



# LEADING THE WAY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CAMBODIA GENDER ASSESSMENT

2014

Cover photo:

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# PREFACE

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) is proud to launch the Cambodia Gender Assessment (CGA) 2014, ***Leading the Way: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment***, in response to the Government's policy on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as to meet the needs of line ministries in the formulation of policies and programs in their respective sectors.


MoWA has produced a series of CGAs over the past decade (2004, 2008 and 2014), which provide a comprehensive overview of gender in all sectors, through joint partnership and collaboration between MoWA, civil society and development partners, with an inclusive consultation process across government through the Technical Working Group-Gender (TWG-G) mechanism.

The CGA 2014 and the Strategic Plan (Neary Rattanak IV) have been developed and launched together as a joint evidence-based policy package. The CGA informed the Neary Rattanak IV, in order to respond to key gender issues and to meet the needs of women.

This third CGA highlights many of the achievements made in the past five years, such as the decreasing rate of women in vulnerable and unpaid work, and the increasing rate of women in self and paid employment. Additionally, maternal mortality has more than halved, the HIV infection rate has decreased, there is increased awareness and policy focus on gender-based violence, and the target for women in the civil service has been met. At the policy level, the development of the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women (NAPVAW) I and II and the Millennium Acceleration Framework for Women's Economic Empowerment provide the basis for sustaining these achievements in the long term.

The CGA also highlights remaining challenges and provides comprehensive policy guidelines and recommendations for MoWA and policy makers across government to deepen our collective efforts for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. These recommendations are reflected in the Neary Rattanak IV, which is structured to support the transformational nature of the MoWA strategy, from project-based activities to a program-based approach, and from implementation and service delivery to mainstreaming gender in government policies and programs, and towards promoting social accountability for women.

Cambodia's rapid economic development and transition to lower-middle-income country status brings with it rising inequalities and vulnerabilities of under-served groups and areas. Thus, the CGA 2014 and the Neary Rattanak IV also mainstream issues related to



disadvantaged groups, based on vulnerability, marginalization and disability, to clearly identify the most severe gaps and target them with appropriate measures.

I gratefully acknowledge the constructive partnership with SIDA, UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, UNESCO, UNICEF, ADB, Australian Aid/DFAT, GIZ/CIM, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), JICA, Oxfam GB, Fred Hollows Foundation, Plan International and other partners in producing the CGA, and their roles in our continued collaboration in working toward gender equality.

It is our aim that policy and decision makers in all sectors will be informed by the following analysis and recommendations, as line ministries have a critical role to play in sustainably promoting gender equality in the long term. MoWA strongly believes that every decision related to policy, service provision, program design and project implementation in all sectors will be informed by this evidence-based policy resource. It is this consideration that is the key to effectively mainstreaming gender and ensuring a fair share for Cambodian women.

Phnom Penh, December 2014  
Minister of Women's Affairs



ING KANTHA PHAVI



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**The MoWA CGA Working Group** was responsible for the overall process, oversight, and approval of the document. Under the leadership of HE Dr Ing Kantha Phavi, Minister of Women's Affairs, the CGA working group was chaired by HE Khim Chamroeun, Secretary of State, with direct support from HE Keth Sam Ath, MoWA Senior Advisor, HE Kim Siphath, Director General, Mr The Chhunhak, Deputy Director General, Ms Nhean Sochetra, Director of Gender Equality Department; and Ms Te Vouchlim, Director of Department of Planning and Statistics. Inputs for each chapter were provided by members of the CGA Working Group and other relevant officials with technical support from the UNDP/SIDA PGE III team led by Ms Mia Hyun, Senior Policy Advisor to MoWA, supported by other team members including Ms Dy Many, Management Specialist; Mr Pen Bory, Gender Policy and Aid Effectiveness Specialist; Ms Heng Seltik, Women's Economic Empowerment Specialist; Mr Chhuon Thavrith, Gender Budgeting Specialist; and Mr Kim Sopor, Technical Assistant. **The Technical Working Group on Gender** provided a forum for consultation with other stakeholders including line ministries, Development Partners, and Civil Society. **Peer Reviewers**, including experts from MoWA, line ministries, Development Partners and Civil Society, assisted in reviewing the draft documents in their respective areas of work. **Communications**, photos, design by *Good Morning Beautiful*.

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**Chapter and Policy Brief 2: Gender Attitudes and Relations:** Overall guidance by HE Hou Samith, Secretary of State of MoWA; drafted by Professor of Gender Studies, Ms Kasumi Nakagawa, MoWA consultant sponsored by UNDP/PGE, with inputs from relevant MoWA officials and other stakeholders, with overall assistance by Mr Kim Sopor.

**Chapter and Policy Brief 3: Women's Economic Empowerment:** Overall guidance by HE Chan Sorey, Secretary of State; drafted by ADB consultant Professor Fiona MacPhail, with inputs and editing by Ms Bunchhit Veasna, Director of Economic Development Department and her working group including Ms Soth Sithon, Ms Heng Seltik, Ms Thoeun Sakmakna and Mr Udo Gartner. Inputs on migration provided by Ms. Jenna Holliday (UN Women),



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**Chapter and Policy Brief 5: Gender and Health:** Overall guidance by HE Kop Maryas, Secretary of State of MoWA and HE Pich Pitouratha, Under Secretary of State of MoWA; drafted by UNFPA consultant, Dr Kate Frieson. Inputs provided by Ms Hou Nirmita, Director of Women and Health Department of MoWA and her team including Ms Kou Sothea, Ms Leng Monipheap Ms Hou Sophallika, and Ms Sengphal Davine. Additional inputs from Dr Tung Rothavy, MoH, Ms Sarah Knibbs, Deputy Country Representative, UN Women, and Ms Aing Sokroeun, Programme Officer, UNFPA, and from other stakeholders.

**Chapter and Policy Brief 6: HIV/AIDS:** Overall guidance by HE Kop Maryas, Secretary of State of MoWA and HE Pich Pitouratha, Under Secretary of State of MoWA; drafted by Dr Silja Rajander (UN Women), inputs provided by Ms Hou Nirmita, Director of Women and Health Department of MoWA and other officers of the department. Additional inputs provided by H.E. Sim Kheng Kham, (NAA), Dr Ngin Lina, (NAA), and from other stakeholders.

**Chapter and Policy Brief 7: Violence Against Women:** Overall guidance by HE Sy Define, Secretary of State of MoWA, and HE Tes Chan Saroeun, Under Secretary of State; drafted by Ms Robin Mauney, consultant sponsored by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Inputs provided by HE Khiev Sereyvuthea, General Director of Social Affairs of MoWA, Ms Sakhoeurn Savady, Deputy Director General, and Ms Keth Mardy, Director of Legal Protection Department. Additional inputs from the *Access to Justice for Women* project (GIZ).

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**Policy Brief 9: Vulnerable Groups of Women and Girls:** Overall guidance by HE Khieu Sereyvuthea, Director General; drafted by Mr Rodrigo Montero Cano, Advisor, Access



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**Policy Brief 10: Climate Change:** Overall guidance by HE Sivann Botum, Secretary of State, drafted by Mr Udo Gartner, CIM Economic Advisor to MoWA. Inputs provided by Ms Chut Leang Vanny, Deputy General Director, and Ms Cheng Chinneth, Deputy Director, Department of Gender Equality, Mr Sao Chantomaly, Mr Sok Pisith, Ms Kim Sokanry, Women and Education Department, and Mr Chhuon Thavrith.



# ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANC	Antenatal Care
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BFC	Better Factories Cambodia
BSIC	Beer Selling Industry Cambodia
BSP	Budget Strategic Plan
BSS	Behavioural Surveillance Survey
CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
CCCA	Cambodia Climate Change Alliance
CCWC	Commune Committee for Women and Children
CDB	Commune Database
CDC	Council for the Development of Cambodia
CDCF	Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEDAW-CO	CEDAW Concluding Observations
CGA	Cambodia Gender Assessment
CIP	Commune Investment Plan
CIPS	Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey
CMDG	Cambodia Millennium Development Goal
CNCW	Cambodian National Council for Women
CNP	Cambodian National Police
CPN+	Cambodian People Living with HIV Network
CPWP	Committee for Promotion of Women in Politics
C/S	Commune/Sangkat
CSES	Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CVACS	Cambodia Violence Against Children Survey
CWCFP	Commune Women and Children Focal Point
D&D	Decentralization and De-concentration
DOWA	District Office of Women's Affairs
DP	Development Partner
DV Law	Domestic Violence Law
GADC	Gender and Development for Cambodia
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GCCAP	Gender and Climate Change Action Plan
GCCC	Gender and Climate Change Committee



GCCSP	Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GMAC	Garment Manufacturers' Association of Cambodia
GMAG	Gender Mainstreaming Action Group
GMAP	Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan
GPSF	Government Private Sector Forum
GRB	Gender-responsive Budgeting
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
HSS	HIV Sentinel Surveillance
IBBS	Integrated Biological and Behavioural Survey
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEA	International Energy Agency
ILO	International Labour Organization
IP3	(3-year) Implementation Plan
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JMI	Joint Monitoring Indicator
LBT	Lesbian, bisexual and transgender
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
LHTSE	Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation
LM	Line Ministry
MAF	MDG Acceleration Framework
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MAR(Y)P	Most At Risk (Young) People
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MFI	Micro-Finance Institution
MLMUPC	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MoC	Ministry of Commerce
MoCS	Ministry of Civil Service
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoIH	Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts
MoIn	Ministry of Information
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLVT	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
MoP	Ministry of Planning

MoPT	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications
MoSVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MoWRaM	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NAA	National AIDS Authority
NAPVAW	National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women
NACD	National Authority of Combating Drugs
NCCC	National Climate Change Committee
NCDD	National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development
NCDM	National Committee for Disaster Management
NCGG	National Committee for Green Growth
NCGHA	National Committee on Gender and HIV/AIDS
NCHADS	National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STDs
NEC	National Election Committee
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NIPH	National Institute of Public Health
NMCHC	National Maternal and Child Health Centre
NPA-STSLs	National Plan of Action for the Suppression of Human Trafficking, Smuggling, Labour and Sexual Exploitation
NPE	National Policy for the Elderly
NP-SNDD	National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development
NR IV	Neary Rattanak IV
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSP	The National Strategic Plan (for multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS)
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
P4P	Partners for Prevention Study
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PB	Program Budgeting
PBA	Program-based Approach
BPAC	Program-based Approach Committee
PDWA	Provincial Department of Women's Affairs
PFMRP	Public Financial Management Reform Program
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
PPCR	Pilot Program for Climate Resilience
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PTC	Provincial Training Centre
OS-WEE	Operational Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment



RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RSA	Royal School of Administration
SCCSP	Sector Climate Change Strategic Plan
SNA	Sub-national Authority
SNDD	Sub-national Democratic Development
SPCR	Strategic Program for Climate Resilience
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
TWG-G	Technical Working Group on Gender
TWG-G-GBV	TWG-G sub-group on Gender-based Violence
UNAIDS	Joint UN Program on HIV-AIDS
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolutions
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls
VCCT	Voluntary and Confidential Counselling and Testing
WCCC	Women and Children Consultative Committee
WCFP	Women and Children Focal Points
WDC	Women's Development Centre
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WHO	World Health Organization
WLHIV	Women Living with HIV



The top five female high school students in Cambodia in 2014.



# INTRODUCTION

This set of ten Cambodia Gender Assessment (CGA) Policy Briefs and Executive Summary, developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), provides an update on the recent changes and the current status of gender issues across all key sectors in Cambodia and is meant to inform Neary Rattanak IV and other relevant policies. The ten Policy Briefs include:


1. Gender Mainstreaming: Institutional, Partnership and Policy Context
2. Gender Relations and Attitudes
3. Women's Economic Empowerment
4. Gender in Education and Vocational Training
5. Gender and Health
6. Gender and HIV
7. Violence Against Women and Girls
8. Women in Public Decision-Making and Politics
9. Vulnerable Groups of Women and Girls
10. Gender and Climate Change, Green Growth and Disaster Risk Management

These ten Policy Briefs are based on the CGA 2014, which was developed based on a review of a wide range of existing information from government and development partners. The assessment greatly benefited from the availability of a number of recent surveys, including the Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey 2012 (CIPS, NIS 2013), Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2012 (CSES, NIS 2012), Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2010 (CDHS, NIPH/NIS 2010), Labour Force Survey 2012 (LFS, NIS 2012), the Economic Census 2011 (NIS 2013), as well as a number of sector-specific surveys and studies. These recent surveys, when analyzed in conjunction with earlier surveys, have allowed for a better assessment of changes in key gender indicators over time.

The CGA 2014 also includes a review of major policy documents, particularly the Rectangular Strategy Phase III 2014-2018 and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018, which provides the framework for implementing the Government's Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency and achieving the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs).

The concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee on Cambodia's combined Fourth and Fifth Periodic Reports on the implementation of the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (2013) have been incorporated into both the analysis and formulation of recommendations.

The Policy Briefs were reviewed by MoWA technical teams, as well as through the TWG-G mechanism, which provided extensive consultation and participation from a wide range of stakeholders across government, development partners (DPs) and CSOs. Each



thematic Policy Brief includes a summary of key achievements, challenges and policy recommendations for addressing remaining challenges in that particular thematic area or sector. These were used as the basis for validating the Policy Matrices of the Neary Rattanak IV.

The rest of this executive summary provides an overview of recent progress and remaining challenges, as well as key policy recommendations from each of the CGA Policy Briefs, and a brief discussion of cross-cutting issues such as changing gender attitudes and stereotypes and targeting disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Gender Mainstreaming: Institutional, Partnership and Policy Context

Over the past five years, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has carried out gender mainstreaming in policies, plans and programs, including institutional strengthening and improving partnerships with stakeholders, to bring about sustainable development for all. Although there are several challenges related to capacity and resources, the Government has made considerable progress in deepening and broadening gender mainstreaming in all sectors.

### Achievements

The RGC's Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase III (2013-2018) recognizes gender equity as a key component of national development, capacity building and human resource development. It highlights the need "to further improve the status of women, who are the backbone of Cambodian society and economy".

