



**Ministry of Planning**



# **NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY 2016 - 2030**



**Continue to improve the quality of life and well-being of the people**

**General Secretariat for Population and Development**



**NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY  
2016 - 2030**

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# INTRODUCTION

The results of the Inter-censual Population Survey 2013 (CIPS 2013) and Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2014 (CDHS 2014) have shown substantial changes in the socio-economic and demographic situation of the country, especially change in age structure that was due to the reduction of total fertility rate and mortality rate. The emerging population dynamics (including fertility, mortality and migration) bring about both the opportunities and new challenges impacting the development in all spheres because **"population is both a means and an end of development"**. Based on the long-term development perspective, the government recognizes the need of incorporating the population dynamics into the context of development process and development planning by considering multi-sectoral relationship between population issues and development.

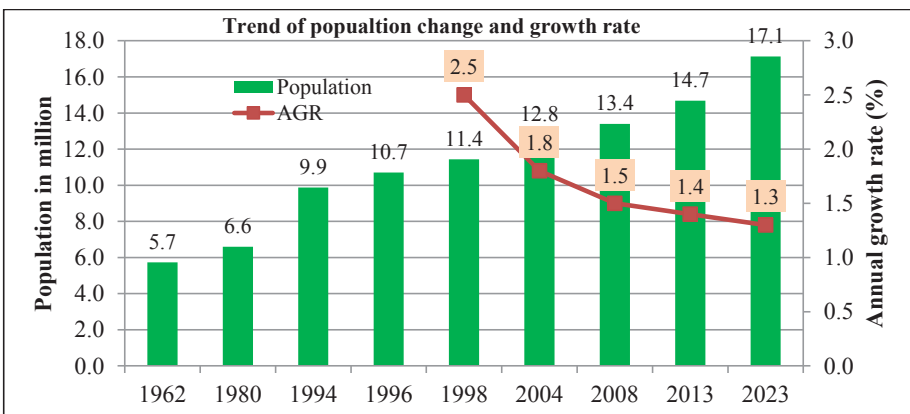
The purpose of this handbook is to provide the public (including decision makers, policy makers, planners and all concerned stakeholders at both national and subnational levels) a summary document of the National Population Policy 2016-2030 that is easily understandable on population-related information, especially the importance of integrating the demographic dynamics into the development planning at the local level.

## DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

### A. Population Size and Population Growth

The population growth rate has declined from 2.5% in 1998 to 1.5% in 2008 and to 1.4% in 2013. Although the growth rate declines, the sheer number of population continues to rise due to the population momentum. As shown in Figure 1, Cambodian population, which was 11.5 million in 1998, increased to 13.4 million in 2008 and to 14.7 million in 2013. According to the population projection, Cambodian population will be around 17.1 million in 2023.

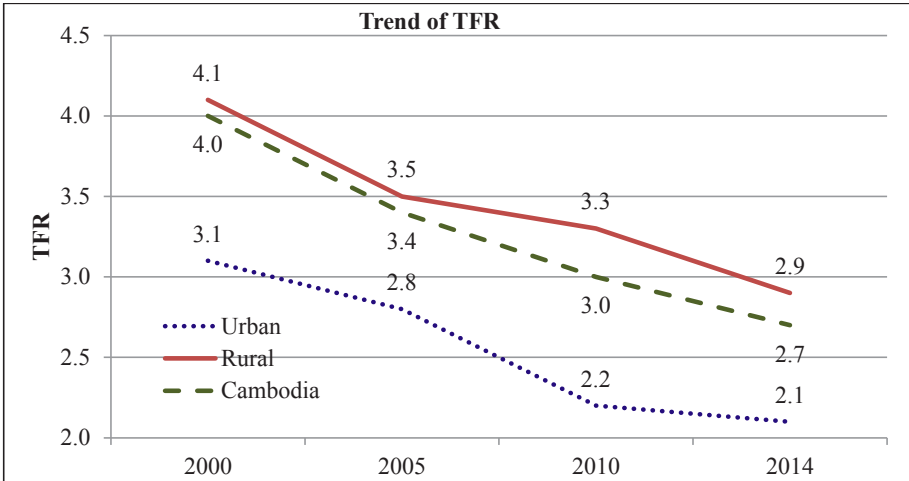
Figure 1: Trend of Population Change and Growth Rate



## B. Total Fertility Rate (TFR)

Total fertility rate (TFR) decreased from 4.0 in 2000 to 2.7 in 2014. Usually, the fertility rate in urban areas is lower than that in rural areas; specifically TF in 2014 was 2.1 in urban areas and 2.9 in rural areas.

