Cambodia's SDG Progress (VNR 2023)



SDG 1	NO POVERTY
	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
1. Poverty Reduction through Economic Growth	• There has been a significant reduction in Colombia's poverty, attributing to its strong economic growth. The poverty rate at the country level decreased from 26.3% to 17.8% over the period of 2014–2019, indicating positive economic development.
2. ID Poor Program	 The government implemented the ID Poor program, which identifies and targets the poorest households for assistance. This program has facilitated the provision of social assistance, education, health, and livelihood support to the most economically vulnerable sections of society.
3. Social Protection Policy Framework	 Cambodia is working towards building a more comprehensive social protection system through the establishment of the National Social Protection Policy Framework and its General Secretariat. This includes the expansion of contributory and non- contributory schemes.
4. Financial Sector Resilience Measures	 The National Bank of Cambodia issued a circular on "restructured loans" during the pandemic, particularly for sectors heavily impacted by COVID-19. This includes tourism, textiles, construction, and transportation. These measures have contributed to the resilience of banks and financial institutions, as reflected in indicators such as the solvency ratio and liquidity coverage ratio.

Challenges	 The most significant challenge faced by Cambodia is the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty levels. There is a 2.8 percentage point increase in the poverty rate since 2020, with around 460,000 people falling below the poverty income thresholds due to the pandemic's economic repercussions. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a contraction in Cambodia's GDP
	 growth by 3.1% in 2020. The pandemic has widened the gap between the rich and poor in Cambodia, according to the CSES 2021 report. This exacerbation of income inequality poses a challenge to achieving the goal of
	ending poverty in all its forms.

SDG 2	ZERO HUNGER
	End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and
	promote sustainable agriculture
1. National Strategy for Food	Cambodia has developed a comprehensive strategy to address
Security and Nutrition	food security and nutrition challenges. This includes the National
	Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition, providing a roadmap for
	achieving the goals set under CSDG 2.
2. Fast-Track Road Map for	The Fast-Track Road Map focuses on accelerating progress in
Improving Nutrition	improving nutrition, particularly in response to challenges such as
	stunting, wasting, and overweight/obesity in children.
3. SUN Business Network and	Forming the SUN Business Network and making national
National Commitments	commitments for Nutrition for Growth show a commitment to
	engaging multiple stakeholders and the private sector in
	achieving nutrition goals.

Challenges

SDG 3	GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all
	ages
1. HIV/AIDS Response	 Cambodia is committed to achieving the 95-95-95 goal by 2025, showing good progress in managing HIV/AIDS. Although under 95% of people living with HIV knew their status, 99% were on antiretroviral treatment, and 98% were virally suppressed.
2. Tuberculosis and Malaria	 Cambodia transitioned out of the global list of high burden countries for tuberculosis in 2021. Malaria incidence has significantly decreased, and no malaria deaths have been reported since 2018.
3. Health Equity Fund and National Social Security Fund for Health Care	 Membership in the Health Equity Fund and the National Social Security Fund for Health Care increased significantly, indicating improved access to health services for low-income families and private sector workers, civil servants, and veterans.

Challenges	 Rapidly increasing levels of NCDs, mental health concerns, and an aging population present long-term challenge. Mental health prevalence increased globally during COVID-19, but treatment rates in Cambodia remain lower than targets. Despite progress, reproductive, maternal, child, and adolescent health remain concerns, with COVID-19 slowing progress in some areas. Coverage and quality/safety of health services, especially in district referral hospitals and health centers, have not met expectations.
------------	--

SDG 4 1. Modernization of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	QUALITY EDUCATION Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all • Cambodia has focused on modernizing the TVET system, strengthening the quality of technical and vocational education, and expanding skills training. This aligns with economic and social development policies and involves public-private partnerships for sustainability.
2. Volunteers for My Community (VMC)	 The Volunteers for My Community program, launched in 2019, engages more than 500 in-school and out-of-school youths annually. It has successfully initiated and implemented projects related to selected SDG goals, building various skills in participating youth.
3. Early Childhood Education (ECE) Programs	 While there is a decrease in the percentage of Grade 1 children attending ECE programs from 65.0% in 2018 to 55.8% in 2022, this is attributed to low enrollment rates in primary schools and parental concerns related to COVID-19.
4. Education Policy for 2030	 MoEYS has developed the education policy for 2030, focusing on inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Challenges	• Challenges include enhancing teaching competency in Khmer language, mathematics, STEM education, foreign languages, sex education, and ICT for Grades 4 to 6 to meet the modern needs of society.
	• The transition from primary to lower secondary school and high dropout rates in lower secondary school pose challenges.

