

Overview of the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable

Social protection is support given to people to cope with major sources of poverty and vulnerability, while at the same time promoting human development. Social protection interventions include, at a minimum, social insurance, labour market policies, social safety nets and social welfare services.

The **poor and vulnerable** are defined as: people living below the national poverty line; and people who cannot cope with shocks and/or have a high level of exposure to shocks (of these, people living under or near the poverty line tend to be most vulnerable).

The Rectangular Strategy Phase II and NSDP Update 2009-2013 define **vulnerable groups** as: people living with HIV and their families; homeless people; people living with disabilities; orphaned and at-risk children and youth; victims of violence, abuse and exploitation; indigenous and ethnic minorities; families of migrants; veterans; and the elderly.

Introduction

Social protection is a priority of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), as expressed in the Constitution, the Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase II, the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) Update 2009-2013 and national legislation, as well as international conventions to which Cambodia is a signatory.

The main rationale behind a National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable (NSPS) is the need to accelerate progress towards the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs). Achievement of the CMDGs has been further delayed by the recent food, fuel and financial crises, which have had a negative impact on the poor and vulnerable.

By investing in strengthened provision of social protection, the RGC can address the challenges involved in reducing long-term poverty and mitigating the negative impact of short-term crises. Therefore, the strategic intent of the NSPS is to support socioeconomic security for the population as the foundation for sustainable and shared economic growth.

An effective social protection strategy for the poor and vulnerable requires a balance between relieving chronic poverty, helping the poor to cope with social, economic and climatic shocks and promoting their human capital for the future towards enabling them to break the cycle of poverty. The NSPS therefore pursues a threefold approach:

- Supporting the poorest and most disadvantaged groups who cannot help themselves through social transfers and services;
- Reducing the impact of risks that could lead to negative coping strategies and further impoverishment; and
- Supporting the poor to move out of poverty by building human capital and expanding their opportunities.

Process of developing the NSPS

Elaboration of the NSPS was led by the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD), through a number of technical consultations with a broad set of stakeholders, including Government representatives at national and sub-national level, development partners, civil society representatives and other development practitioners.

To inform the priorities of the NSPS, a profile of the poor and vulnerable in Cambodia was elaborated, which identifies the main sources of vulnerability and main vulnerable groups, followed by a gap analysis of current social protection interventions mapped against the poverty and vulnerability profile (see Appendix).

Vision, goal and objectives

The NSPS envisions that **all Cambodians, especially the poor and vulnerable, will benefit from improved social safety nets and social security, as an integral part of a sustainable, affordable and effective national social protection system.**

The main goal of the NSPS is that **poor and vulnerable Cambodians will be increasingly protected against chronic poverty and hunger, shocks, destitution and social exclusion and benefit from investments in their human capital.**

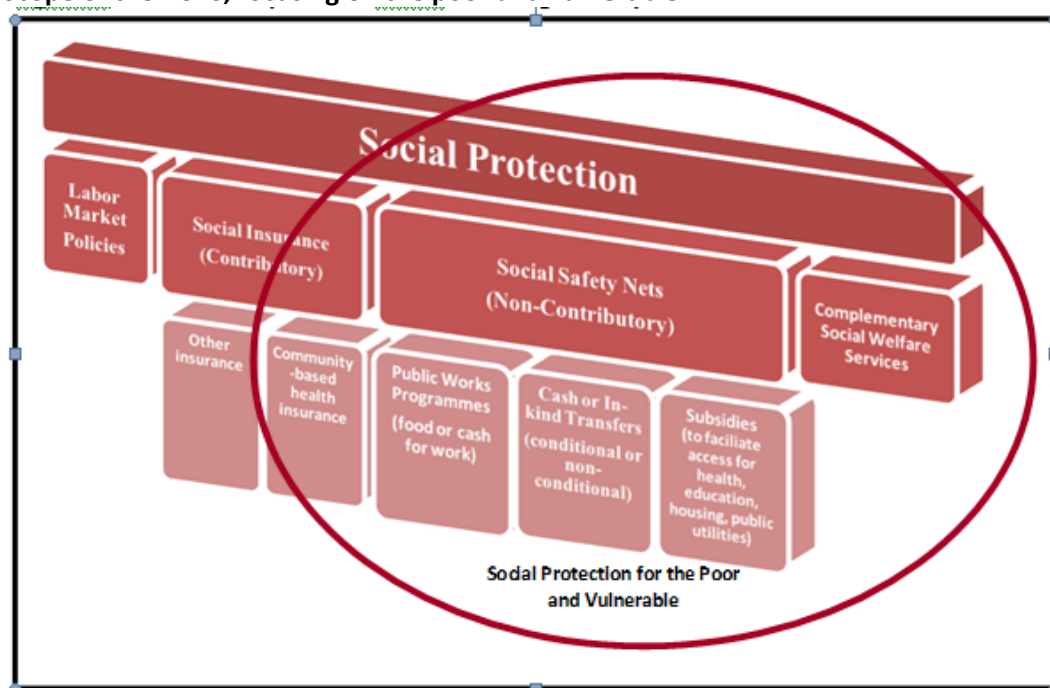
The objectives of the NSPS are:

1. Address the basic needs of the poor and vulnerable in situations of emergency and crisis;
2. Reduce the poverty and vulnerability of children and mothers and enhance their human development;
3. Address seasonal un- and underemployment and provide livelihood opportunities for the poor and vulnerable;
4. Promote affordable health care for the poor and vulnerable;
5. Improve social protection for special vulnerable groups.

Focus on the poor and vulnerable

To achieve the vision, goals and objectives, in the short and medium term the NSPS prioritises the development of effective and sustainable social safety nets targeted to the poor and vulnerable, with complementary social welfare services for special vulnerable groups.

Scope of the NSPS, focusing on the poor and vulnerable



Implementation

To achieve these objectives requires **1) scaling-up and harmonising existing social protection interventions** and **2) implementing new programmes to cover current gaps in social protection**.

Health Equity Funds (HEFs), school feeding, scholarships and public works programmes are already addressing major vulnerabilities faced by the poor and are proving effective. However, some of these, such as public works programmes, tend to be implemented by multiple development partners on an *ad hoc* basis without much coordination, and their medium-term sustainability is often questionable. In scaling these interventions up it will be of the utmost importance to harmonise processes and ensure regular financing, so as to guarantee medium-term sustainability. In addition, the coverage of existing programmes will be reassessed and better aligned to poverty and vulnerability levels of provinces and districts.

Gaps in existing social protection for the poor and vulnerable will be addressed by the implementation of new programmes that intend to help both relieve chronic poverty and promote human capital, such as cash transfers focusing on improvement of child and maternal nutrition, health and education outcomes and reducing child labour, as well as second-chance programmes that promote skills development for out-of-school youth and provide support to child labourers to re-enter the school system. New interventions will be piloted, evaluated and expanded based on effectiveness and sustainability.

Given the NSPS priorities, the following are the preferred instruments for medium-term implementation:

(1) The poor and vulnerable receive support including food, sanitation, water and shelter etc, to meet their basic needs in times of emergency and crisis. (CMDG 1, 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted food distribution • Distribution of farm inputs • Other emergency support operations
(2) Poor and vulnerable children and mothers benefit from social safety nets to reduce poverty and enhance the development of human capital by improving nutrition, maternal and child health, promoting education and eliminating child labour, especially its worst forms (CMDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash, vouchers, food or other in-kind transfers for children and women towards one integrated programme (e.g. cash transfers focusing on maternal and child nutrition, cash transfers promoting education and reducing child labour) • Outreach services and second-chance programmes for out-of-school youth; and supporting social welfare services • Transfer of fortified foods to pregnant women, lactating mothers and children • School feeding, take-home rations etc
(3) The working-age poor and vulnerable benefit from work opportunities to secure income, food and livelihoods, while contributing to the creation of sustainable physical and social infrastructure assets (CMDG 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National labour-intensive public works programme • Food for work and cash for work schemes
(4) The poor and vulnerable have effective access to affordable quality health care and financial protection in case of illness (CMDG 4, 5, 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of Health Equity Funds (for the poor) and Community Based Health Insurance (for the near poor)
(5) Special vulnerable groups receive income, in kind and psycho-social support and adequate social care (CMDG 1, 6, 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social welfare services for special vulnerable groups • Social transfer and social pensions for the elderly and people living with chronic illness and people living with disabilities

Coordination

The NSPS is aligned with and makes operational the priority actions laid out in the Rectangular Strategy Phase II and the NSDP Update 2009-2013. It also complements other strategies and sector plans that pertain directly or indirectly to social protection. Many of these strategies and plans, and the related activities, represent the building blocks for a comprehensive system of social protection for the poor and vulnerable in Cambodia.

Implementation of social protection interventions is the responsibility of line ministries and decentralised Government institutions. The NSPS aims to complement the efforts of line ministries in achieving sector targets in social protection measures through providing a framework for sustainable, effective and efficient implementation. Most programmes in the NSPS are by nature inter-sectoral and require coordination across ministries and Government agencies, to avoid thematic and geographical overlaps, to harmonise implementation procedures and to coordinate the effective and efficient use of available funds from the national budget and development partners. This also entails active dialogue with development partners and civil society.