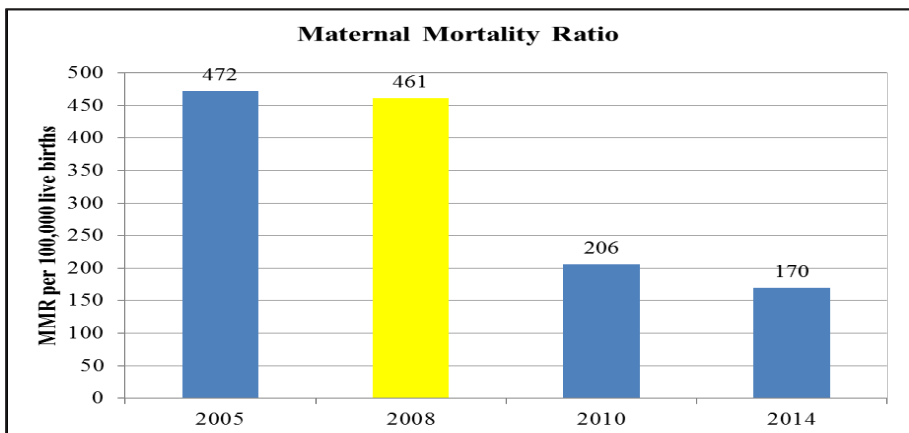
**Figure 2: Trend of Total Fertility Rate**



## C. Maternal Mortality Ratio

Maternal mortality ratio, which was 461 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008, was declined to 206 deaths in 2010 and continued to decline to 170 deaths in 2014.

**Figure 3: Trend of MMR**

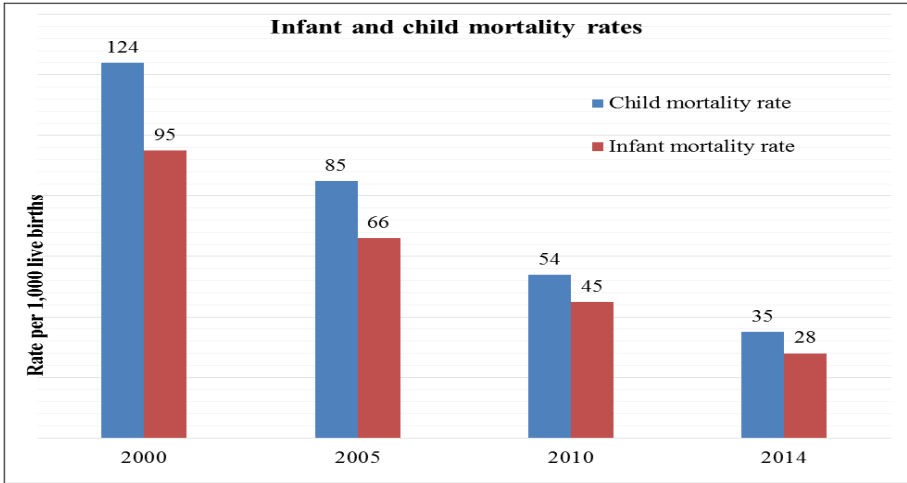




#### D. Infant and Child Mortality Rates

Infant mortality rate has dramatically declined from 95 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 28 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014. Child mortality rate has also declined from 124 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 35 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014.

