LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Analysis in Cambodia

April 2024

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List of Acronyms

CCHR	Cambodian Centre for Human Rights
CDB	Commune Database
CDPO	Cambodia Disabled People's Organisation
CIPO	Cambodia Indigenous People's Organisation
CPD	Country Programme Document
CVI	Climate Vulnerability Index
CWPD	Cambodian Women for Peace and Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ELC	Economic Land Concession
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FEW	Female Entertainment Worker
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GADC	Gender and Development for Cambodia
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IP	Indigenous Peoples
KHR	Cambodian riel
KI	Key Informant
LBT	Lesbian, bisexual, and transgender
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (+) Community
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPHC	Operational Program Human Capital

PwD	Persons with disabilities
RoCK	Rainbow Community Kampuchea
RWI	The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STI	Sexually Transmitted Disease
UN	The United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USD	United States dollar
WHO	World Health Organization

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The Leave No One Behind principle was established in September 2015 with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[1]. Within this Agenda, there is a commitment from all UN Member States to end all forms of discrimination and exclusion, and address inequalities and vulnerabilities to reach the SDGs by 2030. Attaining the SDGs can therefore only be done by "leaving no one behind" and by "reaching the furthest behind first"[2].

In recent years, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have conducted separate analyses related to LNOB in Cambodia. While these interventions enhance our collective understanding of the major gaps in socio-economic inclusion and vulnerability cross the country, there remains limited information on how and why certain groups are more excluded from fully participating in social and economic life than others. Specifically, there is a lack of understanding regarding the intersectional nature of exclusion: how certain population groups are facing multiple and compounding forms of socio-economic exclusion.

Following its Strategic Plan 2022-2025, which elevates LNOB as one of the key components under its three "directions of change", UNDP has commissioned this study to develop a systemic and holistic understanding of exclusion that will help close the LNOB gaps in the country development. This study aims to provide up-to-date insight into who and why certain groups remain left behind in Cambodia today. The research seeks to explore the circumstances in which certain groups are not being reached by development interventions, as well as to provide an intersectional understanding of these groups. This report provides an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and recommendations on how these groups can be better integrated into development strategies and planning going forward.

This study will also contribute to the implementation of UNDP's newly approved Country Programme Document (CPD). It will as well help identify the research gaps on LNOB and inform other UN agencies and various development organisations to consider systemic and inclusive interventions and actions that can help ensure those left furthest behind will be included in the developmental progress of the country.

METHODOLOGY

Literature Review

A review of available quantitative data was conducted in order to identify information gaps and guide the initial literature review on vulnerability in Cambodia. The resulting unstructured literature review focused on sexual minority groups, ethnic and religious minorities (including indigenous peoples), and landless/displaced communities, as these groups are absent from all relevant datasets. A more structured literature

1. An 18th SDG was added in Cambodia in 2020 to "end the negative impact of mines/explosive remnants of war, and promote victim assistance"

2. UNSDG, 2022. Operationalizing Leaving No One Behind: Good practice note for UN country teams. https://unsdg.un.org/resources/leaving-no-one-behind-unsdg-operational-guide-un-country-teams

review was then completed, to explore the existing evidence on vulnerability in Cambodia. A total of 30 key documents were identified and systematically reviewed, covering eight population groups and the five LNOB factors: discrimination, governance, vulnerability to shocks, socio-economic conditions, and geography.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative analysis has relied heavily on the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data (2021-22), which covers 28,876 individuals across all provinces and is representative at both the national and provincial levels, rendering it the most comprehensive data source available on issues related to health, domestic violence, and access to basic services. An additional source of data for quantitative analysis is the 2019 Commune Database (CDB) (2019). The CDB comprises data collected on an annual basis by local government officials across every subnational unit in the country. The CDB provides insight into commune-level variance of LNOB factors and is used to both validate the information from the DHS database and provide a finer-grained geographic breakdown of socio-economic trends. The final source of data for the quantitative analysis is the National Council for Sustainable Development's Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) (2021). The Index calculates scores for every province, district, and commune representing the area's vulnerability to floods, droughts, and storms, respectively, as well as a composite score that captures vulnerability to all three climate shocks.

Quantitative Analysis

To preliminarily analyse who and why certain groups remain left behind in Cambodia, several indicators were identified within the above datasets that pertain to governance, socioeconomic, discrimination, exposure to shocks and displacement within the aforementioned data sources. These indicators measure vulnerabilities at the individual, household, and/or commune-level, and can further be aggregated at the district or province level to analyse geographic trends. Indicators were chosen based on previous UNESCAP analysis in the region and data coverage considerations.

At the household and individual level, mean outcomes of the indicators are calculated for each of the populations identified as at risk of being left behind, along with their counterparts. For example, mean outcomes are compared between men and women, individuals with and without disabilities, rural households and urban households, and so on. Bearing in mind that even within a left-behind population, some subgroups may face greater vulnerabilities than others, the analysis also compares mean outcomes among subgroups of interest – for example, mean outcomes are compared between single mothers and women in general, or between poor urban households and poor rural households.

Finally, several Classification and Regression Trees (CART) have been produced using a standard recursive partitioning algorithm. The trees display the share of households in each subset of the surveyed population that exhibit the chosen outcome of interest while highlighting factors that are important in driving variation in the outcome.

Qualitative Data Collection

To be able to cover gaps identified in the literature review and quantitative analysis, while providing more detailed insights into the various issues faced by left behind groups, the research included key informant interviews with individuals working on issues of exclusion in Cambodia, group consultations with UN

agencies, and focus group discussions with selected left-behind groups. The selection process of these groups was based on i) a preliminary assessment of exclusion and vulnerability from secondary sources, and ii) an identification of groups for which there is limited data or evidence to describe and explain their potential exclusion.

These consultations involved:

- 13 individuals from 9 United Nations agencies and officials from 2 ministries.
- 8 key informants, from 7 local Non-Governmental Organisations and 1 international research institute.
- 12 focus group discussions, 6 in Phnom Penh and 6 in Preah Vihear Province.

Phnom Penh was selected in order to gain insight into urban-centred forms of exclusion, particularly among low income and landless communities. Preah Vihear and Stung Treng were initially selected as they are home to diverse, rural populations and performed poorly in many LNOB-related indicators within the DHS and CDB datasets. During the field planning process, focus groups were only confirmed in Preah Vihear.

All individual interviews were conducted remotely, with the exception of consultations with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and with the domestic violence organisation. All focus groups were conducted in-person. Informed consent was provided by all participants, and interview notes for all activities were developed by the research team in English. To aid this process, audio recordings of focus group discussions were taken in cases where permission to do so was provided.

Summary of Findings

This study provides evidence to suggest that the most left behind groups in Cambodia today fall into the following categories:

- **The rural poor,** in terms of child stunting, school attendance, climate impacts, sustainable livelihoods, and access to services, among others. Within this large population group, the risk of being left behind is considered greater among those facing agricultural hardship, exposed to the effects of climate change, and living in remote provincial areas.
- **Women, particularly in rural areas,** in terms of access and fairness of economic opportunities and the limitations posed by traditional gender roles on mobility and expectations.
- **Women in high-risk employment[3],** facing harassment and heightened health risks.
- **The urban poor,** and particularly those falling until the poorest 20% of all households (urban and rural) and with children out of school.
- **Groups lacking legal identity,** not only in terms of legal recognition but also in terms of eligibility, accessibility, and/or affordability of services.
- **Indigenous peoples,** and particularly those involved in land disputes and with limited livelihood opportunities.

The quantitative analysis found that the provinces of Ratanakiri, Stung Treng, and Preah Vihear – all in the northeast - lagged behind the rest of the country for the majority of LNOB-linked indicators (see Section

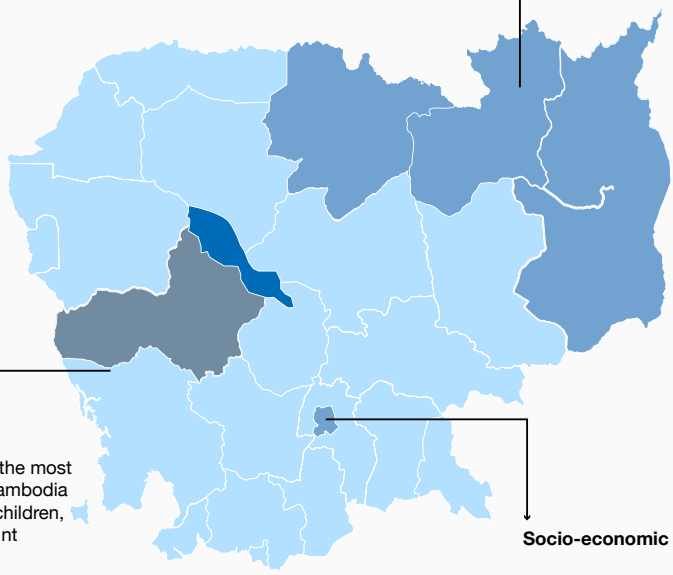
3. In this research, the forms of "high-risk" employment that emerged through the desk review, interviews, and focus group discussions included: entertainment work, brick kiln work, garment sector work, construction work.

4.1.1). Additionally, Pursat province performed poorly for a number of different indicators, and the growing concern over urban poverty was reinforced by governance indicators in particular (access to services).

Figure 1 Selection of key findings, by geography

Shocks

Climate events (floods, droughts) are impacting most provinces in Cambodia, Seasonal flooding is a regular feature of life in the Tonle Sap region, while north and north-eastern provinces are also particularly prone to flooding events. Droughts affect much of the country, with little consistency in the data in terms of the most drought-affected provinces.



Socio-economic / Governance

The north-eastern provinces tend to be further behind the rest of Cambodia in terms of access to services (electricity, water, sanitation), while gender-based violence tends to be more prevalent. The regions large indigenous population are also disproportionately impacted by land insecurity, land grabbing, and the subsequent impact in livelihoods.

