

Cambodia's VNR 2023 Main Messages

Cambodia's development goals, vision and LDC graduation

Cambodia's second VNR assesses progress on the 17 SDGs and its additional goal of eliminating mines and ERW.

With the slogan **'THANKS-PEACE'**, Cambodia has implemented sustainable development initiatives, outlined in strategic documents like the Cambodia SDGs Framework, National Strategic Development Plan, Rectangular Strategy Phase IV, National Social Protection Policy Framework, Economic Recovery Programmes, Cambodia Digital Government Policy, and Integrated National Financing Framework.

Achieving the SDGs is crucial for Cambodia's aspirations to become an Upper Middle-Income Country by 2030 and a High-Income Country by 2050. Having met for the first time all LDC graduation criteria in 2021, Cambodia may potentially graduate from the LDCs as early as 2027 if progress continues.

Progress on the Goals and leaving no one behind

Cambodia has made significant strides in enhancing the well-being of its population, working diligently to ensure that no one is left behind. This progress is evident in various sectors, including 7) Affordable and clean energy, 11) Sustainable cities and communities, 12) Responsible consumption and production, 4) Quality of education, 5) Gender equality, 10) Reduced inequalities, 17) Partnership for the goals, and Cambodia's own goal, and 18) End the negative impact of mines and ERW.

The government also recognizes the need to make further efforts in 8) Decent work and economic growth, 9) Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and 15) Life on land, and to make additional data available to assess progress in 1) No poverty, 2) Zero hunger, 3) Good health and well-being, 6) Clean water and sanitation, 13) Climate action, 14) Life below water, and 16) Peace, justice, and strong institutions.

Furthermore, Cambodia has made significant strides in enhancing the well-being of its population, with a focus on ensuring that no one is left behind in this progress. For example, from 2010 to 2022, access to basic drinking water and sanitation more than doubled, while access to electricity, clean fuel, and bank accounts more than tripled for average households at national level, but with greater progress observed in households furthest behind, closing the gap in terms of inequality of opportunities in Cambodia.

In children's health, prevalence of stunting almost halved from 40% in 2010 to 22% in 2022. However, children living in poorer households are left behind as stunting prevalence reaches 30% among them. Prevalence of wasting remained stagnant at 10% on average and at 14% for the furthest behind, while prevalence of overweight children doubled from 2% in 2014 to 4% in 2022.

As regards women's health, there has been an overall improvement in birth attendance. However, 5% of economically disadvantaged women, those with lower education levels,

and those with more than three children, still lack access to skilled birth attendance. Additionally, although there has been a 20% increase in the proportion of women with access to modern contraceptives from 2014 to 2020, nearly 40% of women aged 15-49 still have unmet needs for family planning. This figure rises to almost 50% for younger women in urban areas, who, as of 2022, represent the most underserved demographic in this regard.

Among adults aged 20-35, completion of secondary education jumped from 15% in 2014 to 23% in 2022, while tertiary education attendance almost doubled from 7% in 2014 to 13% in 2022. Although, poorer women aged 25-35 are furthest behind in secondary completion as only 7% of them have completed secondary education in 2022.

Road ahead

Cambodia is determined to accelerate its recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact of the Ukraine war while proactively addressing current and emerging challenges such as climate change. The nation will redouble its efforts to achieve all its goals by implementing targeted corrective measures, allocating budgets, and mobilizing resources from diverse sources in collaboration with development partners and stakeholders.

The forthcoming long-term Pentagon Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan 2024-2028 will be strategically aligned to accelerate progress towards SDGs achievement, economic recovery, inclusive, sustainable and resilient development, as well as shared prosperity for Cambodia and the World to leave no one behind.