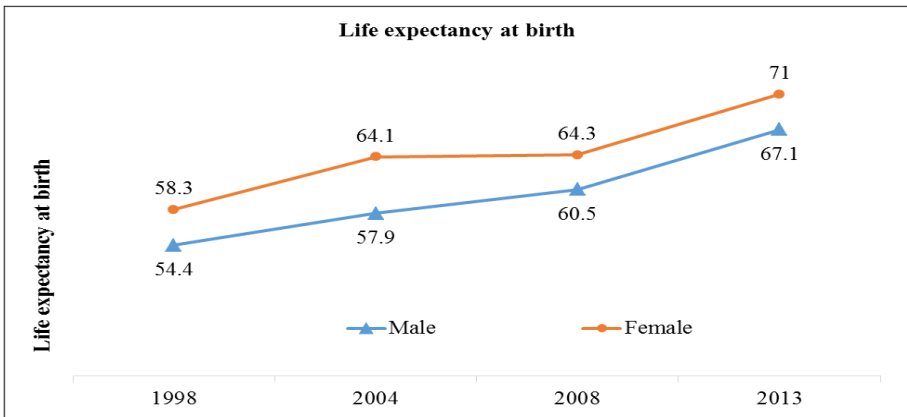
Figure 4: Trend of Infant Mortality Rate and Child Mortality Rate



#### E. Life Expectancy at Birth

During the last 15 years since the General Population Census 1998, life expectancy at birth has increased from 58 years to 71 years for women and from 54 years to 67 years for men.

Figure 5: Life Expectancy at Birth

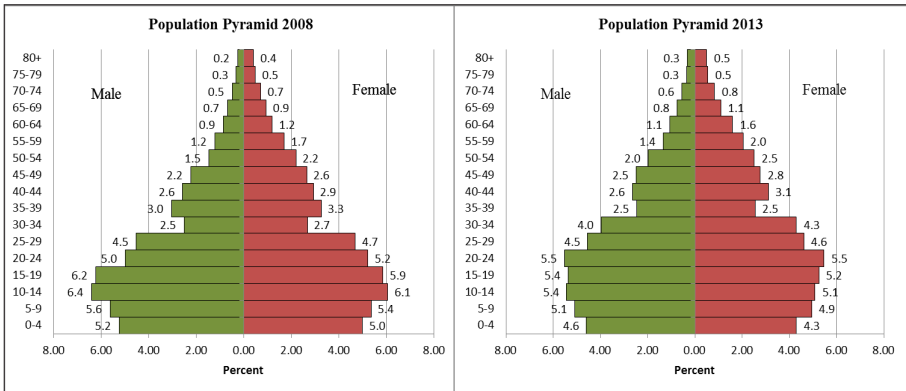


## F. Age-Sex Structure

Cambodian population's age-sex structure reflects the past high mortality and low fertility rate during Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979). The 30-34 years old cohort in 2008 and 35-39 years old cohort in 2013 illustrate this phenomena. The baby boom started right after 1979, but the huge baby boom occurred between mid-1980s and mid-1990s, during which the total fertility rate was about four children per one woman in productive age. After 1998, the total fertility rate was consistently declined: from 4.0 in 2000 to 3.4 in 2005 to 3.0 in 2010 and to 2.7 in 2014.

Moreover, the age-sex structure indicates that population change from young to working-age population might have started even before 2008 and the increase in the working age population continues until today.

**Figure 6: Population Age-Sex Structure**

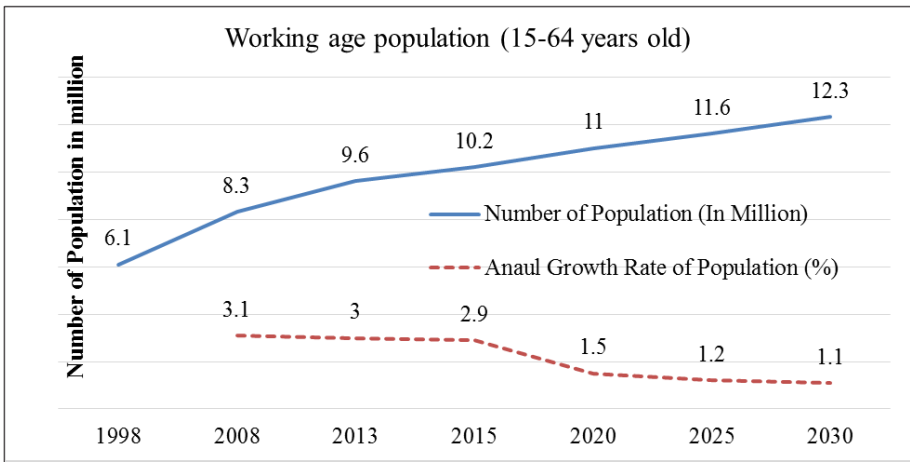


# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

## A. Labor Growth in Cambodia

- The number of working age population aged 15-64 years old increased from 6.1 million in 1998 to 9.6 million in 2013.
- This number will increase to 11.0 million by 2020 and to 12.3 million by 2030, based on the population projection using Census 2008 data.
- Despite the increase in sheer number, the annual growth rate of working aged people is declining, with a sharp drop being around and after 2020.