A number of laws protecting women's rights have been enacted by the RGC, including: the Election Law (1997); the Amended Election Law (2013); the Labour Code (1997); the Land Law (2001); the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims (2005); the Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation (2008); the Civil Code (2007); the Civil Procedure Code (2006); the Criminal Code (2009); the Criminal Procedure Code (2010); the Law on Administrative Management of the Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans (2008); De-concentration and Decentralization; the Law on Elections of Capital Council, Provincial Council, Municipal Council, District Council and Khan Council (2008); and the Amended Law on Commune Councils (2006).

In 2010, the RGC issued the Village/Commune Safety Policy, which prioritizes "no domestic violence" and "no trafficking of women and children".

The National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018 includes indicators relating to gender equality and advises on mainstreaming gender in several areas, such as poverty and vulnerability, disability and ethnic minority groups.

The Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMI) 2014-2018 relating to gender equality are determined jointly by MoWA and relevant institutions and development partners within the TWG-G to measure and strengthen gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment.

The Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework (MAF) 2012-2015 is designed to accelerate and achieve Target 3 through:



- 1) Strengthening professional skills for women based on market demand; ▲
- 2) Creating micro and medium enterprises; and
- 3) Improving livelihoods in rural areas.

H.E Minister Ing Kantha Phavi and her staff at MoWA are promoting Gender Mainstreaming.


The RGC used the results of the 2008 CGA for gender mainstreaming and successfully implemented the Neary Ratanak III Strategic Plan (2009-2013). The CGA 2014 and Neary Ratanak IV Strategic Plan (2014-2018) have been prepared by MoWA and are a guide for policy making, planning and programming for gender equality and development.

Gender is mainstreamed in national reforms, such as Public Administration Reform (PAR), the Public Financial Management Reform Program (PFMRP) and the Decentralization and De-concentration Reform Program (D&D), as well as the 10-year National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development, and the 3-year implementation plans (IP3).

## Challenges

Persistent gender inequality is measured by the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which captures the loss of achievement due to gender inequality in three realms: reproductive health, empowerment and labour market participation.





Cambodia ranks 96th out of 148 countries (2012)<sup>1</sup>. In the Global Gender Gap Index, which benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health-based criteria, Cambodia is ranked 108th of 142 countries (2014)<sup>2</sup>; the overall score increased from 0.629 (2006) to 0.652 (2014). It's ranking remains fairly consistent at around the 76-77<sup>th</sup> percentile (100 being the lowest and 1 the highest.) Cambodia's scores are slightly higher than average for countries of similar income level, for economic participation and opportunity, and educational attainment, but much lower than the average for political empowerment.

There is limited capacity of line ministries/institutions for in-depth gender analysis, advocacy and gender mainstreaming.

There are gaps in the implementation of laws, policies, plans and programs.

Gender mainstreaming has not yet been organized in a program-based approach (PBA) manner.

There is limited coordination between relevant stakeholders.

Links between technical departments of MoWA and GMAGs of line ministries and other TWGs remain weak.

There is limited budget for implementing gender-related plans/activities.

There is a wide spread perception that gender mainstreaming is MoWA's responsibility.

The institutional policies of line ministries do not have monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems to track gender mainstreaming.

Sectoral policies, as well as policies and programs for gender equality, have not yet fully addressed the needs of vulnerable groups of women and girls<sup>3</sup>.

## Recommendations

- Raise the profile and overall capacity of MoWA in terms of gender policy analysis and advocacy, and as a catalyst, coordinator and facilitator, to strengthen the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming across government at all levels.
- Strengthen capacity in gender analysis and planning, monitoring and evaluation for gender mainstreaming across government, including data collection and

<sup>1</sup> UNDP, Gender Inequality Index, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>

<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2014, <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>

<sup>3</sup> Namely women and girls with disabilities; elderly women; women and girls with HIV; widows and women-headed households; women and girls from indigenous groups and from ethnic and religious minorities; lesbian and bisexual women; transgender persons; women survivors of gender-based violence and their children; women who experienced sexual violence and/or forced marriage during the Khmer Rouge regime; women and girls living in remote areas; women in prison; and women engaged in prostitution and/or working in the men's entertainment sector.



analysis skills of the Ministry of Planning, line ministries and MoWA.

- Strengthen links between MoWA technical line departments and Gender Mainstreaming Action Group (GMAGs) and establish MoWA presence in all sectoral Technical Working Groups (TWGs). Ensure that all Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans (GMAGs) are revised based on the CGA/NR IV findings and recommendations, and that all GMAGs are fully integrated into line ministries' core planning and budgeting cycles. Strengthen MoWA's monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems.
- Make better use of MoWA's network at the local level to increase social accountability from a gender perspective by strengthening links with the National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development (NCDD) Social Accountability Framework, for demand for good governance (commune councils), service delivery (education and health, legal protection) and social protection.
- The Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) should continue to implement gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) initiatives within PFMRP and at sub-national levels. It should include a gender implication statement in the guidelines for the preparation of budget strategic plans (BSP) and program budgeting (PB) for line ministries, to ensure that gender is fully considered in all budgeting processes, particularly in indicators and annual outputs.
- MoWA should include specific recommendations for mainstreaming gender into the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) and specific social protection instruments.
- Learn from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and NCDD recent experiences with gender auditing to roll out this tool for broad-based gender assessments across key line ministries/sectoral programs.
- Undertake further research and capacity development measures to improve understanding about vulnerable groups of women and girls so their needs can be better addressed and mainstreamed in sectoral policies and programs.

## Women's Economic Empowerment

MoWA's approach to Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) includes increasing participation of women in the economy and their contribution to national goals, such as equitable, inclusive economic growth, and is key to achieving gender equality in Cambodia. WEE covers the promotion of decent wage employment and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) with a particular focus on empowering women, and takes stock of Cambodia's labour market and the challenges for women in obtaining decent jobs. Climate change and green growth are also considered as critical challenges for WEE.



## Achievements

Cambodia is making good progress in women's economic empowerment. The RGC's long-term goal is to create jobs and ensure improved working conditions<sup>4</sup>, which directly contributes to economic empowerment of women. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) 2012 indicated that female participation in the labour market is 79.2 percent. In the Global Gender Gap Index 2014 for economic participation Cambodia scores quite high for labour force participation, but lower for professional and technical workers<sup>5</sup>. The growth of trade, services and manufacturing, agriculture, hotels and accommodation has increased jobs for women – accounting for 89 percent of all women's employment<sup>6</sup>. There have been increased employment opportunities for both women and men, and a decrease in vulnerable employment. The poverty rate dropped from 29.9 percent in 2008 to 19.8 percent in 2011<sup>7</sup>.

## Challenges

The wage employment sector offers many opportunities to women, but the benefits are curtailed by low wages, poor working conditions, a gap between demand and supply of available jobs and ASEAN economic integration.

There is lot of potential for women to create and expand MSMEs, but they have limited access to business-related services and resources, including finance. Most women-owned enterprises are informal and concentrated in low productive sectors. Similarly, women engaged in subsistence agriculture and rural livelihoods lack access to, and ownership over, resources. Women are predominantly involved in unpaid domestic and care work and have little spare time to invest in expanding their productive economic activities.

As income-earning opportunities are high in the domestic labour market and MSME sector, many women migrate from rural to urban areas, and to neighbouring countries, to find jobs. Generally, they face more risks than men, including physical abuse.

