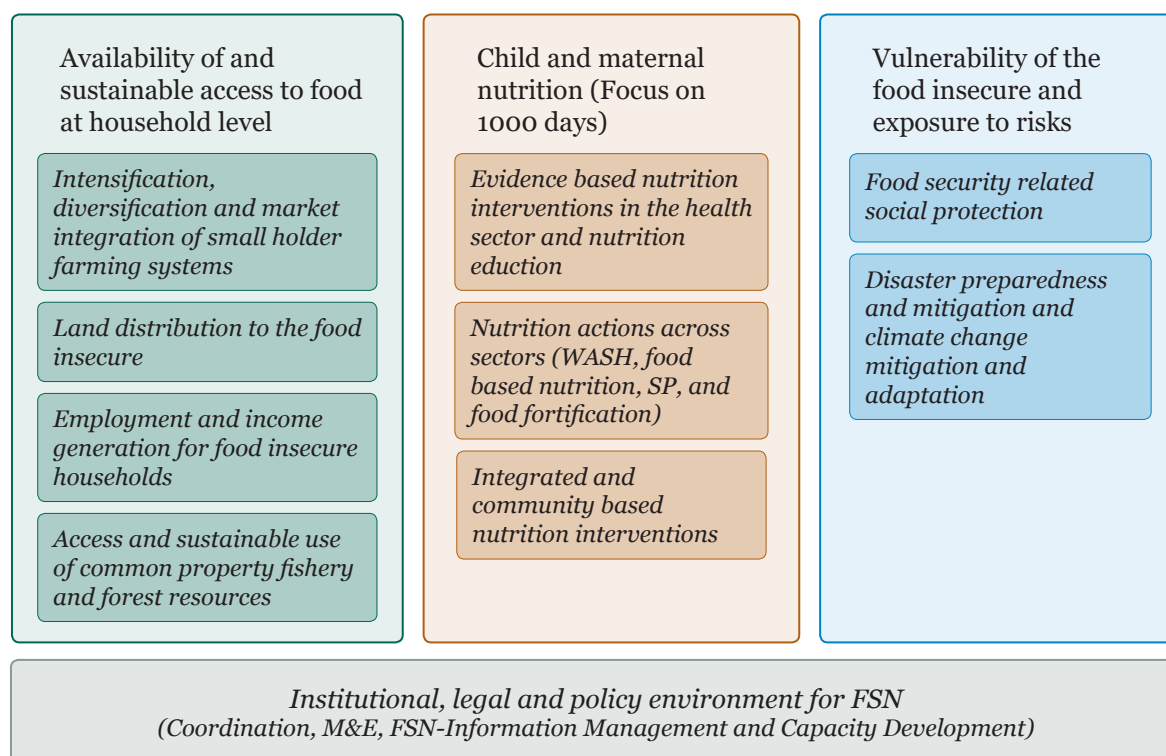


Figure 1: Priority areas to be addressed by the NSFSN 2014-2018



## Summary of Progress for the Mid-Term Review 2016

### Overall Progress

There is strong support for a comprehensive approach to combatting malnutrition. This support extends to the highest level in Cambodia and is reflected in policy statements and high-level directives from the RGC and concerted actions by Government and development partners throughout the country. It is based on the understanding that the basic causes of malnutrition are subject to cross-sectoral influences and that some problems require an integrated approach (integrating agriculture, health, rural development, education etc.) Understanding of malnutrition requires an appreciation of a complex of factors constituting both the basic and underlying causes.

Progress has been made on all fronts in implementing the priority actions for the NSFSN 2014-2018. Virtually all priority actions are underway, but national coverage is uneven. There is very limited ability to report on the outcomes of RGC programmes, except in terms of production aspects for agriculture, delivery of health programmes and progress with infrastructure development and land distribution. It is difficult to determine how these actions have contributed to improved outcomes for food security and for nutrition, except through the detailed information available from projects implemented with development partners. The reports from these diverse activities do not in themselves provide evidence for a comprehensive review of progress. The Cambodia Demographic Health Survey (2015) has shown national progress with key indicators for nutrition such as stunting and wasting, countering trends in the previous period where progress had stalled on some fronts. No national data are available to update the results to the end of 2016. Detailed studies in particular areas show that there is considerable geographic and demographic variation relating to malnutrition, with ongoing and significant areas of concern, including increasing problems for obesity and overweight.

Cambodia continues to increase access to clean water, improved sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) practices - one of the key contributing factor to acute and chronic child malnutrition. Over the past several years, the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), sub-national government bodies and development partners have made remarkable progress in advancing access to water supply and improved sanitation in rural areas with many villages declared as Open Defecation Free. In many areas, the key indicators suggest that progress is on track to meet NSDP targets and sanitation coverage exceeded 2016 targets for the NSFSN. This represents a significant contribution to improved health and nutrition outcomes among rural citizens.

Access to clean water in primary schools for both sanitation and toilet usage is increasing, although about half the provinces still have less than 60 percent coverage. At the secondary education level, access to clean water has increased in all provinces and is estimated to be above 60 percent except for two provinces (Pursat and Pailin). However, the quality of water remains an ongoing concern given the lack of testing of water quality.

In recent years, the growth of the agriculture sector continues but at the slower pace due to climate change, low productivity and decline in global commodity prices, along with the country's economic transition from an agriculture-based economy to a service and industrial-based economy. However, the RGC continues to prioritise the agricultural sector in order to maintain sustainable growth as stated in NSDP 2014-2018. The RGC will focus on addressing low factor productivity in agriculture by (1) investing more in rural infrastructure and irrigation; (2) strengthening the use of better plant breeds and improved techniques and provision of extension services; (3) promoting high value-added agro-industrial crops; and (4) promoting affordable credit. The government will also pay close attention to aquaculture and livestock production that is ecologically sustainable. Care will be needed to ensure the nutrition and food security concerns are not lost with sectoral focus on production, commercial development and infrastructure.

MRD has also made important progress in rural transport by completing a high percentage of its annual plans for rehabilitating rural roads. Progress with the road system and other key infrastructure reflects the rapid economic growth for the nation and increases the livelihood opportunities for the rural population.

The national economy has shown continued strong growth in the years 2014-2016 and there has been an accompanying growth in paid employment opportunities. However, the situation in specific areas and especially for rural communities reflects a growing trend in migration for work, either to urban areas, other provinces or to neighbouring countries. The total number of migrant workers is substantially increased in recent years and this has provided increasing income for families although there are accompanying social problems and implications for food security and welfare for both the household left behind (especially children under five) and the migrant workers themselves. The level of rural wages has increased as the availability of labour in rural areas has declined. The complexity of the problems has increased even in the face of the general improvements of the economy. This highlights the importance of the commitment under the SDGs that no one should be left behind in the movement towards sustainable development.

Vocational training is important for labour mobility and returns. Expanding secondary school curriculums and vocational education and skill training is necessary and will require resources and qualified teachers. These are challenges for strengthening institutions, infrastructure and access for vocational education and life skills programmes including health and nutrition promotion and education.

The NSFSN 2014-2018 was officially launched in August 2014. One early result of the strategy was the preparation of the Fast Track Road Map for Nutrition 2014-2020 (FTRM) and investment plan consultations between the MoH, MRD and the MAFF.

Cambodia became the 53rd member of SUN Movement in July 2014. Thanks to close collaboration between CARD, MoH, Development Partners, and Civil Society, the FSN sector has developed useful monitoring and reporting frameworks to track progress against SUN Movement Objectives as well the FTRM.

The National Action Plan for Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025 was also officially launched in May 2016 to provide a comprehensive road map to achieve Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to End Hunger, Achieve Food Security, and Improve Nutrition, and Promote Sustainable Agriculture.

The RGC has made important progress in strengthening the social protection system to be more interconnected and consolidate it as an integrated, consistent, and efficient system covering both the public and private sectors, including a clear-cut division of roles distinguishing from policy making, regulation, and operations. The MEF, with input from relevant line ministries and CARD, has led a multi-sector effort to develop the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSSPF) 2016 – 2025 comprised of two main pillars: Social Assistance and Social Insurance.

## Priority Area 1: Availability of and sustainable access to food at household level

The objective is for food insecure households to increase food availability and food access through more productive and diversified agriculture and livestock production, sustainable fisheries and forestry as well as from non-agricultural employment and income opportunities. Under Priority Area 1, availability and sustainable access at household level are addressed by intensification and diversification of production and market integration for smallholder farmers; land titling and distribution to the food insecure; employment and income generation for the food insecure; and access and sustainable use of common property fishery and forest resources. Whilst the availability of food has been shown not to be a major problem in Cambodia (taking into account domestic and imported foods) seasonal food insecurity, diet diversity and access to nutrient-rich food remain key issues for malnutrition.

### 1.1 Intensify and diversify smallholder farming systems and improve linkages to markets

During 2014-2016, the overall results of agricultural production were satisfactory, even though natural disasters occurred with delayed planting rains, early onset of the dry season and floods at the end of the rainy season. All of these situations were met by the strong efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), with guidance and support from the RGC and the active participation of all relevant ministries and institutions, local authorities, armed forces, farmers in the whole country, and also with the contribution from development partners.

The intensification of farming has become a priority for Cambodia. The expansion and improvement of supporting services including research, new technology dissemination, the distribution of seed, fertilizer and agricultural materials, and rural loans are priorities for Government to increase agricultural productivity and fulfil market demand in quantity, quality, safety and international standards.

The challenges for crop production were due in part to the vulnerability of rainfed cropping systems to rainfall variability and climate change. The limited capacity of agricultural cooperatives, who are seen by Government as key actors in the rural economy, requires close attention in the near future. The participation of private investment in the agriculture sector is still small compared to other sectors, especially medium and large-scale investment in processing agricultural products. Animal production has made uneven progress, as draught animals are replaced by mechanization and due to the reduction in grazing lands, climate change, and water sources. The productivity of animal based enterprises continues to rise in response to increasing demand for animal products.

## 1.2 Enhance sustainable and secure access to land for the poor and food-insecure

Access to land remains a growing challenge with average land holdings of smallholder farmers barely adequate for subsistence and limiting for diversification and livelihoods vulnerable to climatic risks. Migration associated with social and economic transformation is both a solution to household poverty and a further problem complicating the welfare of vulnerable rural populations. Social land concessions, resettlement schemes, rehabilitation of productive lands through demining and the granting of freehold land all provide avenues for increasing access to land, but it is likely that these efforts are eclipsed as larger scale population changes, labour mobility and remittances serve as major sources of livelihood improvement. Access to land is a critical factor for access to adequate and nutritious foods, but there are many other considerations and challenges to be taken into account.

## 1.3 Improve access to and sustainable use of common property fishery and forestry resources

Natural resource management, including forestry and fisheries and sectoral reform are topics of intense debate. Implementation of changes requires the strengthening the enforcement of laws and regulations. In order to prevent and combat illegal forest, wildlife, and fishing activities, strong coordination is required between agencies at national and sub-national levels. The effective governance of common property resources is a major challenge under the competing pressures of a growing population, expanding demands and multiple institutions involved.

Greater emphasis is needed on the promotion of aquaculture in order to meet expected demand and to reduce the pressure on wild fish and rice field fisheries.

## 1.4 Enhance employment and income opportunities for the food-insecure

The national economy has shown continued strong growth in the years 2014-2016 and there has been an accompanying growth in paid employment opportunities. However, the situation in specific areas and especially for rural communities reflects a growing trend in migration for work, either to urban areas, other provinces or to neighbouring countries. The total number of migrant workers is substantially increased in recent years and this has provided increasing income for families although there are accompanying social problems and implications for food security and welfare for both the household left behind and the migrant workers themselves. The level of rural wages has increased as the availability of labour in rural areas has declined. The complexity of the problems has increased even in the face of the general improvements of the economy. This highlights the importance of the commitment under the SDGs that no one should be left behind in the movement towards sustainable development.



## Priority Area 2: Utilization and use of food resulting in improving child and maternal nutrition with a focus on the first 1,000 days

### 2.1 Health and Nutrition

There have been significant achievements in the health sector, and most health-related MDGs targets for Cambodia have been reached. Notable achievements include progress in reducing maternal and child mortality, reducing the spread of communicable diseases, and the country-wide expansion of Health Equity Funds (HEFs) for nearly 2,000,000 poor households. The targets associated with MDG 4 (Reducing Child Mortality) have been achieved. The targets associated with CMDG 5 (Improving Maternal Health) have been, for the most part, achieved.

The MEF and Ministry of Health (MoH) have worked to improve the efficiency of budget allocation for health. There have also been increased financial budget allocations in the health sector, including current 50% government contributions to HEF pooled resources and a strong commitment to self-finance HEF in a five-year period. The strengthening of routine and cross-sectional health data collection has provided information and evidence for policy making, planning, and for monitoring and evaluation.

In January 2016, the Ministry of Health (MoH) prepared the National Budget for the Health Strategic Plan (HSP3, 2016-2020) and for the first time, nutrition was included with the support of WHO and UNICEF. This programmatic approach in the Health Sector is showing dividends for reporting and planning purposes. Over the next five years, approximately USD 24.6 million is needed for nutrition, of which 54.5% is devoted to the supply of treatment of malnutrition: 6 million for treatment of severe acute malnutrition over 5 years, 3.7 million for daily IFA, 0.5 million for vitamin A supplements and 3 million USD for micro-nutrient powder supplementation.

There remains a need for increased funding to address the constant burden of malnutrition and the allocated budget for the MoH for nutrition cannot meet these costs. A recent MoH publication, led by WHO and CHAI estimating health expenditure in Cambodia from 2012 to 2014 (published in December 2015), showed that the government was spending USD 200 million on health, of which, USD 0.75 million was spent for nutrition. Most of the USD 0.75 million was used to purchase Iron-Folate and vitamin A supplements. According to the need (costing HSP3) and the budget allocated in 2014, an additional USD 3.5 million should be invested from public funding and development partners. With limited resources, it is challenging to scale-up the entire Fast Track Road Map for improving nutrition. Activities such as the child screening, referral and treatment of acute malnutrition have been scaled up in rural areas, but still need additional extension.

The importance of exclusive breast-feeding for infants until the age of 6 months appears to be increasingly well understood by mothers across most parts of Cambodia. According to Cambodian Health and Demographic Surveys, in 2014, 65% of children under six months were exclusively breastfed, a significant decrease from the figure of 74% reported in 2010. Children in rural areas, poor households and with mothers with lower education are significantly more likely to be exclusively breastfed and to breastfeed longer. Understanding the importance of exclusive breast feeding is an ongoing challenge given the demands on working women, especially in urban situations. Continuing efforts are needed to prevent a decline in the impressive breast-feeding statistics, especially among urban populations.

Only one in three (30%) children 6-23 months in Cambodia receive a minimum acceptable diet. Rural children and the poorest children are two and four times less likely to receive the minimum acceptable diet, respectively. Secondary analysis of the Cambodian data also suggest that children who ate animal source foods were less likely to be chronically malnourished (stunted). A number of evidence-based locally acceptable interventions focusing on complimentary feeding practices were introduced by the development partners, civil society, MoH and MAFF. Some focus on setting up and maintaining nutrient-rich home gardens, while others introduce local solutions such as small fish powder.

## 2.2 Improve domestic water supply, sanitation and hygiene practices

2016 WASH related targets have been met in the case of water and hygiene related targets and are on-track for sanitation. Progress with priority actions is mixed and needs further follow-up: WASH messages have been included in MoH nutrition information and education campaigns and behavioural change and communication (BCC) materials, and WASH nutrition actions are being supported by an increasing number of actors, however convergence is not routinely part of national programming and despite progress in a number of areas. The work of the BCC Task Force in designing a national BCC campaign has the potential to move this agenda forward. In the area of planning, the MRD has a costed National Action Plan for Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (2014-2018) which includes a range of interventions which would benefit maternal and child health and nutrition status. However specific guidance on WASH and nutrition programming has not yet been developed and space exists for further enhancing nutrition sensitivity. WASH functionality and sustainability remain issues for which national data is not available, however from project data these issues remain challenging, and there is room to build on and make use of the large number of guidance materials developed by MRD and sector partners, and strengthen data in these areas.

A new sub-working group committee on WASH and Nutrition was established under the TWG SP & FSN and is co-chaired by CARD and Save the Children. The actions of the sub-working group led to development of key documents on the integration and convergence of WASH and Nutrition activities in 2016.

In November 2016, CARD led the efforts for the celebration of the third annual National Nutrition Day that focused on the impact of WASH and proper nutritional practices on the healthy growth and development of Cambodian children. The event brought together over 700 participants. The celebration was jointly organized by the RGC through CARD along with the MRD and the MoH, in partnership with USAID, UNICEF, FAO, WFP, and GIZ with the support from Save the Children, Plan International, Action Against Hunger, Samaritan's Purse, Medical Teams International, and Malteser International.

Also in November 2016, CARD and core development partners conducted a national workshop on "Improved Hygiene and Nutrition Make Children Grow: from Evidence to Impact." Nearly 200 participants had the chance to review the most recent data collected by local baseline surveys and to learn about innovative interventions implemented by USAID's NOURISH project, HKI and Plan International.

Access to improved sanitation and water supply have improved and 2016 targets for sanitation have been exceeded. Community Led Total Sanitation and village level Operating and Maintenance for point water sources is widely adopted with sector. For water supply, various pilots have been undertaken: e.g. since March 2015 MRD and NCDD received support from ADB with SNV technical assistance to pilot decentralized water supply O&M in four districts of Kampot Province.

### 2.3 Expand fortification of food with micronutrients

There is a clear policy established under the NSFSN 2014-18 for food fortification and salt iodization. There is technical capacity to produce these products in Cambodia although demand is still limiting and the enforcement of market controls is problematic. Challenges include the limited participation of development partners and the private sectors, limited skills of law enforcement institutions to perform the work, the media is not widely interested or supportive, lack of public understanding of the importance of micronutrients (iodine, iron, vitamin B1, etc.) and the lack of budget allocations to support the program which forces the programme to rely mostly on the support of development partners. A dramatic rise in the prevalence of non-iodized salt in Cambodia documented in 2015, demonstrated the fragility of the national iodization program in the absence of help from development partners.

## 2.4 Enhance availability and use of nutritious and safe food at household level

MAFF has been working with partners to mainstream nutrition into agricultural extension through the MAFF Gender Mainstreaming and Childhood Development and Protection policies. Capacity strengthening efforts target core trainers on the national level down to the community level, working closely with District Agriculture Officers and Agriculture Extension Workers.

## 2.5 Use social protection instruments for enhancing nutrition

Social Protection instruments addressing nutrition are mostly in the form of social assistance. Various programmes supported by development partners have been implemented including school meals and food scholarships programmes, food for work, cash for work and cash transfer schemes.

The WFP, in collaboration with MoEYS, has supported education through the School Meal Programme by providing nutritious breakfast to children in pre- and primary school and providing a scholarship programme to children from poor households. The programme supports the RGC to ensure equitable access to education services and contributes to the human capital development of the National Social Protection Policy Framework. The meal programme (including normal school meals and Home-Grown School Feeding) annually covers over 300,000 students, and the scholarship programme covers over 40,000 students, in total of 2,547 primary schools located in food insecure area across 11 provinces. The programme has also focused on WASH infrastructure and education and other activities related to nutrition-sensitive programme.

Food Scholarship activities involving periodic provision of rice rations are highly targeted and are provided to primary school children in grades four to six (as these grades have the highest dropout rates) from the poorest families. It has served as a basis for expanding social safety nets within the framework of the National Social Protection Strategy by MoEYS, as evidenced by the establishment of the national primary scholarship programme in 2014.

The RGC and MoEYS, have committed to explore options for the takeover of the School Feeding Programme to national programme by 2021. Although Cambodia is reaching Lower Middle-Income Country status, investment in social sectors continues to be a significant constraint, including for the School Feeding Programme.

CARD and the MoH have been working closely with USAID-funded NOURISH project to roll out a conditional cash transfer (CCT) that will directly contribute to the increased utilization of key health and nutrition services. NOURISH specifically works with Commune Committees for Women and Children, Village Chiefs and health volunteers to identify eligible beneficiaries and target health centres to confirm

beneficiaries who have met conditions. Under NOURISH, over 15,000 food-insecure poor “first 1,000 days families” from Siem Reap, Pursat and Battambang have been enrolled in the CCT program, from 475 villages, with more than half having already received at least one payment for the condition(s) met. In addition, vouchers with co-payments are introduced for locally-made water filters, latrine components and nutrient-rich food baskets to stimulate habit formation when it comes to using clean water, building and using latrines and improving dietary diversity of pregnant and lactating women and children between six months and two years.

In 2015, HKI and UNICEF evaluated the MoH Fast Track Road Map where each component provides options for commune council engagement and support. Financing these community and village level activities is very affordable, with the various programmes typically representing 1 per cent or less of the estimated average commune council allocation in 2014. Political support from the commune level could help to reduce the financial barriers, but this support has not been provided.

Training on good health, hygiene and nutrition, and WASH was provided annually at sub-national level to targeted personnel aiming to improve their general understanding and daily practices, especially for schools with a meals programme.

Agriculture and school gardening are already part of the life skills curriculum at all primary schools in Cambodia and school vegetable gardens have been established in all schools with a school meal programme. The vegetables grown in the programme are used to diversify and complement breakfasts cooked in school to promote healthy eating and improve nutrition. All cooks have been trained on hygiene, sanitation and nutrition, including cooking demonstrations, to ensure proper practices in their daily cooking activities. During 2016, FAO has worked with the MoEYS to develop a curriculum for the school garden programme and a pool of trainers from a range of government departments, including teaching staff.

WFP, CamControl and the School Health Department are engaged in a Private Partnership with international company Sodexo to develop guidance and capacity support in enhancing quality assurance and food safety in school meals.

## 2.6 Develop, and pilot an integrated community based nutrition program (CBNP) for Cambodia implemented through local authorities

As part of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, a Civil Society Alliance (CSA) for SUN in Cambodia was established to support the government to achieve its’ commitments made, while working to hold the government to account. Cambodia’s CSA for SUN has over 35 members with activities reaching all 25 provinces. In the NSFSN 2014-2018, the programmatic priority action for developing and piloting an integrated community-based nutrition programme for Cambodia is accepted by CSA working alongside government programs and in close consultation with



government, especially at the sub-national level but also with strong and trusted roles in the TWG and on advisory bodies.

Seven of the thirteen Cambodia SUN CSA members provided reports for 2016 on nutrition-specific or nutrition-sensitive interventions, which will generate evidence for scalable actions. Many of the activities are still in the implementation phase, thus lack supporting evidence to determine their scalability.

The challenges highlighted and areas requiring attention ranged across shortages of human and other resources, government investments, enforcement of laws and other social factors such as migration.

Several organizations reported that that migration has been an underlying challenge across various interventions, fostering a range of issues in terms of maintaining local knowledge and capacity and social and behavior changes. Migration has resulted in a change of caregiver dynamics, as young parents migrated for various periods of time.

Many of the members of the Cambodia SUN CSA anticipated changes to their interventions from 2017 to 2018. A number of agencies will be phasing out activities by the end of 2017. Some of those reducing their targets are doing so in an attempt to have more deliberate social and behavior change communication actions that are focused more on individual and household needs, as opposed to community awareness raising sessions.

As reported above, analysis of the Fast Track Road Map shows that there is scope for engagement of the commune councils and for use of commune funds to accelerate community based nutrition programmes. This potential is not yet tapped. The Home-Grown School Feeding Programme has also demonstrated that community level investments can lead to more effective nutrition-sensitive activities with the support of local authorities, including school committees and commune councils.

## Priority Area 3: Improved food security related social protection and enhanced capacities of poor and vulnerable households to cope with risks and shocks to increase the stability of their food supply

### 3.1 Scale-up food security related social protection instruments

A range of activities were reported for the scaling up of food security related social protection instruments. These mainly relate to social assistance measures and overlap to some extent with the comments on nutrition related social protection. Development partners have collaborated with CARD and local governments through NCDDs to pilot Income Support projects that will provide useful lessons for the design of the income support component of the NSSPF social assistance pillar.

The IDPoor targeting program has achieved full coverage of all rural areas. Since 2015, the MoP has assumed full ownership for financing rural coverage. An urban ID Poor targeting mechanism is now being piloted. The urban targeting mechanism incorporates scoring for vulnerability criteria including health, disabilities, education, and debt. This scoring may eventually be applied to rural areas.

The MEF continues to oversee the Cambodia Food Reserve System to support emergency response to natural disasters or severe weather events.

Following MoEYS commitment to have nationally owned school meals in 2021, WFP has supported to scale up the HGSP model from 2 schools in 2014 to 84 schools in 2016. The model is expected to be adapted and owned by the government in future. The MoEYS has yearly increased their budget allocation for national primary scholarship and gradually taken over similar programme supported by development partners.

Since the mid-1990s, WFP and the Royal Government of Cambodia (primarily the MRD) have implemented the Food for Assets (FFA) programme. The programme has the dual objective of providing employment opportunities to poor, food insecure households and alleviating their short-term hunger gap during the yearly lean season, while creating or rehabilitating community assets. The building or rehabilitation of these assets also contributes to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

In the period 2014-2016, in partnership with MRD, PDRD and NGOs, the WFP Productive Assets and Livelihood Programme (PALS) provided food assistance to over 29,158 households or 145,790 people (11,133 households or 55,665 people were IDPoor I & II), approx. 50% of which were female-headed households.

In 2015, the flood and storm National Contingency Plan (NCP) was drafted, covering six sectors (Food Security and Nutrition, Health, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, Shelter, Education, and Protection). As yet, the plan has not been formalized and disseminated for use. However, the Humanitarian Response Forum has adapted the drafted plan and developed its own Inter-Agency Contingency Plan for Flood, Storm, and Drought adjusting the six sectors of the NCP to fit their mandate. The Inter-Agency Contingency Plan including food security, nutrition and the cash sector is updated annually.

At sub-national level, the Provincial Committee for Disaster Management with support from its partners updated their Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP).

Enhancement of social protection in the informal sector especially for women, is mostly the work of specific development partners. The national schemes do not yet extend to this. During 2016 there has been some introductory work with MAFF and CARD to explore the Right to Food concept in the context of Cambodia.

### 3.2 Improve disaster preparedness and mitigation and enhance resilience of households against effects of climate change

A nationwide household resilience survey undertaken following the 2016 dry season included important health indicators which will help to better understand and address climate related vulnerabilities. The study has been extended to generate a more comprehensive picture household resilience.

At national level, the CamREx has been organized annually by the Humanitarian Response Form in cooperation with National Committee for Disaster Management and in 2016, sub-national exercises were conducted in two provinces, Kampong Thom and Battambang.

The Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM) continues to make progress with the maintenance, restoration and construction of irrigation infrastructure and the development of the social capital supporting the ongoing operation of irrigation activities. Progress in the management of water resources by MoWRAM in meeting its goals for the expansion of the capacity of the irrigation systems to the end of 2016 included:

- Expanding the irrigation capacity on a total of 257,926 hectares of rice production areas to reach 56.28% of the total rice production area of 3,097,647 hectares in 2016 (Figures from the Ministry of Agriculture).
- Expanding the supplementary crop irrigation capacity by 3,398 hectares.
- Formed 46 farmer water user communities.

- Protect the residences and rice crops for the people from flood on 526 additional hectares of land.
- Prevent salt water from flowing into 940 additional hectares of land for rice and supplementary crops.
- Increasing capacity to predict weather events alert people to extreme weather and hydrological situations.