Socio-economic/Shocks

Pursat province is among the most disadvantaged areas of Cambodia in terms of out-of-school children, child stunting, bank account ownership, and droughts.

Socio-economic / Governance / Discrimination

Urban poverty (not only in Phnom Penh) is a growing concern, noting rates of out-of-school children, instances of violence, and high living costs. Rural-urban migration is on the rise, contributing to increased pressure on basic services. Urban areas are also associated with a number of excluded group, such as LGBT+, ethnic minorities, and female entertainment workers.

Given the diversity of groups that are considered to lack access to opportunities and support services in Cambodia, there are naturally many different reasons and contextual variations that explain how and why these groups are left behind. This section is structured according to factors of exclusion based on an individual's identity, and an individual's specific socio-economic circumstances.

Qualitative findings predominantly identified the following reasons for persistent patterns of social exclusion:

- **A lack of economic opportunities,** coupled with a high cost of living, is the major reasons for exclusion from others in the local community as well as from economic participation more broadly. Cambodia's high-growth development has not reached many remote, rural, or urban poor communities. Completion rates in education remain low, and the vast majority of the workforce

undertake low-skill work. Financial difficulties have led to widespread indebtedness, as well as risk-taking behaviour related to migration and/or income generation activities. Financial distress is also an important explanatory factor for children not attending school and thus remaining vulnerable to lifelong forms of socio-economic exclusion.

- **A lack of recognition for minorities,** non-conforming individuals, or other diverse groups, which restricts eligibility or access to services and underpins social discrimination. This finding is mostly related to groups without legal identity, indigenous peoples, persons with hidden disabilities or mental health challenges, and the LGBT+ community. Other groups, for example certain political activists, may belong to this group but were not studied as part of this research.

- **Limited public finances and capacities** means that many laws, regulations and policies that are promising on paper are often unable to be effectively implemented, for example, the registration of indigenous communities and indigenous communal land titles. Aside from questions of legal identity and recognition, the majority of participants believed that fundamental policy changes were not necessary to address left behind groups, but that capacity-building and sufficient and sustainable funding/finance was key to improved implementation. This includes the provision of primary healthcare, a quick or more comprehensive expansion of social protection schemes, better quality schooling, and upgrades to basic services in remote areas. Fluctuations in the priorities and budgets of international organisations in Cambodia are thought to exacerbate the problem.

- **Insufficient legal protections** contribute to the social exclusion of women, or their limited access to support services. Without employment contracts, for example, female entertainment workers are not protected by the Labor Law nor entitled to benefits provided through the National Social Security Fund, making them vulnerable to economic shocks and life-cycle risks. The law that does not detail different forms of sexual harassment, making it difficult for duty bearers to support victims. The culture-driven law enforcement of prioritising family harmony over women's rights in the case of domestic violence puts women at risk of experiencing vicious cycle of violence.

EXAMPLES OF IMPROVED INCLUSIVITY

While this research focused on exploring social exclusion, it is important to recognise the improvements in inclusivity articulated by key informants and focus group participants:

- Improved access to social protection for older persons, through old age pensions, old age allowances, invalidity pensions, and survivors' pensions
- Improved access to social protection for persons with disabilities, including through the newly introduced and ongoing rollout of disability cards
- Increased recognition of long-term and hidden disabilities, including in the official definition of disability.
- Increased recognition of migration vulnerabilities, following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, evidenced in the Labour Migration Policy 2024-2028

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study proposes a range of recommendations for UNDP with links made to the Country Programme Document as well as specific population groups and LNOB factors. A summary of these recommendations is provided in the table below.

CPD Output	Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Shift One: Economic diversification, inclusive growth and human development			
Output 1.1. Resilient people-centred health systems supported	Supporting investment in primary healthcare for underserviced areas, improving both the availability and affordability of basic healthcare	Remote rural communities; Low-income households; Persons with disabilities and chronic illnesses; Single mothers	Geography; Governance; Socio-economic
	Supporting investment in improving prevention, which requires further gains in terms of access to safe water and health education interventions	North-eastern provinces; Rural and urban poor	Governance; Socio-economic
	Conducting research into the causes of differential access to health services, due to a number of different potential factors including accessibility, affordability, trust, stigma, fear of discrimination, etc.	People with HIV/AIDS, hidden illnesses, or mental health challenges; Indigenous and other ethnic minority groups; LGBT+	Governance; Discrimination; Socio-economic
Output 1.2. Inclusive social protection systems to increase the resilience of people	Supporting the ongoing improvement of the ID Poor registration process with a specific focus on the inclusion of left behind groups	[Unregistered…] Rural and urban poor; Women-headed households; Single mothers; Persons with disabilities; Older persons; Children in foster care	Governance; Socio-economic
	Supporting the expansion of social protection to the informal sector by focusing on how to include informal workers belonging to left behind groups	[Unregistered…] Agricultural workers; Female entertainment workers; Brick industry workers; Internal migrant workers	Governance; Socio-economic
	Supporting the preparedness of different left behind populations for the future expansion of social protection schemes, for example through awareness raising activities and financial inclusion interventions.	[Unregistered…] Remote rural communities; Urban poor communities	Governance; Socio-economic; Geography; Vulnerability to shocks
Output 2.1. Businesses and young entrepreneurs are prepared and equipped for future markets and contribute to employment opportunities and economic diversification	Supporting access to adult educational and vocational training, in order to improve the livelihood opportunities of vulnerable groups, particularly those from low-income and low educational backgrounds. Adult educational and vocational training can also help others transition out of high-risk employment or adapt to localised economic and climate pressures.	Rural and urban poor; Female entertainment workers; Persons with disabilities; Communes with high climate vulnerabilities; Communities whose livelihoods are under threat, e.g., due to climate change, land use conversion, displacement	Socio-economic; Vulnerability to shocks
Output 2.2. The shift from funding to financing supported in preparation of LDC graduation, and SDGs acceleration	Research into innovative financing strategies for both primary healthcare provision and education services, both to strengthen and supplement existing state-run services.	Rural and urban poor; Persons with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses	Socio-economic; Governance; Vulnerability to shocks

CPD Output	Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
	Monitoring changes to national and sub-national budget allocations for their potential impact on left behind populations (particularly related to health, education, social protection, gender and disability).	All	Governance
	Assessing the feasibility of inter-agency taskforces to improve the coherence and efficiency of LNOB implementation across the UN system, noting the different sources and forms of financing available to different UN agencies.	All	Governance
Shift Two: Climate Action and Nature-Based Solutions for Growth and Human Security			
Output 3.1. Natural resources are sustainably managed, protected and restored	Supporting reforestation and landscape conservation projects through climate finance solutions, with an explicit focus on developing the sustainable livelihoods of local communities	Rural poor; Indigenous communities; Climate-impacted regions	Socio-economic; Vulnerability to shocks; Geography
Output 3.3. Climate change action and transparency are strengthened with involvement of various socioeconomic actors	Engage in sustainable, long-term, meaningful stakeholder engagement with climate vulnerable and low-income communities – led and facilitated by civil society groups – recording experiences of climate change and gathering feedback on proposed climate change actions	Northernmost provinces; Pursat province	Socio-economic; Vulnerability to shocks
Output 3.4. The adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened.	Conduct focused research on the adaptive capacities of climate vulnerable communities, ideally through the dedicated stakeholder platform outlined in the recommendation for Output 3.3.	Northernmost provinces; Pursat province	Vulnerability to shocks
Shift Three: Strong institutions, civic space, and people-centred digital governance for a peaceful and resilient society			
Output 4.1. Selected subnational administrations deliver services in a transparent and inclusive manner responsive to constituent needs	Provide technical assistance at local, national, and regional levels to promote and support governance mechanisms that require more openness, inclusiveness, and accountability to marginalised groups.	All	Governance
	Providing institutional support to the government to improve the implementation of community land titling processes for indigenous communities.	Indigenous communities	Governance

CPD Output	Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
	Advocating for the proper implementation of national regulations concerning physical and economic displacement, including additional compensation provisions for vulnerable groups	Indigenous communities; Other ethnic minorities; Landless households	Governance; Socio-economic; Vulnerability to shocks
	Support for rigorous and more detailed social and economic data collection, at the provincial and commune levels as well as at the programme/project level	Indigenous communities; Migrant populations	Governance; Socio-economic
Output 4.2. Increased civic participation including women and marginalized groups in decision-making at all levels.	Engage in sustainable, long-term, meaningful stakeholder engagement with left behind groups – led and facilitated by civil society groups	Indigenous communities; LGBT+ community; Other minority groups	Governance
	Supporting civil society and community-based organisations in the promotion of human rights	Women; Children; Indigenous communities; people with legal identity	Governance; Discrimination
Output 4.3. People and institutions are equipped with capabilities and opportunities to participate in an inclusive digital society.	Improve coverage and access to banking and finance for small businesses and marginalised groups	Women entrepreneurs; Rural and urban poor; Low-income migrants	Governance; Socio-economic
	Advocate at the national level and provide technical assistance to regulate the microfinance sector, to provide more secure and sustainable loan offers to the most vulnerable and left behind households.	Indebted households; Rural and urban poor	Governance; Socio-economic
	Integrating training opportunities with support to setup bank accounts, to improve access to credit while reducing vulnerability to predatory microfinance lenders.	Low-income households (rural and urban settings)	Governance; Socio-economic
	Supporting the preparedness of government for the future expansion of social protection schemes, for example through the digitisation of public administration and advocacy for the integration of vulnerable and near-poor populations.	Remote rural communities; Urban poor communities; Illiterate households	Governance; Socio-economic; Geography; Vulnerability to shocks

1. Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. LNOB in Cambodia

The Leave No One Behind principle was established in September 2015 with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[4]. Within this Agenda, there is a commitment from all UN Member States to end all forms of discrimination and exclusion, and address inequalities and vulnerabilities to reach the SDGs by 2030. Attaining the SDGs can therefore only be done by "leaving no one behind" and by "reaching the furthest behind first"[5].