Women from vulnerable groups are more likely to be impoverished or have less income than other women and men, including men from the same vulnerable groups. This is particularly the case for women with disabilities<sup>8</sup> and elderly women<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> RGC, National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018.

<sup>5</sup> World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2014, <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>

<sup>6</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning (2013) *Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey*, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>7</sup> The new national poverty line is still a low estimate of the cost of survival as it is based on the cost of 2,200 calories and a small cost for non-food items; the new poverty line for Cambodia is 3,871 Riels/day (per capita) in 2009 prices, with higher poverty lines for Phnom Penh and other urban areas, and a lower line for rural areas (Ministry of Planning 2013a).

<sup>8</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning (2013) *Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>9</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning (2012) *Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



Climate change (floods, droughts, rising temperatures) has various negative impacts on agriculture, MSME development, employment and livelihoods of women. Thus women have a role to play in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and securing environmental sustainability.

▲ Phun Seang Kheng (41) is a small business owner with a market stall at the Central Market in Phnom Penh. Kheng has been selling seafood in the market for over 15 years.

## Recommendations

- Institutionalize the mechanism to promote the Program-based Approach (PBA) on WEE based on the Operational Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment (OS-WEE) and the MAF.
- Strengthen the cooperation between MoWA and MoLVT regarding the implementation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), with a focus on employment opportunities for women.
- Strengthen cooperation with stakeholders in relation to the labour market (ILO, GMAC, NGOs, private sector) in advocating for the elimination of discrimination against women in work places, introduction of labour standards, social protection, arbitration, and the revision of laws and regulations to promote gender equality.

- Strengthen the cooperation with line ministries to promote the formation and operation of women's business associations and producer groups, and encourage women's membership in other business networks, such as the Government-Private Sector Forum (G-PSF).
- In partnership with public and private providers of business services, including micro-finance institutions (MFI), continue to promote and expand awareness raising on important business services for women-owned MSMEs, including financial services, financial literacy and business-related knowledge and information.
- Continue to support women in diversifying and commercializing subsistence agriculture and increase off-farm economic activities.
- Continue to promote and support the Ministry of Planning's ID Poor targeting mechanism to make it more gender-responsive.
- Ratify the ILO Conventions on "Domestic Workers" and "Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families" and support the development and implementation of bilateral Memoranda of Understanding for legal and safe labour migration for women.
- Encourage employers, and educational, training and vocational establishments through tax and other legal incentives to hire women from vulnerable groups, especially women survivors of gender-based violence, women from ethnic and religious minorities, women with disabilities, women with HIV, lesbian and bisexual women, transgender people, as well as dependents of widows and women heads of households.
- Enhance social protection for widows and elderly women (e.g. expansion of ID Poor to households with members older than 70 years).
- Use WDCs for promotional campaigns related to climate change, to develop women's capacity to prepare for climate-related disasters.

## Gender, Education and Vocational Training

For the development of the Cambodian society as a whole, as well as towards achieving education for all, the Government has actively mainstreamed gender in the education and vocational training sectors. Gender has been mainstreamed in relevant laws, policies, plans and programs, together with awareness raising at all levels on the importance of gender equality in education and training. As a result, negative social attitudes towards girls' education and gender gaps in education have gradually reduced. However, greater efforts are needed, particularly in promoting girls' access to higher education and technical and vocational training.



## Achievements

Since 2008, gender has been mainstreamed in policies and plans in education and vocational training, including the Education Strategic Plan (2009-2013); the Curriculum Development Master Plan (2010-2014); the Teacher Development Master Plan (2010-2014); the Master Plan for Capacity Development in the Education Sector (2011-2015); the Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan (2011-2015); the Policy on Human Resources in the Education Sector (2012); the Teacher Policy (2013); the National Policy of Cambodia Youth Development (2011); the MoLVT Strategic Plan (2009-2013); and the Social Marketing Strategy: Strategy for Gender Equity in TVET (2014-2018).

These laws, policies and plans have contributed to the promotion of gender equality in education and vocational training through improved physical infrastructure, better access and opportunities for girls to education and training, better social attitudes and favourable conditions for the participation of women at all levels and in all sectors. At the preschool level, enrolment of both boys and girls has seen gradual increases over the last five years<sup>10</sup>, contributing to children's increased levels of education, and confidence in primary education and beyond. At the primary and secondary levels, the enrolment of girls is equal to that of boys<sup>11</sup>. In 2012, more girls than boys enrolled in lower secondary education<sup>12</sup>. In higher education, the proportion of female students has been increasing steadily from 33 percent in 2008 to 37.6 percent in 2011<sup>13</sup>. The proportion of girls in technical and vocational training has also increased.

Cambodia's scores for education in the Global Gender Gap Index are relatively high<sup>14</sup>.

## Challenges

Major challenges to expanding education and training opportunities for girls and women include negative social attitudes towards girls' education, illiteracy and low levels of parents' education, child marriage, domestic violence and opportunity costs of education.

Child protection in schools remains limited, particularly for girls to travel safely to and from school, to be free from violence at school, and in terms of access to sanitation facilities.

There are still gaps in the implementation of policies and plans at all levels of education, and institutional and human resource capacity in gender mainstreaming at the sub-national level remains weak.

Community and parent engagement in school activities and children's education remains weak.

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<sup>10</sup> UIS online database. UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Available online at: [data.uis.unesco.org](http://data.uis.unesco.org)

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Education Management Information System (2008; 2009; 2010; 2011).

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Education Management Information System (2012).

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Education Management Information System (2008; 2009; 2010; 2011).

<sup>14</sup> World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2014, <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>



Families in rural areas, particularly among ethnic minorities, have limited awareness of the relevance of education and the broader, longer-term benefits for children and families, particularly for girls.

Rapid industrial growth, ASEAN economic integration in 2015, together with the increasing level of materialism in society, will drive the demand for skilled workers and will push young girls and boys into the labour market.

Access to education and training for disabled people remains a neglected factor.

Children of women who suffer gender-based violence<sup>15</sup>, girls with disabilities<sup>16</sup>, lesbian girls and transgender people<sup>17</sup> have higher school absence and drop-out rates due to their personal and family situation and/or bullying from peers.

## Recommendations

- Review and reform the legal framework and education sector policies to accelerate gender-mainstreaming efforts and to advance gender equality to, in and through education.
- Strengthen institutional and human capacities to implement and monitor the implementation of policies and plans for gender mainstreaming.
- Reinforce gender-specific programming, expand access and improve the quality of education and training for women and girls, with particular attention to women and girls from vulnerable groups.
- Expand advocacy and awareness raising efforts to challenge social norms and practices that continue to discriminate against girls and women in education and beyond.
- Include specific educational content in school curricula to address the socio-cultural diversity of Cambodia and the realities faced by women and girls from vulnerable groups, and raise their awareness about discrimination and rights.

## Gender and Health

Gender norms and roles affect women and men, girls and boys, their access to health services, and how health systems respond to their different needs. Different and often unequal abilities between women and men, girls and boys to protect and promote their health require recognition in policies, guidelines and budgets to plan appropriate health interventions.

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Women's Affairs (2009) *Violence Against Women, Follow Up Survey*. Phnom Penh.