Some obstacles which prevent the MoWRAM from achieving the goals of the RGC Rectangular Strategy and the NSDP include the high costs of climate resilient infrastructure; the need for intersectoral water resource management and river basin management to meet the increasing pressure on water resources; limited budget allocation for the maintenance, restoration and construction of irrigation systems; coupled with delays in the provision of funds and a mismatch between investment priorities and actual needs. Farmers' involvement in using and maintaining irrigation systems is limited.

## Gaps and Challenges

A number of challenges have emerged from the analysis of progress and the identification of obstacles to the NSFSN 2014-2018.

One of these challenges is to increase the effectiveness and reach of the strategy by ensuring better linkages with line ministries and sub-national government. Limited information flow between these bodies limits engagement with the NSFSN. Lack of assigned responsibilities for actions and outcomes also effects engagement, implementation and reporting. The NSFSN has too many priority actions and a long list of associated indicators which need to be aligned with other programmes, including for the Joint Monitoring Indicators and localized SDGs.

It is vital that sufficient investments are made to continue with advanced monitoring processes such as the CDHS surveys. Issues pertaining to financing such studies will need to be addressed through dialogue between RGC and development partners.

Because of the cross-cutting nature of nutrition and food security issues, there is a major challenge in identifying the investments contributing to reduced malnutrition and improved food security, except for nutrition-specific interventions such as those made by the Ministry of Health and development partners working on nutrition in the health sector. There is a challenge to ensure that sector specific programmes and policies address food and nutrition security explicitly and that both investments and outcomes are reported.

Despite an impressive track record concerning improved food security, malnutrition has proven to be stubbornly resistant, including significant socio-economic and regional disparities for important indicators. Households across all income levels, but especially among lower quintile households, lack information about and basic understanding of nutrition.

CARD and relevant line ministries and agencies lack sufficient resources to coordinate, implement, and monitor the NSFSN and other strategies. It will be important for RGC, DPs, and CSOs to identify shared investment priorities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of FSN investments.

Subnational linkages and programming for food and nutrition security need to be enhanced. This requires information sharing and informing decision making and additional capacity building at all levels. In order for sub-national authorities to discharge their responsibilities, they need linkages to the national coordination and national authorities need to work through these linkages to influence coordination, and programme and policy coherence, dialogue and support



Climate change impacts and vulnerabilities pose a challenge in that the associated shocks can create periods of food insecurity for affected communities. Cambodia is thought to be particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Monitoring the effects of natural disasters and cyclic events requires increased capacities for both local and national government. The collection and sharing of information needs greater investment in information systems and coordination.

Migration and urbanization are strong influences on the Cambodian economy and society. Whilst these processes contribute to stronger economic growth, there are some harmful impacts for nutrition and food security associated with the disruption of the household economy. Agriculture faces a particular challenge during this process of socio-economic transformation because of the dual responsibilities within the sector for small holder food security and for modernization and contribution to economic growth.

There is a challenge to improve food access and utilization, and an imbalance in the investment of resources, with too much emphasis on production. Increasing efforts to encourage diversification of food production and consumption, and to increase social assistance are required. Sustainable and secure access of land for the poor and food insecure can improve access to food. This is a growing challenge as the stock of available land is limited and population increasing. There are increasing sources of competition and a recognition that the living areas required are greater than the land areas currently held by most smallholder families. Efforts to promote more sustainable intensification and productivity of existing lands are difficult given the pressures for forest clearance and expansion of agriculture.

The double burden of malnutrition is a growing challenge and women are at particular risk. More attention is required to improve nutrition education, as well as enforce regulations concerning breast-feeding substitutes and micro-nutrients. Continued investments are required to sustain these achievements, while at the same increasing attention on preventing non-communicable diseases. Food regulations and food safety are areas of ongoing concern as are related issues for food labelling, testing and consumer education. More attention is required to involve the private sector in matters pertaining to food safety and security as well as nutrition.

Fortification (including salt iodization) faces many challenges, especially in quality control, quality assurance and enforcement of the legislation. Problems exist both with scaling up of domestic production and the maintenance of standards and the control of imports.

Coverage of social assistance and social insurance schemes is limited and does not reach about 60 percent of the population, including the disabled and elderly, most of whom are in the non-formal sector. The management of the various schemes have not yet been sufficiently developed and integrated, leading to a lack of effectiveness

and efficiency. There is limited coordination at the policy and for monitoring and evaluation to ensure accountability and transparency of operations at the program/scheme level.

The development of financing arrangements for implementing the NSSPF will require dialogue between RGC stakeholders and relevant development partners. For example, those institutions mandated to provide a range of social services for vulnerable groups, including MoSVY, MoLVT, and MoWA, have not been adequately resourced to achieve their policy objectives.

The identification and registration of general citizens, identification of the poor and vulnerable people, and registration system of operators are not yet linked. This has led to double identification/registration and overlap in the provision of benefits.

All of these challenges represent an increased demand for financing, from the RGC budget and from development assistance and private investment. This will be the most significant challenge for the future. Implementation gaps, resources and sub-national engagement are limiting achievements. We need to go further, to develop an inclusive plan of action, focused on a limited set of objectives, with allocated responsibilities and identified funding sources.

## Key recommendations

### ***1. Greater attention should be paid to improving access and utilization of food***

Focus on food production is still a major focus in food security programmes. This is not the priority issue in terms of food security in Cambodia. To emphasize access and utilization issues, there should be a review of policies, planning and programmes to recommend the incorporation of objectives specifically addressing these access and utilization issues (such as improved access to land for vulnerable groups, promotion of nutrition-sensitive agriculture, livelihood improvement, nutrition education, social assistance, WASH and health care to reduce malnutrition and food insecurity).

Needs specific incorporation of objectives and into policies and plans to address access issues.

### ***2. Strengthen understanding of the basic and underlying causes of undernutrition***

Continue to advocate for comprehensive approaches to combatting malnutrition (approaches across the food, care and health systems). Consider the re-positioning of the national strategy to ensure greater attention to nutrition security and a comprehensive approach. Focus efforts at sub-national level to ensure that capacity building, information and investment is reaching to critical levels for implementation of changes and include key decision-makers, opinion leaders, educators and the private sector.

### ***3. Strengthen the framework for management of food and nutrition security***

This requires greater investment in advocacy, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, information management and capacity building. Stronger bridges are required between CARD and line ministries and to the sub-national level to ensure responsibilities are agreed and outcomes assured. The priority actions and indicators should be linked to assigned responsibilities, whether for government, development partners or the private sector. The indicator set should be rationalized and harmonized with agreed priorities, sectoral programmes and localized SDGs. Ensure that there is capacity to collect the data and a routine for data collection and sharing is agreed with the responsible agency. In addition, there is a need to invest in a functional information system and the capacity to collect, analyze, report, and strategically use the data for decision making and policy guidance.

### ***4. Conduct a comprehensive review of implementation and institutional issues in preparation for the formulation of the next NSFSN 2019-2023***

### ***5. Continued investment by civil society in community-based approaches, combined with programmatic investment by governments at a local level***

Opportunities to take community-based approaches forward include:

- harnessing the energies of civil society to address common goals;
- working more effectively with Commune Councils and local authorities on development and investment plans incorporating nutrition and food security;
- using community volunteer structures to track progress more effectively;
- address underlying gender inequities;
- establishment of a sub national SUN CSA mechanism to better coordinate NGO work at community level.

### ***6. Strengthen the linkages with social protection***

Social Protection is a vital consideration in the provision of food and nutrition security. The approval of the Social Protection Policy Framework provides a window of opportunity for ensuring that social assistance is strengthened by government investment, especially for improving child and maternal nutrition (focused on the first 1,000 days) and reducing the vulnerability of the food insecure. Social assistance is a key mechanism to address the equity dimensions of the SDGs and the promise to leave no one behind.

### ***7. Prepare plans for dealing with the double burden of malnutrition (including overweight and obesity issues)***

Under-nutrition continues to impact on society and economy and levels of under-nutrition remain a concern in Cambodia. At the same time, over-nutrition leading to overweight and obesity problems is a rising challenge, also leading to major impacts on society and economy. Both of these are complex issues to deal with, but there is much common ground in dealing with these challenges. Because sound nutritional guidelines and practices are equally relevant to address both under- and over-nutrition, there can be a strong element of common ground in the materials and practices. There is an immediate need for a plan of action on the part of Government to simultaneously address the double burden of malnutrition in Cambodia. These plans should draw more on the private sector to address manufacturing, imports regulation, advertising and sales restrictions, media contributions, investment and other matters.

### ***8. Use economic arguments and cross-sectoral dialogue to advocate for increased investments by governments, development partners and the private sector for funding for food security and nutrition***

## Sources of Information

This Progress Inventory is compiled from responses to a survey of ministries with broad responsibility for particular priority actions identified for the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018 as authorized by the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition chaired by H.E. Dr. Yim Chhay Ly, Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and Chairman of the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition.

The main assignment of responsibilities for reporting of progress against the priority actions was presented at a meeting of the Food Security and Nutrition Forum on 13 March 2017, Chaired by H.E. Dr. Chea Sam Nang, Secretary General of the One Village, One Product Committee and Director of Cabinet for the Deputy Prime Minister Yim Chhay Ly and agreed as follows:

### Objective 1: Increase Food Availability and Food Access

- Intensification, diversification and market integration of smallholder farming systems - MAFF and FAO
- Land distribution and titling for poor and food-insecure households – CARD and MoLMUPC
- Promotion of access and sustainable use of common property fishery and forestry resources for the poor and food insecure – MAFF and FAO
- Enhance wage employment and income opportunities for the poor and food insecure – various Ministries and ILO

### Objective 2: Improve Use and Utilization of Food

- Scale up nutrition services and nutrition education – MoH and UNICEF
- Improve domestic water supply, sanitation and hygiene – MRD and WASH TWG
- Expand fortification of food – MoP and UNICEF
- Increase the availability and use of nutritious food MAFF and FAO
- Link social protection instruments to nutrition – UNICEF and MoH, MRD and WFP
- Develop and implement a community based nutrition programme – MoH and SUN- CSA network.

### Objective 3: Increase stability of food supply

- Scale up food security related social protection instruments - CARD and WFP
- Improve resilience of households against disasters and climate change – NCDM and WFP.

A survey of concerned ministries was launched on 24 April 2017 at the official launch of the MTSR by the Deputy Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Yim Chhay Ly. Survey responses were submitted to CARD by the ministries and collated into a summary report which was circulated amongst stakeholders for additional comments. Development partners contributed comments for the progress summary and these were integrated into the progress inventory during the process of refining the draft report. The summary information was also presented at sub-national and national consultation workshops and further comments were collected from participants at these events. The drafts of the report were also submitted to the members of the Advisory Board under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Ngy Chanphal, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior and Deputy Chairman of CARD, for review prior to finalization.

The responsibility for the drafting and validation of the draft during the survey and consultation process lay primarily with Iean Russell, Senior Policy Officer for FAO Cambodia. In addition to collecting and compiling survey responses and stakeholder comments, key documents were used as the basis for the production of the Progress inventory, as listed in the References below.



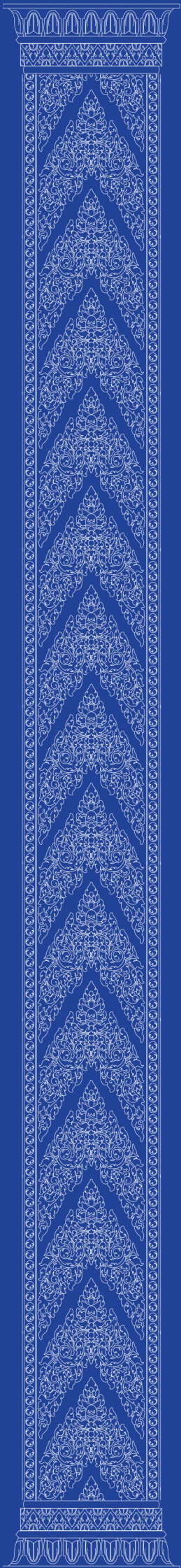
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- Royal Government of Cambodia (2017). National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSSPF) 2016 – 2025.

### Other Source

- Humanitarian Response Forum (2017) Inter-Agency Contingency Plan for Flood, Storm, and Drought.



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**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**Nation Religion King**

Mid-Term and Strategic Review of the  
National Strategy for Food Security and  
Nutrition 2014-2018

**II. Situation Update 2017**



December 2017

COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT





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COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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## Acknowledgement

His Excellency **Yim Chhay Ly**, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and Chairman of the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-SP&FSN), is pleased to launch the findings of the Mid Term and Strategic Review of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018 (MTRS-NSFSN). In so doing, he is pleased to acknowledge the importance of the contributions and active participation made by the staff of CARD, the line ministries, the sub-national authorities, the community representatives and NGOs who participated in the consultations of the MTRS-NSFSN. In addition, H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** wishes to thank the development partners who have assisted in every aspect of the Review, including the support received from the EU, USAID, GIZ, and UN agencies, including FAO, WFP and UNICEF, and the Civil Society Alliance of the SUN Network led by Helen Keller International. The critical review provided by the World Bank is also very much appreciated.

The work of the formally constituted Advisory Board for the MTSR, chaired by H.E. Mr. **Ngy Chanphal**, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of CARD was constituted from representatives of CARD and key ministries and development partners, has been fundamental in guiding the process and validating the results. The commitment of Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Ms. **Veena Reddy**, Acting Mission Director for USAID, has been very much appreciated. Many members of the TWG-SP&FSN have participated in the MTSR and their long-standing support is much valued in dealing with ongoing challenges for food security and nutrition in Cambodia. The Food Security and Nutrition Forum has served as a vital means of communicating progress with the review and discussing results.

After extensive consultation and review, the final documents were released by H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Mr. **David Kaatrud**, WFP Regional Director for Asia and Pacific Bureau on 6 February 2018. Three separate documents have been generated for the MTSR to include multiple inputs and these documents have been widely circulated and discussed in draft form. The three documents are also supported by a number of contributed papers and ongoing analysis. The three main components of the MTSR are:

1. **Progress Inventory 2016**
2. **Situation Update 2017**
3. **Strategic Directions Towards 2030**

Whilst these documents are released together, they are provided as separate documents on the grounds that each of these can stand as an independent analysis.

As evidenced by these documents, the MTSR has generated important findings and guidance for the way forward. It serves as a foundation for the drafting of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019-2023 and has given fresh impetus to national efforts to combat malnutrition. The process of consultation and discussion has also served as an important avenue for learning and capacity building at national and sub-national level.

Good progress towards the strategic objectives has been made to the end of 2016. Our directions going forward are clear. The existing strategy serves well to guide actions for the remaining period to the end of 2018. All sectoral policies and programmes should incorporate these directions and each contribute under their identified areas of responsibility and mandates. However, there is a need to strengthen the coordinating mechanisms for this work at national and sub-national levels, especially to ensure the capacity to monitor and evaluate progress is in place by the end of the strategic period. We must also ensure that all parties work together with renewed effort in order to meet the deadline for ending hunger in Cambodia by 2030. We are in a position to set an example globally, by working unfailingly towards that objective, working together with unity under wise leadership of **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the guidance of the Rectangular Strategy, the National Strategic Development Plan and other existing policies, strategies and plans.

## Acronyms

### Government Institutions

CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
CDC	Council for the Development of Cambodia
CRDB	Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NMCHC	National Maternal and Child Health Center
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia

### UN/NGOs/Institutions

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CSA	Civil Society Alliance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HLPE	High-Level Panel of Experts
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IFReDI	Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
SUN-CSN	SUN Civil Society Network

UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

### Others

DM	Disaster Management
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
GDP	Gross domestic product
HDI	Human Development Index
LMIC	Lower Middle-Income Country
MTSR	Mid-Term and Strategic Review
NAP/ZHC	National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSFSN	National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition
NSPPF	National Social Protection Policy Framework
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TWG	Technical Working Group
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age

## Glossary

*Chronic food insecurity:* A long-term or persistent inability to meet minimum food requirements.

*Chronic poverty:* Chronically poor are those whose average consumption per capita over time is at or below the poverty line.

*Coping strategies:* Activities to which people resort to obtain food, income, and/or services when their normal means of livelihood have been disrupted.

*Dietary Diversity:* A measure of food consumption quality, that quality that is based on number of food groups consumed by an individual or household over a reference period of seven days. Household Dietary Diversity (HDDS) reflects “the economic ability of a household to access a variety of foods” at any given point in time. An increase in HDDS is associated with socio-economic status and household food security (energy availability).

*Food access:* A household’s ability to acquire food regularly through one or a combination of home production and stocks, purchases, barter, gifts, borrowing, and food aid.

*Food availability:* The food that is physically present in the area of concern, through all forms of domestic production, commercial imports, reserves and food aid. This might be aggregated at the regional, national, district, or community level.

*Food security:* The state at which all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (World Food Summit, 1996).

*Food utilization:* (i) A household’s use of the food to which they have access; and (ii) individuals’ ability to absorb and metabolize nutrients (i.e., the efficiency of food conversion by the body).

*Gender:* The socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men that are learned (and therefore unlearned) roles and responsibilities, and expectations, of women and men often described in terms of masculinity and femininity.

*Livelihoods:* The capabilities, assets (material and social), and activities required for a means of living linked to survival and well-being.

*Malnutrition:* Refers to both undernutrition and overnutrition. Undernutrition and overweight can co-exist, recognized as the “double burden” of malnutrition. Micronutrient malnutrition – this constitutes being deficient in vitamins and minerals (e.g. iodine).

*Multi-dimensional poverty:* Assesses the nature and intensity of poverty by identifying multiple deprivations (in health, education and standard of living) and the extent of these at the individual level. It uses micro data from household surveys and can be aggregated into the national measure of poverty assessed in line with the standard UNDP definition looking at indicators of health (nutrition and child mortality), education (child enrolment and years of schooling,) and living standards (measure of assets in a household, access to flooring, water, electricity, a toilet and cooking fuel).

*Nutrition-sensitive interventions:* Those whose primary objective is not necessarily nutrition, but they have the potential to improve the nutrition security of those targeted. Such interventions tend to include activities that have an impact on nutrition by addressing the underlying causes of undernutrition, such as agriculture and food security, access to health care, education, water and sanitation.

*Nutrition-specific interventions:* Those whose primary objective is to address nutrition and so target the immediate causes of undernutrition that affect foetal and child development and maternal health; issues relating to adequate food and nutrient intake; feeding, caregiving and parenting practices, and the impact of certain infectious diseases. Examples of nutrition-specific interventions include targeted supplementary and complementary feeding; dietary supplementation; promotion of optimum breastfeeding; diversification and micronutrient supplementation or fortification for children; treatment of severe acute malnutrition; disease prevention and management; and nutrition in emergencies.

*Overnutrition:* People can be malnourished if they consume too many calories.

*Poverty headcount:* the proportion of a population that lives below the poverty line; calculated from national expenditure statistics.

*Resilience:* The ability to recover after being affected by a shock.

*Risk of food insecurity:* The probability of food insecurity resulting from natural/human-induced hazards and vulnerable conditions.

*Shock:* An event that has a negative impact on food and nutrition security. Shocks can be natural or caused by human action.

*Stunting:* being too short for one's age.

*Undernutrition:* People are undernourished if their diet does not provide enough calories and protein for growth and maintenance, or they are unable to fully utilize the food they eat due to illness. This constitutes being underweight for one's age and includes, stunting – being too short for one's age- and wasting – being dangerously thin for one's height.

*Vulnerability to food insecurity:* Conditions that increase the susceptibility of a household to the impact on food security in case of a shock. Vulnerability is a function of how a household's livelihood would be affected by a specific hazard and how it would manage to cope with this impact.

*Wasting:* Being dangerously thin for one's height.



# Cambodia Food Security and Nutrition

## NSFSN 2014-2018 Goal

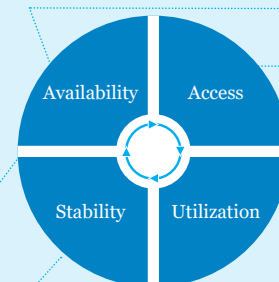
"By 2018, poor and food-insecure Cambodians have substantially improved physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and optimize the Utilization of this food to keep a healthy and productive life."

## SDG2: Zero Hunger



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

For food security objectives to be realized, all four dimensions (availability, access, utilization, stability) must be fulfilled simultaneously.



## PESTLE Situation Analysis

### Political and Legal Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 1

#### Key policies and strategies supporting FSN:

- » National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2025
- » National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018
- » National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025
- » MoH's Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020
- » Other Line Ministry strategies

### Regional and global alliances

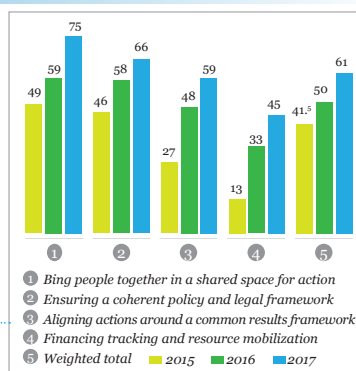
#### ASEAN FSN policy:

"To ensure sustainable supply of sufficient, affordable, safe and nutritious foods that meet the dietary requirements of increasing populations in ASEAN."

#### Hyogo Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction

#### 50 percent performance increase

Overall, Cambodia improved its institutional performance for scaled up nutrition action by 20 percentage points (2017), a 50% increase from 2015.



### Economic Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 2

"Cambodia has seen strong economic growth, enabling improvements in food and nutrition security..."

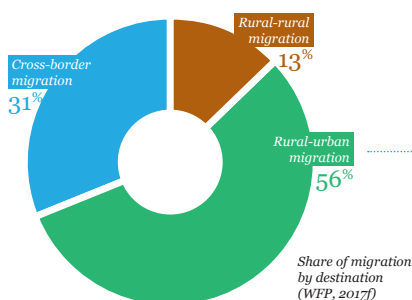
Cambodians living under the national poverty line has declined from 53.2 percent in 2004 to 13.5 percent in 2014 (MEF, 2016b).

Nevertheless, many of the most marginalized people are still being left behind

There is still a need to ensure that human development is equitably distributed and that women in particular are included.

### Socio-demographic Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 3



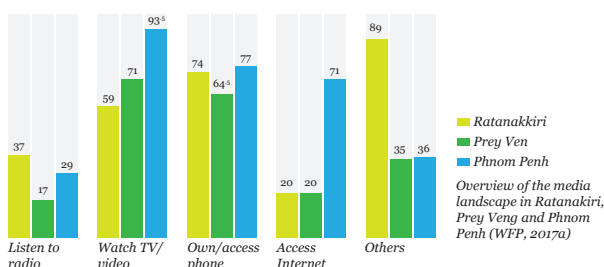
Increasing urbanization, largely due to shifts in population from rural areas, has significant policy implications ...

Women continue to face inequity of access with poverty being a gendered phenomenon

Limited education, lack of economic empowerment and decision-making power, trafficking, migration, gender based violence, limited access to productive resources and an undervaluing of women's contributions are major factors undermining their food security.

### Technological Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 4



Cambodia has seen a declining use of radio and TV for information with increased emphasis on the Internet and mobile phones.

Building on the understanding of the population's media usage, create and facilitate access to credible sources of FSN-related information.

### Environmental Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 5

80 percent rural poor dependent on the natural environment and agriculture (CIF, 2016).

Forest area coverage fell from ~ 60% (2006) to < 47% (2014); remaining forest cover increasingly challenged by logging; extensive areas of wetland have also been lost (MoE, 2016).

Managing the natural resources, while also ensuring climate change adaption, will be critical for sustainable development.

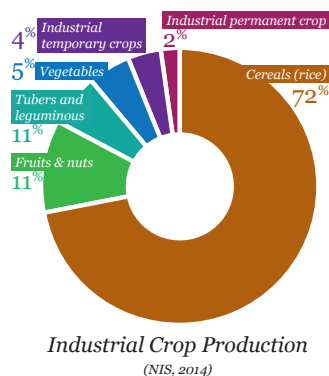
To reduce the impact and cost of disasters: Improve flood-resilient infrastructure, ensuring minimum construction standards, and ensuring urban plans are used to enhance resilience (FAO, et al., 2016; UNDP, 2014).



## Food and Nutrition Security Analysis

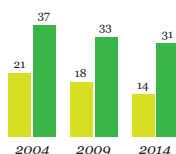
### Availability Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 6



While production of rice has grown apace, this means limited crop diversification.

It is reflected in household dietary consumption patterns where, despite increasing availability of food in the markets, rice remains paramount in the diet.



**Undernourishment 2004-2014**  
(FAO, 2017b; NIS, 2005, 2009b, 2014)

■ National food balancesheet (FAO)  
■ Household consumption data (NIS)

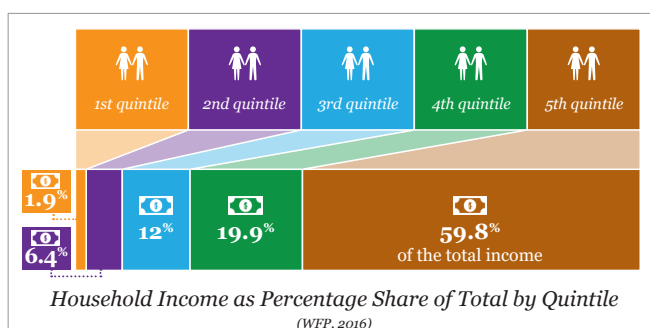
### Nutrition-sensitive Agriculture

Future Smart Food that is nutrient-dense, climate-resilient, economically viable and locally available or adaptable, and integrated agriculture (i.e. a mix of crop, animal and fish production) can enhance diversity (FAO, 2017).

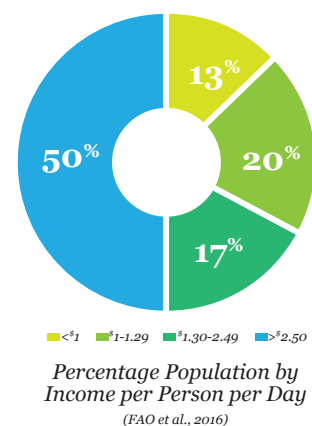
### Access Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 7

Despite significantly decreasing poverty rates, a large share of the Cambodian population moved only very slightly above the poverty line, leaving many highly vulnerable to shocks that might occur (World Bank, 2013).

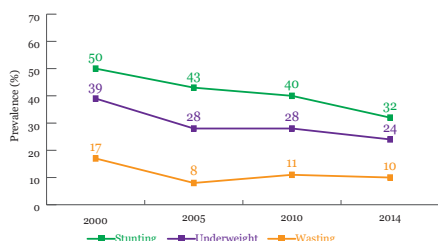


Multi-dimensionally poor households experience further adverse effects when affected by shocks, such as illness, due to the fact that aside from a lack of income to sustain their needs, they are also deprived of the ability to access health care or keep their children in school (UNDP, 2016).



### Utilization Trends »

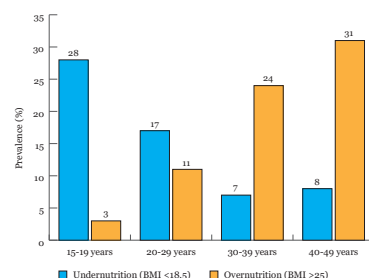
### Strategic Considerations 8



Despite the positive trends, malnutrition continues to cause irreversible damage to children's development contributing to their low wages and lost productivity as adults (NIS et al., 2001, 2006, 2011, 2015).

Cambodia has seen changing dietary practices toward more convenience foods, a trend towards obesity and risks of NCDs (MoH, 2013).

