Operational Context

Cambodia has achieved remarkable economic growth in the last two decades. The poverty rate has decreased from 47.8 percent in 2007 to 13.5 percent in 2014. The Government is committed to reaching upper middle-income status by 2030. However, a significant portion of the population remains ‘near poor’ and still at high risk of falling back into poverty following a shock. Undernutrition remains a public health concern: 32 percent of children under 5 years are stunted, 24 percent are underweight, and 10 percent wasted. Micronutrient deficiencies are widespread. Cambodia is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, with regular monsoon flooding in the Mekong and Tonle Sap basin and localised droughts in the plains. Limited access for the poor to education and health services and low levels of investment in public infrastructure further perpetuate food insecurity and undernutrition.

WFP has been present in Cambodia since 1979.

School Feeding

One month after resuming the school feeding programme, Cambodia experienced another COVID-19 community outbreak, which was considered the most severe so far. As a result, schools in the capital and a few affected provinces closed. WFP school feeding programme was able to continue normally as it operates in five provinces not affected by the closure.

This month, approximately 220,000 students in over 900 pre-primary and primary schools received nutritious meals from WFP. To ensure that these schools have enough food supplies and cooking materials, WFP dispatched approximately 1,200 mt of fortified rice, vegetable oil, canned fish and pulse, along with many non-food items such as food trays, scales, cooking pots and cooking utensils. In addition, WFP also distributed over 1,200 mobile hand-washing stations to heighten COVID-19 prevention measure.

To further support digital transformation, WFP, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), rolled out the School Feeding Information System (SFIS) to 1,113 schools across 10 provinces. Training was provided to committees selecting school suppliers on how to use SFIS in the bidding process to track, report and visualize information.

Food Security and Nutrition

WFP and the Council of Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) held a stakeholders workshop to mobilize the private sector in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement and lay the foundation for the establishment of a SUN Business Network in Cambodia. On this occasion, Danish Care Foods (DCF), a Cambodian company, was celebrated for being a runner-up in the Global SUN pitch competition for their fish-based wafer snack developed to treat severe acute malnutrition in children. The company is one among over 500 candidates from 24 countries across Africa and Asia.
**Emergency Preparedness**

Based on lessons from the October 2020 floods, WFP supported the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) and its provincial committees (PCDMs) to conduct refresher training with 415 officials (including 94 women) in five disaster-prone provinces. With the aim of supporting the digital transformation of disaster-related information, the training focused on strengthening the capacity of field-level officials on data collection, reporting and incident tracking to support the government’s decision-making process.

Additionally, WFP and NCDM, with the support of the Global Logistics Cluster, conducted a provincial workshop to raise awareness on humanitarian logistics preparedness, discuss how to operationalize provincial contingency plans and establish a network of stakeholders. More than 55 participants from government agencies, NGOs, UN agencies, the Cambodia Red Cross and the private sector attended. The two-day workshop resulted in a draft Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Action Plan, which will be reviewed and developed further in subsequent stakeholder workshops.

At the community level, the construction of the Safe Evacuation Centres (SECs) has made significant progress. Electricity, plumbing and lightening protection system are being fitted, and the centres will be completed in March.

**Resilience building**

WFP and the Government of Japan signed a US$ 2 million grant agreement to mitigate the impact of floods on vulnerable households and communities. In partnership with the National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development (NCDDD), WFP will support recovery through the rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure in targeted flood-prone communes. This includes enhancement of local planning capacities on disaster preparedness and mitigation, and the conduct of a food security and nutrition assessment in flood-affected areas.

A safe evacuation center is being constructed in Kampong Thom province. © WFP/Thanak Nut.

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