Figure 7. Trend of Working-Age Population



## B. Marital Status of Youth Aged 18-30 Years Old

- In 2013, the population at marriageable age (18-30 years old) was 3.9 million (26.6% of the total population), of which 2.1 million had not been married (53.2%).
- This suggests high demands for health care of youth, especially reproductive health and family planning for both married and unmarried youth.

## C. Educational Attainment of the Labor Force (Aged 15-64 Years Old)

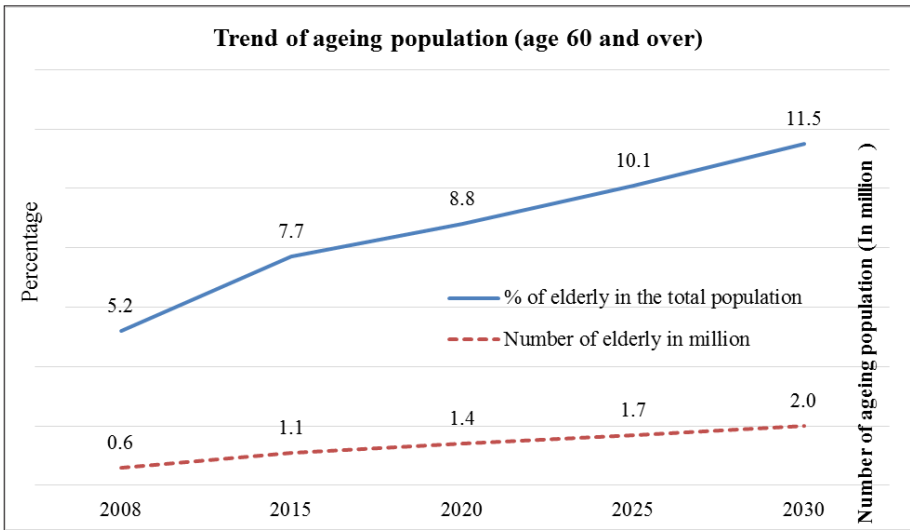
- In 2013, only 7.4% of the population aged 15-64 years old (9.0% among men and 5.8% among women of the same ages) finished upper secondary education, vocational training and college education.
- The percentage of population aged 15-64 finishing upper secondary education, vocational training and college education differs significantly by place of residence:

- Urban: Total 19.3% male 23.5% female 15.3%
  - Rural: Total 3.3% male 4.2% female 2.5%
- There is a need for key policy directions, measures and actions in order to reduce the above gender and geographic disparities.

#### D. Number and Growth of Ageing Population (Aged 60 and above)

Ageing population in Cambodia has increased and continues to increase until post 2030. In 2008, the elderly which was only 0.6 million (5.2% of the total population) increased to around 1.1 million in 2015 (7.7% of the total population) and will increase to 1.7 million by 2025 (10.1% of the total population), and to around 2 million by 2030 (11.5% of the total population).

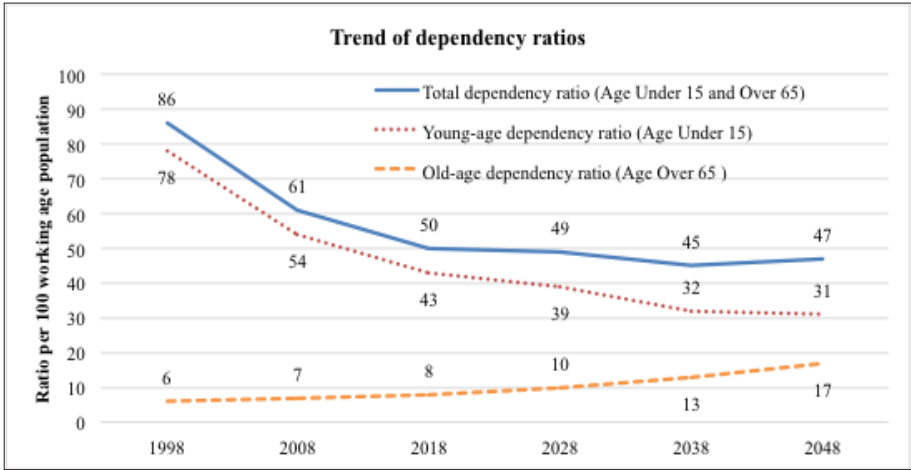
**Figure 8: Trend of Ageing Population**