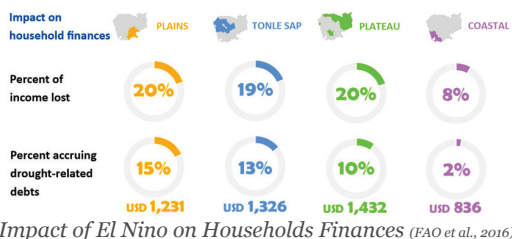
The key to strengthening human capital is through nutrition and education.



### Stability Trends »

### Strategic Considerations 9

Cambodia: 9th most at risk country due to a significant exposure to natural hazards, most importantly to the limited adaptive and coping capacities, and of national and local structures to prevent and mitigate the disasters effects (Garschagen, et al., 2016).



To support risk reduction, preparedness and response efforts, the gathering, analysing and dissemination of information on population vulnerabilities, and monitoring of price patterns will be required to increase awareness of possible shocks, and guide policy-makers (CARD, 2017b).

## Working towards Agenda 2030



### Leave no one Behind

The achievement of the SDGs requires all people irrespective of geographic, demographic, gender, social, economic, cultural, or ethnic background benefit equally from economic growth and development.

“...wealth status was the main socio-economic factor associated with undernutrition and the nutritional status of children was strongly related to those of their mother”  
(NIS/CDHS (2014) in Grefeuille et al., 2016).

### Nutrition as an SDG Accelerator

Optimal nutrition is essential for achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals... A multi-sectoral nutrition security approach is necessary for success (SUN-CSA, 2017).

## In Summary: Key Strategic Considerations

An analysis of relevant contextual elements that influence food security and nutrition (FSN) in Cambodia was undertaken along the **PESTLE** framework's six pillars - Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental. The analysis identified the following strategic considerations to inform future action and strategy development around FSN:

- » **Political and Legal** • Build on the existing policy frameworks to ensure all strategic documents are well aligned, with clear plans for implementation and enforcement including resourcing, governance arrangement, and monitoring and data collection capacities. • A substantive increase in funding from public and private sources will need to be mobilised, alongside more closely aligning planning and budgeting processes through Program-Based Budgeting and Budget Strategic Plans. • Build on the strong foundation of cooperation through the TWGs and SUN network to expand coordination to subnational level, while simultaneously expanding partnerships to garner additional resources and expertise.
- » **Economic** • Address inequities and enhance inclusive growth towards the underlying vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to Leave No-one Behind.
- » **Socio-demographic** • Invest in capacity building including a focus on adolescents and achieving nutrition outcomes. • Rapid migration requires monitoring on its impact. • Gender imbalances needs to be addressed.
- » **Technological** • Leverage the increased technology access and availability to create and facilitate access to credible sources of FSN-related information.
- » **Environmental** • Implement policies towards effective resource management, sustainable development and Disaster Risk Reduction.

Further analysis following the four pillars of the existing **FSN** framework - availability, accessibility, utilization and stability – identified additional considerations.

- » **Availability** • Enhance focus on quality, diversity, resilient and nutrition-sensitive agriculture.
- » **Access** • With strong economic growth, and poverty reduction trends, increase emphasis on enhancing more equitable access to food. • Operationalize the National Social Protection Policy Framework with a close link to FSN.
- » **Utilization** • Strengthen a multi-sectoral response including enhancing awareness and behavior change on nutritional issues. • Increase attention to changing dietary patterns, increasing overweight and impact of non-communicable diseases.
- » **Stability** • Protect economic and FSN gains from natural and economic shocks through climate change adaptation, disaster management and shock responsive social protection.

A reflection on the **SDG** framework and the **2030 agenda** add further strategic considerations to this analysis:

- » **SDGs and 2030 Agenda** • Leaving No-One Behind calls for in-depth analysis of FSN data to identify vulnerability nuances. • Dedicated attention needs to be given to design and targeting of intervention strategies with particular focus on those who lag behind. • Given the close connection between nutrition and the targets set in 12 SDGs, investment in nutrition as a central rather than a contributory aspect of Cambodia's FSN framework could pay great dividend in national efforts towards the 2030 agenda.

## 1. Introduction

The right to food is a fundamental human right recognized by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, enshrined in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by Cambodia in 1992, and supported by ongoing United Nations (UN) summits and initiatives including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its associated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 which aims towards zero hunger (Box 1).

Cambodia is committed to the elimination of food insecurity and hunger. The nation has made great strides in improving the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) situation within the country by adopting a multi-sectoral approach to tackling malnutrition and poverty, developing comprehensive strategies and policies and making an effort to mainstream FSN into different agendas. Improving food security is an important development priority of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), addressed in the Government's Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency, which strengthens the government's engagement in the areas of gender equality, nutrition and social protection, and in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014–2018 formulated to implement the Strategy and articulate it across all national sector policies. To ensure a platform for joint inter-sectorial action to enhance FSN, the RGC has entrusted the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) with the development and implementation of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN).

*The right to food recognizes that ending hunger means ensuring access to nutritious food for the most vulnerable, increasing agricultural production through sustainable and resilient food systems and tackling the multidimensional causes of malnutrition, including health and sanitation.*

In 2014, the RGC launched the NSFSN 2014-2018 with the goal that “by 2018, poor and food-insecure Cambodians have substantially improved physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and optimize the Utilization of this food to keep a healthy and productive life.” This is aligned with the definition of food security, as agreed at the World Food Summit in 1996, food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. It results from the four pillars of food security including 1) food availability, 2) adequate access to food, 3) proper food utilization, as well as 4) stability of the other three pillars. For food security objectives to be realized, all four dimensions must be fulfilled simultaneously. This situation analysis accordingly uses this concept as a framework as its base, while also highlighting links with other related frameworks and analyses.

The NSFSN serves as a crosscutting strategy supporting existing sector strategies, and as an instrument for enhanced coordinated and integrated action to improve

FSN in Cambodia. The NSFSN has three objectives, supported by priority actions to achieve them, and centres on the pillars of food security:

1. Objective 1: Increase availability and access to food through more productive and diversified agriculture and livestock production, sustainable forestry and fisheries, and from non-agricultural employment and income opportunities.
2. Objective 2: Improve use and Utilization of their food resulting in reduced child and maternal malnutrition and enhanced human and economic development.
3. Objective 3: Improve food security related social protection and enhanced capacities of poor and vulnerable households to cope with risks and shocks and increase the stability of their food supply.

The NSFSN is supported by the Fast Track Roadmap for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020, and a commitment to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 on Zero Hunger, under the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia (NAP/ZHC) 2016-2025. Progress is being tracked through review of the NSFSN indicators, the Joint Monitoring Indicators and the localising of SDG targets and indicators.

As a number of key strategies related to FSN in Cambodia will be reviewed and renewed, a Mid-Term and Strategic Review (MTSR) of the NSFSN 2014-2018 aimed to reflect on past achievements, analyse of the current FSN context in Cambodia, and prepare for the forthcoming strategies. The MTSR involved information gathering through a survey of past achievements, desk reviews, key stakeholder interviews and a series of formal consultations at sub-national and national level. This situation update aims to provide a current overview of the FSN situation in Cambodia, seeking to cap-ture what has changed, illustrate key drivers of this change, and inform common thinking about future strategic direction.



## ***Sustainable Development Goal 2***

*End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture*

- 2.1 by 2030 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round;
- 2.2 by 2030 end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving by 2025 the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons
- 2.3 by 2030 double the agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to ►

- ▶ land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment;
- 2.4 by 2030 ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality;
- 2.5 by 2020 maintain genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at national, regional and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge as internationally agreed.

*Box 1: SDG 2 Aiming towards Zero Hunger*

## 2. Analysing Food Security and Nutrition

This situation update includes an overview of FSN trends in Cambodia, by considering a number of frameworks. In terms of the broader context and backdrop for FSN trends, a framework for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental (PESTLE) analysis is used to shape an overview of macro trends that influence the FSN context. Subsequently, specific FSN trends are considered through a framework which bases on the four pillars of food security namely availability, access, utilization and stability. Within the utilization pillar, UNICEF's Conceptual Framework on Malnutrition is also considered to give an enhanced emphasis to the nutrition analysis. Finally, the analysis is set against the backdrop of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which has framed the context for more recent policy documents and will frame future FSN strategy development.



## 2.1 PESTLE Framework

PESTLE analysis provides an overview of external trends in political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental spheres in relation to the FSN context. It is a neutral analysis noting trends in these areas (Table 1), which can be reviewed in terms of opportunities or risks urgency and importance, in order to determine how to re-pond to these trends, e.g., building on opportunities or mitigating risks.

Table 1: PESTLE Analysis Example

Political	Key political considerations (eg. presence of policies, changes in policy due to elections, etc.)  Key trends relating to the development and humanitarian sectors (e.g. presence and activity of UN/NGO/civil society; donor funding trends, nature of programmes provided, sector coordination, etc.)
Economics	Key macro-economic considerations (eg. income trends, employment trends, structure of the economy, areas of growth/decline, price/inflation trend, etc.)
Social	Key socio-demographic considerations (e.g. population structure, population spread by geography, access to basic services, equity, public sector structures, etc.)
Technological	Key technological considerations (e.g. access to and use of different technologies and information, availability of tech services – e.g. digitized early warning, etc.)
Legal	Key legislative considerations (e.g. presence/enforcement of social protection, disaster management law, etc.)
Environmental	Key environmental considerations (e.g. availability of natural resources, resource management, environmental degradation, natural disasters, etc.)

## 2.2 Food Security Framework

The NSFSN adopts at its core the four pillars of food security defined by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in 1996, describing food security as a situation “when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. It results from adequate food availability and access at all times as well as proper food utilization (FAO, 2006) (Figure 1).

1. **Availability:** considering issues around production, import and export trends.
2. **Access:** considering issues around household income and debt changes that can affect access to food, inequalities and vulnerability including differences between urban/rural populations, income sources including migration, and the impact of localization policies.



3. **Utilization:** considering issues around feeding and care habits, access to water and sanitation and health care and their implications on nutrition, etc.
4. **Stability:** considering issues such as price trends and shocks caused by seasonal disasters that can destabilize availability, access and utilization of food.

For food security objectives to be realized, all four dimensions must be fulfilled simultaneously.

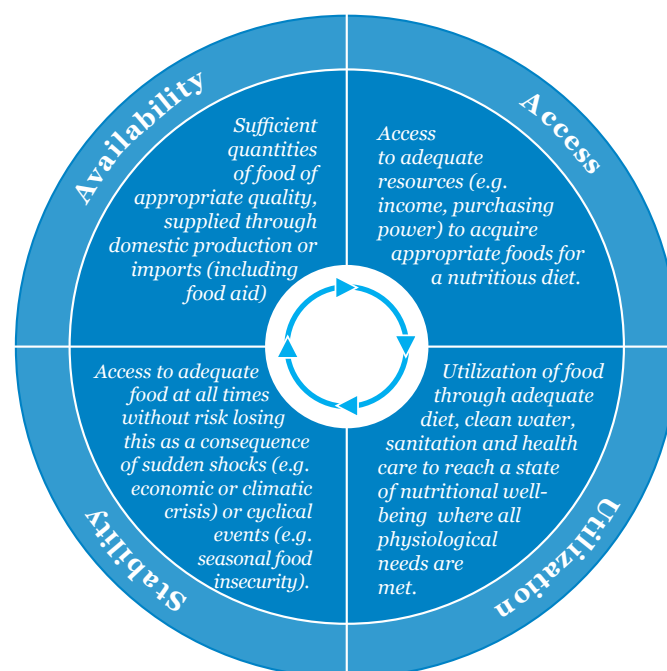


Figure 1: The Dimensions of Food Security (as per FAO, 2006)

## 2.3 Conceptual Framework on Malnutrition

Nutrition Security is more than just food security; it is the outcome of good health, a healthy environment, good caring practices as well as food security. Thus, while there is a difference between Food Security and Nutrition Security, the two are closely inter-linked and part and parcel of each other. Attaining nutritional security requires the food, health and care components to be fulfilled simultaneously. This is exemplified through UNICEF's Conceptual Framework on Malnutrition (Figure 2).

Malnutrition refers to both undernutrition and overnutrition. People are malnourished if their diet does not provide enough calories and protein for growth and maintenance, or they are unable to fully utilize the food they eat due to illness (undernutrition). They could also be malnourished if they consume too many calories (overnutrition). Undernutrition and overweight can co-exist, recognized as the “double burden” of malnutrition.

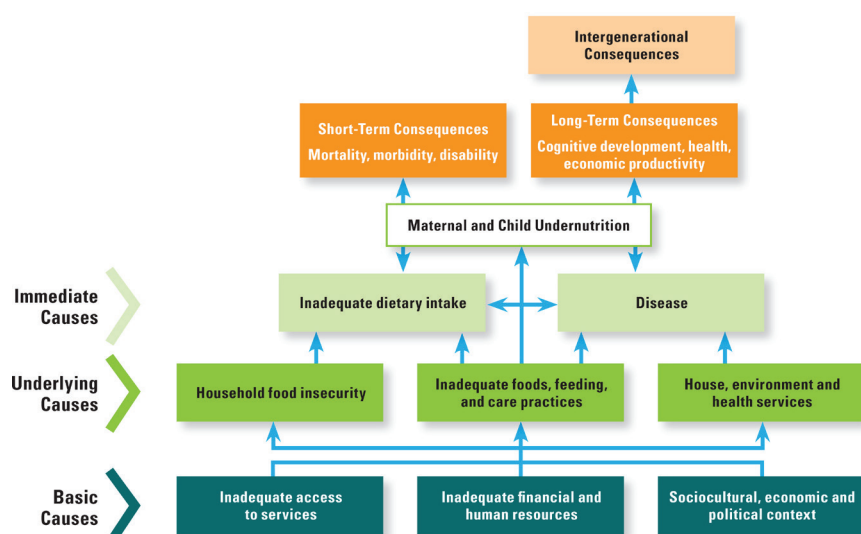


Figure 2: UNICEF Conceptual Framework on Malnutrition (Bhutta, 2013)

There are multifaceted determinants of undernutrition that include the combination of immediate, underlying and basic causes. The immediate causes, such as inadequate dietary intake or disease, are influenced by a number of underlying factors, such as household food insecurity, and

are underpinned by the basic causes of poor nutrition, including societal structures and processes that can result in poverty and limit or deny vulnerable populations' access to essential resources. A key area of focus is improved nutrition during the first 1,000 days – from pregnancy through to a child's second birthday – because poor nutrition can cause life-long and irreversible damage with consequences at individual, community, and national level. Chronic undernutrition can contribute to poverty, and in the short-term increases risk of mortality and morbidity, while in the longer term the consequences of stunting can impact adulthood with negative health, educational and economic consequences. These factors are all considered under the “Utilization Trends” in section 4.3.

It is important to distinguish between nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive inter-ventions to resolve nutrition challenges. Nutrition-specific interventions are those whose primary objective is to address the immediate causes of undernutrition that af-fect foetal and child development and maternal health – adequate food and nutrient intake; feeding, caregiving and parenting practices; and the impact of certain infectious diseases. Examples of nutrition-specific interventions include targeted complementary feeding; dietary supplementation; promotion of optimum breastfeeding; diversifica-tion and micronutrient supplementation or fortification for children; treatment of se-vere acute malnutrition; disease prevention and management; and nutrition in emer-gencies. Nutrition-sensitive interventions are those whose primary objective is not necessarily nutrition, but they have the potential to improve the nutrition security of those targeted. Findings from the 2013 Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Nutrition note the importance of nutrition-

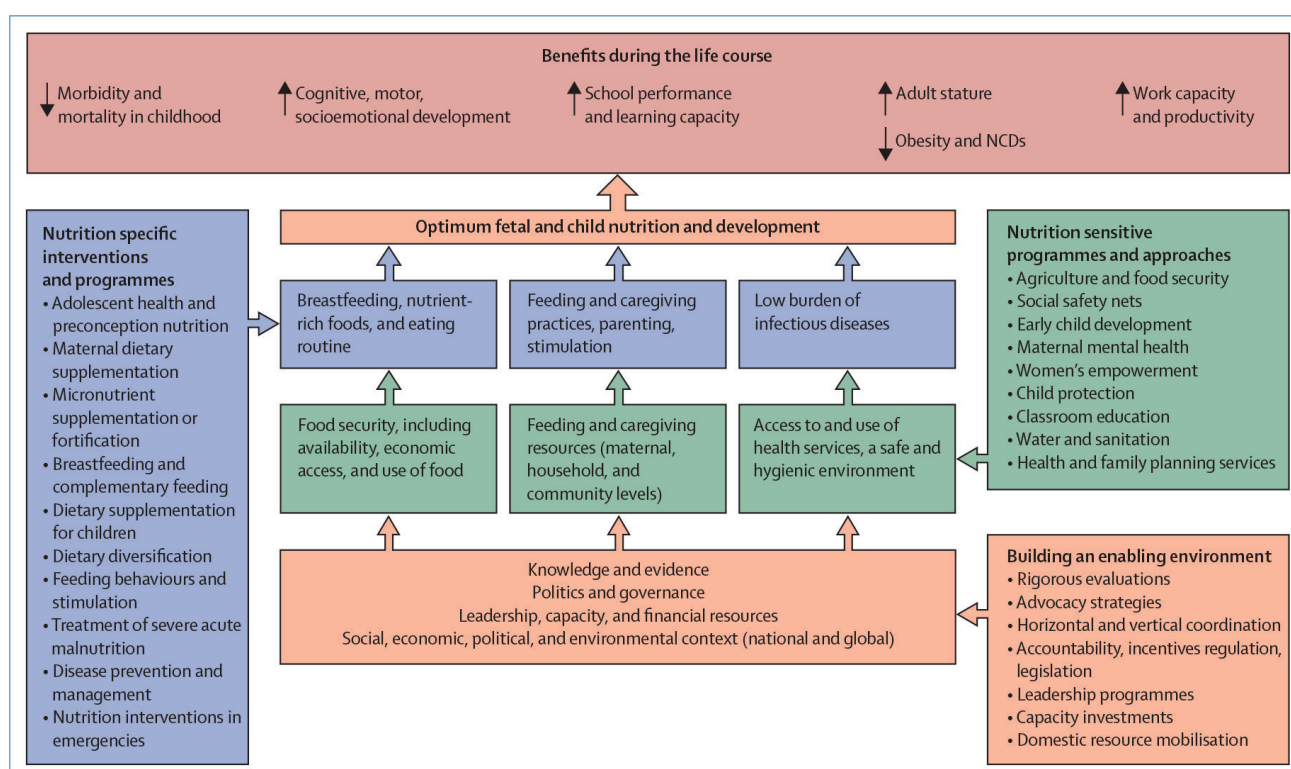


Figure 3: Optimum Fetal and Child Nutrition and Development (Lancet, 2008)

sensitive programmes in agriculture, education, public health, and social welfare in addressing some of the underlying determinants of nutrition. (Figure 3). Both have a critical role to play in combatting nutritional issues. A critical strategy consideration is how existing nutrition-specific interventions can be built on, while nutrition-sensitive interventions are expanded.

### Rethinking Food and Nutrition Security – a Food Systems Approach

A new framework outlined in a report on nutrition and food systems, by the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE, 2017) on FSN could provide a more holistic approach to reflect the evolving context in Cambodia. It recognizes that while every human being has the right to adequate food, this right will not be achieved without more sustainable food systems that facilitate healthy and sustainable food choices and ensure FSN for all, leaving no one behind. Current food systems have dramatic effects on human health and that of the environment, while human decisions and choices (individual or collective) around production and consumption can also influence food systems and improve their ability to deliver healthy and sustainable diets.

The framework proposed by the HLPE seeks to demonstrate, how food systems influence people's dietary patterns and nutritional status. It identifies three interacting elements of food systems; food supply chains, food environments and consumer behaviour. It highlights the central role of the food environment (i.e. the physical, economic, political and socio-cultural context in which each consumer engages with the food system) in facilitating healthy and sustainable consumer food choices. Aligned with the SDGs, it suggests two concrete priorities for attaining FSN: (i) improving physical and economic access to healthy and sustainable diets; and (ii) strengthening consumers' information and education to enable healthier food choices.

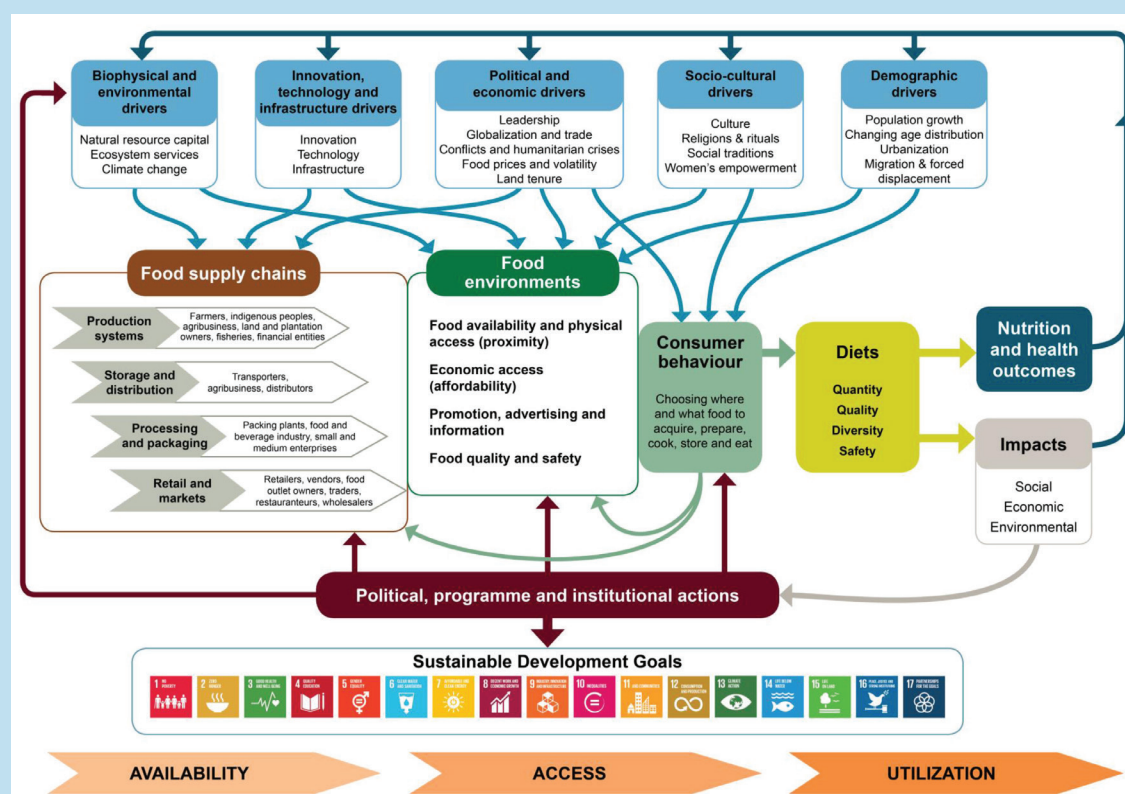


Figure 4: An Adapted Nutrition and Food Systems Framework (HLPE, 2017)

## 2.4 Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, as a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative SDGs and targets, to build upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and address areas that had not been achieved. The 2030 Agenda sets out a bold vision for repositioning sustainable development, pledging to leave no one behind. It recognizes that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions



Figure 5: The Sustainable Development Goals (UN, n.d.)

is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and registers commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner. It lays out the overarching objective between now and 2030 — “to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources”, and it resolves “to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities” (UN, 2015a). The goals of Agenda 2030 are laid out through 17 SDGs (Figure 5) and 169 targets that demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. While the emphasis of the NSFSN will be on SDG 2 - Zero Hunger, there are clear links with other critical SDGs, and particularly: SDG 1 - no poverty; SDG 3 - good health and wellbeing; SDG 4 - quality education; SDG 5 - gender equality; SDG 6 - clean water and sanitation; SDG 8 - decent work and economic growth; SDG 12 - Sustainable Consumption and production; SDG 13 - climate action; SDG 15 - life and land; SDG 16 - peace, justice and strong institutions; and SDG 17 - partnerships.

### Leave no one behind



In 2015, the United National General Assembly pledged that as part of the collective commitment towards the Sustainable Development Goals no one will be left behind. Recognizing that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, the General Assembly wished to see the goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments



of society; endeavouring to reach the furthest behind first (UN, 2015a).

The 2016 report on the World Social Situation highlighted that “Humankind has achieved unprecedented social progress over the past several decades. Poverty has declined dramatically around the world, and people are healthier, more educated and better connected than ever before. However, the progress has been uneven. Social and economic inequalities persist and, in many cases, have worsened. Virtually everywhere, some individuals and groups confront barriers that prevent them from fully participating in economic, social and political life. Against this backdrop, inclusiveness and shared prosperity have emerged as core aspirations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The focus of the 2030 Agenda on inclusiveness underscores the need to identify who is being left behind and in what ways” (UN, 2016).

The report stresses that social inclusion is not only a fundamental moral imperative. It also impacts on development risks associated with social and economic growth, political and environmental contexts, safety and security and productivity. National strategies to further the sustainable development goals require explicit action to reduce inequalities and enhance inclusive growth. The achievement of zero hunger under Sustainable Development Goal 2 in Cambodia thus depends on food security and nutrition targets being met for all people irrespective of the demographic, social, ethnic and geographic characteristics. A thorough understanding of current dynamics using existing statistics provide the foundations for identifying effective strategies to reach out to those who need it the most.

### 3. PESTLE Situation Analysis

#### 3.1 Political and Legal Trends

In the political, policy and legal sphere, a number of key trends are of note and of relevance to FSN. Primarily, it is important to recognise that key policies and strategies are in place that facilitate the ability to address FSN issues.

##### Food Security and Nutrition Policies

The policy context is shaped by the NSDP 2014-2018 (RGC, 2014b) that provides the roadmap for implementing the RGC’s Rectangular Strategy, Phase III (RS III) (RGC, 2013). The NSFSN is placed within that context.

The RS III with its central themes of “Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency”, relies on the NSDP 2014-2018 as its roadmap for implementation, and together they shape the policy framework for development. The current NSFSN is in its last year of implementation ahead of elections in 2018, after which policies and related strategies will be updated. Mostly, related strategic plans run from 2014-2018, and provide a comprehensive policy framework. While there has been progress against these, many of the objectives still stand for longer term implementation.

A strong planning framework and the mechanisms for coordination are in place, with responsible line ministries, development partners and civil society cooperating towards the implementation of the NSFSN 2014-2018, NAP/ZHC 2016-2025, the Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018, the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020 and other sectoral strategic plans relating to FSN. The Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020, complemented more recently by the NAP/ZHC 2016-2025, have sought to increase emphasis on improved nutrition towards meeting SDG 2 target 2.2: “By 2030, to end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons”.

A number of relevant policy and legislative provisions are in place to support FSN through implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (FAO et al., 2016), official mandate for salt and soy sauce fortification (GAIN, 2015), and inclusion of under nutrition/over nutrition in its development plans and/or strategies (IDS, 2015).

The RGC has adopted the NSPPF 2016-2025 to promote a strong social protection system and provide resilient protection for every citizen. The policy seeks to provide assistance including emergency responses (e.g. food supplies in times of crisis), protection of pregnant women and children (e.g. improving nutrition), and school feeding programme using locally grown food products (RGC, 2016b).

The Law on Disaster Management (DM) of June 2015 supports efforts towards the Stability pillar of food security. It seeks to “regulate disaster management in the Kingdom of Cambodia” towards the following goals: 1) Prevention, adaptation and mitigation in the pre-disaster period, due to natural or human-made causes; 2) Emergency response during the disaster; 3) Recovery in the post-disaster period (RGC, 2015b). Ongoing efforts are underway to operationalize the Law through a series of sub-decrees, required to clarify institutional arrangements, responsibilities and resourcing for all areas of the disaster management spectrum.