<sup>16</sup> UNESCAP (2012) *Disability, Livelihood and Poverty in Asia and the Pacific*, Bangkok, Thailand; and Handicap International (2009) *Briefing Paper: Disability Facts in Cambodia*, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>17</sup> UNESCO (2012) *Review of Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions*, Paris, France; from Cambodian Center for Human Rights (2012) *Rainbow Khmer: From Prejudice to Pride*, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.





The RGC has aligned national policy commitments to gender equity, which is integrated into the NSDP and the CMDGs.

Integrating gendered approaches into public health requires political commitment from the highest levels to ensure that women's and men's health concerns and experiences are an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the health sector strategic areas<sup>18</sup>.

## Achievements

### Reduction of the maternal mortality rate

The maternal mortality rate (MMR) decreased by more than half, from 472 per 100,000 live births in 2005 to 206 per 100,000 live births in 2010<sup>19</sup>. Access to maternal health care also improved steadily over the same five years<sup>20</sup>. Positive trends continue due to interventions by the Ministry of Health (MoH), other in-

In the final exam for the class of 2014, there were 11 students who received an A score; 5 of them were girls.

**Oet Sreypov (18)** is from Kampong Cham.

**Sambath Vibolroth (18)** is from Phnom Penh.

**Chan Kethyapheara (17)** is from Kampong Speu.

**Out Sokphalkun (18)** is from Siem Reap.


**Yean Sophea (18)** is from Prey Veng.

<sup>18</sup> World Health Organization (2011) *Human Rights and Gender Equality in Health Sector Strategies: How to Assess Policy Coherence*. (With SIDA and United Nations Commission for Human Rights). Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>19</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Directorate General for Health, Ministry of Health (2010) *Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>20</sup> Wang, Wenjuan (2013) *Assessing Trends in Inequalities in Maternal and Child Health and Health Care in Cambodia*. DHS Further Analysis Reports No. 86. Calverton, Maryland, USA: ICF International.





stitutions and partners involved in increasing the number of health care providers at health centres, as well as education programs and outreach by village health workers.

### Nutritional status of children

Stunting reduced from 50 percent in 2000 to 40 percent in 2010. Wasting decreased from 17 percent in 2000 to 8 percent in 2005 and slightly increased to 11 percent in 2010. Underweight rates decreased from 39 percent in 2000 to 28 percent in 2010<sup>21</sup>.

### Health and gender-based violence

As envisaged in the NAPVAW II, the Preventive Medicine Department of MoH, in cooperation with MoWA and other relevant institutions, is setting up and piloting guidelines on clinical response to violence against women and children.

### Youth Health

Information on reproductive and sexual health is important for youth to understand their reproductive and sexual rights. In 2013, the RGC made a commitment to addressing this issue, through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), by adopting a comprehensive curriculum for youth in primary and secondary education, as well as for those outside school. The curriculum includes information on reproductive and sexual health in relation to age, gender, gender-based violence, drugs, life skills and HIV/AIDS.

## Challenges

There are many remaining challenges, such as the lack of skilled service providers in remote areas and the lack of adequate medicine and modern health equipment in health centres. Social, cultural and economic factors all contribute to low levels of awareness, access to information and health care seeking behaviour among women. Poverty and domestic violence compound health issues for women and girls.

Despite the impressive decrease in MMR, there are still significant inequities in pregnant women's access to health care, and maternal mortality remains high compared to other countries in the region. Contraceptive prevalence has gradually increased however unmet need remains high at 17 percent<sup>22</sup>. Non-communicable diseases are emerging as a significant concern, and women face a lack of detection and treatment for cervical, ovarian and breast cancers.


Lack of access to clean water and sanitation has a negative effect on the nutritional status of women. There is a 3.4 percent prevalence of blindness among women older than 50 years, compared to 2 percent among men in the same age group<sup>23</sup>. There is no explanation

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<sup>21</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Directorate General for Health, Ministry of Health (2010) *Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Seiha, D. and Limburg, H. (2009) *Report of the Rapid Assessment for Avoidable Blindness in Cambodia - 2007*. National Program for Eye Health, Phnom Penh.



for the difference between the prevalence of blindness among men and women; this requires further study and an expansion of services.

Social and cultural barriers continue to be obstacles in many countries, including Cambodia, to speaking openly about sexual health issues, particularly between mothers and youth.

A number of women and girls from vulnerable groups have higher demand of health services and/or mental health services when compared to other women (including women and girls with disabilities<sup>24</sup>, with HIV, elderly women<sup>25</sup>, lesbian and bisexual women, transgender people<sup>26</sup>, women survivors of gender-based violence and their children<sup>27</sup>, women who experienced sexual violence and/or forced marriage during the Khmer Rouge regime<sup>28</sup> and women engaged in prostitution and/or working in men's entertainment sector)<sup>29</sup>.

## Recommendations

- Revise the National Policy for Quality in Health, and the Health Sector Strategy and Guidelines from gender-blind to gender-sensitive, based on the different aspects of health quality improvement for women, men, boys and girls.
- Continue to scale up implementation and funding for the Fast Track Initiative Roadmap for Reducing Maternal and Newborn Mortality 2010-2015.
- Strengthen and expand the promotion of food security and nutrition training for professional health staff so that access to information, as well as monitoring and evaluation of patient nutritional status can be followed up at the community level, particularly for women and children.
- Increase attention on addressing the lack of clean water and sanitation facilities to reduce the gap in access to hygiene between rural and urban areas.
- Increase the effectiveness of the implementation of guidelines on clinical response to violence against women and children.
- Promote men's participation in reproductive health, family planning and sexual

<sup>24</sup> WHO (2012) from GIZ-Social Health Protection Project, Feb 2013, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>25</sup> GIZ Cambodia (Feb 2013) *Update on Vulnerable Groups-GIZ Social Health Protection Project*, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>26</sup> Cambodian Center for Human Rights (2012) *Rainbow Khmer: From Prejudice to Pride*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>27</sup> World Health Organization (2013) *Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Against Women*. Retrieved December 27, 2013 from Media Centre: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>

<sup>28</sup> Nakagawa, K. (2008) *Gender-based violence during the Khmer Rouge Regime: Stories of survivors from the Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)*. Phnom Penh: Cambodian Defenders Project; Natale, K. (2011) *I Could Feel My Soul Flying away from My Body: A Study of Gender-Based Violence during Democratic Kampuchea in Battambang and Svay Rieng Provinces*. Phnom Penh: Cambodian Defenders Project; Braaf, R. (2014) *Sexual Violence against Ethnic Minorities during the Khmer Rouge Regime*. Phnom Penh: Cambodian Defenders Project.

<sup>29</sup> National Center for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STD of the Ministry of Health (2013) *Behavioural Sentinel Surveillance 2013*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



health, and contribution to the elimination of domestic violence.

- Build the capacity of MoWA by transferring knowledge from national consultants to the gender team for monitoring, evaluation and analysis of gender in the health sector.
- Strengthen and expand the implementation of the Mother-Youth Connection Program on reproductive and sexual health.
- Strengthen and expand youth-friendly health information services at health centres in urban and rural areas.
- Improve accessibility and availability of sexual and reproductive health services as well as psychosocial and mental health services for vulnerable groups of women and girls.

## Gender and HIV

Cambodia has the second highest prevalence of HIV in Asia<sup>30</sup>. Although HIV transmission has decreased remarkably, high prevalence of HIV continues among the most vulnerable groups.