SDG 5	GENDER EQUALITY
	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girl
1. Legal Frameworks	 Cambodia has made substantial progress in establishing laws, policies, national plans, and legal frameworks to promote, enforce, and monitor gender equality. The number increased from 55 in 2019 to 73 in 2022, surpassing the target of 55.

2. Gender-Based Violence Response	 A multi-sectoral response mechanism for gender-based violence has been established in eight provinces, involving service providers from various institutions, including the government, civil society, and the private sector.
3. Gender Budgeting	 The government is developing a gender budget, aiming to integrate a clear gender perspective into the overall budget process. This approach uses political policies and public financial management tools to promote gender equality and the development of girls and women.

Challenges	• The number of women in leadership roles remains limited in
	Cambodia, falling short of commitments to the SDGs.
	Societal stereotypes persist, discouraging women and girls from
	pursuing skills and job opportunities aligned with the needs of
	the digital economy and society.

SDG 6	CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and
	sanitation for all
1. Access to Safe Drinking Water	 Cambodia has achieved significant progress in CSDG 6, with 75%
and Sanitation	of the target indicators achieved as planned. The proportion of
	rural households with basic access to safe drinking water services
	and sanitation has increased from 74.7% and 76.8% in 2019 to
	85.7% and 84.0%, respectively, in 2022
2. Improved Access for	 The UNESCAP Leaving No One Behind Platform indicates that
Vulnerable Households	access to clean water among the furthest behind households
	(poorer households with lower education) increased from 46% in
	2014 to 70% in 2021. Access to improved sanitation facilities
	among these households improved from 4% in 2014 to 52% in
	2021.
3. Rural Water Supply, Sanitation	The national action plan, Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and
and Hygiene Action Plan	Hygiene 2019–2023, focuses on enabling the rural population to
	have increased access to equitable, sustainable, and safe drinking
	water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities. It emphasizes equality
	and targets poor households and people in challenging
	environments.
4. CNMC Strategic Plan 2021–	 To ensure water and related resource sustainability in the
2025	Mekong basin, the CNMC Strategic Plan 2021–2025 covers
	directives such as improving coordination, strengthening
	cooperation and partnerships, enhancing institutions and human
	resources, conducting studies and research, awareness-raising,
	and monitoring and evaluation.

Challenges	 Cambodia faces challenges such as the absence of a national- level master plan for long-term investment in the water and sanitation sector.
	 Limited financial resources pose challenges for the rehabilitation and development of the water and sanitation sector. The inability

 to generate sufficient revenue to cover expenses and investments is a concern. There is a shortage of technical officers, especially at the subnational level, to handle tasks related to water and sanitation.
--

SDG 7	AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
1. Power Master Development Plan (PDP) 2022–2040	 Cambodia adopted a comprehensive plan for the development of its power sector, focusing on fulfilling future power demand reliably and affordably, strengthening energy security, and increasing the share of clean energy to contribute to national environmental goals.
2. Clean Energy Commitment	 The government commits to maximizing and prioritizing cleaner energy, particularly renewable energy and energy efficiency. It explicitly states a refusal to opt for additional coal-fired power plants or large hydropower plants on the mainstream of the Mekong River in the future.
3. National Energy Efficiency Policy (NEEP) 2022–2030	• A long-term policy aiming to transform energy consumption by adopting energy efficiency, contributing to economic growth, social inclusiveness, and environmental sustainability. Targets include a 19% reduction in total energy consumption by 2030.
4. Record-Low Tariffs	• The country conducted successful reverse auctions for its national solar park projects, achieving record-low tariffs in ASEAN. The second phase of the national solar park achieved a tariff of US\$2.57 per kWh for 40 MW.

Challenges	 There are 245 licensed villages that remain unconnected to the electricity grid, primarily due to their locations on islands, flooded areas, areas without road access, remote areas, or as floating villages. Significant investments are needed for power infrastructure development to connect these villages. Despite steady progress, uncertainty related to the resurgence of
	• Despite steady progress, uncertainty related to the resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine crisis poses challenges.