### National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition

With multiple policies relating to FSN in existence, a clear line of sight, accountabilities and resourcing require clarification. Traditionally, policies set the framework in which strategies define objectives and the direction of action for a set number of years, with associated action plans that define specific activities and budgets that clarify resources to achieve those. With that in mind, clarity of alignment/hierarchy or line of sight between the various documents is required to ensure clarity of vision of end goals, and therefore facilitate creating clear plans and mobilizing resources towards these. Linked to that clearer prioritised resourcing and implementation plans, with linked accountabilities and a more focused and condensed results framework, is required to ensure strengthened implementation (CARD, 2017a).



There has been strong support for an increasingly integrated approach to tackling food security and nutrition, findings from a series of national and sub-national consultations suggest the need for further strengthening of institutional arrangements to implement the NSFSN, through a multi-sectoral approach, including consolidating, prioritising and sequencing its current 64 priority actions and accompanying indicators; strengthening sub-national linkages to ensure ground-level implementation; securing increasingly local funding to ensure priorities are resourced sustainably; and, shifting the focus of achievement towards outcome-oriented results with a lesser emphasis on activities and outputs (CARD, 2017b, 2017c).

### Regional and Global Alliances

The ASEAN FSN policy's main objective is "to ensure sustainable supply of sufficient, affordable, safe and nutritious foods that meet the dietary requirements of increasing populations in ASEAN." Member states are expected to shape more inclusive governing policies and strategies to:

- » Improve food and agricultural systems' governance for nutrition
- » Improve national food security and nutrition
- » Improve households' food security and nutrition
- » Increase agricultural productivities to alleviate poverty
- » Strengthen national, regional, and local capacities to formulate and implement policies and programmes to improve nutritional status.

Since FSN is a cross-cutting issue, member states are encouraged to create an FSN policy that covers multiple areas including agricultural, marketing and pricing, trade policies, infrastructure, poverty alleviation and social sector, health, education, population, macroeconomic, exchange rate, fiscal and monetary policies (ASEAN Secretariat, 2017).

The RGC has signed up to the Hyogo Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), with commitments to tackle climate related vulnerabilities most recently reiterated in Cancun and Sendai. ASEAN provides further guidance for DRR and emergency response in a regional context.

### Sector Coordination

The emphasis on nutrition has increased in recent years, with an active civil society in Cambodia enhancing efforts towards improved socio-economic and nutritional outcomes, aided by an increasingly enabling policy framework. This has been further supported by the establishment of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) network that, alongside the Technical Working Group on Social Protection and FSN, has supported CARD in cross-sectoral coordinated FSN efforts.

Following Cambodia's institutional transformation as part of its engagement in the global SUN movement since 2014, strongest performance is noted in bringing people together into a shared space for action. While the largest progress is noted in tracking and mobilizing resources, the area lags behind other institutional achievements. The score card follows the SUN's global progress monitor and is reported annually based on self-assessed progress by government, donor, civil society and UN constituencies; maximum scores are 100% for each parameter. Overall, Cambodia improved its institutional performance for scaled up nutrition action by 20 percentage points in 2017, a 50 percent increase from 2015 (Figure 6). In 2017 the Cambodia SUN network identified greater engagement by private sector, increased nutrition financing commitments, longer term programming by development partners, and enhanced regulation of food fortification as key priorities for the period 2017-2018.

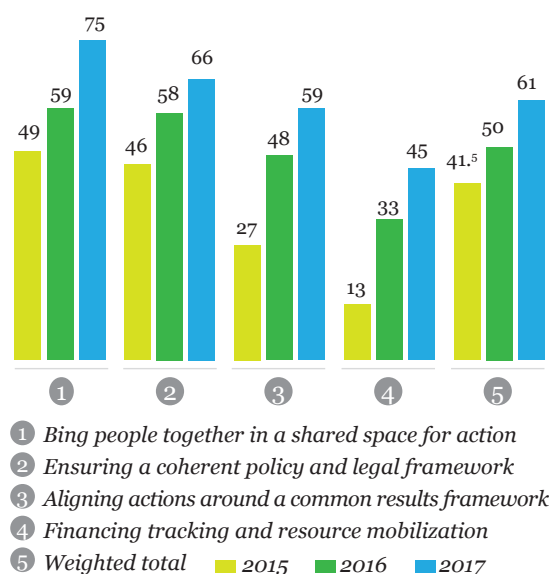


Figure 6: Scaling Up Nutrition – Cambodia Institutional Transformation 2015-2017 (SUN, 2015, 2016, 2017)

Building on a strong policy basis, CARD together with the Ministries of Rural Development (MRD) and Health (MoH), key donors and development partners (DPs) are working together through the WASH and Nutrition Technical Sub-Working Group to drive forward integrated action, with key priorities being:

1. Appoint focal people who can accumulate knowledge about WASH and nutrition.
2. Develop a cross-sectoral strategy that outlines how existing WASH and nutrition policies contribute to integrated efforts to improve nutrition outcomes.
3. Advocate to the Ministry of Economy and Finance for increased national budget allocations to nutrition and WASH, and advocate to donors for increased merged funding opportunities (Development Initiatives, 2017, p.56).

Currently efforts at cross-sector coordination remain at national level, with opportunities for future extension to sub-national level, building on existing structures around Provincial Governors' offices.

Moreover, extensive plans under the NSFSN, require consolidation and prioritisation; the NSFSN has some 64 priority actions and related indicators, some of which have seen limited progress as noted in the Progress Inventory 206 (CARD, 2017d). To ensure results delivery, enhanced focus on clearly defined and measurable goals will be needed, with a smaller number of related indicators and targets that are linked to the SDGs, and clear responsibilities and accountabilities around these to motivate and guide stakeholders. These will require clear implementation plans

to link resources, and clearly articulated ownership, leadership and coordination arrangements.

### Development Financing

While most sectors have strategic plans, these are not costed, with the exception of education and health; other key areas pertaining to FSN therefore need to be fully prioritised and costed. Externally- and domestically-funded financing processes need to be linked through the planning and budgeting cycle, and resources directed to demand-driven priorities rather than supply-driven interests (WFP, 2017c).

Consultations with stakeholders across Cambodia at national and sub-national level (CARD, 2017b, 2017c), highlighted the importance of adequate financing for the sector to meet FSN outcomes, ensuring that priority areas have been covered. Achieving the national and sustainable development objectives under Agenda 2030 and Cambodia's aspiration to reach upper-middle income country status by 2030, will require a substantive increase in investment in a holistic approach, with enabling, comprehensive planning and financial management structures from both private and public sources (CRDB & CDC, 2017). Separate planning and budgeting processes need to be more clearly linked to ensure key nutrition priorities are funded.

Cambodia's re-classification as a Lower-Middle Income Country (LMIC) may affect the availability of external support; grant-funding may be replaced by concessional loans while net Official Development Assistance (ODA) may reduce (CRDB & CDC, 2017). The Aid/GDP ratio reduced from 11% in 2011 to 7.4% in 2015, and the social sectors received the largest share of 37% of the total ODA, followed by the infrastructure around 30% in 2015 (CRDB & CDC, 2016).

	2015		2020		2025	
	USD m	%GDP	USD m	%GDP	USD m	%GDP
Domestic Revenue	3,114	17.2	5,001	19.7	6,961	20.0
Domestic Private Investment	2,147	11.9	3,048	12	4,176	12.0
Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)	1,732	9.6	2,540	10	3,480	10.0
Remittances	397	2.2	914	3.6	1,740	5.0
ODA	767	4.2	800	3.1	800	2.3
South-South Cooperation	349	1.9	400	1.6	400	1.1
Climate Finance	140	0.8	226	0.9	312	0.9
NGOs	226	1.3	225	0.9	225	0.6
Total Development Finance	8,873	49.1%	13,164	51.8%	18,094	52.0%

Table 2: Summary of Development Finance Assessment Projections (CRDB & CDC, 2017)

To build on existing efforts and ensure ongoing momentum, clear links between priorities, expected results and development financing, will need to be combined with proactive engagement with existing and new partners (internal and external) to ensure resource flows are maintained and built on. Creative financing options

from domestic and non-traditional external sources could be looked at to bolster key public expenditures for ongoing development.

### Strategic Considerations 1

There is an opportunity to build on existing policy frameworks and utilize them to ensure all strategic documents are well aligned, with clear plans for implementation and enforcement including resourcing, governance arrangement, and monitoring and data collection capacities.

To achieve development objectives laid out under Agenda 2030, a substantive increase in funding from public and private sources will need to be mobilised, alongside more closely aligning planning and budgeting processes through Program-Based Budgeting and Budget Strategic Plans.

Opportunities lie in building on the strong foundation of cooperation through the TWGs and SUN network to expand coordination to subnational level, while simultaneously expanding partnerships to garner additional resources and expertise.

## 3.2 Economic Trends

Macro-economic trends in Cambodia have included impressively strong economic growth as the country stabilized from the mid-1990s, which has facilitated a sizeable reduction in poverty at national level, outstripping that of many other countries. Multi-Dimensional Poverty rates are higher than headcount poverty (see 4.2 Access) and the improvements in income have not been evenly distributed, with household debt amongst the most vulnerable remaining a concern. In recent years, economic growth in Cambodia has increasingly been driven through growth in the service sector which has meant a changing structure in the economy away from agriculture and towards the manufacturing and service sectors.

### Macroeconomic Growth

With the country stabilizing from the mid-1990s, Cambodia has seen strong and impressive economic growth that has averaged some 7.7 percent per annum over the past two decades. In 2016, Cambodia maintained a solid growth at the rate of 7 percent, in line with the projected average annual GDP growth of 7 percent planned in the NSDP 2014-2018, and the outlook remains favourable as the country expects to maintain the average growth rate at 7 percent in the medium term, supported by ongoing export diversification (ADB, 2017; World Bank, 2017a; MEF, 2016).

*“Cambodia has seen strong economic growth, enabling improvements in food and nutrition security...”*

Strong macroeconomic growth has facilitated Cambodia's attainment of Lower Middle-Income status in 2016, enhancing its presence in an increasingly competitive regional and global trade environment. Growth in the country has been driven by multiple factors including a rapid expansion of the construction sector, a robust growth of the industry sector and in particular garments exports, as well as to a much lesser degree ongoing expansion of the agriculture sector (especially in rice production) and tourist arrivals.

The rapid expansion of the industry sector and to a lesser degree the service sector, has seen agriculture accounting for a diminishing share of the national economy. In 2016, agriculture accounted for 26.3 percent of GDP, industry for 31.3 percent and services for 42.4 percent (Asian Development Bank, 2014; World Bank, 2017a; RGC, 2017). Cambodia's external position has further improved given strong export growth, with retail exports expansion driven by footwear and garment exports; the latter have eased in recent years due to US dollar appreciation and competition from other regional low-wage countries (World Bank, 2017a). Though the outlook is for continued positive growth, risks include exchange-rate fluctuations, slower-than-expected economic recovery in key markets such as Europe and wider uncertainties over global trade, as well as the potential for diminishing comparative advantage as wages rise if not made up by commensurate increases in investment in human capital, including a particular emphasis on nutrition, to sustain competitiveness (World Bank, 2017b; WFP, 2017b, 2017f).

Concurrently, rural households have been able to diversify their livelihoods towards non-farm jobs (including the garment industry, construction and services), which has also contributed to poverty reduction. By 2015, non-agriculture wage incomes made up more than one-third of rural incomes, against less than one-fifth in 2007 (World Bank, 2017b).

Strong national income and wage growth, including rising public-sector wages, has been accompanied by rising domestic demand, that has seen inflation fluctuate and rise slightly to as much as 4.3 percent year-on-year in March 2017 and fall back to 2.3 percent year-on-year at latest official data in July 2017. This has been driven mainly by rising food prices, and eat into some of the real income growth benefits (NIS, 2017) (World Bank, 2017a).

### Poverty Reduction

Covered more fully under section 4.2 on household access, it is important to note here that impressively strong economic growth at national level has facilitated declining poverty rates and sizeable improvements in Cambodia's Human Development Index (HDI). From 1990 to 2015, Cambodia's annual HDI growth rate of 1.84 percent has outpaced the average in East Asia and the Pacific, currently at 1.35 percent, making it among the top seven countries in the world with the fastest HDI growth rate and ranking at 143 out of 188 countries. However, many of the most marginalized



people are still being left behind. The 2016 Human Development Report notes that Cambodia's 2015 HDI value of 0.563 showed an impressive 57 percent increase from 0.357 in 1990; nevertheless, this still falls below the 0.631 average for countries in the medium human development group and below the 0.721 average for countries in East Asia and the Pacific (UNDP, 2016). Concurrently, the percentage of Cambodians living under the national poverty line has declined from 53.2 percent in 2004 to 13.5 percent in 2014, based on official statistics of income poverty headcount. Despite these notable improvements, Cambodia still faces ongoing challenges in reducing poverty and inequality. There is therefore a need to ensure that human development is equitably distributed and that women in particular are included.

#### Strategic Considerations 2

Strong economic growth has facilitated poverty reduction. Moving forward this momentum should be directed at addressing inequities and enhancing inclusive growth to further the underlying vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to Leave No-one Behind.

### 3.3 Socio-demographic Trends

Cambodia has a young and growing population, which although still largely rural, according to the most recent census, is rapidly urbanising, largely due to migration flows, which presents both extensive economic potential and the need for policy adjustment implications (NIS, 2013a, 2013b; Haslett et al., 2013). Concurrently, gender imbalances remain, though women are active contributors to economic and social development.

#### Population Trends

Cambodia's population increased from 11.43 million in 1998 to 13.39 million in 2008, an increase of 1.96 million in the decade prior to the last census in 2008 (National Institute of Statistics, 2009a), and 15.76 million in 2016 (World Bank, n.d.). The country has seen an increasing population density from 64 to 75 people per square kilometre, though according to official statistics the annual population growth rate declined from 2.49 percent in 1998 to 1.54 percent in 2008, with Cambodian women having fewer children, and a fertility rate of 3.1 births per woman (NIS, 2009a). Concurrently, with falling maternal, child, and infant mortality rates, estimates are that the population will reach nearly 20 million by 2030 (ADB, 2014). The 2008 census indicated that infant mortality rates decreased moderately from 66 to 60 per 1,000 live births between 2005 and 2008, while the 2010 and 2014 CDHS reported 45 deaths and 28 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively. Maternal mortality ratio was estimated to have remained more static from at 437 in 2000, to 472 in 2005 and 461 per 100,000 live births in 2008 according to census data. However, the



2010 CDHS reported a maternal mortality rate of 206 deaths per 100,000 live births followed by 170 per 100,000 live births reported in 2014. Both infant and maternal mortality thus show marked improvement over the past decade (NIS 2009a, 2011, 2015).

Cambodia has a young population that presents a sizeable economic opportunity, with young adults aged 15 to 29 years accounting for some 33 percent of the population, and an additional 32 percent being younger than 15 years of age. The country has a high adolescent birth rate, almost twice as high as the average among countries in East Asia and the Pacific, standing at 51.6 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19 in Cambodia, and 23.1 births per 1,000 women in the region (UNDP, 2016; WFP, 2017a).

Cambodians are also living longer; from 1995 to 2015, Cambodia's life expectancy at birth increased by 15.2 years (UNDP, 2016), with life expectancy standing at 60.5 years for men and 63.5 years for women during the last census and anticipated to rise to 66.4 years for men and 69.9 years for women by 2030. A more ageing population with a higher dependency ratio is envisaged. The proportion of Cambodians aged over 65 years is increasing and estimated to reach some 6 percent of the population by 2030, which will entail health and social protection policy implications, given the high levels of vulnerability amongst the elderly population, particularly for women who have a longer life expectancy (NIS, 2009a; ADB, 2014). Nevertheless, the elderly bring a significant positive contribution to family life, including child care support. In a recent UNDP report, the presence of elderly household members was positively associated with a shift of households to non-poor status from 2014 data (Foraci/ UNDP, 2017).

Population density is unevenly spread across the country, concentrated in the South-Eastern plains, along the Tonle Sap lake and in the North West of the country. The lowest density is in the North East and South West (Figure 7). It is important to keep these differences in mind when considering the geographic disparities in vulnerability; proportional (prevalence) and absolute (number of people

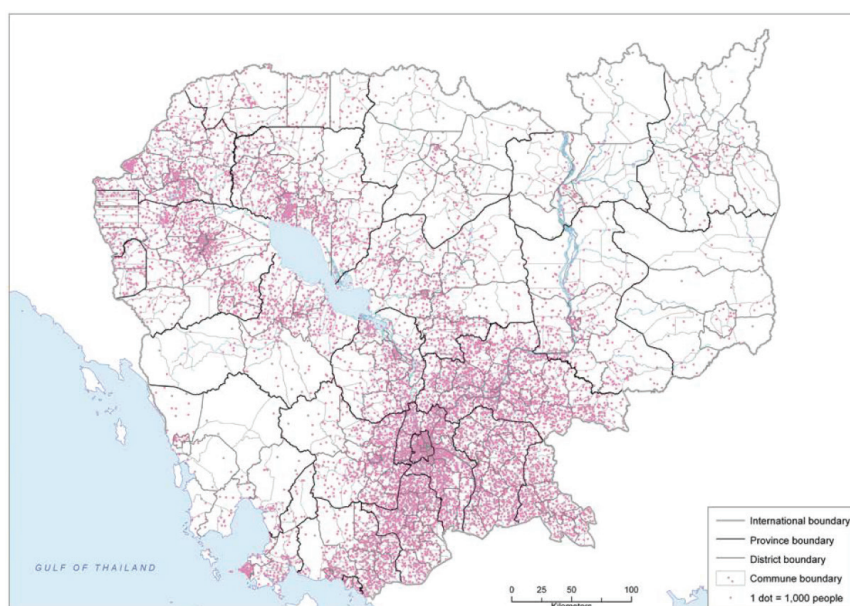


Figure 7: Population Density (General Population Census of Cambodia, 2008 (Haslett et al., 2013)

Note: This map predates the division of Kampong Cham; hence, it does not include Tbong Khmum province.

affected) burden of vulnerabilities are not necessarily similarly distributed across the country. This could have considerable implications for the design of intervention strategies and targeting approaches (Haslett et al., 2013).

## Migration

Studies suggested that rural to urban migration accounts for 56 percent of total migration, predominantly to Phnom Penh and out outer city areas, and has been driven primarily by economic factors that have helped facilitate growth and poverty reduction (WFP, 2017f). This finding is echoed by the Cambodia Rural Urban Migration Project, that estimated that half of outbound rural migration is to Phnom Penh and about one-third is international; the vast majority to Thailand. This rural to urban migration shift has seen Phnom Penh's population increase by 70 percent, from nearly 1 million to nearly 1.7 million between 1998 and 2013. Concurrently, the proportion of rural households is estimated to have declined from 80.5 percent of total households in 2008 to 78.6 percent in 2013, largely due to migration. Migration from villages located closer to national roads and with greater access to facilities such as electricity was noted to be lower. Moreover, with migration being primarily amongst younger adults, this has meant a slowly ageing rural population. Concurrently, a trend of parents leaving children behind with grandparents is an additional social issue with protection implications; for example, among migrants with children in Phnom Penh, some 20 percent were estimated to have children living elsewhere (MoP, 2012; NIS, 2013a, 2013b).

Most of the migrants coming from rural areas tend to live in outer city areas, including most factory workers and non-skilled labourers, most of whom live in outer zones. While they share some of the characteristics with those living in inner city areas, vulnerability appears higher in the outer city areas.

## Urbanization

Demographic data indicates an increasingly urbanizing population. Of the 14.68 million Cambodians making up some 3.16 million households, some 2.5 million are estimated to be rural residents and 0.66 million urban (NIS, 2009a). While Cambodia remains a more rurally-based population, the urban population increased to 21.4 percent of the total in 2013 from 19.5 percent in 2008. Phnom Penh overwhelmingly represents the largest urban area (greater than all other urban areas combined), and accounts for some 11.5 percent of the total population and 53.7 percent of the urban

*“An estimated half of outbound rural migration is to Phnom Penh and about one-third is international...”*

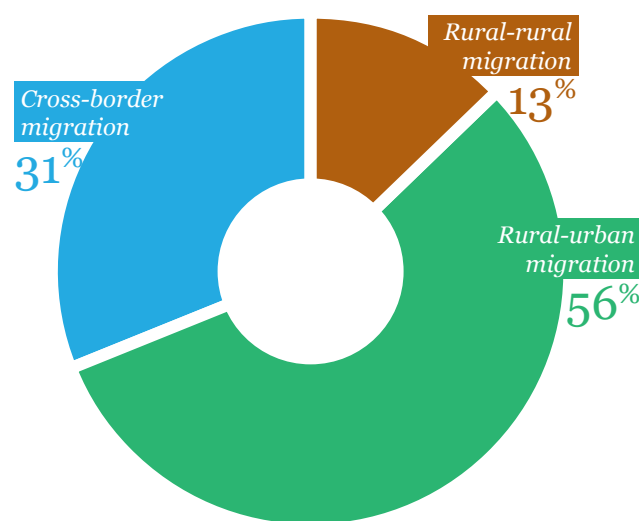


Figure 8: Share of migration by destination (WFP, 2017f)

population. The average urban household (4.8 members) is slightly larger than the average rural household of 4.6 members (NIS, 2013b) (NIS, 2013a). The increasing urbanization of the population, largely due to shifts in population from rural areas, also has significant policy implications.

*“The increasing urbanization of the population, largely due to shifts in population from rural areas, has significant policy implications ...”*

The increasing pace of urbanization has seen the growth of poorer outer-city areas, polarizing urban life and seeing some of the poorest and richest people live side by side. For those living in the outer and more marginalized city areas, including those working in garment and other factories, access to water, sanitation and health facilities remains constrained, even though somewhat better than in rural areas. As the pace of urbanisation continues, this is expected to place increasing strain on already stretched access to services (WFP, 2017f; UNFPA, 2014).

A 2016 study suggests that the earning capacity of those living in Phnom Penh, even those in the outer zones, is at least twice as great as that in rural areas. However, while only 10 percent of households in inner Phnom Penh take out loans, this grows to some 40 percent for those in the outer Phnom Penh and rises to 55 percent amongst rural households, suggesting that borrowing is more of a rural rather than urban phenomenon and necessity. Moreover, the average loan size of outer city households is significantly larger than inner city households, standing at some 27 million riels against 16 million respectively, and more sizeable than in rural areas (some 9 million riels). In both inner and outer urban area households, loans were taken out to pay for health-related issues, and for inner urban households to also support children’s studies (WFP, 2017f).

Outer city households have similar access to some commodities and services such as housing materials, access to electricity, and mobile phones. However, only 18 percent have access to a bank or micro-finance institution account, relative to 41

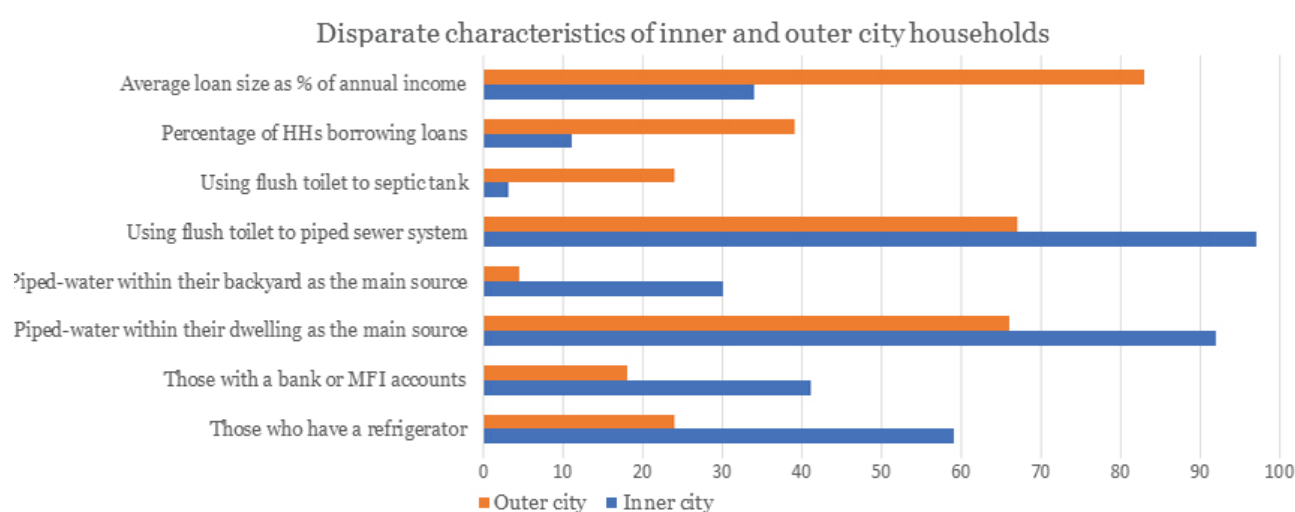


Figure 9: Urban Vulnerability in Phnom Penh; Situation, Vulnerability, and Migration (WFP, 2017f)

percent for inner city households. While they have similar access to clean water, outer city households have poorer sanitation and child health, as indicated by a higher incidence of diarrhoea; 21 percent versus 12 percent (WFP, 2017f).

Looking at food security of urban households, food expenditure for inner city households is slightly higher than in outer city areas, and includes a greater consumption of goods such as alcohol and cigarettes. Inner city households also spend slightly more on non-food items, which can include children's education and business investments. Dietary composition between inner and outer city households is similar, although the latter show greater consumption of rice and prohok (fermented fish). Both groups get their food from markets, while a greater proportion of outer city households grow their own food; 17 percent versus 5.5 percent (WFP, 2017f).

### Gender Dynamics

Cambodia's Gender Inequality Index (GII) – the loss in human development due to inequality between female and male achievements in reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity – ranks the country 112 out of 159 countries in the index. This indicates a sizeable gap between male and female achievements, and the need to tackle this (UNDP, 2016). Women continue to face inequity of access with poverty being a gendered phenomenon; while women play a critical role in the food system, including in the production, processing, preparation, consumption and distribution of food, nevertheless they are over represented in the food insecure; some 27 percent of Cambodian households are headed by women, and women-headed households are more likely to be poor (FAO, 2016); with more than 30 percent of ID poor households being female headed.

*“Women continue to face inequity of access with poverty being a gendered phenomenon...”*

Issues such as limited education, lack of economic empowerment and decision-making power, trafficking, migration, gender based violence, limited access to productive resources and an undervaluing of women's contributions are major factors undermining their food security. There is a growing recognition of women's disproportional vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition, and the need to address this. The Ministry of Women's Affairs' National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Neary Rattanak IV 2014-2018, outlines Government commitments and priorities on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and promotes addressing gender equality in the development of FSN action plans and mainstreaming gender in all RGC policies and programs and mainstreaming and ensuring line ministries receive the required national budget for gender mainstreaming. The plan calls for enhanced public awareness about FSN, promotes measures to address gender based violence, women's increased



participation in decision-making at the household and community levels, access to and control over land rights through gender land reform, increased access to education and vocational training and promoting favourable conditions for increasing women's access to skills training, employment, and productive resources (MoWA, 2014). Aspects of the gender dimension are reflected in the NSFSN taking a lead from the NSDP, which recognizes that despite progress made in the previous decade, the nutritional status of children and women has remained more static, with a significant portion of the population living just above the poverty line (FAO, 2016; WFP, 2017e; IDS, 2014). Nevertheless, gaps also remain in the gender alignment of FSN policies' approach to gender, and the NSFSN needs to be more clearly linked to international and national frameworks and commitments on gender quality including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), SDG 5 on gender equality, while also referring to key aspects of the Neary Rattanak IV Strategic Plan.