The LNOB pledge is inherently rooted in the UN principles, namely, respect for human rights and commitments to equality and non-discrimination. Following calls from Member States for the UN to implement the LNOB principle, in 2016 the UN Chief Executives Board (UNCEB) has developed a Shared Framework for Action on 'Leaving No One Behind'[6]. This Shared Framework for Action provides both a conceptual framework that includes equality, non-discrimination, and equity to address inequalities; and a shared framework for implementation for all Member States, with a set of policy recommendations to implement at country level.

More recently, in 2022, the United Nations published an operational manual for UN Country Teams implementing the LNOB agenda[7]. LNOB acts as a set of guiding principles to be applied across UN initiatives that seek to reduce poverty and empower people and communities. This document provides the conceptual framework that drives this study.

As in the rest of Southeast Asia, LNOB has been a growing topic of interest in Cambodia over recent years, particularly with a significant increase in inequality between 2014 and 2019, and again since 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Gini index for Cambodia – an internationally recognised indicator of income inequality, rose from 29.9 in 2014 to 32.2 in 2019/20, having remained relatively stable in the preceding five years as most Cambodian households experienced an increase in domestic consumption. While income inequality in Cambodia is higher in urban rather than rural areas, the rate of the inequality increase between 2014 and 2019 was higher in rural parts of the country[8].

With a large span of the Cambodian population relying on the informal economy, households throughout the country have experienced deep financial shocks, resulting in particular from the impact of COVID-19 on key economic sectors such as tourism, construction and manufacturing. It has been reported that the pandemic was largely responsible for a lack of movement in socio-economic development indicators between 2018 and 2021[9]. It is also reported that 460,000 people fell back into poverty during this period, while the fragility of basic services and poor living conditions have contributed to increased school drop-out rates[10]. Access to quality healthcare has been restricted to only a small share of the population, concentrated in large urban areas and with many rural areas reliant on NGO provisions[11]. This post-COVID-19 situation could have direct impacts on Cambodia's objectives in terms of SDGs achievements

4. An 18th SDG was added in Cambodia in 2020 to "end the negative impact of mines/explosive remnants of war, and promote victim assistance"

5. UNSDG, 2022. Operationalizing Leaving No One Behind: Good practice note for UN country teams.

6. UNCEB, 2017. Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable development.

7. UNSDG, 2022.

8. World Bank Group, 2022. Cambodia Poverty Assessment—Toward A More Inclusive and Resilient Cambodia. Washington, D.C.

9. UNDP, 2022. Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World. Human Development Report 2021/2022.

10. World Bank Group, 2022.

11. Business Scouts for Development – GIZ. 2021. Sector Brief Cambodia: Healthcare.

and the aspiration to achieve high-income country status by 2050[12].
This study aims to provide up-to-date insight into who and why certain groups remain left behind in Cambodia today. The research seeks to explore the circumstances in which certain groups are not being reached by development interventions, as well as to provide an intersectional understanding of these groups. This report provides an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and recommendations on how these groups can be better integrated into UNDP programming and planning going forward.

1.2. UNDP Programming

Commissioned by UNDP, this study provides research and recommendations that align with the mandate and objectives of UNDP in Cambodia. Specifically, this study will contribute to the implementation of UNDP's newly approved Country Programme Document (CPD). It will as well help identify the research gaps on LNOB and inform other UN agencies and various development organisations to consider systemic and inclusive interventions and actions that can help ensure those left furthest behind will be included in the developmental progress of the country.

The UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2024-2028 aligns with the Royal Government of Cambodia's Pentagonal Strategy Phase I and Vision 2050, as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). Following a human rights-based approach, the CPD aims to leverage UNDP technical capacities to finance integrated solutions to structural barriers to sustainable development. The programme involves three transformative shifts:

- **Shift One:** Economic diversification, inclusive growth, and human development
- **Shift Two:** Climate action and nature-based solutions for growth and human security
- **Shift Three:** Strong institutions, civic space, and people-centred digital governance for a peaceful and resilient society

Each of these three shifts are linked to UN Cooperation Framework outcomes, with corresponding outputs to guide UNDP's programming until 2028:

Shift	UNDP CPD Outputs
#1	• Resilient people-centred **health systems** supported • Inclusive **social protection systems** to increase the resilience of people • Increased human security underpinned by mine action which expands access to **safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance** • **Businesses and young entrepreneurs** are prepared and equipped for future markets and contribute to employment opportunities and economic diversification • The shift **from funding to financing** supported in preparation of LDC graduation, and SDGs acceleration
#2	• Natural resources are sustainably **managed, protected and restored** • **Circular economy** promoted to reduce pollution and improve consumption behaviours and production practices • **Climate change action** and transparency are strengthened with involvement of various socioeconomic actors • The **adaptive capacity** of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened

12. United Nations Country Team, 2021. Cambodia Common Country Analysis: Towards an Inclusive, Equitable and Sustainable Recovery.

Shift	UNDP CPD Outputs
#3	• Selected subnational administrations deliver **services in a transparent and inclusive manner** responsive to constituent needs • Increased **civic participation** including women and marginalized groups in decision-making at all levels • People and institutions are equipped with capabilities and opportunities to participate in an **inclusive digital society**

This study provides recommendations to UNDP for improved LNOB programming in Cambodia, and with reference to these shifts and intended outputs. However, this study also takes a holistic perspective on social exclusion and associated vulnerabilities across Cambodia, and especially those that are not already included in such programmes, or in national data collection procedures. The recommendations in this paper are presented with reference to these outputs, and include details on the left behind groups targeted by each recommendation.

2. Methodology

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Conceptual framework

According to the United Nations, the risk of being "left behind" is a product of five overlapping and intersecting factors. These factors are outlined below, and provide the basis for collecting evidence of left behind groups within specific country contexts:

- **Discrimination**
- **Socio-economic status**
- **Vulnerability to shocks**
- **Geography**
- **Governance.**

Each factor covers a diverse set of issues, contexts, and potential forms of exclusion. For example, **vulnerability to shocks** may refer to an economic, environmental, political, or public health crisis. Similarly, **geography** may refer to geographical remoteness (lack of services, lack of opportunity) or environmental challenges that impact health or local livelihoods. **Governance** can refer to the existence/absence of legal and regulatory protections, budgetary capabilities, or to systems of participation, collaboration, and expression.

The starting point for conducting this analysis is to identify general population groups that are considered to be either "marginalised" or "vulnerable". The 2030 Agenda use these terms to refer, in general, to the following populations: women and girls, all children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced people, migrants, minorities, stateless people and all people facing discrimination.[13] The World Bank, United Nations, and other major international development actors also use these terms to refer to a similar list of population groups at the country level[14]. One of the major challenges for LNOB-related research is to find a way to meaningfully and rigorously compare the vulnerability of these groups, according to multiple LNOB factors and amid different local challenges and contexts.

Many people experience more than one form of deprivation or disadvantage. Therefore, there is a need to assess the position of population groups across all five factors, to determine those at risk of being or becoming the furthest left behind. There is an implicit assumption that **the greater number of LNOB factors that explain the vulnerability of a given group, in a given context, the greater the risk that individuals within the group are left behind.**[15]

Through the use of factor-specific indicators, quantitative data analysis is an essential step in comparing the vulnerability of different population groups. This adds an additional layer of analysis when assuming that, **for any given factor/indicator, the greater the degree of vulnerability of a given group, the greater the risk that individuals within the group are left behind.**

However, for many countries, there are significant limitations on the collection and availability of quantitative data that is i) nationally representative, ii) up-to-date, and iii) allows for disaggregation by different population segments. This is especially challenging in countries that have experienced significant social,

13. UNCEB, 2017.

14. For example, see: World Bank, 2019. FY19-FY23 Country Partnership Framework for the Kingdom of Cambodia. https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/872721559440966260/pdf/Cambodia-Country-Partnership-Framework-for-the-Period-of-FY2019-2023.pdf

15. UNSDG, 2022.

economic, and environmental changes in recent years, such as a natural disaster, economic downtown, or pandemic/epidemic. This makes it essential to gather additional evidence through the following means:

- Consultations with diverse stakeholders, including groups and populations left behind
- Identify data gaps and complement existing data where needed
- Triangulate data from different sources[16].

Therefore, this project combines quantitative data analysis, findings from the literature review, and insights gained from qualitative data collection (key informant interviews and focus group discussions). This methodological process is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 2 Research process

16. UNSDG, 2022.

2.2. Documentation review

The review of available quantitative data was conducted in order to guide the initial literature review on vulnerability in Cambodia. Specific attention was paid to sexual minority groups, religious minorities, and drug users, as these groups are absent from all relevant datasets. The objective of this unstructured and targeted review of the literature was to fill key information gaps.

A more structured literature review was then completed, to explore the existing evidence on vulnerability in Cambodia. A total of 30 key documents were identified and systematically reviewed:

- Four (4) strategic documents from major international donors/development practitioners
- Ten (10) key documents focusing on each of the five LNOB factors (two documents per group)
- Sixteen (16) key documents focusing on each of the eight population group categories identified in the LNOB literature as "vulnerable" (two documents per group).

These key documents (Annex 1) were selected based on the following criteria:

- Published from 2018 onwards
- Published by a recognised institution specialised in the specific field (vulnerability factor or population group) and in the Cambodian context.
- As wide a coverage of the country, specific vulnerability factor, or specific group as possible

A data saturation grid (Annex 2) was used to record the LNOB factors and vulnerable groups highlighted in each key document. A cell was marked "1" if the report provided an evidence-based claim to the exclusion of a population group for the designated LNOB factor (for example, discrimination of women, or governance of indigenous people). A cell was left blank if the key document did not address this group, or did not substantiate the claim. By gathering the claims made about specific vulnerabilities among specific groups (e.g., the discrimination of women) in this systematic way, it becomes possible to gain insight into the vulnerability landscape in Cambodia, and the priority areas identified by key actors and institutions.

Following primary data collection, additional research was conducted to provide greater context to some of the main issues raised by key informants and focus group participants. A full bibliography is included in this report.