To implement the NSPS, the RGC will establish the appropriate mechanisms and structures for social protection coordination to provide policy oversight, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge and information management and capacity building. Through this support to implementing ministries, the RGC aims to:

- Avoid geographical overlaps or gaps in the provision of social protection;
- Avoid over-targeting or gaps in coverage of beneficiaries;
- Harmonise implementation procedures;
- Strengthen the capacity of ministries and agencies to implement social protection interventions;
- Support the decentralised structures of Government (provincial, district, commune councils) to engage on social protection;
- Strengthen vulnerability assessment and monitoring;
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of social protection interventions;

- Strengthen information and knowledge management for social protection;
- Strengthen the participation of beneficiaries (in design, review, feedback mechanisms);
- Coordinate the use of available funds.

Beneficiary selection/targeting

Appropriate targeting mechanisms are crucial to the effective and cost-efficient implementation of the NSPS. A range of approaches to selecting beneficiaries for social protection interventions will be adopted, drawing on self-targeting, geographic targeting and household targeting.

Household targeting will be based primarily on the MoP Identification of Poor Households programme, to achieve greater harmonisation and uniformity in targeting the poor. The RGC intends to make IDPoor the primary targeting methodology across all social protection schemes, while still allowing for the use of complementary methodologies where necessary.

Resource requirements

A provisional estimate of costed programmes and interventions has been developed for the near future, to prioritise the expansion of existing measures and the introduction of new social protection provisions. A costing exercise for the medium and long term will be a priority activity during the first year of implementation (including a detailed costing of existing and planned interventions and a fiscal space analysis).

Financing arrangements will be discussed with development partners. The objective is a programme-based approach to social protection in Cambodia, with harmonised donor support to the NSPS that is aligned with Government systems. The RGC proposes a pooled fund arrangement to finance the coordination of NSPS implementation.

Immediate priorities

Building up institutional capacities in the central coordination mechanism and relevant agencies, at national and decentralised level, will be a major priority for the immediate future: institutional arrangements and functioning coordination and monitoring structures are a prerequisite for rolling out the NSPS over the medium and long term.

Ongoing and new social protection programmes will increasingly be harmonised and integrated with larger-scale national programmes during the medium- to long-term implementation of the NSPS, in order to bring the various schemes under one integrated programme, at least per objective.

The cost estimates are indicative only and the exact financing will be determined through further analyses and assessments. The majority of the priority actions already have committed funding through the RGC budget and with the support of development partners. Some of the priority actions are new interventions.

This matrix is a work in progress.

CARD welcomes the support of line ministries in confirming the priority actions.

Short-term priority programmes and action		Implementing ministry	Estimated beneficiaries and benefit levels	Funding status	Resource requirements (in US\$ m)		
					2010/2011	2012	2013
Overarching priority actions							
0.1	Disseminate NSPS at national and decentralised level	CARD		To be confirmed	0.05		
0.2	Define roles and functions and set up a social protection steering committee and appropriate Government/donor coordination structure	CARD		To be confirmed	0.05		
0.3	Cost medium- and long-term implementation of NSPS and identify opportunities for joint pooled financing and develop appropriate joint/pooled financing arrangements for social protection tasks	CARD		To be confirmed	0.1		
0.4	Conduct capacity need assessment and develop human resource development plan	CARD		To be confirmed	0.1		
0.5	Build up capacities for social protection development, coordination and M&E at national level (in CARD and line ministries) (trainer pool)	CARD		To be confirmed	0.1	0.3	0.3
0.6	Build up capacities for social protection coordination and monitoring at decentralised level	CARD		To be confirmed	0.5	0.5	0.5
0.7	Set up and maintain monitoring and information management system for social protection in CARD	CARD		To be confirmed	0.5	0.5	0.5
0.8	Expand coverage of IDPoor to all rural households and provide updated Lists of Poor Households every two years	MoP	2010: 11 provinces, approx 1.2 million HHs in coverage area 2011-13: per annum 12 provinces, approx 1.2 million HHs in coverage area	Confirmed for 2010 and 2011	2.8	2.95	3.1
0.9	Design and pilot system to identify urban households	MoP				0.3	0.3