## Education

Education remains critical to human capital investment. Cambodia has made positive progress in improving access to primary education, particularly in rural areas, with net primary enrolment increasing from 81 percent in 2001 to 98.4 percent in 2015. From 1995 to 2015, Cambodia's mean years of schooling increased by some two years to 4.7, the expected years of schooling increased by 4.2 years to 10.9 (UNDP, 2016). However, the quality of education requires continued improvement as, in 2015, some 39 percent of grade 6 pupils were found to have below basic proficiency in reading in Khmer (MoEYS, 2015).

Limited numbers of adequately trained teachers and a relatively annual high dropout rate at 5.5 percent at primary, 18.5 percent at lower secondary school, and 20.8 percent at upper secondary school (MoEYS, 2017) add concerns over attendance and absenteeism. The ASEAN integration in 2015 and the desire of Cambodia to be a Middle-Income Country by 2030 require Cambodia to make considerable investment in education. The Royal Government of Cambodia increased its national budget for education by approximately 17% to 2.38 trillion riels in 2017, from 2.02 trillion riels in 2016 (MEF, 2016a; MEF, 2017). When it comes to educational attainment, the ratio between female to male is roughly 1:2, where only 13.2 percent of adult women have reached at least secondary education compared to 26.1 percent for their male counterparts. Female participation in the labour market is lower at 75.5 percent compared to 86.7 percent among their male counterparts (UNDP, 2017).

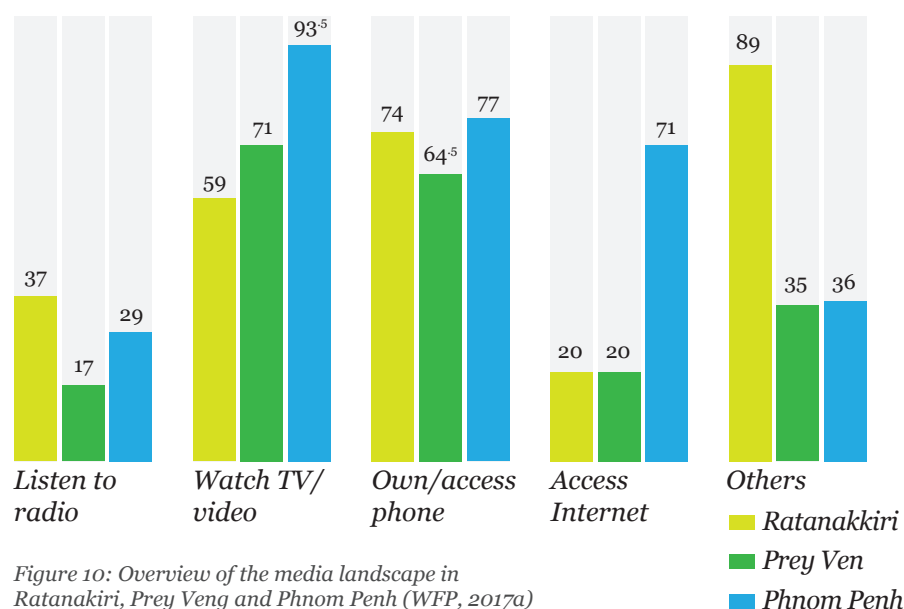
### Strategic Considerations 3

To maximise the potential of the young and increasingly urbanised population, investment in capacity building is required, including a focus on adolescents and achieving nutrition outcomes. Concurrently, rapid migration requires monitoring on its impact, and the remaining gender imbalance needs to be addressed.

## 3.4 Technological Trends

The rapid expansion of low-cost technology availability and access serves as an incredible opportunity in Cambodia to enable improved investment in human capital and raise awareness of key issues. Cambodia has seen a declining use of radio and TV for information with increased emphasis on the Internet and mobile phones. A BBC Media Action (2014) study found that the majority of young people (aged 15 to 24) in Cambodia have access to TV (92 percent), radio (92 percent), and mobile phones (96 percent). Internet usage has been increased; one-third of youth in the country, mostly in urban areas, has access to the Internet. They reported using the Internet for news (73%) and social networks (63%) (BBC Media Action, 2014).

While technology can serve as an important enabler for information dissemination and allow improved reach to more people as well as to specific target groups, a key emerging issue is trust in the information available. A Cambodia technology survey found that some 55 percent of respondents trust information on Facebook, while 45 percent did not trust or only ‘somewhat’ trusted it. Distrust of Facebook as an information source was highest in relation to reading news stories, where around 30 percent of respondents reported having received ‘fake’ news stories via Facebook. With Cambodians increasingly using Facebook, including as a medium for news and other information, the need to ensure that reliable information is available is critical, particularly pertaining to adolescents and youths, including on issues of health and nutrition (BBC Media Action, 2014; WFP, 2017a).





#### Strategic Considerations 4

With increased availability and access to technologies by the population particularly among the youth segment, there are opportunities for improved capital investment in the area, by building on the understanding of the population's media usage to create and facilitate access to credible sources of FSN-related information.

### 3.5 Environmental Trends

Cambodia is rich in its environmental diversity. The combination of environmental degradation, climate change and low-level annual disasters, as noted in section 4.4 on Stability Trends, are having an adverse effect on vulnerable communities' ability to cope with natural and man-made disasters. Those repeatedly affected see growing negative coping strategies, such as taking on more debt (WFP, 2017b), while risks posed by the degradation of natural resources could adversely affect economic sustainability.

Official estimates by the Ministry of Environment suggest that forest area coverage has fallen from around 60 percent in 2006 to less than 47 percent in 2014, with remaining forest cover increasingly challenged by logging. Concurrently, extensive areas of wetland have also been lost (MoE, 2016). Poor natural resource management practices, limited investment in sustainable management and land expansion for agricultural production are contributing trends (World Bank & ADB, 2015; World Bank, 2017b).

With an estimated 80 percent of rural poor dependent on the natural environment and agriculture for their livelihoods (Climate Investment Funds, 2016), sustainably managing those natural resources, while also ensuring climate change adaption and mitigation measures, will be critical for sustainable development in future. Linked to that, improving flood-resilient infrastructure, ensuring minimum construction standards, and ensuring urban plans are used to enhance resilience, will be critical to reducing the impact and cost of natural and man-made disasters (FAO, et al., 2016; UNDP, 2014).

#### Strategic Considerations 5

The combination of environmental degradation, climate change and low-level annual disasters, that are adversely affecting vulnerable communities' ability to cope, require implementation of policies towards effective resource management, sustainable development and Disaster Risk Reduction.

## 4. Food and Nutrition Security Analysis

Impressive economic growth, diversification and livelihood improvements have concurrently enabled sizeable improvements in food and nutrition security, as reflected in the scoring for the Global Hunger Index 2017. Although still rated as having extensive hunger challenges, Cambodia has experienced relatively rapid improvements and is now approaching the moderate category. The country has achieved the highest percentage reductions for countries measured as having serious hunger or above, in the scoring of the Global Hunger Index for the period 2000-2017 (von Grebmer, et al., 2017).



Figure 11: Global Hunger Index; Progress Since 2000 (von Grebmer, et al., 2017)

### 4.1 Availability Trends

#### Food Production and Markets

Agricultural production, with a focus on paddy rice and to a lesser degree on secondary crops, has outpaced population growth and demand resulting in improvements in food availability. The dominance of rice in agricultural production means it now accounts for some 72 percent of planting activity (MAFF, 2017; NIS, 2009b, 2014). Cambodia has been self-sufficient in rice production since 1996, with production increasing from some four to almost ten million tonnes between 2000 and 2016. Concurrently, a strong export push of rice has seen exporting figures grow from just

under half a million to some 4.7 million tonnes for export between 2011 and 2016 (World Bank, 2017b; MAFF, 2017).

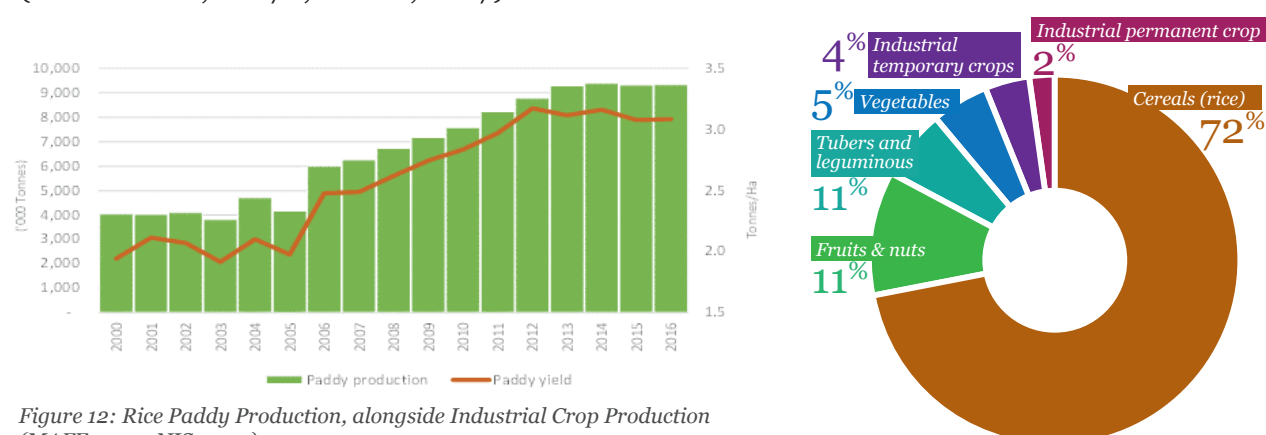


Figure 12: Rice Paddy Production, alongside Industrial Crop Production (MAFF, 2017; NIS, 2014)

From a food availability perspective, while production of rice has grown apace, this narrow production focus meant limited crop diversification within the country. This limited diversity is reflected in household dietary consumption patterns where, despite increasing availability of food in the markets, rice remains paramount in the diet. Undernourishment has fallen dramatically over time from 29.2 percent (of the total population) in 2000 to 15.3 percent in 2015 (FAO, 2017b) based on the national food balance sheet, and highlighting the combination of improved food production, imports and exports are facilitating a shift towards more people meeting their energy requirements.

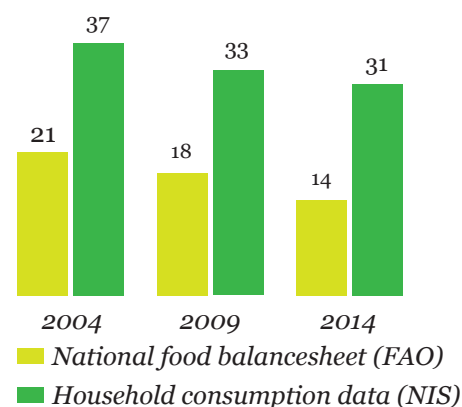
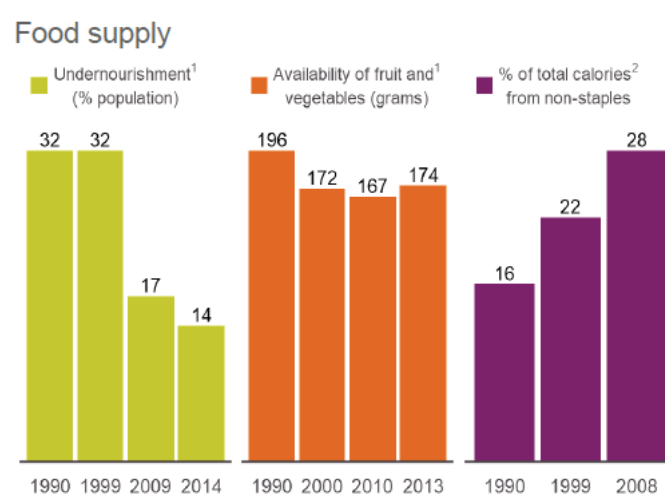


Figure 13: Undernourishment 2004-2014 (FAO, 2017b; NIS, 2005, 2009b, 2014)

## Vegetables, Animal Husbandry and Aquaculture

The cultivation of subsidiary crops (maize, cassava, sweet potatoes, vegetables and mungbean) has expanded by over 5% in the period 2015-2016, continuing a long running increase in production area for these crops. It is difficult to determine from the official statistics how much of the increase is related to crops sourced directly for food, and how much relates to crops used primarily for animal feed or processing and exports. Production areas for the industrial crops soy bean, peanuts, sesame, sugar cane, jute and tobacco)



Source: FAOSTAT 2015;<sup>1</sup> FAOSTAT 2014.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 14: Food Supply and Dietary Diversity (Development Initiatives, 2017; IFRDI, 2012)

has been variable and has declined in recent years. Just how these changes impact food availability and access cannot be determined nationally. Major increases in the area planted to cassava, a crop mostly used for industrial processing and export, may have come at a cost to the diversity of domestic production and quite likely constitute the bulk of the increase in the area planted to subsidiary crops.

Livestock production is reported by the MAFF (2017) as having exceeded targets for increases in numbers of livestock, continuing longer term trends. Overall livestock numbers held by smallholders are reported to have increased by 3.5%, despite falls in the number of cattle by 0.2%. The major increases were for poultry numbers which increased by 6.4% from 2015 to 2016. Major increases in the size of commercial livestock numbers are reported for cattle and pigs. Decreases in the number of poultry produced domestically were countered by major increases in the number of imported birds. Fish production from all sources, including Dai fisheries, family fishing in both the fisheries domain and in rice fields and aquaculture all increased slightly from 2015 to 2016 (MAFF 2017).

In early 2016, price data were collected from 95 markets country side to inform a Cost of The Diet analysis aimed at determining affordability of nutritious diets in different regions of the country. The sample of 95 markets was selected from 202 total markets registered at the price statistics office of the Department of Panning and Statistic of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Of the 500 listed food products, the survey was able to collect prices from between 232 and 342 products in each of the markets, reflecting availability of a considerable range of products across the country.

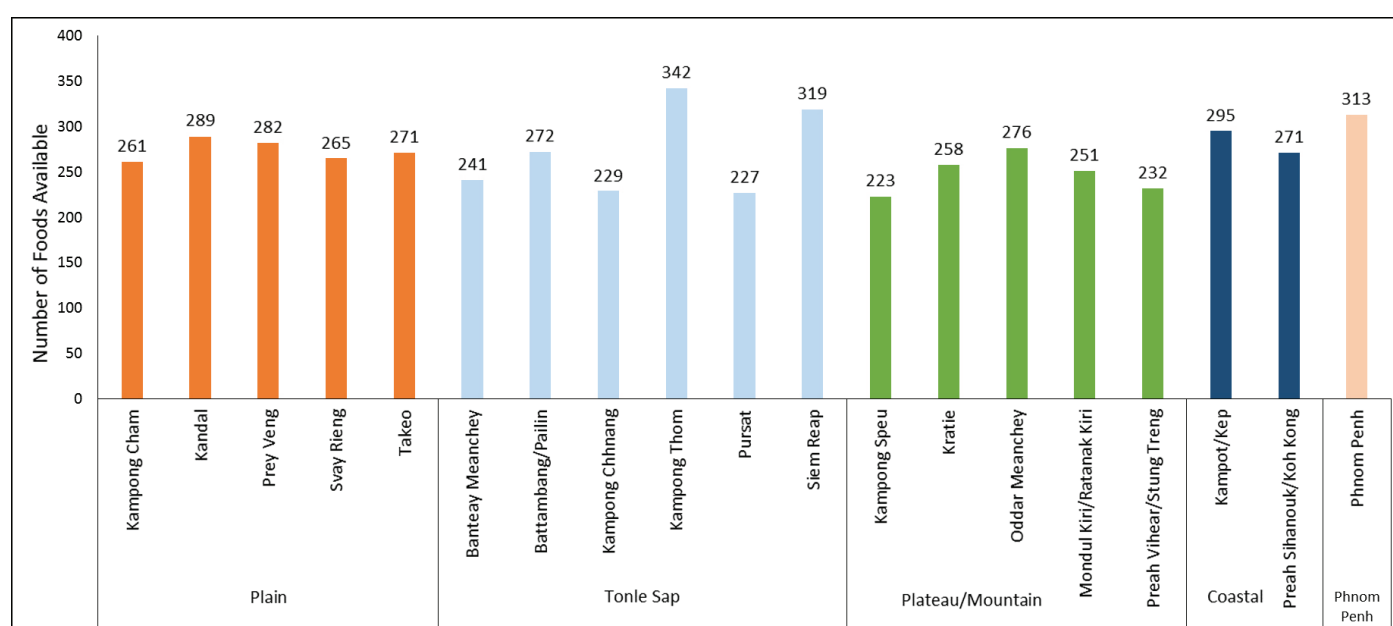


Figure 15: Food Products Available in 95 Markets across Cambodia (WFP, 2017d)

## Nutrition-sensitive Agriculture

A recent series of case studies by FAO (2017), suggested positive resonance to nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Cambodia. Encouragement of production diversity supported dietary diversity, with findings suggesting that using Future Smart Food that is nutrient-dense, climate-resilient, economically viable and locally available or adaptable, and integrated agriculture including a mix of crop, animal and fish production can enhance diversity. Moreover, a form of homestead food production that provided smallholders with the skills and resources to produce a range of healthy food all year, as well as strengthening their links to and access of markets, enhanced their food and nutrition security. Linked to that, improving preservation, storage and processing to retain nutritional value, improved shelf-life and food safety also positively impacted food security, combined with enhancing nutrition and food safety awareness for producers as well as for consumers through use of food standards. Given the high engagement of women in agriculture, supporting mothers' access to and awareness of diverse safe foods and child care, as well as enhancing women's empowerment and education to facilitate their participation, can also enable positive food and nutrition security outcomes. Finally, there is a need for enhanced integration between the agriculture, health and WASH sectors for improved nutrition, as well as through education programmes on food production and consumption to strengthen nutritional awareness (FAO, 2017a).

### Strategic Considerations 6

Strong agricultural production has supported improvements in food and nutrition security, with an enhanced focus now required on quality, diversity, resilient and nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

## 4.2 Access Trends

Impressive economic growth at a macro level, has enabled great strides in income improvement and poverty reduction at household level. The benefits of that growth have not been evenly spread, highlighting the relevance of Agenda 2030 which aims to "Leave no one behind."

### Poverty Reduction

The percentage of Cambodians living under the national poverty line has declined from 53.2 percent in 2004 to 13.5 percent in 2014, based on official statistics of income poverty headcount (MEF, 2016b). Cambodia has also shown impressive progress in reducing poverty in multidimensional terms, where unlike income poverty, the Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) factors in deprivations in health, education and living standards, at the household level. Cambodia's MPI decreased from 0.211 in 2011 to 0.150 in 2014 while the headcount ratio of people

in multi-dimensional poverty declined from 46.8 percent to 33.8 percent within the same period. Multidimensional poverty headcount now stands at 31.6 percent of the population, higher than income poverty on account of the additional dimensions factored in. It reflects that multi-dimensionally poor households experience further adverse effects when affected by shocks, such as illness, due to the fact that aside from a lack of income to sustain their needs, they are also deprived of the ability to access health care or keep their children in school, making it even more difficult for them to recover or be lifted out of poverty, and heightening the likelihood of adopting negative coping strategies (UNDP, 2016).

In conjunction with the poverty measurement efforts of the RGC, similar poverty trends are shown in data from the World Bank that has developed a new set of poverty lines which differ slightly from those of the Government but show like trends. The World Bank (2013) poverty assessment emphasized that despite significantly decreasing poverty rates, due in large part to agriculture and rising rural wages, a large share of the Cambodian population moved only very slightly above the poverty line, leaving many highly vulnerable to shocks that might occur. An Asian Development Bank comparison of the World Bank's poverty lines with those of the RGC also demonstrated that poverty rates are highly sensitive to very small changes in the poverty threshold, and therefore that Cambodian households hovering slightly above the poverty line (the 'near poor') are highly vulnerable to external shocks (hiked prices of food and basic commodities, unexpected healthcare expenditure and climate change-related disasters); these vulnerabilities therefore need to be factored into policy considerations (ADB, 2014).

### Income (In)Equality

Despite these notable improvements facilitated by growth at national level, Cambodia still faces ongoing challenges in reducing poverty and inequality. These include an unevenness of progress across the country and demographic and socio-economic groups, while Cambodia lags behind on a number of human development indicators. There is a need to ensure that human development is equitably distributed, that all can benefit from progress and that women in particular are included. To meet the 'leave no one behind' aim of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, and reach the furthest behind first, efforts will need to be made to prioritise outcomes for marginalised groups, looking beyond population averages to identify who and where they are and what they need. Those left behind are often from a marginalised identity, including women, the disabled, the elderly, and people from ethnic minorities among others (Overseas Development Institute, 2017).

In terms of economic access, despite strong income growth, wealth is still not equitably distributed. Nationally representative data (except Phnom Penh) collected in December 2016 showed that 80 percent of the population accounts for only 40.2 percent of the total income, while less than 20 percent have 59.8 percent of the income



(WFP, 2016). Cambodia's growth has seen national per capita GDP rise from US\$ 1,215 in 2015 to US\$ 1,435 in 2017 (Cabinet of the Prime Minister, 2018), while expenditure per capita has also grown.

The growth enabled increased spending on food, which grew by 5.5 percent between 2009 and 2015, while in the same period non-food spending also increased by 11 percent. It suggests improvements in purchasing power including amongst the poorest segments; where positive expenditure growth means that food now makes up a smaller proportion of total expenditure, indicating lesser vulnerability to food insecurity (NIS, 2009b, 2014). Nevertheless, poorer groups made slower gains than richer groups, with the bottom 50 percent of population living off less than US\$ 2.50 per person per day. For sustainable development, the scale of these inequities require redress as part of the "leave no-one behind" agenda.

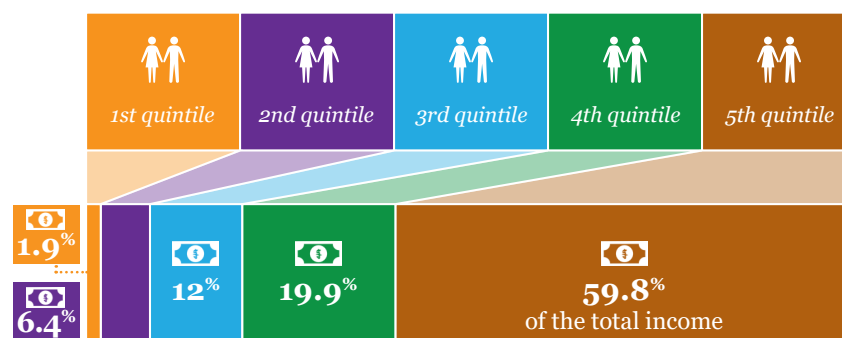


Figure 16: Household Income as Percentage Share of Total by Quintile (WFP, 2016)

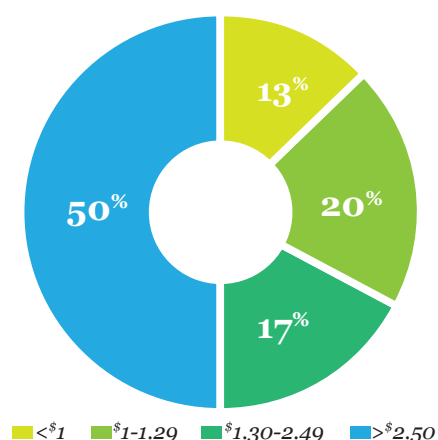


Figure 17: Percentage Population by Income per Person per Day (FAO et al., 2016)

With growth largely driven by low-skilled employment and migration, these can serve as opportunities but also pose a risk to sustaining future growth and Cambodia's comparative advantage if it remains focussed on low-skilled low-cost industries without additional investment in human capital. To ensure sustainable growth and development, Cambodia may not be able to rely on the same factors that drove strong growth and poverty reduction over the past two decades. Efforts are required to address imbalances and invest in human capital.

### Diet Affordability, Expenditure and Indebtedness

An analysis of the cost of the diet showed that on average 21 percent of households cannot afford a least expensive nutritionally adequate diet. The cost of a nutritious diet is 44 percent higher for children who are not breastfed than for those who are; the cost of the diet increases by 10-15 percent when adolescent girls are pregnant or breastfeeding. Similarly, the consumption of unhealthy snacks could increase the cost for the child by 38 percent (WFP, 2017d). Local food availability and their prices, household demographic characteristics, and income levels greatly influence the households' ability to access a nutritionally adequate diet.

Key social expenditures around health and education often tip the balance for the most vulnerable households; household expenditure for health can account up to

70% of total expenditure (NIS, et al., 2001, 2015). A study also found that health expenditures after the El Nino drought were a possible factor tipping households into debt (FAO et al., 2017b; UNICEF et al., 2016). While Government spending on health and education is on the increase, standing at around 1.3 and 2.1 percent of GDP respectively in 2015, it remains below average for a Lower Middle-Income country, with heavy external funding for service delivery. School based social assistance in the form of meals and scholarships is receiving increasing attention to support regular access to schools for the most vulnerable, but further expansion would be required to meet the need.

Vulnerable households have been found to have acquired more debt and for longer than other households, where debt is taken on as a coping strategy (FAO et al., 2017b). While a loan can be seen to correlate positively with exiting poverty and vulnerability when used as a buffer, as indicated by a recent UNDP study, the build-up over time can counterbalance poverty reduction gains and be unsustainable (Foraci/UNDP, 2017; Collins et al., 2009; WFP, 2017b).

In time of shocks, taking on (additional) debt, often at exorbitant rates, is one of the key negative coping strategies adopted by vulnerable households. RGC introduced an interest charge cap of 18 percent to microfinance loans; previously interest rates could be as high as between 20-30 percent (Leng/NBC, 2016).

### Social Protection

Recognizing the importance of social protection mechanisms to protect the most vulnerable, efforts underway under the auspices of the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) 2016-2025 (RGC, 2016b) have a key role to play in facilitating this, by positively contributing to economic growth with equity and inclusiveness, through both Social Assistance and Social Insurance components. Nevertheless, additional financing is needed to realise objectives to 'leave no one behind', with core elements of a basic social compact including social protection, universal health coverage and universal primary and secondary education (ODI, 2017).

The NSPPF seeks to provide social assistance linked to FSN in the following areas:

- » Emergency responses, e.g. food supplies in times of crisis;
- » Protection of pregnant women and children, e.g. focus on improving nutrition of pregnant women and children;
- » School feeding programme using locally grown food products

Source: RGC (2017b)

The evolution of the NSPPF is critical, as key social expenditures around health and education often tip the balance for the most vulnerable families, linking to issues of stability noted in section 4.4. The coverage of social assistance and social insurance under the NSPPF remains limited. The framework itself recognises a number of challenges to overcome including the needs to: improve investment environment

and clarification on tax policies related to the social protection system; integrate management of various schemes to be more effective and efficient; link ‘identification and registration of citizens’ system and ‘identification and registration of the poor and vulnerable’ system to address issue of double registration and overlapping provision of benefits; and raise citizens’ awareness due to limited understanding of the system and its benefits (RGC, 2016b, pp. xv-xvi, 39-41).

#### Strategic Considerations 7

Strong recent economic growth and poverty reduction trends will need to be supported with increasing emphasis on enhancing more equitable access to food.

### 4.3 Utilization Trends

Utilization trends in Cambodia have seen positive change, partly enabled by improvements in income, wealth, food availability and improved access to basic services.