2.3. Quantitative analysis

In line with the objectives stated above, quantitative analysis was undertaken to determine the vulnerabilities of potentially left behind groups within each LNOB factor. **Quantitative analysis has relied heavily on the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data** (2021/22), for several reasons. First, the DHS contains data on 28,876 individuals across all provinces and is representative at both the national and provincial level, rendering it the most comprehensive data source available on issues related to health, domestic violence, and access to basic services. Second, while the DHS is statistically representative only at the provincial and national level, clusters of interviewed populations are present in every district of Cambodia, and it is therefore possible to disaggregate trends at the district level; however, due to the lack of representativeness, district-level disaggregation of DHS data should be interpreted as suggestive and exploratory rather than authoritative. Finally, the DHS is publicly available for use by practitioners. As discussed

in more detail below, while other nationally representative data sources exist, procedures for accessing the data are opaque and effectively serve to restrict data access.

An **additional source of data for quantitative analysis is the 2019 Commune Database** (CDB) (2019). The CDB comprises data collected on an annual basis by local government officials across every subnational unit in the country. The CDB provides insight into commune-level[17] variance of LNOB factors and is used to both validate the information from the DHS database and provide a finer-grained geographic breakdown of trends than can be obtained from the DHS. A third data source for the quantitative analysis is the National Council for Sustainable Development's (NCSD) **Climate Vulnerability Index (2021)**. The Index calculates scores for every province, district, and commune representing the area's vulnerability to floods, droughts, and storms, respectively, as well as a composite score that captures vulnerability to all three climate shocks.

Finally, additional analysis was conducted for Cambodian households in the agricultural sector, following the results of the literature review and the limitations of the above data sources to provide further insights. For this, the Agricultural Survey 2020 (CAS 2020) data was analysed, focusing on data points linked to vulnerability: food insecurity indicators, experiences of shocks in the 12 months prior to data collection, and household finances. The survey data provides household-level weighting in order for the majority of relevant data points to be presented at the provincial level. It is noted that this analysis cannot provide a direct comparison with the potential vulnerabilities and exclusionary experiences of non-agricultural households.

2.3.1. Analytical approach

To quantitatively analyse who and why certain groups remain left behind in Cambodia, this report first identifies several indicators that pertain to **governance, socioeconomic, discrimination, exposure to shocks** and **displacement** within the aforementioned data sources. These indicators measure vulnerabilities at the individual, household, and/or commune-level, and **can further be aggregated at the district or province level to analyse geographic trends.** Indicators were chosen based on previous UNESCAP analysis in the region[18] and data coverage considerations. Annex 5 lists the indicators for each LNOB factor, and how the indicator is measured at the individual, household, and commune levels.

At the household and individual level, **mean outcomes of the indicators are calculated for each of the populations identified as at risk of being left behind and their counterparts** – for example, mean outcomes are compared between men and women, individuals with and without disabilities, rural households and urban households, and so on. Bearing in mind that even within a left-behind population, **some subgroups may face greater vulnerabilities than others,** the analysis also compares mean outcomes among subgroups of interest – for example, mean outcomes are compared between single mothers and women in general, or between poor urban households and poor rural households.

Finally, several **Classification and Regression Trees (CART)** have been produced using a standard recursive partitioning algorithm. Household level observations from DHS data are first split into two sub-populations, or nodes, according to the factor (including wealth, age, disability, education, urban/rural, and remoteness) that produces the least within-node variation of the outcome variable. The process is repeated, with each node being split again, so long as the split

17. This report uses the term commune to refer to both rural and urban communes (Sangkats).

18. UNESCAP, 2018. Inequality in Asia and the Pacific in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ; UNESCAP, 2022b. Leave No One Behind (Cambodia).

results in less within-node variation or until a depth of four is reached[19]. The resulting tree displays the share of households in each subset of the surveyed population that exhibit the outcome of interest, while highlighting factors that are important in driving variation in the outcome.

2.4. Primary data collection

To be able to cover gaps identified in the literature review and quantitative analysis, while providing more detailed insights into the various issues faced by left behind groups, it has been decided to conduct both key informant interviews as well as focus group discussions with left behind groups.

The role of key informants will be twofold: first to provide specific information on groups and/or key factors they are specialised in, and second to act as an entry point for reaching the vulnerable groups they are supporting.

Focus group discussions will supplement this data by providing more in-depth details on the dynamics and dimensions of exclusion and risks associated with being left behind, focusing on a set of key intersectional groups.

2.4.1. Key informant interviews

Consultations with specific stakeholders were required to further inform the analysis, particularly to address gaps in the literature and available data. The majority of interviews and consultations took place between 9th January – 2nd February 2024. The chosen stakeholders are engaged in work relevant to multiple LNOB factors, and these consultations provide an essential step for understanding intersectionality in the context of exclusion, marginalisation and vulnerability across Cambodia. The selection of stakeholders followed the criteria below:

- Authority and expertise to cover multiple key factors and vulnerable groups (or key groups not sufficiently covered by available literature and quantitative data).
- Expertise working with key left-behind groups (emerging from the literature review)
- Presence in Cambodia, in terms of development-related interventions.

Group consultations were conducted with multiple UN agencies based on a specific theme related to LNOB (8 agencies total), while 10 individual interviews were conducted related to specific population groups.

2.4.2. Focus group discussions

Grassroots and local organisations were contacted to support the research by identifying potential participants for focus groups with left behind groups. The selection of left behind groups was based on balancing the following concerns:

- Engaging population groups that appeared to be among the most excluded in Cambodia, based on the available data and literature
- Engaging population groups that are arguably the least understood in Cambodia, due to a lack of data and literature.
- Ensuring a balance of gender, geography, and left behind groups.

19. Maximum depth of four was chosen for this report to ensure legibility of output.

Focus groups were conducted in the Phnom Penh area and in Preah Vihear province. As this report shows, Preah Vihear is among the lowest performing provinces in Cambodia, according to various LNOB-related indicators within the available data sets. Phnom Penh was included in the research as the city's inhabitants is far more diverse, and it is widely acknowledged that the challenges of residing in large urban areas can be very different to those in remote, rural areas.

Table 1 Focus group discussions (n=12, 69 participants)

#	Scope	Location	Participation
1	Displaced Vietnamese (mostly female)	Phnom Penh	4 women, 1 man Ages: 16-68
2	Displaced Vietnamese (male)	Phnom Penh	8 men Ages: 38-50
3	Female Entertainment Workers	Phnom Penh	8 women Ages: 18-42
4	Domestic Violence Survivor[20]	Phnom Penh	1 woman Age group: 30-39
5	Indigenous Peoples, land disputes	Preah Vihear	3 men; 3 women Ages: 28-68
6	Indigenous Peoples, land clearance	Preah Vihear	4 women Ages: 24-50
7	People Living with Disabilities (war veterans)	Preah Vihear	6 men Ages 52-68
8	Indigenous Peoples, in debt	Preah Vihear	5 men Ages: 23-40
9	Indigenous Peoples, in debt	Preah Vihear	6 women Ages: 20-36
10	Internal Migrants (rural to rural)	Preah Vihear	3 men, 4 women Ages: 21-60
11	Land Insecure Community	Phnom Penh	2 men, 7 women Ages: 33-72
12	LGBT+ Community	Phnom Penh	1 man, 3 women (including 2 transgender) Ages: 25-36

The focus group discussions and case study focused on: (i) experiences of the at-risk and left behind groups regarding the five key LNOB factors, (ii) their understanding of the kinds of support needed, and (iii) gathering life stories and future aspirations of the participants.

The findings from the focus group discussions provide an additional layer of detail in exploring vulnerability and intersectionality among left-behind groups in Cambodia.

2.5. Data gaps and limitations

Several data gaps limit the use of quantitative data to study left-behind groups or LNOB factors. First and foremost, **data availability in Cambodia remains limited.** Other sources of national quantitative data were identified during the project, including the General Population Census

20. An individual case study approach was applied to the participant that had experienced domestic violence, as it was not deemed appropriate to discuss individual cases in a group format, and the wellbeing of the individual concerned was considered the highest priority.

of Cambodia (2019), the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES, 2019 and 2021), and more recent versions of the CDB. Based on the data available at the beginning of the project, the decision was made to focus primarily on the DHS dataset for the quantitative analysis. To mitigate any potential shortcoming, the research presents relevant findings from reports - such as the World Bank's Systematic Country Diagnostic Update (2024)[21] - that make use of these additional data sets.

Second, **data quality issues and poor documentation further restrict the use of data sets that are available.** The ID Poor database was identified as a potential data source to be used in the analysis. However, upon investigation, the ID Poor database was found to contain significant issues that render it inappropriate for analysis. Without appropriate documentation, it is impossible to determine from where measures are derived. Substantial discrepancies were found between the commune-level population counts in the CDB and the ID Poor, resulting in implausible shares of individuals reported to receive ID Poor. While this issue is particular to the ID Poor database, a lack of documentation regarding how measures are calculated is also a problem for other data sources, including the CDB, where certain variables cannot be used for analysis or can only be interpreted as estimates due to insufficient description of what the variable measures[22] or a lack of rigor in measurement strategy.[23] The multi-stage review of literature helped to qualify or validate certain findings from these datasets as a way of mitigating these issues.

Third, a lack of data coverage limits the utility of quantitative analysis for the identification or study of some left-behind groups. Despite being the most comprehensive data source, the DHS does not collect data on individuals' sexual orientation or ethnicity, and thus cannot be used to determine the vulnerabilities of sexual or ethnic minority individuals. Furthermore, with a specific focus on women of reproductive age and their male counterparts, the DHS does not administer the full survey to individuals over the age of 49 and thus cannot be used to assess the risks facing older or elderly populations. The CDB does provide population counts for indigenous ethnic groups (Phnong, Kouy, Stieng, Mil, Kroal, Thmorn, Khaonh, Tompuonn, Charay, Kroeung, Kavet, Saouch, Lun, Kachak, Praov, Rordei, Chorng, Por, Soury, or other); however, no data is collected on the number of individuals who belong to other ethnic minority groups, including ethnic Vietnamese or Cham individuals, or religious minority groups. Due to lack of data coverage, this report is unable to quantitatively analyse data regarding the experiences of LGBTQI+ individuals, individuals from Vietnamese or Cham ethnic minority groups, indebted individuals, return migrants, entertainment workers, drug-users, or homeless individuals. To mitigate this limitation, primary data collection focused on a wide range of key informants that would speak to these populations and topics, and the sampling of focus group discussions targeted most of these groups, as explained above.