#### E. Change in Dependency Ratio

Due to the increase of the working age population that is twice as much as the increase of the total population, the dependency ratio is declining. The decline is large between 1998 and 2018. In 1998, the total dependency ratio was 86, meaning that 100 working persons need to work to feed 186 persons. In 2018, this total dependency ratio decreased to 150. From 2018 onward, the total dependency ratio will decline slightly; and although young-age dependency ratio will continue to decline, the old-age dependency ratio will increase at a greater rate.

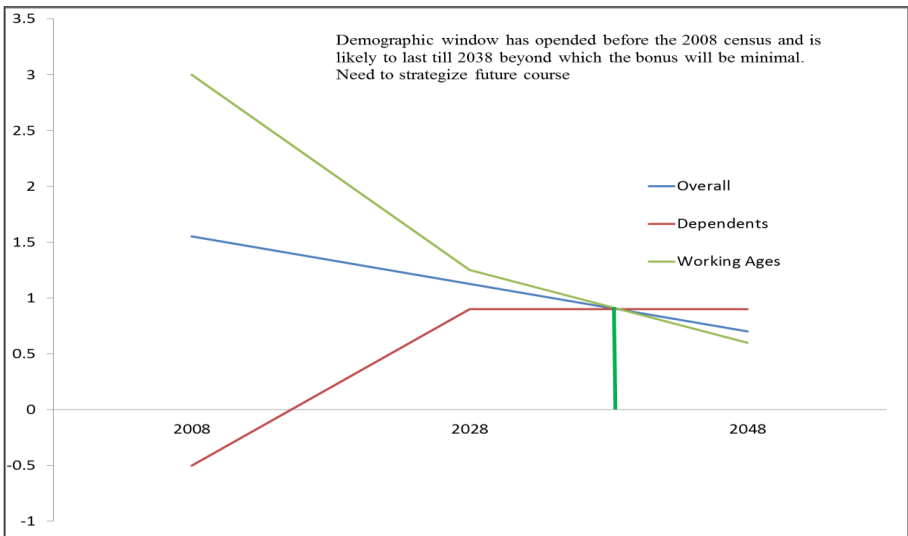
**Figure 9: Trend of Dependency Ratio**



**F. Demographic Dividend**

Changing in the population age structure has created demographic window of opportunity, where the growth rate of working age population is higher than the growth rate of total population and the dependent population, coupled with the continuing decline in fertility rate. This opportunity has provided Cambodia with a large working age population potential for young labor force needed for speedier economic growth. The demographic dividend was likely to occur before 2008 and likely to end by 2040.

**Figure 10: Timing and Duration of Demographic Dividend**



## G. Reaping the Benefit of Demographic Dividend

Reaping the benefit of the demographic dividend has become the main platform of the updated population policy, along with cross-cutting issues of gender, women's empowerment and the emerging issues of the elderly.