#### Child Nutrition Trends

Improvements in income and wealth, increased dietary diversity, education (especially maternal education), expansion of healthcare coverage, improved access to water and sanitation, and health and nutrition promotion behaviours such as exclusive breastfeeding, serve as a backdrop to improvements in nutritional status (UNICEF, 2016a, 2016b). In recent years a more enabling policy environment (RGC, 2014c; MoH, 2014) has also increased emphasis on improving FSN, and with strong support for an integrated approach towards these.

Chronic malnutrition (stunting) rates have fallen from 50 percent in 2000 to 32 percent in 2014, on-track against objectives laid out in the NSFSN. In the same period wasting rates fell from 17 to 10 percent, while underweight reduced to 23.9 percent. Anaemia amongst children under five fell from 62 to 56 percent. Alongside that, since 1990, the country has more than halved maternal mortality (NIS et al., 2015; UN, 2015b; FAO, 2017b).

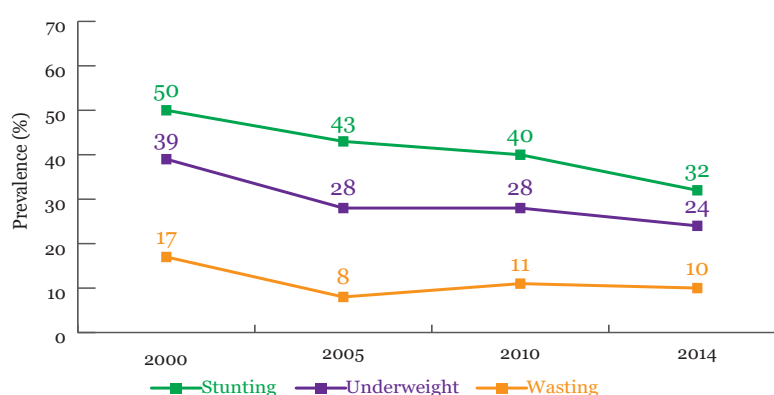


Figure 18: Child Malnutrition Trends (NIS et al., 2001, 2006, 2011, 2015)

Though the positive trends are recognized, the situation in Cambodia remain precarious as malnutrition continues to cause irreversible damage to children’s long-term cognitive and physical development, which also contributes to their low wages and lost productivity as adults (NIS et al., 2001, 2006, 2011, 2015).

Analysis of stunting trends shows that all groups across the wealth spectrum have seen reduced stunting prevalence. However, statistics suggest that poorest households see slower progress while stunting reduction among wealthiest households appears to have stagnated in recent years. In 2014, 18.5 percent of children under five years of age from wealthiest households were stunted (Development Initiatives, 2017). This suggests that while wealth has considerable impact on undernutrition risks, other factors such as consumption and care behaviours may still considerably influence chronic malnutrition in Cambodia.

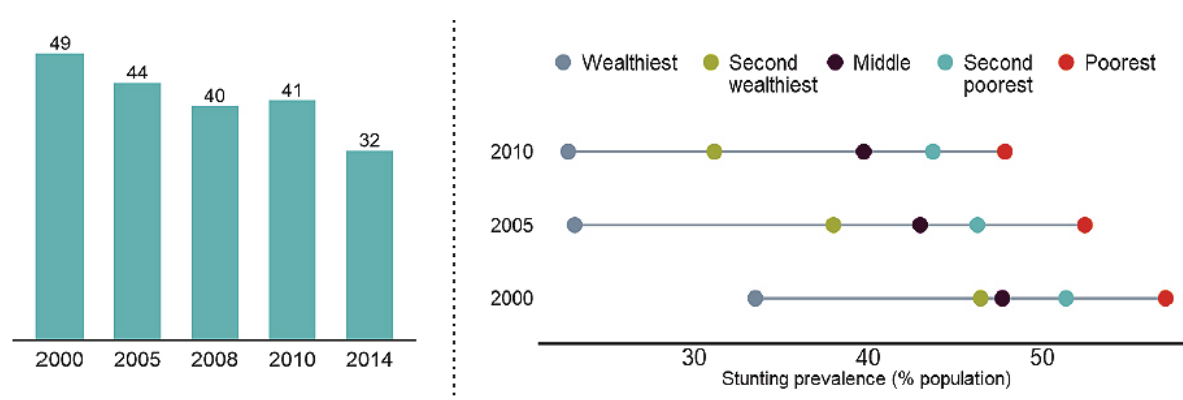


Figure 19: Prevalence of Stunting and Changes in Stunting Prevalence Over Time, By Wealth Quintile (Development Initiatives, 2017)

Some 45 percent of the US\$266 million annual economic burden due to malnutrition is estimated to be due to stunting, while just under three percent is associated with acute malnutrition. The economic case for tackling stunting is therefore very evident, and it also remains essential to continue efforts to treat wasting, as evidence suggests this can adversely affect child growth and development. As stunting and wasting share many common risk factors, policy efforts could therefore facilitate links towards more integrated programming (NIS et al., 2015; NMCHC, 2016; CARD et al., 2013). Without increasing efforts in dealing with these stubborn problems of undernutrition, there is a risk that multiple key SDG targets for reducing malnutrition will not be met. Given the considerable economic and social impact of malnutrition, there is a compelling case to prioritise nutrition as a CSDG ‘accelerator’ that would promote early achievement of this goal in order to ensure a positive spill-over effect into areas as education, health and the availability of a productive and skilled labour force.

## Dietary Diversity

Household weekly dietary diversity score (DDS) measures the number of different food groups consumed by the households during the last 7 days recall period. It provides an estimation of the quality of a diet of the households and can be presented and reported in an average score and the percentage of household according to each diet group: Low (DDS<4.5), Medium (DDS=4.5-6), & high (DDS=6+). An analysis of food security data from 2014 CSES shows that on average the Cambodian households consumed 5.6 food groups during the last 7 days. The consumption pattern was similar in all the four regions.

The percentage of households with inadequate dietary diversity declined significantly from 46 percent in 2008 to 12 percent in 2014 (NIS, 2009b, 2014). In 2014, some 73 percent of households reported medium dietary diversity. While the situation has improved dramatically since 2008 considerable fluctuations are noted across the year and as a result of shocks. In 2016, following the el Nino period dietary diversity fluctuated between 18 (low) and 73 (medium) percent in May and 25 (low) and 68 (medium) percent in December, showcasing the fragility of the food security situation.

## Micronutrient Malnutrition

Micronutrient malnutrition remains a challenge in Cambodia. While supplementation and adequate diets have resulted in Vitamin A deficiency not being a public health concern, other minerals and vitamins fare much worse. Zinc deficiency is particularly worrying with some 63 percent of mothers affected, as well as 65 percent of children between 6 and 24 months. The situation is particularly bad in urban areas where 72 percent of mothers showed zinc deficiency in 2014. This is of concern for the body's defense against infection and disease. Women also show considerable folic acid deficiency at 19 percent which affects foetal development, and Vitamin D deficiency at 31 percent which is important for bone density.

Some 69 percent of children under the age of five live in households that use iodized salt; this is down from 83 percent in 2010. Furthermore, 66 percent of children 6-59 months showed low iodine concentration in their urine; among mothers this was 78 percent. This is of particular concern for mental development. While anemia remains high at 45 percent for mothers and 53 percent for children 6-59 months, advanced analysis shows that only some 25 percent of this (ie 11 percent among mothers) is associated with nutritional causes, while the remaining 75 percent may be genetically determined. This has implications for the design of effective intervention strategies. The hidden hunger exemplified by the above deficiencies requires dedicated attention to ensure continued improvement in health, wellbeing and productivity of the population (NIS, 2015; Prak, 2016).



## Maternal Nutrition

A mother's nutrition and behaviour, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, as well as the challenges in accessing sufficient food, can adversely impact a child's nutritional status. The high nutrient demands of pregnancy also make pregnant women more vulnerable to inadequate nutritional status, and data suggests that dietary diversity which is poor in normal times, show little improvements after pregnancy (NMCHC, 2016; WFP, 2017d). Currently, the NSFSN goal for undernutrition among women of WRA is not on-track with a 14 percent prevalence of undernutrition in 2014; above the 8 percent target for 2015. Anaemia also remains stubbornly high, averaging at 45 percent amongst women. According to the 2016 Global Nutrition Report, Cambodia ranks 160 out of 185 countries with the highest WRA anaemia, which is linked to physiology, rather than health and diet, and therefore potential solutions remain unclear for the country (IFPRI, 2016; NIS et al., 2001, 2015; WFP, 2016d; Wieringa et al., 2016). High rates of adolescent pregnancy, with limited knowledge of nutritional issues also require address with a specific targeting of adolescent groups as part of a lifecycle approach (WFP, 2017a).

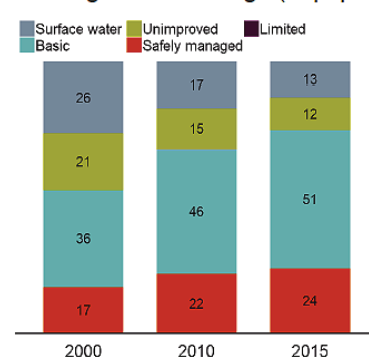
## Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)

Exclusive breastfeeding rates have improved to a high of 96 percent nationally, however, in urban areas exclusive breastfeeding is low (77 percent) while overall duration of breastfeeding is also much lower than in rural areas (13.5 months versus 18.8 months). Only 37 percent of children continue to breastfeed until age two. In the age group 6-23 months only 47.6 percent receive four or more food groups (including breastfeeding), while 72.2 percent are fed with adequate frequency. While there is considerable space for improvement, IYCF practices are showing improvement with six percentage points increase of the proportion of children who are fed according to preferred IYCF practices from 2010 to 2014 (24 percent and 30 percent respectively) (NMCHC, 2016; CARD et al., 2013; WFP, 2017d). Efforts should be made to accelerate this trend.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

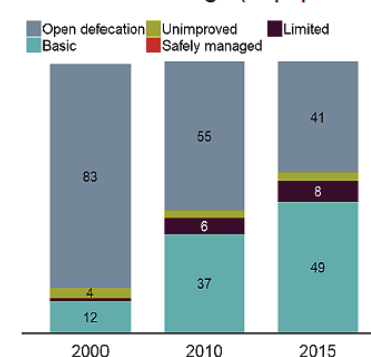
Socioeconomic inequities and access to basic services, such as health, water and sanitation, and education drive many of the deprivations that can contribute to malnutrition (NMCHC, 2016). Access to water and sanitation facilities has improved substantially. The proportion of the

Drinking water coverage (% population)



Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme 2017.  
Note: Due to rounding, numbers might not add up to 100.

Sanitation coverage (% population)



Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme 2017.  
Note: Due to rounding, numbers might not add up to 100.

Figure 20: Water and Sanitation Coverage, % of the Population  
(WHO & UNICEF, 2015)

population using an improved drinking water source rising from some 23 percent in 1990 to 75.5 percent in 2015 and the proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility from 2.9 to 42 percent in the same period, sanitation practices continue to require improvement to reflect the standards of countries with LMIC status (WHO & UNICEF, 2015; World Bank, 2017b). While MDG targets for access to improved sanitation and drinking water have been met, rural areas have significantly lower access to improved sanitation facilities (30.5 percent in rural areas versus 88.1 percent in urban areas in 2015) and improved water supply (69.1 percent in rural areas versus 100 percent in urban areas in 2015) (WHO & UNICEF, 2015). Further, while access has improved, these are below peers and sanitation practices continue to require improvement.

### The Double-burden of Malnutrition

Cambodia has seen changing dietary practices toward more convenience foods, an increasing trend towards obesity especially among women and heightened risks of NCDs (MoH, 2013). The NSFSN 2014-2018 goal for over-nutrition among WRA is a target of 12 percent for 2018, although this stood at 18 percent in 2014 (NIS et al., 2001, 2015; NMCHC, 2016). Aspects of these are linked to rapid urbanisation, the excessive consumption of rice in the diet, and growing consumption of snack foods particularly amongst children. This is primarily associated with women of reproductive age in urban areas, but is also growing in rural areas and cutting across the social divide; in urban areas 22.5 percent of women were overweight or obese compared to 17 percent in rural areas, and 2 percent of children under 5. Among women of reproductive age (15-49 years) older women are particularly prone to overweight, while underweight is mostly experienced by younger women (NIS et al., 2015, NMCHC, 2016; WFP, 2017d; MoH, 2013).

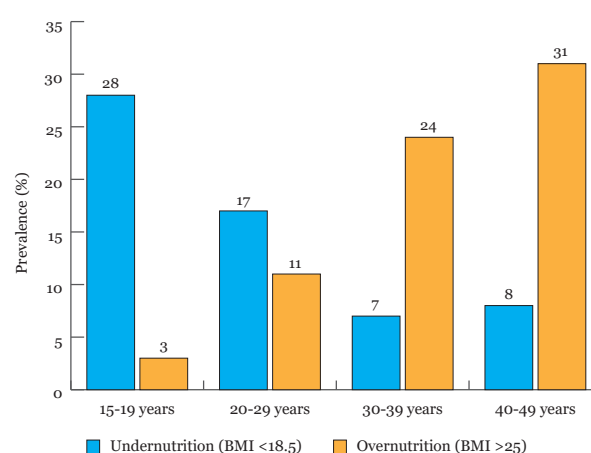


Figure 21: Prevalence of under and over Nutrition among Women of Reproductive Age (NIS et al., 2015)

### Nutritional Behaviours and Practices

The key to strengthening investment in human capital is through nutrition as well as education. Nutritional deficiencies can affect educational attainment and reduce contribution in the work place as well as add to strains on the health sector, while investment in education can enhance awareness and improve negative practices (CARD et al., 2013).

Efforts towards positive socio-cultural practices need to continue to be promoted and strengthened through nutrition-specific interventions that include enhancing behaviour change communication messaging and strategies, to target ongoing issues of chronic malnutrition, improved feeding practices, sanitation, as well as the more

recently arising issues of obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Raising awareness of nutritional content in food and affordable diverse diets, can be coupled with controlled advertising particularly around the consumption of salt, sugar, and fat. Similarly, positive messaging could be further promoted through, for example, the use of role-models on nutrition, including on improved feeding practices (exclusive breastfeeding, infant and young child feeding and complementary feeding), early childhood development and sanitation practices. This is particularly true in the case of stunting, which is prevalent in both areas of low and high non-affordability of food, and among poor and wealthier households, highlighting the importance of behaviour change if the vision of reaching zero stunted children of less than two years of age, is to be reached by 2030 (RGC, 2016a).

#### Strategic Considerations 8

With malnutrition affected by an array of complex and interlinked factors, further strengthening of a multi-sectoral response is required, with a particular focus on awareness-raising of nutritional issues.

## 4.4 Stability Trends

Agenda 2030 registers the central importance of prevention and resilience-building as critical to ensuring inclusive and sustainable development (UN, 2015a). This includes addressing inequalities, strengthening institutions and civil society, and ensuring that development strategies are risk-informed; namely using situational analysis to build on opportunities and prepare for and mitigate potential risks, taking account of and planning for key risks, such as natural and man-made disasters, potential public health crises (including pandemics), economic crises, environmental crises including climate change and its secondary effects, conflict and more recently cybercrime (Stimson, 2017). Regular updating and monitoring allows for early warning of potential issues to trigger action, with mechanisms required to identify potential risks, interpret and then look to mitigate or respond to them as required.

### Natural Hazards

Cambodia is considered one of the most hazard-prone countries in South-East Asia. The World Risk Report 2016 classifies it as the 9th most at risk country, due to a significant exposure to natural hazards but most importantly to the limited adaptive and coping capacities of its population and of national and local structures to prevent and mitigate the effects of disasters (Garschagen, et al., 2016). The major risks faced are in order of prevalence: floods, droughts, typhoons and storms, forest fires, landslides. This risk is exacerbated by ongoing degradation of natural resources. Official estimates suggest forest cover declined from nearly 60 percent in 2006 to

less than 47 percent in 2014 (RGC, 2015a; World Bank, 2017b). The most vulnerable populations reside around the Tonle Sap.

The impact of climate change has adverse implications for FSN. It is expected that at current rates, the pace of climate change in the next 40 years is likely to be faster than the adaptation of local agricultural methodologies (IFPRI, 2013).

While annual seasonal disasters have tended to be small to medium in scale, with approximately 70 percent of the population living agrarian existences, natural disasters can have devastating consequences on the livelihoods of the majority of Cambodians. The knock-on impact of annual disasters has compounded existing poverty-related development challenges and in seen growing indebtedness and negative coping strategies amongst the most vulnerable, including migration (Humanitarian Response Forum, 2017). Moreover, sustainability of progress could be challenged by economic shocks and natural disasters, and therefore increasing emphasis will need to be placed on risk reduction and resilience building (RGC, 2017).

Challenges in keeping apace or sustaining improvements in access and utilization also remain, with large swathes of the population remaining vulnerable to periodic shocks that can counter these positive gains. Ninety percent of Cambodia's poor live in rural areas and remain vulnerable to livelihood or climate shocks. Illustrating the vulnerability of those who live just above the poverty line, the World Bank found in 2011 that a small shock of some KHR 1,200 per day could cause many near poor households to become poor, and thus double the poverty rate at that time (World Bank 2013).

### Vulnerability and Coping Strategies

Vulnerability analysis by UNDP highlights that shocks such as the global financial and food price crises of 2009 shows the vulnerable to be more susceptible to and disproportionately affected by economic shocks. Between 2004 and 2009, many vulnerable and middle class households slipped into lower wealth ranks (47 and 53 percent respectively). This rather regressive transition could be the result of the 2008 – 2009 food crises that may have partially nullified the important poverty reduction gains achieved up until 2008. Following this, the period 2009-2014 shows an impressive movement upwards of the poor to the vulnerable (52 percent) and middle class (5 percent) categories with few households sliding back into poverty.

Findings from a study on the impact of El Nino drought in 2015-2016 by FAO et al. (2016a) showed 37 percent of surveyed households reporting water shortages, with higher water prices putting disproportionate financial pressure on poor households. Drought-related crop losses led to a 22 percent decline in household paddy and cassava production, and consequently 62 percent of households reported income losses in the preceding year, with 19 percent of household income lost on average; a loss of US\$ 0.19 per person per day for the near poor.

Attempting to mitigate such losses, affected households adopted a series of negative coping strategies, including taking on additional loans averaging US\$ 1,282 each, adding to a growing trend for accumulation of debt amongst poorer households.

While research suggests that taking on loans can help households with existing poverty and/or vulnerability in the short-term, it also raises concerns about the sustainability of poverty reduction gains overtime (Foraci/ UNDP, 2017). Shocks such as El Nino also adversely affected household dietary diversity, which declined significantly from 12 percent of households lacking dietary diversity in 2014 to 18 percent in 2016 (FAO et al, 2016).

To support risk reduction, preparedness and response efforts, the gathering, analysing and dissemination of relevant information on population vulnerabilities by geography, weather monitoring and early warning, and monitoring of price patterns will be required to increase awareness of possible shocks, and guide policy-makers (CARD, 2017b).

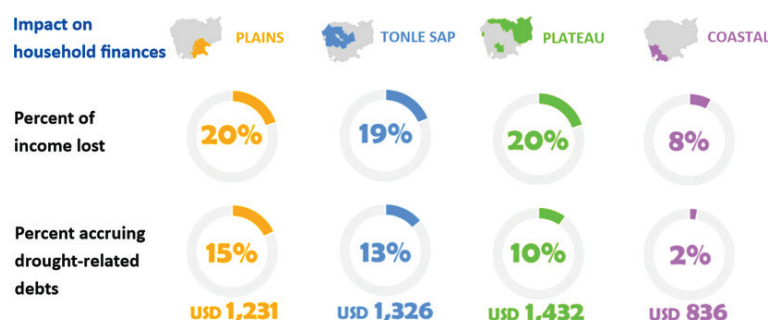


Figure 22: Impact of El Nino on Households Finances (FAO et al., 2016)

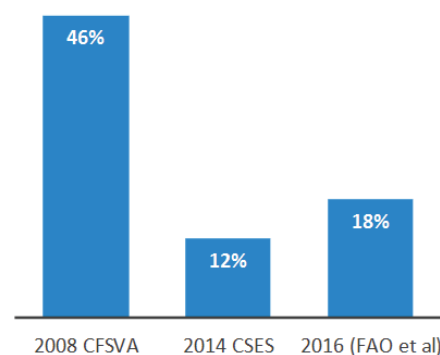


Figure 23: Percentage Households with Inadequate Diets (FAO et al., 2016)

### Strategic Considerations 9

Given Cambodia's high vulnerability to climatic shocks, it is important to protect FSN gains from natural and economic shocks through climate change adaptation, disaster management and shock responsive social protection.

## 5. Working towards Agenda 2030

### Leave No One Behind

The achievement of the SDGs requires that all people irrespective of geographic, demographic, gender, social, economic, cultural, or ethnic background benefit equally from economic growth and development. In fact, sustained economic growth and development will rely on the ability of all Cambodians to participate and contribute to continued economic growth; excluding any groups may hold back Cambodia's transition to middle income status and its graduation from the least developed country characterisation.

Inclusive growth requires explicit identification of those that are left behind by mainstream food security and nutrition strategies. Analysis of existing information



aiming to deliberately identify disparities and inequalities hidden below the surface of national averages helps gain critical insights and inform targeted intervention strategies. Such analysis may include understanding differences in demographic and socio-economic characteristics of those who are most vulnerable (malnutrition determinants), the proportional vulnerabilities between and among groups (prevalence), the absolute burden and contribution to national challenges (number of people affected by selected vulnerabilities), and the overlaying deprivations experienced by particularly vulnerable groups (co-existence of multiple vulnerabilities).

In-depth secondary analysis undertaken with data collected during the 2014 Cambodia Demographic Health Survey (CDHS) found that “in 2014, wealth status was the main socio-economic factor associated with undernutrition and the nutritional status of children was strongly related to those of their mother” (Grefeuille et al., 2016). A similar analysis on the nutritional status of mothers found that “In 2014, contributing factors for thinness were the lowest age, the lowest wealth quintile and anemia. In contrast, overweight was positively related to the older age group, less educated women, women living in urban areas and belonging to the highest wealth quintile, and negatively related to anemia. Antenatal care and delivery conditions improved consistently overtime but were significantly higher in the most educated women, living in urban area and belonging to the richest wealth quintile groups. Consequently, specific interventions have to be directed inside and outside the health sector towards the most vulnerable women, especially the youngest, to reduce the equity gaps between women for nutrition and access and use of prenatal care services” (Grefeuille et al., 2015). Stunted children and children with no certificate or registration are significantly more vulnerable to having higher rates of multiple deprivations compared to non-stunted children (Karpatti et al., 2017).

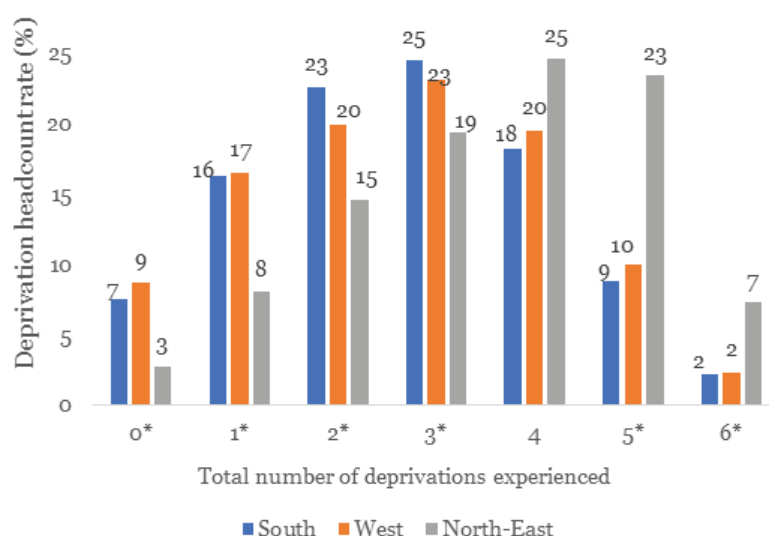


Figure 24: Deprivation Distribution by Region, Children Age 0-4 Years (Karpatti et al., 2017)

Similarly, women continue to face inequity of access with subsequent nutritional implications (FAO, 2016). Continued challenges related to food poverty and nutrition are compounded by related issues of access to livelihood opportunities and public services so that for sustainable development to be assured for the entire population, the scale of these inequities requires redress as part of the “leave no-one behind” agenda to reach those furthest behind first.

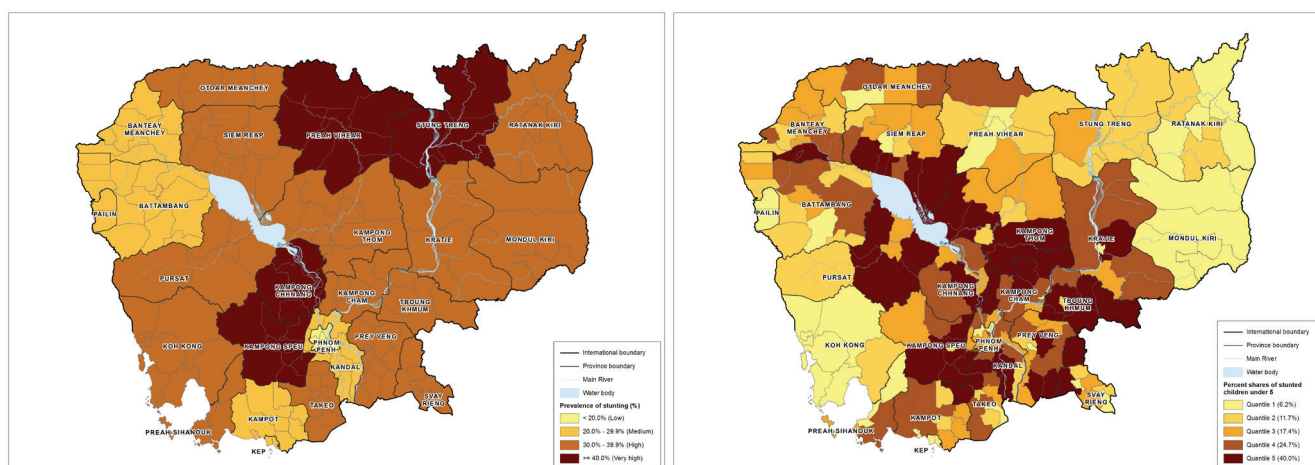


Figure 25: Stunting: Prevalence (CDHS, 2014) vs Estimated Absolute Number of Stunted Children (Commune Database, 2015). Darker colours represent higher stunting.

When reflecting on geographic disparities it appears that economic benefits have accrued more in Phnom Penh rather than in the Plains or Tonle Sap, with income disparities highest in the North East of the country where some of the lowest income households reside (Foraci/UNDP, 2017; WFP, 2017b). A multi-dimensional poverty analysis found that 57.2 percent of children 0-4 years of age nationally experience deprivations from at least 3 of 6 dimensions of multi-dimensional poverty (housing, water sanitation, health, nutrition, Early Childhood Development), while in the North-East this rises to 74.7 percent of children (Karpatti et al., 2017).

Inequality of access has meant that while food is widely available, non-affordability results in inadequate dietary diversity, which is the highest among poorest households. While on average 21 percent of households cannot afford the least expensive, nutritionally adequate diet, this figure ranges from 12 percent in Pursat and Siem Reap to 66 percent in Ratanakiri and Mondulakiri (NIS, 2009b, 2014; von Grebmer, et al., 2014, 2017; FAO, 2017b; WFP, 2017d).