In terms of the use of secondary and primary qualitative data, it is acknowledged that there **are limitations to how comprehensively this study is able to assess left behind groups for the entire country, covering all LNOB factors and all sectors.** To mitigate this challenge and balance the breadth of the study with detailed analysis, a structured approach to the literature

21. World Bank, 2024. Cambodia: Second Generation Systematic Country Diagnostic Update, January.

22. For example, the CDB provides the number of families who do not have any cultivated land, and the number of families who do not have any rice land. It is unclear whether cultivated land includes rice land.

23. For example, the CDB commonly uses categories that are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive. One such case is data on land ownership : the CDB collects data on the number of families in each village who do not own rice land and the number of families who do not own cultivated land. However, it is not possible to determine how many villagers do not own any agricultural land, because some households who do not own rice land might also not own cultivated land, and thus would be double counted when adding together the two figures. This also presents challenges for calculating the number of indigenous households in a community. The CDB counts the number of households belonging to various indigenous ethnic groups, but some households might identify with more than one group. As there is no total count of households belonging to at least one indigenous group, one can only add together the household counts for each ethnic group to obtain an estimate of the indigenous population, leading in some cases to indigenous population shares over 100%, due to double counting.

review was conducted in order to ensure all identified groups and LNOB factors were equally represented. The key informant interviews were also designed to cover multiple factors and population groups, while focus groups provided the opportunity to go deeper into some critical issues. Nevertheless, there are inevitably gaps in the level of detail contained in this report, and subsequent work will be needed to dive deeper into specific issues impacting specific groups.

It is acknowledged that some focus group participants are not entirely left behind, given that they were known to the grassroots organisations and NGOs that were approached for the organisation of these discussions. While still excluded and at-risk in their own right, it was important to explore during the discussions who among their peers the participants feel are particularly at-risk, and who may not be well known or engaged by the organisations providing support in the area. Participants were asked to disclose whether they are currently receiving social assistance, and this information is summarised in the table below.

Table 2 Social assistance provision among FGD participants

	Phnom Penh		Preah Vihear	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
No social assistance	9	15	12	13
Food support (church/community)	2	5	-	-
Government financial assistance	-	-	5	4
Other/undisclosed support	1	3	-	-
Receiving assistance (Total):	**3/12**	**8/23**	**5/17**	**4/17**

3. Review of Literature

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1. Overview

A structured literature review was conducted to understand which population groups and which LNOB factors are most often discussed when explaining social exclusion in Cambodia. As shown in the data saturation grid in Annex 2, this process revealed that **discrimination** and **socio-economic status** were the most often discussed factors explaining left behind populations in Cambodia, while **gender** (predominantly women) and **age** (predominantly children and youth) were the most often cited population groups deemed to be excluded or vulnerable to exclusion.

A significant number of the publications selected for the structured review highlighted vulnerabilities among **other population groups,** which tended to focus on:

- **Over-indebted households,** who may resort to risky livelihood opportunities in order to service these debts. This includes agricultural families who agree to migrate to work in brick kilns, in exchange for debt relief from kiln owners.
- **Agricultural families,** without the means to modernise or diversify their livelihood activities amid ever-increasing climate-related pressures.
- Other **rural, hard-to-reach, and/or underserviced communities,** who lack access to basic services and thus have limited opportunities to escape poverty.

The figure below provides an overview of the most prominent LNOB factors and types of exclusion identified in the structured literature for the population groups assessed in this research. Each of these groups and forms of exclusion are detailed throughout this chapter.

Figure 3 Factors and populations, structured literature review

Identity/Status						Circumstance					
Women	Older Persons	Children	LGBT+	IP and ethnic minori-ties		Disability	Health Issues	Landless / Displaced	Agri workers	Migrants	Indebted
					Violence, exploitation, abuse						
					Social norms						
					Labour market						
					Representation/ recognition						
					Detention						
					Access to services						
					Education						
					Poverty/ Livelihoods						
					Financial independence						
					Health						
					Climate vulnerability						
					Emergency response						
					Displacement						

Discrimination Governance Socio-economic Vulnerability to shocks

Geography has been removed as an LNOB factor from this figure, as geographical disparities apply to all groups, and the literature varied in its geographical scope and depth of analysis.

This table, along with the broader analysis, distinguishes between two forms of social exclusion: i) exclusion based on identity/legal status, and ii) exclusion based on socio-economic circumstances. The table can be used to obtain a general understanding of the main risk factors – according to the literature – of different population groups, and how vulnerabilities can increase when an intersectional lens is applied (e.g., combining the women and indigenous categories to understand the potential LNOB risks of indigenous women).

In the literature, geographical influences were most prominently discussed in terms of a rural-urban divide, and lower human development indicators in rural areas. Beyond this, however, the literature also included a focus on vulnerabilities in the **North-East provinces** of Cambodia and the **Tonle Sap region**. Geographical variations in the available socio-economic datasets are explored in detail in Section 4.

Quantitative data analysis and primary data collection warranted additional bibliographic research on social exclusion linked to mental health and legal identity, among other subjects. This information is included in the sections below, as well as in the discussion of quantitative findings, to provide context to the data analysis. The remainder of this chapter provides a selection of key findings for each population group and LNOB factor displayed in the figure above. These findings are not exhaustive but reflect a structured approach that fits within the constraints of the project. This chapter proceeds with a summary of key findings for each of the population groups assessed as part of this research. The population groups were selected based on a combination of factors: i) those highlighted by the World Bank and UN agencies as globally vulnerable to exclusion, ii) those highlighted by local UN agencies or the research team as being vulnerable to exclusion specifically in the Cambodian context (e.g., migrants, displaced and landless populations).

3.2. Exclusion based on identity/status

3.2.1. Women

The specific population groups highlighted during this review are:

- **Rural women** are highlighted as particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence, restrictive gender norms, financial exclusion, and climate-induced shocks
- **Rural women with disabilities** are specifically highlighted for low rates of private transport (moto or car in the household) and climate-induced shocks

Theme	Headlines
Discrimination Violence Social norms	• Physical and emotional violence, linked to gender and social norms and inadequate support mechanisms • Intimate partner violence, particularly in rural areas • Influential gender norms (e.g., Chbab Srey or "Women's Law") and assumptions related to women in the workplace and care-giving responsibilities
Governance Labour market Representation	• Disproportionately engaged in the informal sector, leading to historical challenges accessing social protection • 19% gender pay gap (national average) • Low representation in positions of authority (e.g., commune chiefs, council members, judges, lawyers)

Theme	Headlines
Socio-economic Education Poverty Independence	• Illiteracy rates and completion rates of primary school education • Disproportionately experiencing multidimensional poverty, financial exclusion, and limited access to personal transport
Shocks Climate vulnerability	• Women and persons with disabilities are reported to be the most vulnerable to climate change-induced shocks, especially the ones living in Northeastern and Southeastern rural areas.

3.2.1.1. Discrimination

Gender-based discrimination, based on longstanding social norms, leads to different risks and socio-economic outcomes for men and women. Girls and women face discrimination at different levels. For example, with respect to intimate partner violence, 21% of women reported physical violence at least once in their lifetime, and 32% reporting emotional violence[24]. These numbers tend to be underreported due to strong patriarchal social norms and a lack of adequate supporting mechanisms[25]. Intimate partner violence is more prevalent in **rural areas,** and higher proportion of **younger women** have experienced violence in the last 12 months compared to older women[26]. Gender-based violence (GBV) has been exacerbated by gender norms linked with male virility and toughness, as well as the perception that men have a right to sex regardless of consent[27].

Customs and traditions defining gender norms are still influential, especially the Chbab Srey ("Code of Conduct for Women"), that defines roles and responsibilities of women within the households. While the Chbab Srey is several hundred years old, it has still influenced recent laws and policies. For example, the Draft Law on Public Order (2020) places restrictions on how women dress in public, while the Civil Code Article 950 (2007) includes a mandatory waiting period for divorced women to remarry, and no such waiting period for divorced men[28]. It remains commonplace for both men and women to believe that it is a woman's role to take care of the family and the home, and more so among rural households (66%) compared to urban households (55%)[29]. It is also common for men (76%) and women (69%) to believe men should have the final decision when it comes to **climate adaptation** measures at the household level[30].

Gender norms and **limited health provisions in certain regions** also impact the vulnerability of women, as income potential is limited by their assumed care-giving responsibilities for children and elderly relatives. Although a legal requirement, day care services in businesses with more than 100 employees are largely absent[31]. Overall, women are forced to balance paid work and family care, with women carrying around 91% of unpaid care responsibilities of their household[32]. In the garment sector, for example, where women are reported to make up more than 80% of the

24. UNFPA, 2023. Harmful Social Norms related to Gender-Based Violence in Cambodia: Annotated Bibliography.

25. United Nations, 2023. Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Cambodia 2024-2028.

26. United Nations, 2022d. Gender Equality Deep-Dive for Cambodia.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Cambodia Climate Change Alliance, 2021. A Third Study on Understanding Public Perceptions of Climate Change in Cambodia: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices.

30. Ibid.

31. IBF International Consulting, 2021. 2021 Gender Mainstreaming and Analysis for Cambodia.

32. Ibid. For more information on care work in Cambodia, see: UNESCAP, 2022e. Valuing and Investing in Unpaid Care and Domestic Work – Country Case Study: Cambodia.

workforce, a 2018 study showed that 72% of factories in the assessment did not have a nursing from or a nearby day care centre, contrary to Cambodian legal requirements[33].

