Overview

In recent years, Cambodia has achieved remarkable economic growth and made significant progress in reducing national poverty. According to the Cambodian National Institute of Statistics (NIS), the poverty rate decreased from 48 percent in 2007 to 18.9 percent in 2012.

Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 136 out of 187 countries on the 2014 UNDP Human Development Index. However, an estimated 20 percent more of the population escaped the poverty classification by a small margin. The impact of losing US$0.30 a day of income would double the poverty rate to about 40 percent.

Household access to sufficient and nutritious food and malnutrition remains a challenge. While only 2.33 percent of the population lives below the food poverty line (estimate in 2012), according to the NIS, some 33 percent of the population are undernourished. Malnutrition rates also remain stubbornly high, with almost 40 percent of children under 5 chronically malnourished (stunted), over 28.3 percent underweight, and 10.9 percent acutely malnourished (wasted).

Micronutrient deficiencies, especially iron, folic acid, B12, zinc, and iodine, are major public health concern, particularly among children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women.

Cambodia remains highly vulnerable to natural disasters, with regular monsoon flooding in the Mekong and Tonle Sap basin and localized droughts causing severe damage to livelihoods and crops.

2011-2016 Country Programme

WFP Cambodia through its Country Programme (CP) 2011-2016 supports the efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia to tackle food security challenges with a focus on food-based social safety nets and the development of national systems. WFP activities have reached close to one million food-insecure people in rural Cambodia each year since the CP began, but due to resource constraints this number will be significantly scaled back in 2015 to less than 500,000. The biggest reduction in beneficiaries will be in non-USDA supported schools.

The dual goal of the CP is to improve the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable households and communities in ways that build longer-term social capital and physical assets; and to develop models and capacities that promote sustainable national food security systems.

Its three main components include Education, Nutrition, and Productive Assets and Livelihoods Support (PALS). Provision of time-critical food security information through Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) is also a key activity.

The WFP Cambodia team is comprised of 99 national and 9 international staff, in the Country Office in Phnom Penh and in three area offices, i.e. Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, and KM6/Phnom Penh.
Programme Component

**Education** — For poor food insecure people, a daily school meal provides a strong incentive to send children to school and keep them focused on their studies. The WFP School Feeding Programme provides a hot nutritious breakfast, and food or cash scholarship to improve attendance in areas of high food insecurity and poor education performance. In USDA supported schools, WFP also addresses literacy, equipment, infrastructure and training on hygiene, sanitation, and nutrition.

**Nutrition** — Without the right nutrition during early childhood, a child’s physical and mental development is compromised irreversibly. WFP Cambodia raises awareness on hygiene and basic health and nutrition practices, stressing the importance of breast-feeding and good complementary foods for young children. WFP is currently working with partners to develop a locally produced fortified nutritious food supplement to create access to the right food for the prevention of stunting.

**Productive Assets and Livelihood Support (PALS)** — WFP’s Food for Assets and Cash for Assets projects compensate workers with food or cash to build a hunger-free future for their communities. The PALS programme strengthens the resilience of communities to shocks by providing regular employment opportunities and livelihood support to food insecure and vulnerable households through the creation and rehabilitation of disaster proof community infrastructure.

**Coordination Role of WFP**

WFP works closely with the Council of Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD), the government body mandated by the Prime Minister to coordinate food security and nutrition initiatives. WFP is the development partner co-chair of the Technical Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition and the Food Security Forum. WFP is an active partner of the Interim Working Group on Social Safety Nets, providing support to the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy. Within the UN Country Team, WFP is chair of the United Nation Development Assistance Framework Social Protection Advisory Group. WFP also chairs the UN Disaster Management Team, which coordinates United Nations response to natural disasters and liaises with the Government’s National Committee for Disaster Management. And, WFP also co-chairs with ActionAid, the Humanitarian Response Forum in Cambodia, which is supported by the US-Office of Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

Target Areas 2014-2015

WFP Cambodia’s Target Areas, 2014-2015

**WFP operations in 2015**

WFP direct beneficiaries: 305,758/Indirect beneficiaries: 457,314

EDUCATION
- 267,869 students with school meals
- 4,930 children with cash scholarships (24,650 family members)
- 26,709 children with food scholarships (133,545 family members)

NUTRITION
- 0—due to programme redesign

PALS (FFA)
- 6,250 workers (31,250 family members)

Resourcing

Under its Country Programme 2011-2016, WFP aims to assist 2.76 million poor food insecure Cambodians. WFP currently needs an additional US$70 million to achieve that target by 2016.

Partnerships

WFP’s activities are made possible thanks to the timely contributions from its funding partners including the Governments of USA, Japan, Cambodia, Australia, and Canada as well as private sector partners such as KFC France and Tencent.