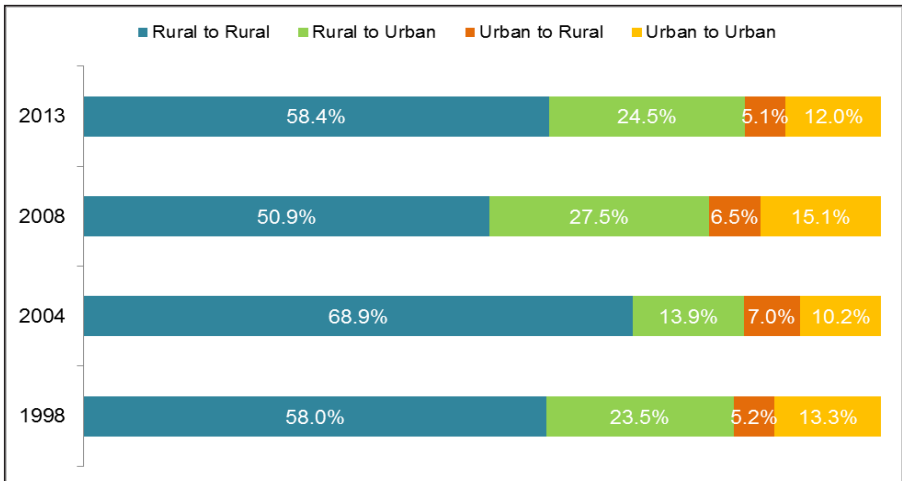
To take advantage of the demographic dividend for economic development, the growth rate of dependency ratio should remain lower than the growth rate of the working-age population, and the rate of job creation must be equal or higher than the growth rate of working-age population; otherwise unemployment rate will increase. In addition, people in the working-age population must be healthy and have skills and knowledge that can increase labor productivity, and have decent jobs and decent income that can generate savings, especially savings and investment for their old age and their children.

To achieve the above, human capital development is becoming a driving force of development through increasing social investment, especially in education and health sectors, as well as economic diversification and gender.

## H. Migration and Urbanization

Increase in urbanization and working-age population growth lead to migration flows. In 2013, 28.9% of the population was migrants, 49.4% among urban inhabitants and 23.3% among rural residents.

**Figure 11: Migration Flow**



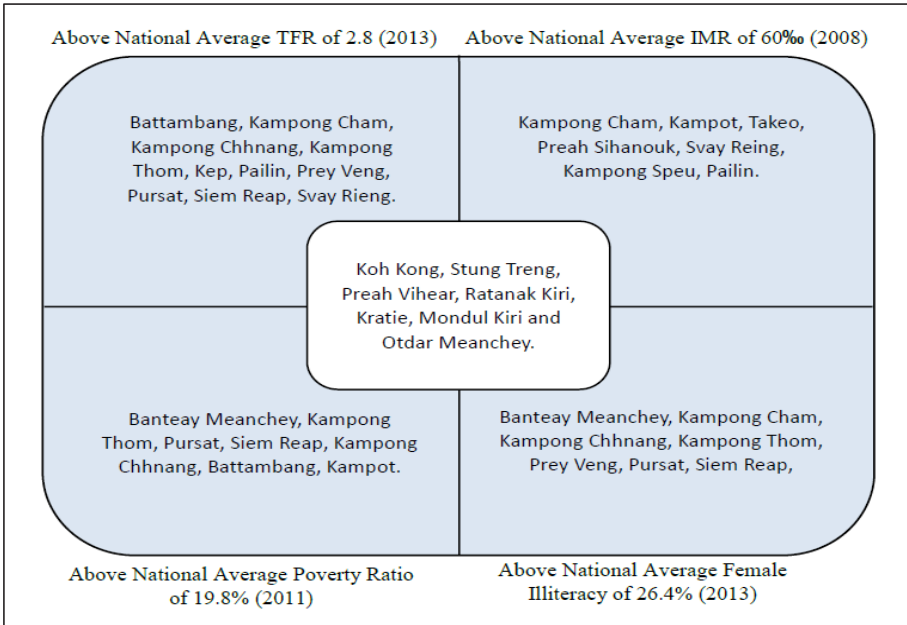
- Men dominate rural-to-rural migration flow, women dominate rural-to-urban migration flow
- Most of the urban-ward migrants migrate to Phnom Penh

- Most of the migrants work in construction and garment factories
- Migrants to Phnom Penh are better than their counterparts regarding quality and revenue
- Urban migration results in the loss of young people in rural areas

### I. Differences among Provinces

Provincial differences are well observed based on the selected four development indicators. Seven provinces that have high TFR, high IMR, high poverty rate, and high female illiteracy rate are Koh Kong, Steung Treng, Preah Vihear, Ratanak Kiri, Kratie, Mondul Kiri, and Oddar Meanchey.

**Figure 12: Provincial Differences**



# POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND GUIDELINES

## A. Vision

- Continue to promote and improve the quality of life of people with a clear and specific focus on measures and sustainable development activities.
- Coordinate the integration of changing demographic dynamics into social and economic development plans and ensure their implementation from all parties until 2030.