Understanding variations in vulnerability benefits from a reflection on population density. While areas with greatest intensity of malnutrition and/or multi-dimensional poverty need targeted strategies to ensure that those who lag most behind will receive the support they need to thrive and benefit from economic growth opportunities, it is also important to recognize that the largest number of people affected by food security and nutrition may live in areas that do not experience the highest intensity. As a result of larger population numbers, they make up a larger share of the total number of people affected. Different strategies may be applied to ensure that they too are able to access basic services, awareness and behaviour change interventions.

## Nutrition as an SDG Accelerator

Optimal nutrition is essential for achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals, and many SDGs impact nutrition security. Nutrition is hence linked to goals and indicators beyond Goal 2 which addresses hunger. A multi-sectoral nutrition security approach is necessary for success (SUN-CSA, 2017).

Concerns remain on the nutritional front where, at the current trajectory, multiple key SDG targets on reducing malnutrition would not be met. There is a compelling case to prioritise nutrition as an SDG ‘accelerator’ that would promote early achievement of this goal as it will generate positive spill-over effects into areas such as education, health and the availability of a productive and skilled labour force. In fact, beyond SDG2, nutrition is closely associated with 11 SDGs. This positions nutrition as an excellent nodal area to accelerate not only SDG2 but many other development goals whose targets are in some way influenced by the nutritional wellbeing of the people of Cambodia.

Enhancing focus on nutrition in the forthcoming NSFSN 2019-2023 may benefit from a rethink of the existing framework, where rather than being considered as part of the utilization pillar side by side with the other three pillars, nutrition could be central to a future Cambodia specific FSN framework. This would encourage all actions to contribute in a specific or sensitive manner to furthering nutrition targets, and in return ensure greater contribution to the remaining SDG2 targets as well as many others across the SDG spectrum.



Figure 26: Nutrition is Essential for the Success of all the SDGs (SUN-CSN, 2017)

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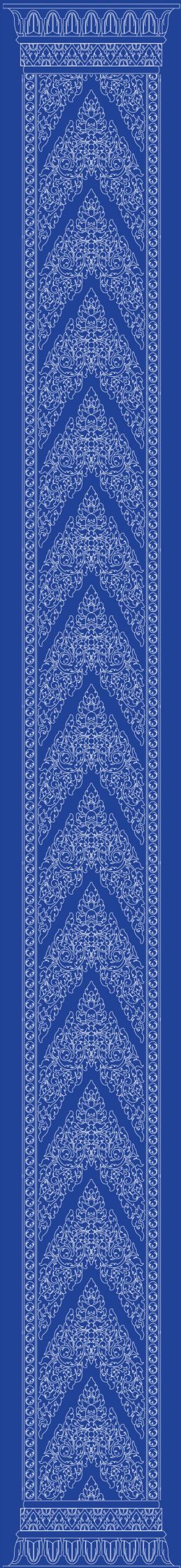
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**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**Nation Religion King**

Mid-Term and Strategic Review of the  
National Strategy for Food Security and  
Nutrition 2014-2018

**III. Strategic Directions Towards 2030**



December 2017

COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT





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## Acknowledgement

His Excellency **Yim Chhay Ly**, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and Chairman of the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-SP&FSN), is pleased to launch the findings of the Mid Term and Strategic Review of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018 (MTRS-NSFSN). In so doing, he is pleased to acknowledge the importance of the contributions and active participation made by the staff of CARD, the line ministries, the sub-national authorities, the community representatives and NGOs who participated in the consultations of the MTRS-NSFSN. In addition, H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** wishes to thank the development partners who have assisted in every aspect of the Review, including the support received from the EU, USAID, GIZ, and UN agencies, including FAO, WFP and UNICEF, and the Civil Society Alliance of the SUN Network led by Helen Keller International. The critical review provided by the World Bank is also very much appreciated.

The work of the formally constituted Advisory Board for the MTSR, chaired by H.E. Mr. **Ngoy Chanphal**, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of CARD was constituted from representatives of CARD and key ministries and development partners, has been fundamental in guiding the process and validating the results. The commitment of Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Ms. **Veena Reddy**, Acting Mission Director for USAID, has been very much appreciated. Many members of the TWG-SP&FSN have participated in the MTSR and their long-standing support is much valued in dealing with ongoing challenges for food security and nutrition in Cambodia. The Food Security and Nutrition Forum has served as a vital means of communicating progress with the review and discussing results.

After extensive consultation and review, the final documents were released by H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Mr. **David Kaatrud**, WFP Regional Director for Asia and Pacific Bureau on 6 February 2018. Three separate documents have been generated for the MTSR to include multiple inputs and these documents have been widely circulated and discussed in draft form. The three documents are also supported by a number of contributed papers and ongoing analysis. The three main components of the MTSR are:

- 1. Progress Inventory 2016**
- 2. Situation Update 2017**
- 3. Strategic Directions Towards 2030**

Whilst these documents are released together, they are provided as separate documents on the grounds that each of these can stand as an independent analysis. As evidenced by these documents, the MTSR has generated important findings

and guidance for the way forward. It serves as a foundation for the drafting of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019-2023 and has given fresh impetus to national efforts to combat malnutrition. The process of consultation and discussion has also served as an important avenue for learning and capacity building at national and sub-national level.

Good progress towards the strategic objectives has been made to the end of 2016. Our directions going forward are clear. The existing strategy serves well to guide actions for the remaining period to the end of 2018. All sectoral policies and programmes should incorporate these directions and each contribute under their identified areas of responsibility and mandates. However, there is a need to strengthen the coordinating mechanisms for this work at national and sub-national levels, especially to ensure the capacity to monitor and evaluate progress is in place by the end of the strategic period. We must also ensure that all parties work together with renewed effort in order to meet the deadline for ending hunger in Cambodia by 2030. We are in a position to set an example globally, by working unfailingly towards that objective, working together with unity under wise leadership of **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the guidance of the Rectangular Strategy, the National Strategic Development Plan and other existing policies, strategies and plans.

## Acronyms

### Government Institutions

CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoH	Ministry of Health
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia

### UN/NGOs/Institutions

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HLPE	High-Level Panel of Experts
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

### Others

BCC	Behavior Change Communication
DM	Disaster Management
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
GDP	Gross domestic product
HDI	Human Development Index
MTSR	Mid-Term and Strategic Review
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSFSN	National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
SUN-CSN	SUN Civil Society Network
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age



## 1. Introduction

The right to food is a fundamental human right recognized by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, enshrined in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by Cambodia in 1992, and supported by on-going United Nations (UN) summits and initiatives including the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 which aims towards zero hunger. The right to food recognizes that ending hunger means ensuring access to nutritious food for the most vulnerable, increasing agricultural production through sustainable and resilient food systems and tackling the multidimensional causes of malnutrition, including health and sanitation.

An ASEAN member, Cambodia is committed to elimination of food insecurity and hunger. The nation has made great strides in improving the food security situation within the country by adopting a multi-sectoral approach to tackling malnutrition and poverty, developing comprehensive strategies and policies and making an effort to mainstream food security and nutrition into different agendas.

Improving food security is an important development priority of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), addressed in the Government's Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase III 2014-2018 (RGC, 2013), which strengthens the government's engagement in the areas of gender equality, nutrition and social protection, and in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018 (RGC, 2014b) formulated to implement the Strategy and articulate it across all national sector policies. To ensure a platform for joint inter-sectorial action to enhance food security and nutrition (FSN), the RGC has entrusted the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) with the development and implementation of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN).

In 2014, the RGC launched the NSFSN 2014-2018 (RGC, 2014a) with the goal that "by 2018, poor and food-insecure Cambodians have substantially improved physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary

2  
ZERO  
HUNGER



### **SDG2: Zero Hunger**

**End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**

- 2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round
- 2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons
- 2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

needs and food preferences and optimize the utilization of this food to keep a healthy and productive life.” This is supported by the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020, and a commitment to SDG 2 under the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025 (RGC, 2016a). Progress is being tracked through review of the NSFSN indicators, the Joint Monitoring Indicators and the localising of SDG indicators that will be concluded by the end of 2017.

With a number of key strategies relating to FSN in Cambodia needing to be reviewed and renewed, a Mid-Term and Strategic

Review (MTSR) of the NSFSN 2014-2018 was launched in April 2017 to allow for a simultaneous reflection on past achievements, analysis of the current FSN context in Cambodia, and to look at how to prepare for the forthcoming strategies. The MTSR involved information gathering through a survey on past achievements, desk reviews, key stakeholder interviews and a series of formal consultations (CARD, 2017b, 2017c) at sub-national and national level, towards the following objectives:

1. Review past achievements under the NSFSN up to 2016.
2. Review challenges and barriers preventing accomplishment of the strategy and ways to resolve these issues.
3. Consider outstanding actions under the strategy as of end 2016 and update plans for completion by 2018.
4. Provide a concise situational analysis of the present situation for FSN built upon a wide-ranging analysis, incorporating cross sectional and multi-stakeholder perspectives.
5. Produce a roadmap towards 2030 and lay the foundations for the NSFSN 2019-2023.
6. Disseminate the results of the MTSR widely.
7. Ensure all data, tools employed and materials assembled for the MTSR are securely stored and widely accessible via a common information platform.

This overview aims to provide a common analysis for alignment of strategies of national and partner strategies.



(SDG 2: Continued)

- 2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality
- 2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed<sup>1</sup>

Source: UN (n.d.)

<sup>1</sup> Sub-goal 2.5 is not covered under the MTSR of the NSFSN.

## 2. Progress to Date

Progress has been made on all fronts in implementing the priority actions for the NSFSN 2014-2018. Virtually all priority actions are underway, although coverage across the country has been uneven. There is strong support for a comprehensive approach to combatting malnutrition. This support extends from the highest level in Cambodia and is reflected in policy statements and high-level directives from the RGC and development partners and concerted actions throughout the country. It is based on the understanding that the basic causes of malnutrition are subject to cross-sectoral influences and that some problems require an integrated approach (integrating agriculture, health, rural development, education etc.)

Cambodia has seen strong economic growth, averaging 7.7% per annum over the past two decades and the country is expecting to continue to maintain the average growth rate at 7% in the medium term. Economic growth, diversification and livelihood improvement have enabled sizeable improvements in food and nutrition security, as reflected in the scoring for the Global Hunger Index 2017 (von Grebmer, et al., 2017). Although still rated as having serious problems with hunger, the Kingdom of Cambodia has experienced relatively rapid improvements and is now approaching the moderate category. In the global rankings, Cambodia has achieved the highest percentage reductions for countries measured as having serious hunger or above, in the scoring of the Global Hunger Index for the period 2000-2017.

*“Cambodia has seen strong economic growth, enabling improvements in food and nutrition security...”*

A strong planning framework and the mechanisms for coordination of development efforts are in place and the RGC calls upon all responsible line ministries, development partners, civil society, and the private sector to continue their cooperation in implementing the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018, the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025, the Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018 (MAFF, 2014), the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020 and other sectoral strategic plans relating to food security and nutrition, to ensure all Cambodian people have improved physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious foods for healthy and productive lives.

### 2.1 Availability

Agricultural production, with a focus on paddy rice and to a lesser degree on secondary crops, has outpaced population growth and demand resulting in improvements in food availability. Cambodia has been self-sufficient in rice production since 1996 facilitating a growing rice export drive, the production of which has increased from some four to almost ten million tonnes between 2000 and 2016 (World Bank, 2017; MAFF, 2017). The dominance of rice in agricultural production means it now accounts for some 72 percent of planted area. Undernourishment has fallen

dramatically over time from a high of 36.7 percent in 1998 to some 14 percent of the population (FAO, 2017a) in 2015 based on the national food balance sheet, and highlighting the combination of improved food production, imports and exports facilitating a shift towards more people meeting their energy requirements.

## 2.2 Access

Alongside improvements in availability, there have been some improvements in access, evidenced by declining poverty rates and sizeable improvements in Cambodia's Human Development Index (HDI). From 1990 to 2015, Cambodia's annual HDI growth rate of 1.84% has outpaced the average in East Asia and the Pacific, currently at 1.35%, making it among the top seven countries in the world with the fastest HDI growth rate and ranking at 143 out of 188 countries. The percentage of Cambodians living under the national poverty line has declined from 53.2% in 2004 to 13.5% in 2014 (MEF, 2016), based on income poverty headcount. Multidimensional poverty headcount stands higher at 31.6% of the population (UNDP, 2016). Cambodia's growth has seen national per capita GDP rise from US\$1,215 in 2015 to US\$1,435 in 2017 (Cabinet of the Prime Minister, 2018), while expenditure per capita has also grown. Spending on food increased by 5.5 percent between 2009 and 2015, while in the same period non-food spending increased by 11 percent. This suggests that there have been improvements in purchasing power, including amongst the poorest segments of society. The positive expenditure growth means that food now makes up a smaller proportion of total expenditure (NIS, 2009).

## 2.3 Utilization

The percentage of households with inadequate dietary diversity has declined significantly from 46 percent in 2008 to 12 percent in 2014 (NIS, 2014). Improvements in income and wealth, increased dietary diversity, education (especially maternal education), expansion of healthcare coverage, access to water and sanitation, and health and nutrition promotion behaviours such as exclusive breastfeeding, particularly in rural areas, serve as a backdrop to improvements in nutritional status (NMCHC, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). In recent years, a more enabling policy environment has also increased emphasis on improving FSN, and with strong support for an integrated approach towards these (RGC, 2014a; MoH, 2014).

Food utilization that is closely related to nutritional outcomes, has also seen some significant progress. Chronic malnutrition (stunting) rates have fallen from 50 percent in 2000 to 32 percent in 2014, on-track against objectives laid out in the NSFSN. In the same period wasting rates fell from 17 to 9.6 percent, while anaemia amongst children under five fell from 62 to 56 percent, and amongst women of reproductive age (15-49 years) from 47 to 45 percent. Alongside that, since 1990, the country has more than halved maternal mortality and achieved nearly universal primary education enrolment (NIS et al., 2015; FAO, 2017a).

## 2.4 Stability

A Disaster Management (DM) Law was passed in 2015, ushering in a framework for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response to support efforts to address shocks from key natural disasters such as flooding and storms. In addition, the RGC has signed up to the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), with commitments to tackle climate related vulnerabilities.

In time of shocks, taking on (additional) debt, often at exorbitant rates, is one of the key negative coping strategies adopted by vulnerable households. RGC introduced an interest charge cap of 18 percent to microfinance loans; previously interest rates could be as high as between 20-30 percent (Leng/NBC, 2016).

## 3. Remaining Issues

Despite the impressive strides towards improved national level growth and progress on FSN, a number of issues remain. These include an unevenness of progress across the country, demographic and socio-economic groups, while Cambodia also still lags behind on a number of human development indicators. Moreover, sustainability of progress could be challenged by economic and disaster shocks, and therefore increasing emphasis will need to be placed on risk reduction and resilience building (CARD, 2017a; RGC, 2017). These issues will need to be tackled in the context of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. While an emphasis will be on SDG 2 – zero hunger, there will need to be clear links with other critical SDGs, and particularly: 1 – no poverty, 3 – good health and wellbeing, 4 – quality education, 5 – gender equality, 6 – clean water and sanitation, 8 – decent work and economic growth, 10 – reduced inequalities, 13 – climate action, and 17 – partnerships.

### 3.1 Availability

From a food availability perspective, while production of rice has grown apace, this narrow production focus has meant limited crop diversification within the country. This limited diversity is reflected in household dietary consumption patterns where, despite increasing availability of food in the markets, rice remains paramount in the diet.

*“while production of rice has grown apace, narrow production focus has meant limited crop diversification...”*

### 3.2 Access

Income distribution and consequently food access remains challenges as the benefits of progress have not yet been equitably distributed. Nationally representative data (except Phnom Penh) collected in December 2016 showed that 80 percent of the population accounts for only 40 percent of the total income, while less than 20 percent have 60 percent of the income (WFP, 2016). Poorer groups have made slower gains than richer groups, with the bottom 50 percent of population living off less than US\$ 2.50 per person per day.

*“... 80 percent of the population accounts for only 40 percent of the total income, while less than 20 percent have 60 percent of the income...”*



Economic benefits have been accrued more in Phnom Penh rather than in the Plains or Tonle Sap regions, with income disparities highest in the North East of the country where some of the lowest income households reside (UNDP, 2017; WFP, 2017b). Inequality of access has meant that while food is widely available, non-affordability results in inadequate dietary diversity. Dietary diversity is lowest among poorest households, where 22 percent of the lowest quintile registered an inadequately diverse diet. In the North East, up to 66 percent of households may not be able to access the most affordable, nutritionally adequate diet (NIS, 2009, 2014; von Grebmer et al., 2014, 2017). Similarly, women continue to face inequity of access with subsequent nutritional implications (FAO, 2017b). Continued challenges related to food poverty and nutrition are compounded by related issues of access to livelihood opportunities and public services. For sustainable development to be assured for the entire population, the scale of these inequities requires redress as part of the “leave no-one behind” agenda.

### 3.3 Utilization

Concerns also remain on the nutritional front where, at the current trajectory, multiple key SDG targets on reducing malnutrition would not be met. There is a compelling case to prioritise nutrition as an SDG ‘accelerator’ that would promote early achievement of this goal. This will generate positive spill-over effects into areas such as education, health and the availability of a productive and skilled labour force. Undernutrition remains a problem for some 24 percent of the children under the age of five years, while stunting still affects one-third of children, with the associated inter-generational impact. Acute malnutrition (or “wasting”) has remained steadily high with 10 percent of children wasted. This rate is well above that envisaged by SDG 2 Target 2.2 and above Middle-Income Country peers. Some 45 percent of the US\$266 million annual economic burden due to malnutrition is estimated to be due to stunting, while just under three percent is associated with acute malnutrition. The economic case for tackling stunting is therefore very evident, and it also remains essential to continue efforts to treat wasting, as evidence suggests this can adversely affect child growth and development. As stunting and wasting share many common risk factors, policy efforts could therefore facilitate links towards more integrated programming (NIS et al., 2014; NMCHC, 2016; CARD et al., 2013). Without increasing efforts and accelerated impacts in dealing with these stubborn problems of undernutrition, there is a risk that multiple key SDG targets for reducing malnutrition will not be met.

*“...there is a risk that multiple key SDG targets for reducing malnutrition will not be met...”*

A mother’s nutrition and behaviour, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, as well as the challenges in accessing sufficient food, can adversely impact a child’s nutritional status. The high nutrient demands of pregnancy also make pregnant women more vulnerable to inadequate nutritional status, and data suggests that dietary diversity which is poor in normal times, show little improvements after pregnancy (NMCHC, 2016; WFP, 2017d). Currently, the NSFSN goal for undernutrition among

## Nutrition as an SDG accelerator

*Optimal nutrition is essential for achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals, and many SDGs impact nutrition security. Nutrition is hence linked to goals and indicators beyond Goal 2 which addresses hunger. A multi-sectoral nutrition security approach is necessary for success (SUN-CSA, 2017).*

*Enhancing focus on nutrition would encourage all actions to contribute in a specific or sensitive manner to furthering nutrition targets, and in return ensure greater contribution to the remaining SDG2 targets as well as many others across the SDG spectrum.*



women of reproductive age (WRA) is not on-track with a 14 percent prevalence of undernutrition in 2014; above the 8 percent target for 2015. Anaemia also remains stubbornly high, averaging at 45 percent amongst women, and 56 percent amongst children. According to the 2016 Global Nutrition Report, Cambodia ranks 160 out of 185 countries with the highest WRA anaemia, which is linked to physiology, rather than health and diet, and therefore potential solutions remain unclear for the country (IFPRI, 2016; NIS et al., 2001, 2015; WFP, 2017d; Wieringa et al., 2016).

Socioeconomic inequities and access to basic services, such as health, water and sanitation, and education drive many of the deprivations that can contribute to malnutrition (NMCHC, 2016). While access to water and sanitation facilities has improved, sanitation practices continue to require improvement to reflect the standards of countries with Low Middle Income Country status. The proportion of the population using an improved drinking water source rose from some 23 percent in 1990, to 75.5 percent in 2015 and the proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility rose from 2.9 to 42 percent in the same period (WHO & UNICEF, 2015; World Bank, 2017).

Moreover, the key to strengthening investment in human capital is through nutrition as well as education. Nutritional deficiencies can affect educational attainment and reduce contribution in the work place, as well as add to strains on the health sector. Investment in education can enhance awareness and reduce negative impacts (CARD et al., 2013). Cambodia has made positive progress in improving access to primary education, particularly in rural areas. Net primary enrolment increased from 81 percent in 2001 to 98.4 percent in 2015. The quality of education requires improvement as exemplified by poor learning outcomes with some 39 percent of grade 6 pupils found to have below basic proficiency in reading in Khmer (MoEYS, 2015). Limited classroom hours compared to peers and limited numbers of adequately trained teachers require address. There is also a relatively high, though largely static annual dropout rate at some 10 percent at primary and 20 percent at lower secondary level, with concerns on attendance and absenteeism. The RGC is increasing the national education budget, with an emphasis on teacher recruitment, training and retention.

### 3.4 Stability

Challenges in keeping pace or sustaining improvements in access and utilization also remain, with large swathes of the population remaining vulnerable to periodic shocks that can counter these positive gains. Ninety percent of Cambodia's poor live in rural areas and remain vulnerable to livelihood or climate shocks. Illustrating the vulnerability of those who live just above the poverty line, the World Bank found in 2011 that a small shock of some KHR 1,200 per day could cause many near poor households to become poor, and thus double the poverty rate at that time (World Bank 2013).

Findings from a study on the impact of El Nino drought in 2015-2016 (FAO et al., 2016) included 37 percent of surveyed households reporting water shortages, with higher water prices putting disproportionate financial pressure on poor households. Drought-related crop losses led to a 22 percent decline in household paddy and cassava production, and consequently 62 percent of households reported income losses in the preceding year, with 19 percent of household income lost on average; a loss of US\$ 0.19 per person per day for the near poor. Attempting to mitigate such losses, affected households took on additional loans averaging US\$

1,282 each, adding to a growing trend for accumulation of debt amongst poorer households. While research suggests that taking on loans can help households with existing poverty and/or vulnerability in the short-term, it also raises concerns about the sustainability of poverty reduction gains overtime (UNDP, 2017). Shocks such as El Nino also adversely affected household dietary diversity, which declined significantly. The percentage of households lacking dietary diversity increased from 12 percent in 2014, to 18 percent in 2016. Data from a vulnerability analysis also highlighted the challenge of global shocks, such as the global financial and food price crises. These combined crises also contributed to a reversal of progress for wasting, which increased from 8 to 11 percent between 2005 and 2010 (NIS et al., 2011, 2015; UNDP, 2017).

Finally, while there has been strong support for an increasingly integrated approach to tackling FSN, findings from a series of national and sub-national consultations (CARD, 2017b, 2017c) suggest the need for further strengthening of institutional arrangements to implement the NSFSN. These consultations recommended a multi-sectoral approach, including: (1) consolidating, prioritising and sequencing its current 64 priority actions and over 120 indicators; (2) strengthening sub-national linkages to ensure ground-level implementation; (3) securing increasingly local funding to ensure priorities are resourced sustainably; and, (4) shifting the focus of achievement towards outcome-oriented results with a lesser emphasis on activities and outputs. These issues are addressed in Section 6 below.

## 4. Emerging Issues

As well as on-going concerns, a number of new FSN issues and opportunities are emerging associated with the socioeconomic and climatic changes occurring in the country. The drivers of economic growth to date have centred on the export of goods and services, particularly garments and tourism. Export growth has been facilitated by low-skilled inexpensive labour and migration, allowing rapid change from a low base. Going forward, there is an opportunity to build on this growth. On the risk-side, in the future, these drivers may not be as effective without enhanced investment in human capital, including a particular emphasis on nutrition, to maintain productivity and competitiveness (World Bank, 2017; WFP, 2017b). The rise of wage labour has also broken the traditionally strong link between households and owned food production. Linked to that, inequities that limit access to food, as well as challenges in food utilization, will need to be tackled to address underlying poverty and vulnerability.

*“...there is an opportunity to build on this growth. On the risk-side, in the future, these drivers may not be as effective without enhanced investment in human capital...”*

Rural to urban migration accounts for 56 percent of total migration, predominantly to Phnom Penh, and has been driven primarily by economic factors that have helped facilitate growth and poverty reduction (UNDP, 2017; WFP, 2017a). However, the increasing pace of urbanization has also seen the growth of poorer outer city areas, polarizing urban life and seeing some of the poorest and richest people live side by side. For the urban poor, access to water, sanitation and health facilities are sometimes constrained, even though somewhat better than in rural areas. As the pace of urbanisation continues, this is expected to place increasing strain on already stretched access to services (WFP, 2017a; UNFPA, 2014). A more sophisticated measure of well-being and/or poverty – such as a Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – may prove more useful to policy makers in the future now that income poverty has reached historically low levels but vulnerability remains a risk.

Cambodia has also seen changing dietary practices toward more convenience foods, an increasing trend towards obesity especially among women, and heightened risks of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). This trend is partly linked to, but not solely an urban trend. The NSFSN 2014-2018 goal for over-nutrition among WRA is a target of 12 percent for 2018, although this stood at 18 percent in 2014 (NIS et al., 2001, 2015; NMCHC, 2016). Urbanization also has had some adverse implications for the nutritional well-being of children, with rates of exclusive breastfeeding lowest in Phnom Penh (77 percent). Certain urban environments, such as garment factories that may not have enabling legal frameworks or facilities, could also serve as an opportunity for enhancing health and nutrition awareness and practices amongst an extensive audience.

The impact of climate change has some expected adverse implications for FSN. It is expected that at current rates, the pace of climate change in the next 40 years is likely to be faster than the adaptation of local agricultural methodologies (IFPRI, 2013). Cambodia faces high risk from the impact of natural disasters, ranking ninth on World Risk Index and standing at 41 of 171 countries in terms of vulnerability (Garschagen et al., 2016; WFP, 2017b), with the most vulnerable populations residing around the Tonle Sap Basin. This risk is exacerbated by on-going degradation of natural resources. Official estimates suggest forest cover declined from nearly 60 percent in 2006 to less than 47 percent in 2014 (RGC, 2015; World Bank, 2017).

Externally financed projects have largely supported efforts towards softer developments and behaviour change in recent years, in fields such as water and sanitation hygiene (WASH), nutrition and environment, while locally financed expenditure has traditionally been allocated towards infrastructure projects. Cambodia's on-going economic development may be accompanied by shift from external grants to loans, as part of the continuing evolution of development assistance for the country. Moving forward, creative financing options from domestic and non-traditional external sources could be looked at to bolster key public expenditures for on-going development equity.



## 5. Strategies to Address Food Security and Nutrition Challenges

The strategies recommended in this section arise through analysis of information gathered by desk review, key stakeholder interviews and a series of consultations at sub-national and national level (CARD, 2017b, 2017c). Parallel efforts will have to continue on multiple fronts to further improve food security and nutrition. These will have to be prioritised and sequenced, with emphasis placed on accelerators of change. Prior efforts have largely focussed on strengthening availability, with a particular emphasis on rice production. There is a need to increase the focus on improving food access through more equitable and inclusive growth as well as enhanced social protection measures, and to strengthen utilization through enhanced nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive measures (UNICEF, 2015).<sup>1</sup>

*“There is a need to increase focus on improving food access through more equitable and inclusive growth as well as enhanced social protection measures, and to strengthen utilization through enhanced nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive measures...”*

These will in turn act as enablers for improved FSN. To facilitate that shift, efforts regarding food availability will have to move towards improving food diversity and quality, and a more nutrition-sensitive agriculture. While the context of the current NSFSN will continue to be shaped by the Food Security Framework, moving forward, it is suggested that a modified framework reflective of new paradigms could be considered. To ensure a more focused national strategy, its emphasis could also shift to priority cross-cutting themes that add value by bringing key stakeholders together, while line Ministry strategies could focus on taking forward specific sectoral areas of work. Strengthening the institutional arrangements and capacity building for improving FSN will need to underpin these.