SDG 8	DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
1. Strategic Priorities	 The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) focuses on four priorities: strengthening public administration, promoting economic resilience through diversification and competitiveness, building social resilience through health and social protection system development, and enhancing financial system resilience.
2. Business Community Solutions	 According to the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce (CCC), solutions include equipping business owners with digital

knowledge for online business, efforts to find training and share
experiences among network members, and promoting
international trade to aid local businesses in recovery and
prosperity.

Challenges	 Cambodia's economic activity is predominantly in the informal sector (77% of total employment in 2019), making it vulnerable to economic and climate shocks.
	 The economic growth outlook is fraught with risks and uncertainties, including global tensions, a potential global
	economic slowdown, monetary policy tightening, appreciation of the US dollar, high energy and commodity prices, disruption of
	global supply chains, fragmentation of the global economy, and climate change-related natural disasters.

SDG 9	INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable
	industrialisation and foster innovation
1. Telecommunication	The RGC introduced the Sub-decree on Management,
Infrastructure	Construction, and Sharing of Telecommunication Infrastructure,
	aiming to define resilient telecom infrastructure development,
	financial resource allocation, and ICT education programs.
2. Airport Modernization	 Cambodia is working on several airport projects to modernize
Projects	infrastructure and accommodate increased tourism post-COVID-
	19.
3. Digital Economy Policies	The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has issued policies and
	regulations, including the Cambodia Digital Economy and Society
	Policy Framework 2021–2035 and the Cambodia Digital
	Government Policy 2022–2035.

Challenges	 Challenges include limited resources and funding, lack of
	coordination among stakeholders, and insufficient skills and
	knowledge for ICT infrastructure development.
	Although access to finance has improved, financial literacy needs
	to be enhanced, especially among small- and medium-sized
	enterprise owners.

SDG 10	REDUCED INEQUALITIES
	Reduce inequality within and among countries
1. IDPoor Registry	 The government leveraged the existing "IDPoor" registry to deliver relief cash transfers to registered IDPoor households. Cambodia has made significant progress in reducing poverty, with the poverty rate decreasing from 33.8% in 2009 to 17.8% in 2019/20.
2. Cash Transfer Program	 Launched in June 2020, the cash transfer program disbursed \$714 million as of July 2022. It reached about 690,000 households and 2.7 million individuals, mitigating the increase in poverty and

inequality. The cash transfer program mitigated 40% of the
increase in poverty, and the Gini index's increase was projected
to be lower due to cash transfers.

Challenges	 Household finances were stressed during the pandemic, leading more households to assume debt to cover living expenses. This may have scarring effects on future consumption. Spatial disparities in poverty and low human development persist. Cambodia faces challenges in education, with lower secondary education enrollment remaining low compared to other ASEAN countries.
------------	--

SDG 11	SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and
	sustainable
1. Urban Solid Waste	• The Policy on Urban Solid Waste Management (2020–2030) aims
Management Policy	to create a cleaner environment, comfortable living, and well-
C 1	being through a modern waste management system.
2. Circular Economy Strategy)	• The National Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan (2021–
	2035) promotes sustainable consumption and production, zero
	waste societies, and addresses issues like single-use plastic
	consumption.
3. Land Use Plans	Achievements include land use plans for Phnom Penh,
	Battambang, and Sihanoukville, as well as plans for cities,
	districts, Khans, towns, and commune/Sangkat levels.

Challenges	Rapid urbanization and population growth have outpaced
	infrastructure development. Some areas lack streetlights, proper
	housing, and access to essential services like electricity and clean
	water.
	 The rate of urban solid waste is increasing rapidly, posing a
	challenge to effective waste management.

SDG 12	RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
1. Urban Garbage and Waste Management	 Monitoring urban garbage and solid waste management at the sub-national administration level will be a priority.
2. Pollution Source Targeting	 Efforts will focus on targeting pollution sources through control, monitoring, law enforcement, and the monitoring of Environmental Management Plans.