3.2.1.2. Employment and educational settings

Women experience more difficulties accessing public services and entitlements than men. 53% of women workers do not receive a wage (own-account work or unpaid family work), compared to only 41% of men, while job losses in the informal sector are reported to disproportionately impact women[34]. Despite similarities in the proportion of men and women in the informal sector, enrolment in the NSSF healthcare scheme is skewed towards men. In 2022, 96,259 informal workers were covered under this scheme, with women accounting for only about 23%[35].

Similarly, women-owned businesses are less likely to be registered[36], and operating an informal business is associated with financial exclusion from banks. Banks struggle to assess the creditworthiness of informal businesses and are less likely to lend to businesses without sufficient collateral, disproportionately impacting women[37]. In addition to the lack of collateral, women entrepreneurs face difficulties in understanding the complicated loan application processes and having adequate financial records or business plan required by banks[38]. Furthermore, 70% of non-registered enterprises have no information about benefits of registration[39].

Gender-based discrimination is also evident in the form of a 19% gender pay gap (national average). While the pay gap has fallen from 24% in 2017, this disparity may in part be explained by gender disparity in experience, in education, and overrepresentation in low-skilled jobs[40]. This gap is more prevalent in male-dominated sectors, such as the construction sector (29%)[41]. Women are also underrepresented in leadership positions, mainly due to aforementioned gender norms[42]. Women also tend to face more harassment and violence in sectors over-represented by women. Female entertainment workers, for example, are most at risk of gender-based violence, as 60% have experienced GBV at least once in their lifetime[43]. It is also reported that women working in the garment industry are particularly at risk of sexual harassment from their male colleagues or supervisors[44]. Boys and men are also victim of harmful gender norms related to work, especially with regards to more risky and even exploitative employment, for which men tend to be overrepresented[45].

At the institutional and political levels, structural barriers remain present, hindering progress for gender equity. Women representation in government positions at both sub-national and

33. ILO, 2018. Towards Gender Equality: Lessons from Factory Compliance Assessments.

34. United Nations, 2022d

35. Royal Government of Cambodia, 2022. Report on Annual Achievements 2022 and Action Plans.

36. Out of 519 enterprises participating in the 2023 Enterprise Survey conducted by the World Bank in Cambodia, 40% of firms had female participation in ownership. Regarding business formality, 72.7% of enterprises with a female top manager formally registered when they started operations in the country, while the figure was 79.2% for enterprises with male top managers (World Bank, 2023).

37. ADB, 2021. Sector Assessment (Summary): Finance.

38. CWEA, 2022. Enhancing Access to Market, Development Quality products and Services for Young Women Entrepreneurs in Cambodia.

39. Ibid.

40. UNDP, 2021. The Gender Wage Gap in Cambodia.

41. World Bank, 2019.

42. United Nations, 2022

43. United Nations, 2022

44. United Nations, 2022

45. USAID, 2020. Cambodia, Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-2025.

national ranks has increased over recent years but remains limited[46]. Currently, women account for 8% of commune chiefs and 11% of council members nationwide[47]. In the judicial system, women represent only 15% of judges, 14% of prosecutors, and 22% of lawyers[48]. Women share 13.6%[49] of Cambodia's members of parliament and 27%[50] of the government's leadership positions.

While Cambodia has achieved improvements in terms of gender equity in school enrolment rates, an important gap remains in terms of school achievements. An 8% gap in literacy remains between men (88%) and women (80%)[51], leading to reduced opportunities for girls and women. Moreover, in master's and doctoral cohorts, men represent respectively 70% and 90% of all students[52]. However, even when holding low levels of education and literacy constant, women are less likely than male counterparts to be employed. Analysis of the 2021/22 DHS survey finds that 23% of women under 49 who are not able to read a full sentence in Khmer and 23% of women under 49 who did not complete primary school did not work in the last year, compared to only 4% and 3% of men, respectively.[53]

On average, women are economically worse-off compared to men, compounded by their level of education. Previous reports find that female-headed households tend to be poorer than male-headed households, as they are mainly involved in the informal sector and have more limited access to economic opportunities and possess smaller landholdings than men.[54] The MPI finds that female headed households are more likely to face multidimensional poverty but only slightly more likely to face severe poverty: 19% of female headed households are estimated to live in multidimensional poverty and 5% in severe poverty, compared to 16% and 4% of male-headed households, respectively.[55] Analysis of the 2021/22 DHS finds that female-headed households are somewhat more likely to fall in the bottom 20th and 40th percentile of households in terms of assets and wealth: 43% of female-headed households fall in the bottom 40% in terms of wealth, compared to 39% of male-headed households. Households headed by a single mother (a woman with children under 18 who is not currently living with a partner or spouse) perform no more poorly than female-headed households in general: among households where the head is a single mother, 42% belong to the bottom 40 percent in terms of wealth.[56]

In addition to higher rates of general poverty, **female-headed households are less likely to have a bank account and significantly less likely to possess a means of personal transport (moto or car).** Just 24% of female-headed households report that at least one household member has a bank account, dipping to 14% among female-headed households in rural areas. 21% of female-headed households do not own a motorbike or car, compared to just 14% of male-headed households. This rate increases dramatically among rural, disabled, and poor female heads: 36% of rural female-headed households, 47% of households headed by a woman with a disability, and 57% of female-headed households in the poorest quintile do not possess either a car or a moto within the household.[57]

46. IBF International Consulting, 2021.
47. Yutharo, K., 2023. Cambodia advances women's roles, aims for 2030, 2050 goals. Phnom Penh Post. 22nd November.
48. IBF International Consulting, 2021.
49. Cambodia | Inter-Parliamentary Union (ipu.org) (based on the data of last election in July 2023)
50. Ministry of Public Affairs 's 2022 data officially approved on 22 May 2023.
51. World Bank, 2022. Literacy rate, adult male and adult female aged 15 and above. Available from: https://data.worldbank.org/
52. IBF International Consulting, 2021.
53. Own analysis of DHS 2021.
54. FAO, UNICEF, WFP, Roadmap – Developing a risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection system (Cambodia)
55. Alkire, S., Kanagaratnam, U., and Suppa, N, 2023.
56. Own analysis of DHS 2021.
57. Own analysis of DHS 2021.

3.2.1.3. Women and climate vulnerability

Standard assessments have found that climate change significantly affects the livelihood and health of Cambodian women. Based on the Cambodia Women's Resilience Index (WRI) that compares women's and men's resilience to disaster risks[58], Cambodian women generally are more vulnerable to disaster risks than men, especially those in mountainous areas (with a resilience index score of 0.60 vs. 0.55 respectively).

It is reported that women are disproportionately impacted by climate-related shocks due to their underlying socio-economic situation, relative to men. For example, women are less likely to have access to credit and assets, have fewer economic opportunities and decision-making powers, have greater caregiving and household-related responsibilities that does not generate income[59]. In coping with climate crises, men tend to be responsible for securing income (including migration if necessary), while women tend to be responsible for household management, childcare, and possibly agricultural work or other income generating tasks[60].

Women and **persons with disabilities** are reported to be the most vulnerable to climate change-induced shocks, especially the ones living in **Northeastern** and **Southeastern** rural areas[61].

3.2.2. Children

Specific population groups highlighted:

- **Children growing up in poverty** appear to be at greater risk of experiencing violence, multidimensional poverty, a lack of school, and stunting, wasting and being underweight
- **Children in both urban and rural contexts** face significant but potentially different risks, for example, additional risk/exposure to violence in urban contexts, and greater prevalence of child marriage in certain rural areas (northeastern provinces).

Theme	Headlines
Discrimination Exploitation/abuse Social norms	• Violent discipline, either physical or psychological, and risk of sexual abuse • Child marriage (and teen pregnancy), particularly in north-eastern provinces
Governance Detention	• 4.5% of the total prison population are children, with the majority in pre-trial detention
Socio-economic Education Poverty Health	• Low rates of primary/secondary school completion, particularly lower-income households and rural households • Multidimensional poverty, street children, stunting and wasting

58. The WRI compares women's and men's resilience to disaster risks along 4 pillars of resilience. The economic pillar measures income and access and management of natural resources as a source of income and access to loans and markets. The infrastructure pillar measures infrastructure and location, access to energy, water, sanitation, livelihood input, communications technology, early warning system, and physical structure to protect natural hazards. The social pillar measures access to education, information, health care, food/nutrition security, social mobility, migration, social safety net, GBV and preparedness. The institutional pillar measures participation in decision-making process, response by public institutions, disaster management plan and actions, and roles of media. (ActionAid, 2019. Cambodia Women's Resilience Index)

59. World Bank Group, 2016. Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction, and Inclusive Growth.

60. This finding derives from research in Kampot and Pursat provinces. Source: EmPower, 2020. Participatory Research on Gender-based Vulnerabilities to Climate Change in Cambodia.

61. World Bank, 2023a. Cambodia Country Climate and Development Report.

3.2.2.1. Exploitation and abuse

Children and youth are characterised as a group particularly vulnerable to discrimination and abuse. According to once recent study, 20% of adolescents aged 10-14 reporting having experienced domestic physical abuse[62], and three million children aged 1-14 having experienced some sort of violent discipline, either physical or psychological[63]. Prevalence of violence increases among children growing up in urban poor settlements.[64] This can be explained by harmful cultural norms related to a child's education, as 27% of parents believe that physical punishment is necessary to educate a child[65].

Children and youth are also vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse. 4% of adult women and 5% of adult men have reported at least one experience of sexual abuse before their 18th birthday[66]. The growing proportion of children with access to the Internet are also at risk of online sexual exploitation and abuse. Around 160,000 children, or 11% of the total number of children using the Internet, have already experienced it[67]. Geographic and cultural factors also affect sexual exploitation and abuses. For instance, child marriage is particularly present in the **north-eastern provinces,** where it has been reported that 49% of girls have married as a child[68]. Higher rates of child marriage are also associated with higher rates of teen pregnancy.