## B. Objectives

- Reduce the proportion of people whose income is below the national poverty line.
- Improve and expand the capacity and the effectiveness of irrigation system.
- Improve and expand the scope of infrastructure for flood and drought management.
- Improve access to clean water and sanitation among people who do not have access to.
- Reduce the unemployment rate among the working age population.
- Plan decongestion of Phnom Penh through proper urban planning and develop other towns and cities.
- Ensure completion of nine-year basic schooling to all children.
- Accelerate further reduction of the maternal mortality ratio, child mortality rate and infant mortality rate.
- Realize all the adolescent youth and couple's reproductive needs and fertility intentions are met and accelerate the pace of population stabilization.
- Reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and decrease the spread of Malaria, Tuberculosis and other diseases towards the total elimination of spread.
- Ensure social and health security to all elderly persons and specifically those living below poverty line.
- Stimulate the growth of socio-economic development towards upper-middle income country.

## C. Strategies

The Royal Government of Cambodia sets out the following strategies:

- Have specific policy directions that provide guidance to all ministries and development partners, including civil society.
- Continue to give greater priority to integrated population and development planning and prioritize key sectors of health, education, social welfare, rural and urban development, agriculture, infrastructure and environment with a view of creating more livelihood options to its people.
- Continue to focus on poverty alleviation programmes, human resources development and skill-set formation.
- Pay special attention to increase the human resources in the country by expanding the network of higher and professional education institutions.
- Plan for a phased approach of expanding the sectoral economies along with development of basic infrastructure.
- Achieve population stabilization by addressing the reproduction health needs of individuals/couples.



- Continue to implement life cycle methods in addressing health issues of teenagers, youth, and women.
- Continue to focus on children's health issues, including child rights and nutrition.
- Continue to put effort in preparing strategic and investment framework towards ending the HIV/AIDS spread and addressing management issues related to sexually transmitted diseases; create care and counseling services at health facilities; and create and expand geriatric health care services for the elderly, especially on non-communicable diseases at health facilities.
- Strive to achieve gender equity by addressing the issues related to inter-provincial disparities, gender differences and human right issues of people in general and women in particular.
- Promote inter-sectoral coordination on development and well-being activities.
- Continue to build partnership with international development agencies, NGOs, the private sector and locally elected representatives to plan and implement programmes in a decentralized way.
- Evolve structures and systems both at the national and provincial levels.
- Continue to generate resources to improve the infrastructure and other physical facilities and to pay utmost attention to the proper use of available resources.

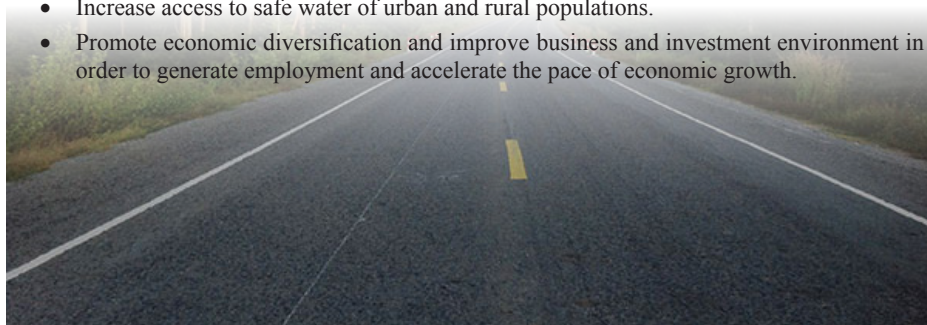
#### D. Policy and Programme Directions

To take advantage of demographic dividend, the policy and programme directions must crucially exist so that they will improve the quality of life and also take into account the needs of planning and strategy. The policy and programme directions are proposed as follows:

##### 1. Extend and Develop Infrastructure

Review the existing strategies of infrastructure development from the perspective of changing population dynamics:

- Develop semi-urban towns as nucleus and satellite towns.
- Improve and strengthen urban infrastructure and amenities, road and rail connectivity between different regions.
- Develop regional infrastructure plans (e.g., coastal or plateau).
- Develop an expanded plan of action for establishing SMEs.
- Promote the development of services sector.
- Explore options of developing de-mined regions.
- Increase access to safe water of urban and rural populations.
- Promote economic diversification and improve business and investment environment in order to generate employment and accelerate the pace of economic growth.