Short-term priority programmes and action		Implementing ministry	Estimated beneficiaries and benefit levels	Funding status	Resource requirements (in US\$ m)		
					2010/2011	2012	2013
Objective 1: Cover basic needs during crisis and emergencies							
1.1	Targeted food distribution	MEF	ADB/EFAP ?	Confirmed			
1.2	Distribution of agricultural inputs	MEF, MAFF	ADB/EFAP ?, EC/FAO Food Facility ?	Confirmed			
1.3	Emergency relief assistance	MoSVY	Based on 2008-2013 MoSVY work platform, by 2013 beneficiaries will have included 250,000 (50,000 per year) work victims of natural disasters, poor people facing food shortages and victims of disasters will have received emergency relief assistance	Confirmed	MoSVY budget	MoSVY budget	MoSVY budget
	Emergency relief assistance – NCDM						
Objective 2: Reduce poverty and vulnerability of poor mothers and children							
2.1	Set up new cash transfer programme to support the poor while addressing child and maternal malnutrition (preparation and pilot in 2011-2012, 50% implementation in 2013)	To be confirmed during project design phase	2012: 64,000 children/mothers 2013: 160,000 children/mothers Benefit level: US\$60 per child/year Administration cost 10%	To be confirmed	0.2	4	10
2.2	Targeted food transfer for mother and child nutrition	MoH	2010: 50,460 beneficiaries 2011: 50,460 beneficiaries 2012: 55,506 beneficiaries 2012: 55,506 beneficiaries	To be confirmed	3.4	3.8	3.8
2.3	Expand scholarship programme for secondary school children focusing especially on children vulnerable to child labour	MoEYS	527 schools currently in CESSP x 30 children on average per school x US\$45 = 15,800 potential scholarships for 2011 (US\$711,450) Potential in 2012 and 2013 to reach more schools	Financed by MoEYS budget			
2.3	Expand scholarship programme for primary school children focusing especially on children vulnerable to child labour	MoEYS	Fast Track Initiative: pilot ending 2012, 10,442 scholarships in 2011, 6,814 in 2012 at US\$20/student, 3 provinces Possible impact evaluation in 2013	Confirmed	0.21	0.14	
2.4	(Expand) School feeding programme	MoEYS	2010: 454,100 children 2011: 564,660 children 2012: 621,126 children 2013: 621,126 children (Grades 1-6, 1 meal /day)	To be confirmed	9.8	15.2	15.2

Short-term priority programmes and action		Implementing ministry	Estimated beneficiaries and benefit levels	Funding status	Resource requirements (in US\$ m)		
					2010/2011	2012	2013
2.5	(Expand) food scholarship programme ("take-home rations")	MoEYS	2010: 89,696 beneficiaries 2011: 92,400 beneficiaries 2012: 184,800 beneficiaries 2013: 184,800 beneficiaries (Monthly 15kg rice, 2kg beans and 1kg vegetable oil mostly to school girls, Grades 2-6 for family consumption)	To be confirmed	3.3	6.6	6.6
2.6	Support to the implementation of the National Plan of Action on the Elimination of Child Labour	MoLVT	12,000 by 2012 12,000 ¹	Confirmed			
Objective 3: Reduce seasonal unemployment and provide livelihood opportunities							
3.1	Set up and gradually expand an integrated national public works programme to address (seasonal) rural unemployment of the poor and create sustainable community assets	To be confirmed during project design phase	Beneficiaries 2011: 20,750 Beneficiaries 2012: 42,000 Beneficiaries 2013: 105,500 Employment for 40 days/year Wage rate: 10,000 Riels Average non-wage cost 30%	To be confirmed	0.2	10	24
3.2	Continue existing FFW/CFW programme a) WFP b) EFAP	MEF, MRD	2010: 142,915 beneficiaries 2011: 181,249 beneficiaries 2012: 250,000 beneficiaries 2013: 250,000 beneficiaries ADB to insert details (EFAP until 2011?)	To be confirmed	3.3	5	5
Objective 4: Promote affordable health care for the poor and vulnerable							
4.1	Streamline/harmonise/expand coverage of HEF	MoH		Confirmed with funding gap identified	9 (Gap 3.0)	10 (Gap 6.0)	12 (Gap 8.0)
4.2	Expand CBHI?	MoH	End 2009: 13 schemes with a total of 122,829 members	To be confirmed			

¹ The above beneficiaries are to be directly targeted under an ILO-funded project. However, it may be noted that the RGC is committed to ending the worst forms of child labour by 2016. Towards this, it has been estimated by joint World Bank, UNICEF, ILO (Understanding Children's Work Project) study to require an additional funding of \$90 million. Thus, for the three-year period 2011-2013, roughly an additional \$45 million will be required, i.e. \$15 million each year.