3.2.2.2. Basic needs

Multidimensional poverty affects 49% of children[69], and there are thought to be 2,600 street children in Cambodia[70]. Nationally, around 22% of children 0 to 5 are **stunted,** 10% are **wasted,** and 16% are underweight.[71] These numbers increase for children, and especially boys, in poorer households. In the provinces of **Ratanakiri** and **Pursat,** 39% and 33% of children under 5, respectively, are stunted[72]. Limited coverage of nutrition services in rural areas leads to limited treatment for children: only 9% of children with acute malnutrition received treatment in 2015[73].

Results in terms of access to quality **education** and achievement tend to also vary based on **geography and socioeconomic status as well.** Adolescents at the top 20% wealthiest households are four times more likely to complete lower secondary education than adolescents in the bottom 20%[74]. As discussed in section 3.1.1.1, primary school attendance varies substantially by province as well. In **Kampong Speu,** as many as 46% of households with primary school-aged children report that at least one child is not attending school.[75] Low educational attainment of older generations can also condition children's educational outcomes: 24% of households in which the head did not finish primary school report having at least one child aged 6 to 11 out

62. UNFPA, 2023
63. UNICEF, 2023. An analysis of the situation of children and adolescents in Cambodia.
64. UNICEF, 2018.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. United Nations, 2023
69. UNICEF, 2023.
70. US Department of State, 2022. Cambodia 2022 Human Rights Report
71. NIS, MoH, and ICF, 2023.
72. Ibid.
73. World Bank, 2019.
74. UNICEF, 2023.
75. Own analysis of DHS 2021 data.

of school, compared to 17% of households in which the household head has at least a primary school education.

Importantly, **children in female-headed households are no more likely to exhibit signs of malnutrition or to be out of school.** In fact, among households where the head did not finish primary school, female-headed households outperform male-headed households in terms of children's attendance at school: 21% of female household heads without a primary school education have a primary-aged child not in school, compared to 27% of male household heads without a basic education.[76]

Children make up a non-negligible part of the carceral system. 4.5% of the total prison population are children[77], this represents more than 1,666 minors[78]. While some young children are living with their mothers, minors are not always separated from adults and face important protection risks in overcrowded prisons not designed to fulfil children's needs[79]. While most of the minors in detention were arrested on charges of drug use, drug trafficking, or theft[80], only 6% had received a final conviction: 61% of the minors are in pre-trial detention, and 32.7% wait for the final verdict[81].

3.2.2.3. Children and climate vulnerability

In addition to the findings of the structured literature review, it is important to note that UNICEF ranks Cambodia as the world's 46th most climate vulnerable country (n=163) for children, based on the Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI)[82]. The Index analyses climate risk from a child's perspective on their exposure to climate and environmental shocks and stresses and their vulnerability regarding health and nutrition, education, WASH, and poverty, communication assets and social protection. Cambodian children are found to be in the top third of countries with a high risk to climate change, particularly due to water scarcity, riverine flooding, and vector-borne disease[83].

3.2.3. Older persons

The social and exclusion of older persons was not explicitly cited in much of the literature included in the systematic review. The findings summarised in the table below manly derive from a government report published in 2021, which itself consists of a documentation review and qualitative research in Phnom Penh, Kampong Thom, and Battambang provinces. While the report pointed to various shortcomings in the social protection of older persons, subsequent regulations have improved access through old age pensions, old age allowances, invalidity pensions, and survivors' pensions[84].

76. Ibid.
77. UNICEF, 2023.
78. FIDH-ADHOC, 2022. FIDH-ADHOC submission to Universal Periodic Review: Cambodia.
79. Ibid.
80. UNICEF, 2023.
81. FIDH-ADHOC, FIDH-ADHOC, 2022
82. UNICEF, 2021. Children in Cambodia at 'very high risk' of the impacts of the climate crisis - UNICEF
83. Ibid.
84. See: https://bnglegal.com/index.php/cambodian-pension-scheme/ (DFDL, Cambodian Pension Scheme, September 2023).

Theme	Headlines
Socio-economic Health Independence Poverty	• Older women tend to experience more physical and mental health issues compared to holder men, as a consequence of household responsibilities and lower personal and family savings • Older persons tend to rely on family members for financial support, for their caring needs, and for meeting basic needs • 42% of people ages 65 and over never attended school, and only 20% completed primary school • A majority of surveyed older people do not receive enough support to access medication (85%), to allow for the upkeep of their home (77%), to access sufficient food (72%), and to access sufficient clothing (70%).

3.2.4. Gender identity and sexual orientation

The literature review suggested that LGBT+ people face specific and targeted forms of discrimination that do not overlap clearly with other population groups. However, experiences of discrimination in particular (violence, harassment, employment decisions) can vary for different groups within the community.

For LGBT+ people it is evident that there is significant overlap across the LNOB factors, particularly **discrimination, governance,** and **socio-economic** outcomes.

Theme	Headlines
Discrimination Physical/sexual violence Gender norms	• Violence within the family, sexual violence, and forced marriage • Risk of physical assault, particularly among transgender entertainment workers • Harassment in the workplace, in schools, and from authorities
Governance Recognition Access to services	• Same-sex marriage is not addressed under Cambodian law • A lack of consideration in gender-sensitive public policies • Limited access to legal aid and barriers to seeking help
Socio-economic Health	• HIV/STI transmission is higher among gay men, with a transmission rate of 4%[85]. • Drug use is also extremely high among gay men and transgender women, and in specific provinces

3.2.4.1. Discrimination

Members of the LGBT+ community suffer from underrepresentation and a lack of responsiveness to their needs. Government information regarding LGBT+ people is scarce in Cambodia, mainly since it is not covered in national census data collection. Same-sex marriage is not addressed under Cambodian law, and while this means it is not criminalised[86], couples of the same gender cannot be registered as partners[87]. Couples can create families and, in some cases, have family books, but their partner will be referred as brother/sister[88]. The lack of legal framework and recognition of LGBT+ couples and parents leads to issues for their children, especially enrolment in primary education, due to inaccurate or lack of family books[89]. Access to legal aid for sexual minorities is also limited, and more than 25% of LGBT+ people feel

85. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
86. US Department of State, 2017. Cambodia 2017 Human Rights Report.
87. ILGA ASIA, 2021. Cambodia LGBT+ Rights Report : Rainbow in the Rain.
88. Ibid.
89. IBF International Consulting, 2021.

uncomfortable seeking legal help due to their identity[90]. There is also a lack of consideration in gender-sensitive public policies. For example, the Five Years Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment discusses gender equality only according to the men or women binary[91]. Engagement on LGBT+ issues in the public is also very limited even from the LGBT+ politicians, who occupy high positions in the public sector[92].

At the household level, LGBT+ individuals are facing discrimination, rejection, and sometimes violence. For female-identified individuals, 81% surveyed LBT respondents (lesbian, bisexual, transgender) under 35 have reported violence within their family because of their orientation. 10% have experienced sexual violence and forced marriages can be common[93]. Rejection and violence can have a high physical and psychological cost for these people, with rates of acute anxiety and depression, especially for children[94]. Moreover, 35% of LGBT+ people have thought about committing suicide due to their family denial and non-acceptance[95].

Discrimination and harassment are also present in the workplace, starting from the recruitment process. 20% of the LGBT+ peoples surveyed in a 2021 study were experiencing rejection during the hiring process[96]. Transgender people and gay males were more at risk of rejection or poorer working conditions, mainly due to harassment from employers and colleagues, as well as a perception among employers that recruiting people that are 'non-conforming' will have an impact on company's reputation[97]. Due to these bottlenecks and stereotypical gender roles in society, LGBT+ people tend to follow careers in entertainment and fashion[98]. Others decide to leave the country in search for better economic opportunities[99].

Harassment is also prevalent among representatives of the State, for example among certain members of the police force. Transgender people are the most at risk, with 40% of transgender respondents reporting to have been harassed/bullied by the police because of their gender[100]. Transgender entertainment workers are vulnerable to more acute forms of violence, with reports of fines, beatings, and even rape from police authorities[101]. They are also more at risk of gender-based violence in general, not only from police authorities. Transgender entertainment workers are twice as likely to experience physical assault in public compared to transgender non-entertainment workers[102].

3.2.4.2. Access to services

LGBT+ individuals are susceptible to discrimination in the education system. 94% LGBT+ persons have reported being bullied in school, mainly by male students, but also by teachers[103]. This harassment in school, mixed with difficult family settings, leads to people dropping out

90. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
91. Sreyleak, H., 2018. Workplace Stigma and Discrimination against LGBTs in Cambodia.
92. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
93. IBF International Consulting, 2021.
94. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
95. IBF International Consulting, 2021.
96. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
97. Sreyleak, 2018
98. IBF International Consulting, 2021.
99. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
100. UNFPA, 2023
101. Sreyleak, 2018
102. United Nations, 2022
103. ILGA ASIA, 2021.

of school early, which strongly limits their future economic opportunities[104]. LGBT+ people experience this discrimination differently, with transgender people (24%) more at risk of drop out than lesbians (14%)[105].

LGBT+ people also face risks related to their access to health. HIV/STI transmission is higher among the male community, with a transmission rate of 4%[106]. People transitioning also tend to lack the needed medications and infrastructures, as while hormone therapy is not illegal, accessing to these medications are particularly difficult[107]. A recent study reported that drug use extremely high among gay men and transgender women in Banteay Meanchey (55% and 55.7% respectively), Phnom Penh (27% / 18.2%), and Preah Sihanouk (24.2% and 10%), compared to the cohort average (18.5% / 15.6%)[108].

3.2.5. Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities

In Cambodia, the Indigenous Peoples (IP) population group refers to various non-Khmer and aboriginal populations, mostly non-Buddhist, and demographically and politically distinct from the region's Khmer population throughout history. Today, most of these IP populations live in the north and north-eastern provinces of Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri and Preah Vihear. Other minority groups in Cambodia include ethnic Vietnamese and the mostly Muslim Cham community.