Response to HIV in Cambodia is multi-sectoral and is led by the Government, with participation from various institutions and development partners.

## Achievements

The rate of HIV among men and women aged 15 to 49 years decreased remarkably from 1.7 percent in 1998 to 0.7 percent in 2014<sup>31</sup> (projection). This was due to a decrease in new infections through prevention efforts, especially among high-risk groups, increased coverage of HIV blood tests, treatment with anti-HIV drugs and improved information services and communication from ministries and stakeholders.

Cambodia achieved the universal goal of access to services for the treatment of women and men, girls and boys, with a rate of up to 89.5 percent for the needy<sup>32</sup>. As a result of this achievement, the estimated deaths from AIDS and HIV transmission from mother to child decreased significantly in recent years.

With the participation of relevant line ministries, the National AIDS Authority prepared a third National Strategic Plan for Comprehensive and Multi-Sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS (2011-2015), as well as training programs and guidelines on gender mainstreaming in response to HIV/AIDS. MoWA also prepared a Strategic Plan on Women, the Girl Child

<sup>30</sup> UNAIDS (2013) *Global Report: UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic*.

<sup>31</sup> As projected in National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STIs (2011) *HIV Estimates and Projections of HIV/AIDS in Cambodia 2011-2015: Report of a Census Workshop*. Phnom Penh: Ministry of Health Surveillance Unit.

<sup>32</sup> National AIDS Authority (2012a) *Cambodia Country Progress Report 2012: Monitoring the Progress towards the Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS*. Phnom Penh.



and HIV/AIDS (2008-2012), and training programs on mainstreaming the fight against HIV/AIDS in the process of promoting gender equality. ▲

Dr. Keo Mao, Maternal Health Doctor (49) has been a doctor for over 20 years. She received her qualifications in Cambodia. She works in maternal health, because she wants to improve the lives of women.


## Challenges

Heterosexual sex is the main mode of HIV transmission; gendered power relations and social norms (e.g. women's subordinate status and relative lack of power to negotiate safer sex) exacerbate women's greater biological susceptibility to infection. Some women and girls are extremely vulnerable to physical and sexual violence and rape, which can cause HIV transmission.

Lack of funding, fears about HIV status and negative attitudes among service providers specializing in AIDS pose obstacles to women living with HIV accessing services and information about family planning and infant care.

Other target groups vulnerable to HIV infection and transmission include female entertainment workers selling sex, injecting drug users, women in prison, gay people and youth<sup>33</sup>. Lack of comprehensive knowledge about HIV,

<sup>33</sup> Liu, K. L. and Chhorvann, C. (2010) *Bros Khmer: Behavioral Risks On-site Sero-survey among At-risk Urban Men in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh; FHI 360 & National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STIs and National AIDS Authority (2012a) *Cambodia Country Progress Report 2012: Monitoring the Progress towards the Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS*. Phnom Penh.



sexual conduct and hazardous use of alcohol and drugs, along with gender-based violence, increases the risk of HIV transmission among these target groups. There are currently no policies or laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol to young people under the legal age in Cambodia. The national clinical and policy guidelines responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence are currently being developed, however currently there is no provision of free post-exposure prophylaxis in cases of sexual assault, relevant especially to women in the most at-risk people (MARF) group. There is also a lack of legal aid and legal assistance services for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and MARFs.

## Recommendations

- Strengthen strategies to promote the empowerment of women through increased access to health information and services including reproductive health.
- Ensure an effective response to harmful gender norms and practices that increase women's vulnerability to HIV infection.
- Expand and strengthen access to essential HIV and sexual and reproductive health services among women living with HIV and vulnerable groups of women and girls.
- Strengthen capacity of key actors to provide gender-responsive, rights-based services.
- Strengthen the integration of HIV into broader programs, policies, official guidelines and budgeting.
- Conduct research on the interconnections between sexual and physical violence and HIV/AIDS to inform the development of effective prevention and response strategies.
- Conduct research on male health-seeking behaviour in the context of HIV, including factors such as male uptake of voluntary confidential counselling and testing, HIV and SRH services and male involvement in family planning.

## Violence against Women and Girls (VAW/G)

In Cambodia, women and girls continue to be subjected to physical, emotional, sexual and economic violence, cutting across all divisions of income, culture and class in their daily public and private spheres. Violence against women and girls in Cambodia takes place in the context of deeply entrenched cultural norms that disadvantage women and girls. There is no one single cause of VAW/G in Cambodia but it is rooted in social and cultural attitudes and norms that privilege men over women, and boys over girls. Different forms of VAW/G are driven by a combination of factors at the individual, relationship, community, institutional and societal levels that discriminate against women and girls and therefore need to be addressed through a variety of interventions.



## Achievements

According to the 2005 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS), 22 percent of women had experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse from their spouse. This is down from 25 percent in 2000<sup>34</sup>.

Cambodia's commune database (CDB) records the number of families<sup>35</sup> seeking help from local authorities for domestic violence. Between 2006 and 2010 the number of families seeking help for domestic violence reduced from 1.63 percent to 0.88 percent<sup>36</sup>.

Overall, compared to 2005, the 2009 MoWA Follow-up Survey shows fewer people find violence acceptable and more people recognize that violent acts are illegal<sup>37</sup>.

The CDHS 2010 reports that the percentage of women who agree with one reason for wife beating is down from 55 percent in 2005 to 45.7 percent in 2010<sup>38</sup>.

The policy framework to respond to VAW/G has improved in recent years. The NAPVAW II (2014-2018) includes five strategic sectors: 1) primary prevention; 2) multi-sector protection and legal services; 3) law and policy; 4) capacity building; and 5) monitoring and evaluation.

There is increased awareness that some women and girls are at increased risk of VAW/G or have particular challenges in accessing protection and social services. In recent years various research studies have increased the understanding of violence against women and girls in Cambodia.

There is a greater focus on developing coordinated multi-sectoral social services and legal support across the country for women and children victims of violence.

## Challenges

While some data indicates spousal violence is reducing, prevalence remains high. New data is required to fully understand the current situation.

There is little robust data on rape and sexual violence reported by victims however reporting of rape and sexual violence in the family and other settings is high. Gang rape is higher in Cambodia than other countries in the region.

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<sup>34</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Directorate General for Health, Ministry of Health (2005) *Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>35</sup> The reports to the CDB are of families not individuals and therefore not disaggregated by type of violence, perpetrator or victim.

<sup>36</sup> CDB Online (2013) <http://db.ncdd.gov.kh/cdbonline/home/index.castle> (accessed November, December 2013).

<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Women's Affairs (2009) *Violence Against Women, Follow Up Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>38</sup> National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Directorate General for Health, Ministry of Health (2010) *Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



Sexual harassment is prevalent in the workplace and in communities. Women in some occupations are particularly vulnerable.

Sexual exploitation of women and girls continues, but no precise data is available.

Violence against women is widely accepted and tolerated. It is perpetuated by traditional gender norms and a variety of factors on the personal level, such as lower education, childhood experience of violence, and alcohol abuse.

The vast majority of victims remain silent, not reporting violence or seeking assistance.

Although the policy framework has improved significantly there is a lack of coordination between authorities, a lack of investigative resources and skills, and no clear guidelines to carry out and enforce the laws. Some laws and policies also have gaps.