<sup>1</sup> “Nutrition-specific interventions address the immediate causes of undernutrition, like inadequate dietary intake and some of the underlying causes like feeding practices and access to food. Nutrition-sensitive interventions can address some of the underlying and basic causes of malnutrition by incorporating nutrition goals and actions from a wide range of sectors. They can also serve as delivery platforms for nutrition-specific interventions.”

## 5.1 Availability: Enhance Focus on Quality, Diversity, Resilient and Nutrition-sensitive Agriculture



### Sub-goal

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

### Strategic Considerations for Cambodia

- Diversify agricultural production - nutritious food production
- Improve value chain in production & processing – including fortification
- Improve food quality and safety (import, export & local market)
- Promote efficient, value-adding sustainable agricultural techniques
- Improve availability/stability and efficiency in use of inputs
- Review export-drive focus including comparative advantages

Building on gains made in agriculture over the lifetime of the current NSFSN, emphasis moving forward will require a shift in focus from increasing production quantity to quality, with enhanced diversification of production to more nutritious foods and towards more nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Diversification and improving quality can raise the incomes of smallholder farmers, increase resilience to shocks and thus improve the access dimension of food security. At the same time, diversification will improve the nutrition dimension for the population in general by increasing the availability of products rich in micronutrients. Improvements in food quality and safety (in both agriculture and the food industry) will be needed to support these changes. These are integral to nutrition-sensitive agriculture that addresses the underlying causes of malnutrition, by supporting the availability, access to and utilization of diverse, safe and nutritious foods, while simultaneously providing necessary income and other resources for producers and supporting human and environmental health, including accommodating for caregiving time.

*“...a shift in focus is required from quantity to quality, with enhanced diversification of production to more nutritious foods and towards more nutrition-sensitive agriculture...”*

Improvements in the value chain, including enhancing post-harvest storage, processing and fortification efforts, and promoting more efficient value-adding sustainable agricultural techniques and food systems (RGC, 2016a), will facilitate the production of more high-value products. To assist this, efforts will have to be made to address the constraints faced by farmers in terms of access to credit, technology, and wider markets. The RGC has already established policies for providing agricultural credit and extension services for better technology and farming practices, and efforts are being made to cap interest rates for micro-credit. Coverage and access to extension services and credit for smallholders can be improved to ensure better access to inputs, infrastructure and technology. Strengthened agricultural cooperatives can play an enabling role in this.

High levels of risk to natural and economic crises necessitate strengthening resilience in production systems. This can be achieved through more diverse agriculture, enhancing the use of monitoring systems for weather, price and FSN to prepare for potential shocks. A wider review of the current export-drive, as well as Cambodia's comparative advantages in production, would assist in strengthening agricultural resilience. Strengthening the existing food reserve system and access to emergency credit will support preparedness for emergency response efforts when required.

Finally, an emphasis on women's empowerment and education is integral to promotion of nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Recent research has highlighted that women's empowerment can support nutrition-sensitive agriculture, including through a greater likelihood of households adopting greater diversity of production when women are empowered. In addition, production diversity combined with nutrition-related behavioural change communication (BCC), increases the likelihood of dietary diversification for the household. While the NSFSN and related policies reference the issue of gender, they require a gender analysis of the current situation of men, women, boys and girls, and considerations that enable engagement in decision-making to fully realise the benefits of a gender emphasis (FAO, 2017b; WFP, 2017e; MoH, 2014).

## 10 Themes for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture in Cambodia

1. **Promoting diversified food systems** that are nutrient-dense, climate-resilient, economically viable and locally available or adaptable, **and integrated agriculture** including a mix of crop, animal and fish production to enhance diversity;
2. **Homestead food production** for smallholders to produce a range of healthy food all year;
3. **Strengthening market access and links for smallholders;**
4. School based programmes on food production and consumption to strengthen **nutritional awareness;**
5. Enhancing **consumer nutrition and food safety awareness** through use of food standards;
6. **Supporting mothers'** awareness of diverse safe foods and access to child care;
7. **Enhancing women's empowerment and education** to facilitate their participation;
8. **Sustainable fisheries** through improved small-scale aquaculture and protection of the natural resource base
9. **Improving preservation, storage and processing** to retain nutritional value, improve shelf-life and safety;
10. **Enhanced integration between agriculture, health and WASH sectors** for improved nutrition.

### Availability

#### Link with access

- Improve livelihoods of rural poor and smallholders

#### Link with utilization

- Enhance nutrition-sensitive agriculture

#### Link with stability

- Enhance food production and price monitoring system
- Promote resilience in production systems
- Strengthen food reserve

## Gender and FSN

*Women and girls play critical roles in the food system, in the production, processing, preparation, consumption and distribution of food. Gender inequalities are evident in the way that women and girls having lower levels of education, lack of economic empowerment and decision-making power, suffer higher rates of trafficking, migration, gender-based violence, limited access to productive resources. Such inequalities combined with the undervaluation of women's contributions are major factors undermining food security.*

*To promote gender alignment of FSN policies, a key action to ensure alignment is to conduct gender analysis to inform policy development, which should take into consideration:*

- *Understanding key factors such as social norms around decision-making, division of labour, impacts of unpaid work*
- *Designing gender markers and indicators that measure the differences in participation, benefits, outcomes and impacts for women, men, boys and girls, changes in gender relations; and*
- *Collecting sex and age disaggregated data to understand different impacts and issues for men, women, boys and girls, and inform opportunities to promote women's empowerment.*

*Source: WFP (2017e)*

## 5.2 Access: More Equitable Access to Food (Leave no-one behind)



### Sub-goal

**2.1** *By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round*

### Strategic Considerations for Cambodia

- *Increase attention to access to food (affordability, resources)*
- *Address access inequalities – leave no one behind, social groups, gender, intra-household dynamics*
- *Review intervention strategies based on proportional, absolute and layered vulnerabilities*
- *Enhancing informed choices of food –dietary diversity*
- *Enhance social safety nets and ensure ongoing link between FSN and social protection*

With extensive improvements in food availability, increased attention will be required to strengthen access to food particularly for the most vulnerable, in line with SDG 2 Target 1, “by 2030 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round” (UN, 2016; RGC, 2016a). Food access refers not only to the resources required to acquire an affordable diverse diet, including

decent employment and livelihood opportunities, but also to the wider right to food, gender and decision-making in food access. Access is at times misunderstood as an extension of food availability, and it is therefore recommended that in future strategy this aspect is considered separately. Issues of household access to food as well as dietary diversity and utilization, have now become the key issues of food and nutrition insecurity in Cambodia, and should serve as the axes of future strategy.

Addressing access inequalities, will need to form a key part of the vision to Leave No-one Behind, and includes improving access by geography, social/ethnic groups and within households. This will require a more in-depth targeting analysis to ensure support is in areas where access is most constrained in terms of population numbers, prevalence of Multi-Dimensional Poverty is high and nutrition indicators poor. To enhance purchasing power of the poorest and most vulnerable households and maintain the gains in poverty reduction, there needs to be concerted longer-term investment in human capital in the form

of improved access to resources, quality education, improved health and nutrition. In the shorter-term, emphasis will need to be on enhancing livelihoods for the rural poor and the vision to realise a 100 percent increase in smallholder productivity and income (RGC, 2016a), strengthening social safety nets, and in parallel enhancing informed choice of food purchases to ensure affordable dietary diversity across all food groups, including animal source foods.

Social protection and safety net programmes are an increasingly important and recognised means of supporting FSN improvements. The recent National Social Protection Policy Framework has provided the policy context for this, and with implementation in early stages, it is necessary to: (a) appropriate resource-allocation and reach to the most vulnerable, (b) further clarify the implementation arrangements to ensure appropriate accountabilities, (c) enhance links with shock-preparedness and response to enable the most vulnerable households to cope better with shocks, and (d) clarify provisions for the urban poor require clarification. Strengthening of

#### Targeting could focus:

- Where there is high prevalence of vulnerabilities;
- Where the absolute burden is highest (i.e. where due to higher population density, the absolute numbers affected are higher); or
- Where there is a high intensity of challenges – for example where multiple overlays of deprivation apply.

#### National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF)

*The RGC has adopted the NSPPF 2016-2025 to promote a strong social protection system and provide resilient protection for every citizen. With regards to FSN, the policy seeks to provide assistance including emergency responses (e.g. food supplies in times of crisis), protection of pregnant women and children (e.g. improving nutrition), and school feeding programme using locally grown food products (RGC, 2016b).*



social protection and safety nets therefore requires more sophisticated measuring and monitoring systems to understand the multiple dimensions of vulnerability and their triggers. This can then inform programming along a parallel track of enhancing the shock responsiveness of both the social protection system and of humanitarian response mechanisms for the protection of the more vulnerable.

Key social expenditures around health and education often tip the balance for the most vulnerable families. Cambodia still has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the region (161 per 100,000 live births in 2015) (NIS, et al., 2001, 2015). A WFP (2017e) study also found that major health expenditures after the El Nino droughts, were the most likely factor tipping households into debt. While Government spending on health and education is on the increase, standing at around 1.3 and 2.1 percent of GDP respectively in 2015, it remains heavily dependent on external funding for service delivery. School based social assistance in the form of meals and scholarship is receiving increasing attention to support regular access to schools for the most vulnerable, but further expansion would be required to meet the need.

Access	<i>Link with availability</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve livelihoods of rural poor and smallholders</li> </ul>
	<i>Link with utilization</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance understanding of nutritional impact of limited access</li> <li>• Enhance understanding of prioritised/convenience access</li> </ul>
	<i>Link with stability</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance food production and price monitoring system</li> <li>• Promote resilience</li> <li>• Shock responsiveness of social protection system and enhance humanitarian response mechanisms</li> </ul>

### 5.3 Utilization: Place Nutrition at the Forefront and Address Emerging Challenges



#### Sub-goal

*2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons*

#### Strategic Considerations for Cambodia

- Improve access to WASH, social and health services and associated behavior change
- Improve infant, young child and maternal feeding practices
- Lifecycle approach to nutrition; first 1000 days, (pre) school-aged children, adolescents, etc.
- Address the double burden of malnutrition and increasing non-communicable diseases
- 'Nutrition = investment in human capital': enhance evidence and awareness for decision-makers & advocates
- Enhancing communication strategies and messaging.

The Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020, complemented more recently by the National Action Plan for Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025, have sought to increase emphasis on improved nutrition towards meeting SDG 2 target 2.2: “By 2030, to end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons”. During sequencing of CSDG implementation, nutrition should therefore be identified as an ‘accelerator’ and accorded the highest priority so that it makes a further positive contribution to SDGs 3 (health), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), 9 (industry) and 10 (inequality). Making the case for nutrition as an investment in human capital will be critical for resourcing to reflect this prioritization. This will require further raising awareness of nutrition issues amongst decision-makers and information-providers. In parallel, the specifics and implementing of a national nutrition programme would need to be clarified, with clear links to improved food security and access to water and sanitation, as well as finalising its costing and securing funding, while ensuring clear accountabilities.

*“During sequencing of CSDG implementation, nutrition should therefore be identified as an ‘accelerator’ and accorded the highest priority so that it makes a further positive contribution to SDGs 3 (health), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), 9 (industry) and 10 (inequality).”*

Nutrition-specific strategies to address malnutrition must build on an understanding of the complex and multidimensional underlying causes of malnutrition. The rates of malnutrition vary extensively by geography and population density, and are impacted by economic and socio-cultural factors, a mother’s nutritional status and (often recurring) shocks that are both natural and economic. At a broader level, there is a need for a continued focus on maternal health and prevention efforts, such as ensuring that pregnant and lactating mothers are adequately nourished, and for nutrition education and counselling for pregnant women. Simultaneously, efforts to address high stunting and wasting prevalence should continue to focus on children receiving exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life and adequate complementary feeding, in addition to breastfeeding, for children aged 6 to 23 months (CARD et al., 2013; WFP, 2017d).

As noted above, economic challenges of access can be mitigated through promoting agricultural diversification as well as improving availability of micronutrient-fortified complementary and staple foods at affordable prices. The latter requires additional efforts to strengthen and implement legislation around fortification programmes (e.g. salt iodization amongst others).

There is also a need to improve access to basic health (preventative and curative), education, water and sanitation. The nutritional status of children and adults alike is highly influenced by the quality of water, sanitation, and hygiene, of which the most progress has been made in water access, though improvements in water quality testing are required to ensure enhanced safety.

Socio-cultural practices also need to be addressed through nutrition-specific interventions that include enhancing BCC messaging and strategies on nutrition (including controlled advertising particularly around the consumption of salt, sugar, fat, the use of role-models etc.), improved feeding and sanitation practices. This is particularly true in the case of stunting, which is prevalent in both areas of low and high non-affordability of food, highlighting the importance of behavioural change, if the vision of reaching zero stunted children less than two years of age is to be reached by 2030 (RGC, 2016a).

The current focus is on the first 1000 days. While there is a continuing need to invest in the early years, this will need to be expanded to a lifecycle approach to nutrition to protect the investments made in the first 1000 days. This will require simultaneous efforts for other target groups, such as (pre)school-aged children and adolescents in particular, given high levels of teenage pregnancies.

Undernutrition prevalence rates remain high throughout the country, but are particularly high in the Plateau areas of the North East. However, higher population density along the Tonle Sap also means higher absolute numbers, for example concerning stunting. Therefore, smart intervention strategies will be required to ensure limited funds can address the needs in areas where absolute numbers affected are highest, as well as in those of highest prevalence.

As well as on-going efforts to target high stunting levels, serious attention must be paid to the problem of acute malnutrition (wasting) among children under five, which has shown little improvement over the years. The RGC provides guidance on treatment of both moderate and severe acute malnutrition, though geographic coverage requires further improvement.

Finally, an additional strand of strategy will be to tackle changing dietary practices around convenience food consumption, the increasing problem of overweight and the rise in NCDs. These are linked to rapid urbanisation, the excessive consumption of rice in the diet and growing consumption of snack foods particularly amongst children. This is primarily associated with women of reproductive age in urban areas, but is also growing in rural areas and cutting across the social divide. In urban areas 22.5 percent of women were overweight or obese compared to 17 percent in rural areas, and 2 percent of children under 5 years (NMCHC, 2016; NIS et al., 2015; WFP, 2017d).

Based on the critical nutrition indicators, key target groups identified in consultation with stakeholders included children and pregnant and lactating women throughout the first 1000 days, (pre)school age children and adolescent girls. However, recognising the key role that men play in their families and the growing role of the elderly as caregivers in place of migrating parents, these will also need to be targeted as part of awareness-raising efforts.

Utilization	<i>Link with availability</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutrition-sensitive agriculture</li> <li>• Nutritionally-enhanced foods including fortification (e.g. salt-iodisation amongst others)</li> </ul>
	<i>Link with access</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance awareness of affordable diet</li> </ul>
	<i>Link with stability</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued access to services, minimising disruption to services caused by shocks (e.g. floods, drought etc)</li> </ul>

## 5.4 Stability: Protect Availability, Access and Utilization from Shocks and Stresses through Risk-reduction and Social Protection Measures.



### Sub-goal

*2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality*

### Strategic Consideration for Cambodia

- Improve shock-responsiveness of Social Protection mechanisms with a view to FSN
- Increase focus on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR), including protection against environmental degradation
- Continue to strengthen disaster management (risk reduction, preparedness and response) mechanisms for all possible shocks (incl. climate, economic, health etc)
- Enhance community resilience to shocks

With Cambodia susceptible to both natural and economic shocks, on-going efforts will be required to improve implementation and the shock-responsiveness of Social Protection mechanisms with a view to protecting food security and nutrition attainments, while simultaneously enhancing community resilience to climate and manmade shocks. Current low awareness and coverage of social assistance and social insurance mechanisms<sup>2</sup> will have to be coupled with the expansion of their resourcing and implementation arrangements. Increasing migration trends

<sup>2</sup> Social Assistance programmes include: 1. The Food Reserve, 2. Nutrition programmes for pregnant women and children, 3. Primary education scholarships, 4. the school feeding programme, and 5. vocational training. Social Insurance programmes include the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), as well as specific Funds for Civil Servants Veterans and People with Disabilities, and the Health Equity Fund (HEF), to protect against income insecurity

have acted as a coping mechanism for many, and contributed valuable resources to families through remittances, with some further analysis required on the impact of migration on social protection. The National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2015 has the goal of developing a strategic plan for the RGC to ensure income security and reduce the economic and financial vulnerability of its citizens.

With rapid urbanisation and infrastructure expansion, it will be critical to implement robust urban planning and strengthen the resilience of Cambodia's infrastructure, including constructing flood-resilient roads, adopting minimum building standards, updating urban plans, and raising the platforms of wells and sanitation facilities to prevent flooding during the rainy season. Simultaneously the maintenance of natural resources will need to be strengthened through the sustainable management of protected areas and forests, as a foundation for climate resilience.

The framework for disaster management (DM) has been laid out through the Law on Disaster Management 2015, however, clarity for its implementation requires the passage of supporting sub-decrees to clarify accountabilities and secure associated budget towards implementation.

The latter will require increased focus on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR), including protection against environmental degradation, as well as strengthening national and sub-national mechanisms for DM (risk reduction, preparedness and response) for all possible shocks (climate, economic, health shocks etc).

To support risk reduction, preparedness and response efforts, the gathering, analysing and dissemination of relevant information on population vulnerabilities by geography, weather monitoring and early warning, and monitoring of price patterns will be required to increase awareness of possible shocks, and guide policy-makers.

Stability	<i>Link with availability</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Monitoring and early warning of weather, price patterns and increase awareness of possible shocks</i></li> <li>• <i>Enhance resilience of farming systems (e.g. through production diversification, irrigation improvement)</i></li> </ul>
	<i>Link with access</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Enhance social protection safety nets and awareness of these</i></li> </ul>
	<i>Link with utilization</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure adequate water and health conditions</i></li> <li>• <i>Uninterrupted access to health and social services</i></li> <li>• <i>Safeguard child feeding</i></li> </ul>



## 6. Food Security and Nutrition Governance Arrangements

Food security and nutrition issues remain key concerns in Cambodia and critical to human capital development. To facilitate coordination of these cross-cutting issues, CARD was established to provide oversight and lead on the NSFSN. The NSFSN serves both as policy framework and strategy, and moving forward requires a clear direction align with related documents such as ministry strategies, the National Action Plan for Zero Hunger Challenges in Cambodia 2016-2025 and the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020. The increasing focus on nutrition has been a relatively recent development in policy terms, with emphasis now required to place it at the forefront of implementation efforts. Concurrently, there is a need to ensure that the interlinked nature of food security and nutrition is understood. Wider trends related to livelihoods, employment, migration and urbanization also need to be taken into account to understand the full policy context and ensure coherent response.

Currently the NSFSN has over 60 priority actions and over 100 related indicators. To aid priority setting these could be narrowed down to a few core cross-cutting priorities that are sequenced over time, and a smaller combination of indicators. This will allow articulation of line ministry strategies and monitoring of more detailed sectoral activities. To enable policy realisation, implementation arrangements for the cross-cutting NSFSN and related strategies need further strengthening by ensuring that the RGC is firmly in the driving seat, agreeing areas where there is added value from integrated work and where individual line ministries can move forward independently. Clear accountabilities for line ministries must be articulated and focal points empowered to action these. Cross-cutting horizontal priorities could include: (1) strengthening targeting to leave no one behind, (2) promoting a “whole of society engagement”, (3) strengthening domestic, public and private financing of the priority areas identified above, (4) enhancing knowledge management on FSN to ensure informed and evidence-based decision-making, and (5) mobilizing multi-sectoral support for selected cross-cutting initiatives such as fortification, and improved water quality and sanitation.

Strong support has been built for an integrated approach, allowing progress against the NSFSN on all fronts. To build on this, priority actions need to be costed and resourced both in human and financial terms, with domestic planning and resourcing processes aligned to ensure this. Creative domestic financing approaches will need to be galvanized and complemented by external assistance that continues to acknowledge nutrition and social protection issues in Cambodia. There are opportunities for building creative domestic financing solutions through stronger government budget allocation, innovative public-private partnerships, and incentivizing remittances to be channelled into productive investments that promote wider household food security. To ensure appropriate resourcing, strategies need to be appropriately

costed. Currently this has only been done for a few areas; the Fast Track Roadmap for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020 was recently costed at approximately USD 50 million, with only some 30 percent of funds secured towards this. Similarly, for the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Public Investment Program (PIP) budget for 2018-2020 of USD 275 million, only some USD 42.4 million has been committed. External funding through concessional loans from financial institutions such as IFAD and ADB represents more than 50 percent of the required total. The NSFSN itself does not have associated budget, and resourcing for CARD is limited (WFP, 2017c).

Effective implementation also requires strengthening of implementation arrangements at sub-national level. Current emphasis of the NSFSN is at national level, with no sub-national arrangements in existence. Decentralisation efforts underway though provincial governance structures can be further built on to in cooperate FSN issues, coordinating with provincial line departments and beyond. Key to this will be to ensure civil society engagement, to strengthen public services through community-based approaches, including for example, building on existing volunteer structures.

Cambodia has taken an important step by joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in July 2014, with efforts underway to build clear strategy and accounts of efforts to achieve the targets. Moving forward a “whole of society approach” will facilitate engagement of all relevant stakeholders. Formally appointed and authorised focal points are needed to lead or engage in the process at national and sub-national level. Policy-makers and administrators need to be engaged, capacitated and empowered in their appropriate space, for example, parliamentarians, governors, commune councils. More effective engagement with the private sector is required to raise awareness and scope out potential resources (technical, material, financial, capacities) and partnerships. For example to enhance awareness in the garments industry or scope out means to strengthen implementation of food fortification legislation and policies (WFP, 2017f). These need to be in parallel with efforts to reach out to the media to encourage informed reporting and academia to support research efforts.

To fully enable a coordinated multi-level and cross-sectoral approach, information gathering, analysis and dissemination will need to be strengthened and made available through a common platform, building on the expanding access to technologies across Cambodia and ensuring capacity building of staff at all levels. Improved, sustainable FSN results will require a scaling up of awareness raising including through mass media, schools and community mechanisms.

### *A Holistic FS Framework*

*Global effort is underway to adapt the framework for Food Security allowing it to reflect emerging trends and the complexity and interconnectedness of multiple factors. A new framework outlined in the recent report on nutrition and food systems, by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE, 2017) could provide a more holistic approach to reflect the evolving context in Cambodia. The framework provides a theory of change well suited to future strategic planning and something currently under-developed in the existing strategy. The basis of food security and the alignment with the SDGs are reflected in this framework.*

## 7. Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

With strong support for a comprehensive approach to combatting food insecurity and malnutrition, and sizeable progress made on all fronts in implementing the priority actions for the NSFSN 2014-2018, this positive trajectory needs to be maintained moving forward. At this critical juncture, investments in combatting malnutrition will serve to accelerate progress in other areas and to sustain economic growth. Multiple policies and strategies relating to food security and nutrition are in place, and there is strong commitment to place nutrition at the forefront of efforts. This review confirms that the current strategy is sound and in 2018, it should continue to guide the efforts of all those involved to address the stated targets. The review process has in itself served to strengthen awareness and re-focus efforts around the core actions and responsibilities. This energy must be maintained and the efforts accelerated in order to reach the targets laid down for 2018. It is foreseen that the same challenges posed for the review in terms of the collection of data and evaluation of progress will also be encountered at the conclusion of the strategic period because of the heavy dependency on the CDHS to measure many aspects of progress.

To build on the strong efforts and prepare for the next NSFSN, in the short-term through 2018, focus could be on:

- Refine the FSN Roadmap 2030 based on the endorsed Cambodia SDGs, and existing actions and indicators in the JMIs and NSFSN, to rationalise indicators, targets and information sources;
- Identify financing sources that could be drawn on in future to help realize underfunded areas; this will require continued strong communication on the importance of FSN as key to development, and advocacy to continue to influence decision makers;
- Undertake an institutional and capacity analysis for the 2030 FSN agenda, to clarify accountabilities towards realising the future strategy;
- Revisit the existing FSN framework, to review the purpose of the NSFSN, and its alignment to other sectoral frameworks, policies, strategies and plans, applying the MTSR learnings;
- Continue research and analysis to improve vulnerability monitoring and response and inform robust action to ‘leave no-one behind’.

### *Participatory planning and implementation: Lessons from the MTSR*

- *A ‘whole of society’ consultative approach – increasing engagement at planning, implementation and review stages with a wide range of stakeholders.*
- *Subnational stakeholder participation – reflecting on regional analyses and prioritization.*
- *The ‘right’ people in the room – ensure key focal points are empowered to engage through the lifecycle of the process.*
- *Combine specialized (issue-specific) and generic (touching on all themes) consultations to strike balance and overview of priorities.*
- *Compile and share the knowledge base and undertake context analysis. challenges – for example where multiple overlays of deprivation apply.*

As preparations commence to develop a follow-on strategy, emphasis will need to be on scaling of strategic directions noted in this review, with respect to enhancing access and social protection as well as nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. This would require additional local resource allocation in recognition of the important investment into human capital. This can be further strengthened by re-enforcing a rights-based approach that explicitly recognises people’s right to food and adequate nutrition, and ensuring accountabilities to facilitate achieving zero hunger by 2030.

The challenges of food and nutrition insecurity are inherently multidimensional and cross-cutting, requiring actions to be taken on multiple fronts and levels at the same time. Building on the current NSFSN, this review recommends five key areas of focus, each of which incorporates some more detailed and illustrative recommendations, which guide the formation of key strategies towards 2030.

- 1** *Availability*  
Enhance focus on food quality, diversity, resilient and nutrition-sensitive agriculture.
- 2** *Access*  
More equitable access to food (Leave no-one behind).
- 3** *Utilization*  
Place nutrition at the forefront and address emerging challenges.
- 4** *Stability*  
Protect availability, access and utilization from shocks and stresses through risk-reduction and social protection measures.
- 5** *Strengthening*  
Enhance food security and nutrition governance arrangements.



## Resources

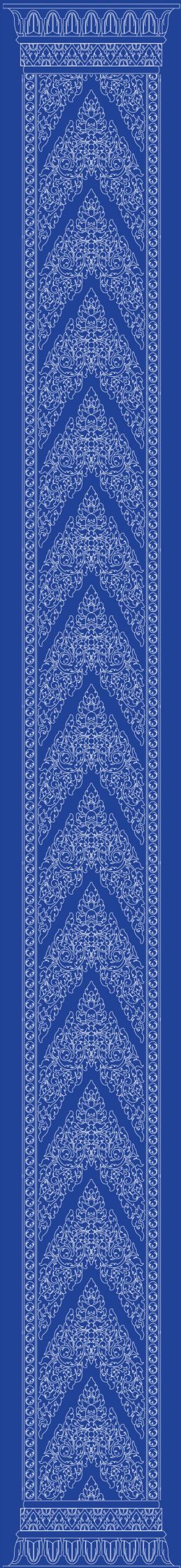
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