## 2. Managing Migration and Urbanization

Urban Growth Prospects of about 30-40 years has to be factored into development planning by taking into consideration the future population growth and youth bulge and more importantly it has to be in sync with the social, economic and environmental road-map of the country.

- Prepare operational plan for managing migration and urbanization.
- Develop age-friendly and eco-friendly new cities and towns.
- Consider the establishment of municipal corporations and wards including slum development corporations and decentralized management.
- Enforce stringent norms on construction and preservation of environment, violation of natural resources, solid and other waste disposal.
- Develop satellite townships by improving connectivity between villages, townships and cities.
- Form nucleus cities with all basic amenities and commercial zones as SEZs and other zones.



### 3. Expansion of Agriculture and Allied Activities

Examine the new Industrial Policy and explore options of expanding the rural economies by creating an environment conducive for setting up of agro-based industries of international standards to promote exports; ensure quality compliance in food processing, and enforce laws and regulations for protection of national resources:

- Undertake skill-set matching and skill requirement.
- Impart specific vocational training programmes on agriculture and water and allied activities for youth with a special focus on women/girls.
- Promote live-stock production as a subsidiary occupation and diversify into agriculture allied activities-agro-processing industries.
- Promote use of bio-gas and solar energy.
- Promote social awareness on the importance of conserving natural resources and promulgate the use of eco-friendly degradable materials.
- Ensure minimum working days and equal wages for men and women in rural and urban areas with special focus on youth, elderly and disabled.



#### 4. Social Sector Investments and Human Capital Development

It is important to work on human capital formation, as a key to the expansion of the base of economy and development of all sectors and at the same time help the country increase global competition. Hence, the policy and program directions shall continue their focuses on investments in education, health and welfare programmes with a special focus on elderly and at the same time ensure gender equality and women empowerment.

##### *Education:*

- Develop and integrate educational cross-linkages with technical and vocational training programmes into the curricula of secondary and college education
- Continue to provide incentives to children with hardship to complete basic education and to youth to complete upper secondary education. Encourage girls' education by providing additional facilities like hostel, books, library facilities, scholarships, etc.
- Accelerate life-skills education training by way of comprehensive sexuality education in schools/colleges



**Health:**

- Develop human resources planning and strengthen health service delivery
- Promote the use of modern birth spacing methods of family planning among youth and women to reduce unmet need for family planning
- Expand life-skills education for out-of-school adolescents and youth through community networks by emphasizing on substance abuse and its negative effects



### *Gender:*

- Strengthen law enforcement and awareness for prevention of domestic violence, delinquency, drugs and commercial sex targeted towards youth
- Increase economic opportunities through provisions of skills training
- Implement national action plans on the prevention of domestic violence against women through strengthening the coordination of leadership and ownership of the Line Ministries and other concerned institutions.
- Improve women's access to education, health care service, and social and legal protection.



### *Ageing population:*

- Introduce appropriate programmes for health care of elderly and enhance human capacity of health care and community-based providers
- Review the need for establishing old-age homes in the country against the social cultural setting of the country
- Strengthen and expand home-based care and social security for elderly, especially for destitute and those from poorer families
- Ensure public facilities for older persons are compliant and provide tax-incentives, higher bank interests and concessions in travel



## **IMPLEMENTING INSTITUTIONS**

To translate the National Population Policy into action, appropriate implementing structures at various administrative levels that can provide good governance, transparency and accountability in implementation and monitoring of the programmes have to be in place.

General Secretariat of Population and Development as an arm of the Ministry of Planning has crucial role to promote the implementation of the NPP 2016-2030 in close collaboration with Line-Ministries, Development Partners, and Civil Society.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Ministry of Planning plays an important role to monitoring and evaluating the progress of NPP implementation and all population programmes and activities. This will be carried out by means of setting demographic and population and development indicators in collaboration with line ministries, to conduct the assessment to track progress at stipulated intervals and to provide recommendations in order to ensure effective implementation of policies and strategies. MOP further has a role to collect, disseminate and promote the use of population data in development planning at all levels.









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