



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Cambodia Country Brief July-October 2024



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## 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 17.8 percent in 2019-20. The Government is committed to reaching upper middle-income status by 2030 and high-income status by 2050—by sustaining growth and accelerating structural transformation. 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: 22 percent of children under 5 years are stunted, 16 percent are underweight, and 10 percent wasted. Micronutrient deficiencies are widespread and overweight/obesity is on the rise. Cambodia is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, with regular monsoon flooding in the Mekong and Tonle Sap basin and localised droughts in the plains. These climate-related disasters can undo years of developmental gains.



Population: **16.8 million**

2023 Human Development Index: **146 out of 191**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **22 percent of children under five**

## Highlights

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), with WFP's support, is actively preparing for the Southeast Asia School Meals Coalition Summit in Siem Reap from 18 to 20 November 2024. As members of the School Meals Coalition, Cambodia, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea are co-hosting, showcasing commitments and progress to inspire further investments and enhanced collaboration.

## Operational Updates

### Nutrition

- The Ministry of Planning, with WFP's support, designed Cambodia's national food fortification strategy to address micronutrient deficiencies. Targeting staples like rice, salt, and oil, the strategy aims to encourage private sector investments and enhance nutrition outcomes. A thorough consultation involving government and private stakeholders will conclude in a year-end review.
- WFP partnered with 17 Triggers, a local behaviour lab, to develop a Social and Behaviour Change nutrition intervention in the North-East where malnutrition is prevalent. This initiative leverages agricultural cooperatives to promote healthier diets by increasing fruit and vegetable consumption while reducing sugary snacks and drinks, emphasizing family unity and creative cooking methods.

### Social Protection

- The National Social Protection Council (NSPC), UNICEF and WFP finalized the evaluation of the Family Package Cash Transfer Programme, uncovering the programme's impact on poverty, resilience, nutrition and diets of vulnerable households—informing Cambodia's social protection system.

### Shock-Responsive Social Protection

- The Royal Government of Cambodia, WFP and World Bank are working together on disaster risk financing strategies. By linking them with social protection systems, the nation is taking an important first step towards financial resilience, strengthening disaster response, empowering communities, and protecting development gains from growing climate risks.
- WFP continued consultations with key stakeholders on refining the shock-responsive social protection operational plan, integrating social security measures and gender sensitivity into emergency protocols—ensuring scalability for flood situations. A validation workshop is set to kick off in December to further refine these efforts.

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*Institutionalizing the National School Meals Programme*

- In September, the Prime Minister endorsed the 2024-2035 school meals policy to strengthen collaboration and clarify roles among stakeholders. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and WFP are facilitating broad policy dissemination. MoEYS collaborated with relevant ministries to establish the national School Meals Committee to oversee and coordinate the implementation of this initiative.
- To enhance the national programme's effectiveness, MoEYS and the Ministry of Economy and Finance endorsed inter-ministerial Prakas No. 507, outlining budget allocations for meal rations, cook incentives and infrastructure. The programme's budget has risen to US\$7.4 million for the upcoming school year, enabling an optimal increase in students' food provisions compared to the previous year.

*Data & Analytics*

- MoEYS, with technical support from WFP, finalized the monitoring and evaluation framework for the national school feeding programme, designed to track progress, assess effectiveness, uphold accountability standards, and ensure ongoing relevance and adaptability. The framework was rolled out to all 10 provinces where the programme operates, empowering provincial and district offices with resources and expertise for regular monitoring, ensuring smooth functioning and continuous improvement of the programme on a nationwide scale.
- In partnership with Harvard University, WFP and the National Social Protection Council are conducting a return-on-investment analysis for school feeding programme to measure its efficacy and value. This study seeks to assess the impact of school meals on education, health, social protection, agriculture, and local economy. Initial results are anticipated in January, with the final report scheduled for release by July 2025 to inform evidence-based decision-making and policy refinement.

*WFP-Run School Meals Programme*

- WFP has been actively preparing remaining schools for government handover: 154 standard kitchens in Oddar Meanchey and Pursat were built, and School Feeding Days in 341 schools were organized to promote healthy eating habits and hygiene practices.

**Food Systems**

- WFP and the Council of Agricultural and Rural Development signed a new 5-year partnership to operationalize food security strategies, strengthen food systems, scale up nutrition efforts like rice fortification and foster multi-sectoral climate-resilient action, so all Cambodians can access adequate food.
- WFP and the World Bank analysed the trade-offs between healthy diets, nutrition, and environmental sustainability to guide future investments in food systems and climate-nutrition linkages. Findings reveal that transitioning to nutritious diets can reduce greenhouse gas emission and water usage, necessitating substantial food systems changes. The final report is set for release in May 2025.

**Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)**

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	October-April 2024 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
<b>63.38 m</b>	<b>32.28 m</b>	<b>1.91 m</b>

**Strategic Result: National programmes and systems are strengthened.**

**Strategic Outcome 1:** By 2028, systems are strengthened for people in Cambodia, particularly women and others most at risk of being left behind, to benefit from improved nutrition, education, and social protection.  
Focus area: Root Causes

**Activity 1:** Provide technical support, facilitate coordination and generate evidence for public and private actors towards reducing all forms of malnutrition.

**Activity 2:** Provide technical support, facilitate coordination and generate evidence for national and subnational authorities to strengthen the social protection system, with a focus on the transition to the national home-grown school feeding programme.

**Strategic Result: National programmes and systems are strengthened.**

**Strategic Outcome 2:** By 2028, food systems and disaster management systems in Cambodia are strengthened to better support the livelihoods, climate adaptive capacity And ability to manage shocks of people in hazard-prone areas.  
Focus area: Resilience Building

**Activity 3:** Provide technical assistance to, and generate evidence for, institutions and value chain actors, particularly women, to strengthen food systems resilience to climate change.

**Activity 4:** Provide national and subnational authorities and communities with technical support, coordination and evidence generation services relevant to disaster risk management and shock-responsive social protection.

**Strategic Result: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs.**

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Crisis-affected populations in Cambodia are able to meet their food, nutrition and other essential needs during and after crises.  
Focus area: Crisis Response

**Activity 5:** Provide nutrition-sensitive food assistance to crisis-affected populations.



*WFP-Cambodia's integrated strategy (2024-2028): Enhancing human capital, fostering resilience, and enabling emergency response through evidence-based, gender-inclusive partnerships with the government and communities.*

- WFP is boosting resilient food systems by prioritizing local agricultural cooperatives and producer groups as suppliers for the national school meals programme. Efforts include upcoming local partner dialogues in November to enhance market linkages and support smallholder farmers.
- In Mondulakiri, WFP and the Cambodia Agriculture Cooperative Corporation registered 614 more smallholder farmers for organic rice production, totalling over 1,200 participants by September. They also awarded farming contracts to five agricultural cooperatives and two producer groups, resulting in an anticipated sale of 2,386 mt of rice this year.

## Disaster Risk Management

- WFP and the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) signed another 5-year strategic partnership to enhance national and local resilience with advanced data systems and early warnings to effectively combat climate shocks and disasters.
- NCDM launched the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2023-2028, developed with assistance from WFP and other key partners. This strategic initiative emphasizes proactive disaster risk management to enhance national resilience against increasing climate threats and natural disasters while safeguarding communities and resources for sustainable development.

## Emergency Preparedness

- WFP, with NCDM and UNDP, completed the National Implementation Roadmap for Early Warning 4 All 2024-28. This validated roadmap is awaiting government endorsement, detailing investments in early warning systems to enhance disaster preparedness, strengthen risk reduction, promote coordination, optimize resources, and safeguard communities and infrastructure.
- WFP developed an Anticipatory Action Plan for pre-flood responses, tailored for the Pursat Basin. The plan includes forecast thresholds, triggers, preparedness steps, target populations, monitoring strategies, responsibilities, and costs for different scenarios. Informed by historical flood data, it efficiently evaluates

risks and impacts. The plan will undergo testing via training and simulation exercises to demonstrate its value to the government.

## Innovations & Digital Systems

- In collaboration with NCDM, WFP completed a Disaster Risk Assessment report, integrating AI and machine learning for advanced risk analysis. This data-driven approach provides detailed risk insights down to the commune level, informing targeted disaster planning, budgeting, and preparedness efforts to enhance the nation's resilience against intensifying natural disasters.
- WFP improved the Platform for Real-time Impact and Situation Monitoring—a web-based application enabling rapid assessment of climate risks and impacts, supporting disaster management with interactive geospatial data—with new on-demand features for disaster risk management and social protection systems. This updated system will launch by late 2024, with training to help officials and partners use it effectively for better results in operations and outcomes.

## The Humanitarian Response Forum (HRF)

- HRF, a forum co-chaired by WFP, released two Flood Situation Reports detailing the impact of flooding in Cambodia, utilizing data from the National and Provincial Committees for Disaster Management and insights from PRISM. These reports revealed that around 29,000 families across 11 provinces were affected by the September and October floods.
- HRF convened to assess drought responses, deliberate on the current flood situations, and strategize for the remaining monsoon season to protect vulnerable communities through proactive planning and coordination. The forum also devised resource mobilization strategies for the 2025 plan, focusing on drought and heat waves in specific provinces and sectors.

## Donors

Cambodia, KOICA, private sector donors, Russia, and USA (USDA and USAID)