Challenges	 The importance of sustainable consumption and production patterns is not widely known among Cambodian people, leading to limited participation in garbage and solid waste sorting, packaging, and disposal. Cambodia faces limitations in human, technical, and financial resources for the full implementation of sustainable consumption and production practices.
------------	---

SDG 13	CLIMATE ACTION
	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
1. Climate Change Strategic Plan	• The Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCCSP:2014–2023)
	guides efforts toward climate change resilience and mitigation.
2. Draft Sub-decree on	A draft Sub-decree on the Management of Greenhouse Gas
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Emissions Reduction Mechanisms aims to regulate mechanisms
Reduction	for reducing emissions, encouraging investment and technology transfer, and supporting sustainable development goals.
2 Notional Action Dian for	
3. National Action Plan for	The National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2019–2023)
Disaster Risk Reduction	complements climate change policies by addressing associated risks.

Challenges	 Lack of funds hampers the implementation of climate change- related activities, particularly in integrating them into commune investment plans, partly due to interruptions caused by COVID- 19.
	 CDM projects and implementation projects under various mechanisms were affected by the pandemic and global trends.

SDG 14	LIFE BELOW WATER Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
1. International Partnerships	Collaborations with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Coral Triangle Initiative demonstrate Cambodia's commitment to managing marine resources effectively.
2. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)	• The establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), notably in the Koh Rong Archipelago, covering 405 km ² , aims to conserve marine ecosystems, including sea turtles, coral reefs, and various fish species.

Challenges	 Despite efforts to combat illegal fishing, Cambodia remains vulnerable to such practices.
	 Lack of awareness among local communities near the coast regarding marine conservation leads to unsustainable fishing
	practices and pollution.

 Improper waste disposal practices result in plastic and other waste entering the ocean, contributing to pollution and affecting marine life.
marine life.

SDG 15	LIFE ON LAND Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial
	ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification,
	and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
1. Protected Areas Expansion	 The government has significantly increased the number of protected areas, covering 41% of Cambodia's total area. This includes National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Protected Landscape Areas, Multi-use Areas, Ramsar Sites, Natural Heritage Sites, and Biodiversity Corridors.
2. Land Registration	 Boundaries of Protected Areas (PAs) were demarcated, and state land was registered, contributing to sustainable land use practices. State land registration for the Sustainable Use Zone is about 69,811 ha, and for Core and Conservation Zones, it is about 124,275 ha.
3. Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)	 Initiatives include research and feasibility studies for a PES policy, a roadmap for PES pilot implementation (2021–2030), a draft notification for a technical working group for PES schemes, and the development of a PES policy for Cambodia.

Challenges	 Rising temperatures, increased droughts, floods, and changing rainfall patterns due to climate change pose challenges to CSDG 15 implementation. Effective institutions, regulations, and governance systems are required for sustainable land use practices, but Cambodia's institutional capacity is weak, particularly in rural areas.
------------	--

SDG 16	PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
1. UN Volunteer Groups	 Active youth organizations like Khmer Youth Association (KYA) and Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP) contribute to capacity building, training on various topics, and encouraging youth involvement in community projects.
2. Guiding Policies	 National policies, including the Rectangular Strategy Phase 4, Neary Ratanak Strategic Plan 5, and Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan, guide the implementation of CSDG 16.

 Approval for new cadre replacements is equivalent to losses, and the rate of female candidates in cadre exams is low. Despite efforts, there is a lack of understanding of the Anti- Corruption Law, requiring further effective education.
Corruption Law, requiring further effective education.

SDG 17	PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the
	Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
1. New Development	The new DCPS aims to strengthen development assistance
Cooperation and Partnerships	effectiveness and inclusive partnerships, align ODA with national
Strategy (DCPS) 2024–2028	priorities, and support the NSDP 2024–2028.
2. Sector Allocations	 Significant funds were allocated to infrastructure (average of US\$696 million per annum) and agriculture (average of US\$276 million per annum), reflecting government priorities.
3. ODA/GDP Ratio	• The ODA/GDP ratio reached 9.1% in 2020 due to increased loan disbursements in response to COVID-19, slightly declining to around 7.0% in 2021 and 2022.

Challenges	 Challenges include the impact of infrastructure development on existing ICT infrastructure, limited financial resources and skills in the sector, low ICT literacy, uneven internet availability and costs, and the need for further digital transformation. There are significant inequalities in internet usage within Cambodia, with women, older people, and rural residents often left behind.
------------	--