Gender inequality, a lack of adequate training and resources, and a culture of impunity reinforce such practices as reconciliation in response to domestic violence and compensation in cases of rape.

Social and legal support services for survivors of VAW/G are not systematically provided, available and accessible for all women and girls.

Data is starting to emerge on women with increased risk for VAW/G. Women with disabilities are more likely to suffer from family non-partner violence, when compared to women without disabilities<sup>39</sup>. Stigma, harassment and discrimination is commonly experienced by lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender people in Cambodia, yet their experiences of abuse or discrimination are often overlooked or ignored by the response systems, their families and communities<sup>40</sup>. One in five garment factory workers experiences sexual harassment in or around the workplace<sup>41</sup>, and 80 percent of beer promoters experience unwanted sexual touching. Data is lacking on other groups of women with increased risk<sup>42</sup>.

An undetermined number of women suffered sexual violence<sup>43</sup> and/or forced marriage<sup>44</sup> during the Khmer Rouge regime<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> Astbury, Jill and Fareen Walji (2013) *Triple Jeopardy: Gender-based violence and human rights violations experienced by women with disabilities in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: AusAID.

<sup>40</sup> Cambodia Center for Human Rights (2010) *Coming out in the Kingdom: Lesbian, gay and bisexual and transgender people in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: CCHR.

<sup>41</sup> ILO (2012) *Action-oriented research on gender equality and the working and living conditions of garment factory workers in Cambodia*. ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

<sup>42</sup> CARE Cambodia (2005) *A Report on the Situation of Beer Promotion Women in the Workplace*. Phnom Penh.

<sup>43</sup> De Langis, Theresa (2012) *"Moral Offenses" and Sexual Violations against Women Under the Khmer Rouge Regime*, Code 6, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>44</sup> Cambodian Defenders Project (2011) *The Mystery of Sexual Violence under the Khmer Rouge Regime*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

<sup>45</sup> De Langis, Theresa (2012) *Briefing Paper on the ECCC, the Cambodian Women's Hearing, and Steps for Addressing Sexual Violence under the Khmer Rouge Regime*.



## Recommendations

- National legislation should be reviewed and provide for the establishment of effective systems for identification, reporting and referral of cases of VAW/G.
- Develop and implement a multi-sectoral coordinated primary prevention strategy targeting key actors and settings for positive change in perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs, practices and social norms that hamper women's empowerment and promote VAW/G.
- Promote programs for non-violent communication strategies and conflict resolution skills between couples and families, and non-violent forms of child discipline among parents and other caregivers (NAPVAW II).
- Through the TWGG-GBV committee, develop a multi-sectoral coordinated response mechanism that brings together government, institutions, service providers and civil society to coordinate and provide better survivor-centred and inclusive interventions to VAW/G.

▲ Ny Phalla, Police Officer (23) has been a policewoman for over two years, she loves her job because she keeps her community safe. She decided to become a police officer to follow in her father's footsteps, who is a policeman in the same office.



- Develop Minimum Standards of Service for various social services to fill the gaps, which are harmonized with existing standards and are child friendly.
- Assess the successes and challenges in the legal system's response and provide recommendations for improvements in laws, policies and practices, and an advocacy strategy on VAW/G.
- Promote capacity building on dynamics of VAW/G, laws and policies, and evidence-based best practice for all key actors, including CCWC, the Cambodian National Police (CNP), health services, doctors, judges, prosecutors, judicial police agents, service providers and others.
- Promote increased coordination between the CNP, local authorities, commune committees for women and children, health, legal actors and aid agencies, MoWA judicial police agents, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) social workers and other support organizations to provide the maximum protection and care for the victim, as well as to promote the potential prosecution of the perpetrator.
- Improve access to redress (including legal aid) and services for women and girls at increased risk, or who face specific challenges in access to services and justice including women with disabilities, women who are LBT, and older women who experienced sexual violence in the Khmer Rouge Regime.
- Promote research on knowledge, attitudes and practices related to VAW/G to address its root causes and support collective efforts for social change.

## Women in Public Decision-Making and Politics

In the Global Gender Gap Index (GGG) in relation to political empowerment, Cambodia is ranked 110th of 142 countries, with a score of 0.091, which is significantly lower than other countries of similar income level<sup>46</sup>. The Government's commitment to increasing the role of women in public decision-making is reflected in the following policies:

- Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency (2014-2018).
- National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) (Update 2009-2013) and (2014-2018).
- Neary Rattanak III (2009-2013) and IV (2014-2018).
- Cambodian National Council for Women Five-Year Strategic Plan 2010-2014 (CNCW Plan).
- National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development 2010-2019 (NP-SNDD).

<sup>46</sup> World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2014, <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>.



## Achievements

The RGC has taken several concrete steps to increase gender equality and advance women in decision-making, including in policies, laws and programs. Special measures have been implemented, resulting in positive increases in the proportion of women at national and sub-national levels. Obstacles to women's inclusion in public decision-making are well documented, and agreed solutions have been proposed by stakeholders.

In 2012, women held 14.75 percent, or nine out of a total of 61 seats in the Senate<sup>47</sup>. In the National Assembly, female representation has more than tripled in two decades<sup>48</sup>. The number of women in Deputy Prime Minister, Minister, Secretary of State and Under Secretary of State level positions increased in 2013<sup>49</sup>. The proportion of women in the Judiciary has increased since 2008<sup>50</sup>. Women comprise 20 percent of Deputy Governors at provincial/capital level, which is above the 2015 CMDG 3 target. The proportion of women councillors in capital and provincial councils has increased from 10 percent in 2009 to 13.23 percent in 2014. In district and khan councils, female seats have increased from 12.68 percent in 2009 to 13.85 percent in 2014. The percentage of female commune councillors increased from 15.10 percent in 2007 to 17.78 percent in 2012<sup>51</sup>.

The proportion of women in the civil service increased from 32 percent in 2007 to 37 percent in 2013<sup>52</sup>. Of 27 ministries, 20 reported an increase in the percentage of female personnel, with increases in female representation ranging from 0.27 percent (2008) to 7.9 percent (2013)<sup>53</sup>. Women's enrolment in the Royal School of Administration (RSA) is increasing, particularly in pre-service training<sup>54</sup>.

## Challenges

Women in Cambodia remain under-represented in decision-making positions in politics, the public sector and the judiciary.

Discrimination impacts the ability of women to be promoted.

Women are concentrated in sectors traditionally associated with women and at lower levels of government.

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<sup>47</sup> List of Senators in the 3<sup>rd</sup> mandate, [http://www.senate.gov.kh/home/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1718&Itemid=12&lang=km](http://www.senate.gov.kh/home/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1718&Itemid=12&lang=km) Senate of The Kingdom of Cambodia.

<sup>48</sup> List of Members of National Assembly for 5<sup>th</sup> Mandate, No. 420.NA, The National Assembly of The Kingdom of Cambodia.

<sup>49</sup> Royal Decree No. NS/RKT/0913/903 dated 24 September 2013 on the Nomination of the Royal Government of Cambodia.


<sup>50</sup> Ministry of Civil Service, *Statistics Table of Civil Servants in Line Ministries*, 31 January 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Official Results of the Commune/Sangkat Election for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mandate, National Election Committee, 24 June 2012, Phnom Penh. Cambodia.