Short-term priority programmes and action		Implementing ministry	Estimated beneficiaries and benefit levels	Funding status	Resource requirements (in US\$ m)		
					2010/2011	2012	2013
Objective 5: Improve social protection for specific poor and vulnerable groups							
5.1	Develop concept for addressing vulnerabilities for poor elderly, chronically ill and disabled people	MoSVY	Long-term strategy to increase social protection for poor, elderly, disabled (e.g. through cash transfers or social pensions) developed and agreed on by 12/2013	To be confirmed	0.1	0.1	0.1
5.2	Targeted food distribution to specific vulnerable groups	MoH	TB patients 2010: 22,857 patients, US\$2 million People living with HIV/AIDS/OVC 2010: 67,460, US\$4.2 million	To be confirmed	3.7	3.7	3.7
					4.9	5.8	5.8
5.3.	Social welfare services, including child welfare and youth rehabilitation, welfare and rehabilitation for people with disabilities, homeless, welfare for elderly and for veterans	MoSVY	Based on the 2008-2013 MoSVY work platform, by 2013 beneficiaries will have included: 11,000 orphan children; 105,160 veterans and 316,260 family members; 15,185 children and teenagers in conflict with the law; 4,500 people with disabilities (900 per year), including 676 children with disabilities; 7,500 homeless people (1,500 per year); 1,500 AIDS-affected women and children and their families (300 per year); 8,500 women and children victims of human trafficking (1,510 per year)	Financed by MoSVY budget	MoSVY budget	MoSVY budget	MoSVY budget

Appendix: Findings from the poverty and vulnerability profile and gap analysis of current social protection interventions

Risks and shocks		Most vulnerable groups	Progress to date in response	Gaps and challenges in response	Options for the near future	
1. Situations of emergency and crisis	Macroeconomic, financial Climate and environmental/ natural disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All poor and near poor• People living in flood and drought-prone areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public works have shown to be an effective and rapidly expandable safety net instrument during crises and natural disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited coverage and coordination of existing public works programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harmonise public works approaches and guarantee stable financing• Establish unit in RGC in charge of public works for rural development and emergency situations	
	2. Human development constraints	Poor maternal and child health and nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Girls and women of reproductive age• Pregnant women• Early childhood (0-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some maternal and child nutrition programs are in place• Breastfeeding practices are improving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supply of maternal and child nutrition services remains limited and of poor quality• Coverage of these services is not universal• Other demand-side factors (eating, feeding and care practices) are not being adequately addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve and expand nutrition services• Develop cash transfer programme targeting poor families with children• Design cash transfers programmes in health and education so they can eventually be harmonised/coordinated/merged
		Poor access to quality education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School age (6-14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scholarships and school feeding programmes are improving attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of education remains poor• Coverage of education services is variable• Coverage of scholarships and school feeding programmes does not reach all poor areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve quality and access to education• Expand programmes for demand side (esp. scholarships) in terms of both coverage and covering all years of basic education• Improve coordination of education and child labour programmes
		Poor access to quality training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth (15-24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of vocational training curricula• Some programmes in place for second-chance education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of vocational training remains poor• Supply of second-chance programming minimal• Poor link between training offered and employers’ needs• No certification/accreditation system in place for private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boost second-chance programmes• Improve quality of vocational training programs by linking to employers’ needs• Develop certification/accreditation system to regulate quality of training provided
3. Seasonal unemployment and livelihood opportunities	Under- and poor nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All poor and near poor• Pregnant women and early childhood (0-5)• Families with greater age dependency ratio• Landless or land-poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some targeted food distribution• School feeding• Public works programmes are providing some assistance during lean season or crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited coverage and coordination of existing public works programmes• Funding and assistance remains volatile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harmonise public works approaches and guarantee stable financing• Establish unit in RGC in charge of public works for rural development and emergency situations	
4. Health shocks	Ill-health, injury, illness, death, pandemics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All poor and near poor• Pregnant women and early childhood (0-5)• Elderly and people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HEFs are financing health care for the poor in some areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of health care remains poor• Coverage/access of HEFs is not universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve and expand social health protection for the poor and vulnerable (HEF and CBHI)	
5. Special vulnerable groups	Inability to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elderly• People living with disability and chronic illness• Ethnic minorities• Orphans• Child labourers• Victims of violence, exploitation and abuse• Veterans• Migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pensions for civil servants, National Social Security Fund for private sector employees• Some donor assistance to the disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No pensions for the poor• Very limited assistance to the disabled• Limited assistance to other special vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and pilot social protection programmes for the disabled and elderly poor and other special vulnerable groups• Extend targeted cash transfers programme to the elderly and disabled	