<sup>52</sup> Ministry of Civil Service, *Statistics Table of Civil Servants in Line Ministries*, 31 January 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Lists of Trainees by Year, Royal School of Administration, 2014, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



Men continue to hold the vast majority of decision-making positions at the capital, provincial, municipal and district/khan levels.

At sub-national level, women face a number of challenges to participation in the public and political spheres, particularly workplace discrimination.

The absence of temporary measures to ‘fast track’ the participation of women in public decision-making, such as quotas, slows progress.

Political parties play a key role in advancing female representation in decision-making at national and sub-national levels. The electoral system impacts on opportunities for women in decision-making in several ways: in candidate selection, the placement of women on party lists and the absence of quotas for women.

The responsibility for achieving gender parity in decision-making is largely perceived to remain with women, however it is also the responsibility of men.

Within the civil service, women are concentrated in lower-level positions. Women in management are more likely to hold deputy positions.

There has been no cooperation among stakeholders in the creation of a framework or a joint program for promoting women’s participation in decision-making.

## Recommendations

- Develop and sustain an effective lobbying campaign to engage national legislators in developing gender-responsive laws and policies and increase female representation in the Legislative Branch.
- Build a more supportive environment for women in the Executive Branch.
- Develop and sustain an effective lobbying campaign to train and appoint more women in the judiciary and encourage female judges, prosecutors and lawyers to enter the Judicial Branch.
- Continue to lobby line ministries to increase the number of women in leadership positions in different sectors at municipal, provincial and district/khan levels.
- Continue to facilitate, establish and strengthen the strategic network for female leaders at sub-national level.
- Coordinate and develop a capacity-building strategy for female leaders, both elected and appointed, at sub-national level in line with strategic priorities.
- The Civil Service requires a mix of special measures, both temporary and permanent, to address the gender imbalance and accelerate women’s participation in public office.



- Support the Ministry of Civil Service in developing a regular monitoring mechanism to track recruitment and promotion of women and men in the civil service at national and sub-national levels.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Service and the RSA, develop and implement affirmative action measures to increase the proportion of female applicants and students accepted into RSA programs.
- Ensure preferential access to women in all capacity-building activities.
- Advocate with legislators and decision-makers in setting policy agendas to increase support for women in decision-making.
- Work in partnership with youth networks to promote women in public decision-making and to promote youth as potential future leaders.
- Promote participation of vulnerable groups of women in politics, decision-making, and in the civil service, and especially of women with disabilities, indigenous women and women from religious minorities. In addition, ensure that existing quotas for vulnerable groups (e.g. those for people with disabilities) are gender-equal (50/50).

▲ Tep Prummony, Commune Chief (55) has been leading her commune since January 2014. Prummony has a well established reputation in her community. She has been working in local government since 1986.



## Gender and Climate Change

Climate change has emerged as an issue of national significance for the future development of Cambodia. Most policy debates on climate change are taking place in the context of ‘Environmental Sustainability and Green Growth’, as these are interconnected and relate to each other. MoWA has started to focus on gender aspects of climate change, i.e. the role of women in coping with the changing climate and natural environment.

In Cambodia, the impacts of climate change relate predominantly to extended droughts, flooding, rising temperatures and changing weather patterns, including unprecedented heavy storms. These all affect agriculture and in particular people living in rural communities.

Poor management of natural resources, for example through uncontrolled depletion of natural forest cover, means environmental sustainability and nature’s resilience to climate-related disasters are at stake. As a result, there is a risk of increased hardship for the rural and urban poor, particularly women and children.

The RGC is focusing on both Climate Change Adaptation, i.e. building resilience or reducing vulnerabilities, and Climate Change Mitigation, which is about pro-actively moving towards low-carbon societies and reducing or preventing emissions of greenhouse gases.

In rural areas women in particular depend on local natural resources and are engaged in securing water, food, and energy for cooking and other household activities. As a result, droughts, uncertain rainfall and deforestation affect women differently from men. Similarly, the effects of climate change on women’s health are likely to be overwhelmingly negative. Climate change affects most social and environmental determinants of health - clean air, safe drinking water, food security and shelter.

Women play an indispensable role in the development of Cambodia’s economy, as participants in the labour market and business owners. Therefore, the livelihoods of women and their families who rely on either employment or their own businesses are at stake, especially those depending on agriculture and related rural industries.

There are untapped opportunities for women in climate change mitigation, i.e. green growth and the reduction of greenhouse gases. Women’s Economic Empowerment and climate change are directly related and create opportunities for moving towards a low-carbon society<sup>55</sup>. This includes opportunities in promoting renewable energy, which is often cited as a key climate change mitigation technology. Women have a role to play where energy supply is primarily about electricity to operate household appliances or equipment for home-industries and agriculture.

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<sup>55</sup> <http://www.unep.org/climatechange/mitigation/>



The key elements on gender and climate change in the “Gender and Climate Change Strategic Plan 2013-2023” (GCCSP) include:

- Promote women in decision-making on climate change adaptation and mitigation, and natural disaster management at all levels and domains.
- Increase the level of awareness on gender and climate change, including natural disasters, within MoWA and its decentralized offices and stakeholders.
- Increase the capacity of MoWA and its decentralized offices and stakeholders on gender-integrated vulnerability and capacity assessment, planning methods for climate change adaptation and mitigation and natural disaster management.
- Deliver targeted interventions for women with a high level of vulnerability to strengthen their climate change adaptation and mitigation capacities and empowerment (e.g. food security, nutrition, sustainable access to clean water, urban and rural livelihoods, waste management, access to information and support group formation).

▲ Heng Pheap (41) works as an agricultural laborer in Arey Skat, Kandal Province. She previously worked as a weaver, but this work is no longer profitable. Pheap now works on other people's farms for a small income.

- Conduct research and development to increase the availability of data and information on gender and climate change.
- Elicit best practices and lessons on gender and climate change for scaling up and sharing knowledge.

The “Gender and Climate Change Action Plan 2014-2018” (GCCAP) is meant to translate the recommendations of the GCCSP into action. The GCCAP addresses women and other vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly through capacity development measures for women in policy-dialogue, leadership, livelihood development, green growth and building climate change resilience in communities. The GCCAP engages the following three strategies: 1) strengthen institutional capacity and cross-sectoral coordination to reduce the vulnerability of women to climate change impacts; 2) improve capacity, knowledge and awareness on gender and climate change response; 3) promote gender-responsive climate change responses.

## Recommendations

- Encourage women to undertake more green, low-carbon, economic activities in agriculture or small-scale industry, increasing use of renewable energy, such as wind, solar and biomass.
- Promote female entrepreneurship and use the latest Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to disseminate climate change related information and knowledge, particularly in rural areas.
- Continue to mainstream gender in management of natural disasters and other climate-change related policies and programs.
- During times of natural disasters and climate change hazards, particular attention must be given to vulnerable groups of women and girls (e.g. elderly women, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls with HIV, indigenous women and girls, and women and girls living in remote areas).
- Legal measures, policies, programs and strategies on environmental sustainability must be responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups of women and girls.





Choeun Kim Heng (24) works as a translator for TVK. She climbs the stairs everyday as there is no ramp, but she doesn't mind. She works in this position because she knows she has the capacity to do it.











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