Findings from the literature review focus on i) indigenous peoples and ii) ethnic Vietnamese without legal identity. While the two groups live under different contexts, they are similar lacking in access to health, education, legal, and basic services (remote IP communities and "illegal" Vietnamese), and particularly exposed to the risk of forced displacement. Discrimination ties into these issues presented in the table below.

Theme	Headlines
Shocks Displacement	• Indigenous peoples have been particularly affected by land grabbing and land exploitation, especially for those living in or around forested areas. • Ethnic Vietnamese are also disproportionately impacted by forced eviction and relocation.
Governance Access to Services Recognition	• Basic services seem less accessible for IP families (sanitation, electricity, water) • Ethnic minorities, and especially Vietnamese, are victims of discrimination in terms of their access to health services, education, and land rights. • Ethnic Vietnamese cannot access economic opportunities, social support, or legal protection • Low rates of community land titles granted for IP communities
Socio-economic Education Livelihood opportunities	• Education rates remain low, in terms of both attendance and completion • Restrictions on livelihood opportunities through the increase in land concessions and designated conservation areas

104. Ibid.

105. Sreyleak, 2018

106. ILGA ASIA, 2021.

107. Ibid.

108. Phalkun, M. Integrated HIV Bio-Behavioural Surveillance Survey among Men who have sex with Men and Transgender Women in Cambodia, 2023.

3.2.5.1. Basic needs

Indigenous peoples tend to have lower access to public education and health services, as well as economic opportunities. Access to education remains limited, with two-thirds of the adult Indigenous peoples population estimated to have never attended school or achieved some form of educational certification[109]. Literacy among indigenous children is lower than the national average, with only a third able to read and write Khmer, compared to 88% for Khmer people. Literacy rates are particularly low for Jarai (44.4%), Kravet (44.7%) and Tampuon (47.2%) people[110]. Indigenous women generally have a lower literacy rate than men[111]. Variations in literacy rates between Khmer and IP can be explained by lower enrolment rates, late school enrolment, and higher school dropouts[112]. Reports from the Ministry of Planning show that less than half of IP children are attending school[113]. The data shows an increase in dropout rates starting around the age of 14, and is highest in the 16-18 age group[114]. Low levels of education and literacy, especially among IP girls, contributes to the generational transfer of care labour[115]. Basic services seem less accessible for IP families: one decade ago, 80% were without access to sanitary facilities, 60% without access to safe drinking water, and only 20% had access to electricity[116]. Ratanakiri, where 60% of the population are indigenous, was one of the worst performing province according to these metrics in the 2021/22 DHS[117]. There is also a lack of administrative services among indigenous communities, with only 20% of the IP children being registered at birth, partly due to the lack of health infrastructure and the use of traditional midwives for deliveries[118].

In terms of the economic sectors, the vast majority of indigenous peoples aged 15 and over are **employed in agriculture** (93.3% of the population, 90.6% of men, and 95.9% of women). For agricultural-related vulnerabilities, see section 3.3.1.

3.2.5.2. Land disputes

Indigenous peoples have been particularly affected by land grabbing and land exploitation, especially for those living in or around forested areas. It has been reported that there are substantial gaps in terms of the consultation process, compensation provision, and the handling of petitions and appeals, leading to increased tensions[119]. Ultimately, the forced displacement of families away from their communities has the potential to undermine the distinctive, place-based identity of affected indigenous people[120]. Moreover, illegal logging has been reported in sanctuaries and forests, infringing indigenous peoples' rights, limiting their livelihoods, and

109. Ministry of Planning, 2021, National Report on Demographic and Socio-economic Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia.

110. National Institute of Statistics and Ministry of Planning, 2022. General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019. Series Thematic Report on Literacy and Educational Attainment.

111. National Institute of Statistics and Ministry of Planning, 2022.

112. Ministry of Planning, 2021.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid.

115. United Nations, 2022

116. Ministry of Planning, 2021.

117. According to the survey, Ratanakiri recorded the highest rate of households practicing open defecation (46%), and thesecond lowest rate of electricity access (51%) and improved water source access (58%), behind Stung Treng (44% and 56% respectively). Source: Own Analysis.

118. Ibid.

119. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia, 2023, Role and achievements of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in assisting the Government and people of Cambodia in the promotion and protection of human rights.

120. FIDH-ADHOC, FIDH-ADHOC, 2022

impacting their cultural and spiritual practices[121]. It has been reported that indigenous mothers have been particularly affected by these instances of uncontrolled land conversion, as they are less able to rely on forest resources to contribute to their own household's food needs, and instead must seek childcare and paid work to help secure their livelihoods[122].

More information on the relationship between economic development processes and the socio-economic situation of affected people, including indigenous peoples, is provided in section 3.3.3.

3.2.5.3. Legal identity

Ethnic minorities, and especially Vietnamese, are victims of discrimination in terms of their access to health services, education, and land rights. Vietnamese are more at risk of experiencing these discriminations, due to their lack of citizenship[123]. While many Vietnamese families have been living in Cambodia for generations, they can face challenges proving their Cambodian nationality. In some instances, local authorities refuse to provide birth certificates to Vietnamese newborns as they wrongfully believe that it means giving them Cambodian nationality[124].

The recent organisation of a national census to identify foreign residents has led to the deportation of 'illegal immigrants' that were not able to access identification documents, some living in Cambodia for decades[125]. During the census, it was reported that thousands of ethnic Vietnamese had their identification documents seized. New official documents could be provided upon an application, but the high application cost is seen as a barrier for many families. Without recognised nationality or proper documentation, these ethnic Vietnamese cannot access economic opportunities, social support, or legal protection[126]. This discrimination also appears in the underrepresentation of these minorities in national statistics. Recent government figures estimated the ethnic Vietnamese population to be around 78,000 people, while specialised NGOs are reporting between 400,000 and 700,000 individuals[127].

Ethnic Vietnamese are also disproportionately impacted by forced eviction and relocation. A number of river-dwelling communities (many of whom of Vietnamese origin) have been forced to relocate onto land in recent years, and in some cases this has led to rejection by host communities[128]. The impact on the affected Vietnamese people is exacerbated by their lack of identification documents and ineligibility to own land[129]. Often, these displaced families receive little to no notice in advance of their relocation[130]. Due to discrimination and worsened conditions, thousands of ethnic Vietnamese have moved to Vietnam in search for better conditions, even if the vast majority do not own any Vietnamese identification document, and some have never lived there[131].

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121. Ibid.; McLinden Nuijen M., Prachvuthy M., van Westen G., 2014. '"Land Grabbing" in Cambodia: Land Rights in a Post-Conflict Setting". In: Kaag M., Zoomers A. (eds.), The Global Land Grab: Beyond the Hype, Halifax/Londres, Fernwood Publishing/Zed Books, p. 152-169.

122. United Nations, 2022.

123. USAID, 2020.

124. Sperfeldt, 2021. Legal Identity and Minority Statelessness in Cambodia: Recent Developments.

125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.

128. Sperfeldt, 2021

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid.

131. Ibid.

3.3. Exclusion based on circumstance

3.3.1. Economic circumstances (employment, migration, debt)

3.3.1.1. Rural agricultural communities

Theme	Headlines
Socio-economic Poverty	• High poverty rates, leading to increased reliance on debt • Transitions to high-risk work due to debt/poverty, e.g., brick kilns
Shocks Climate vulnerability	• Climate-induced economic loss for agricultural households • Economic migration is common among members of agricultural households affected by climate change.

Rural households heavily dependent on agriculture face specific vulnerabilities. The poverty rate among rural agricultural households was 23% for 2019-2020.[132] **Economic migration is common among members of agricultural households affected by climate change. Smallholder farmers** are on average more affected by this phenomenon, compared to farmers with larger land who have more resources[133]. Many farming families have felt compelled to leave their agricultural lands to become brick workers in and around Phnom Penh[134]. Part of the motivation of this relocation and change in livelihoods involves the selling of unsustainable debt to brick kiln owners in exchange for work, which is a form of debt bondage[135]. For more information on indebtedness in Cambodia, see section 3.3.1.3.

Cambodia faces some of the highest net rice yield losses in Southeast Asia, with expected yield losses of 10% to 15% by 2040. These losses are linked to the main use of rain-fed cultivation systems, which are more vulnerable to both lack of water and excess in precipitation. A study from 2017 focusing on farming communities in **Koh Kong** and **Mondulkiri** highlighted that the average economic income losses caused by climate hazards from 2005-2014 for these households were of close to 80% for rice production[136]. The **poorest farmers** are the most affected, as they are least able to access irrigation infrastructures and technologies to less rely on rain-fed systems. Small farms tend to be overly reliant on rice production and risk becoming uncompetitive and over-exposed to shocks without sufficient diversification[137]. This leads to a relatively high probability for these households to fall into extreme poverty when exposed to droughts and floods. Among the households surveyed in Mondulkiri and Koh Kong, a drought or flood event happening once every three years has a 50% chance of pushing a household into extreme poverty[138].

132. United Nations, 2023
133. Ibid.
134. Natarajan et al., 2019.
135. Ibid.; US Department of State, 2022.
136. ADB, 2017. Risk financing for rural climate resilience in the greater Mekong subregion. Greater Mekong Subregion Core Environment Program.
137. The World Bank, 2019.
138. Ibid.

3.3.1.2. Migrants

Theme	Headlines
Discrimination Protection risks	• Cases of safety issues, and risk of detention and deportation for international migrants • Cases of workplace protection risks, particularly among women migrants
Socio-economic Education Poverty/livelihoods Working conditions	• Migration is also associated with school dropouts (especially girls), and increased risk of injury, illness and malnutrition for children migrating with members of the household[139]. • Migration decisions linked to economic hardship (underlying vulnerability) • Long hours and poor access to healthcare

According to the 2019 General Population Census, approximately 1,260,000 people had undertaken internal migration in the previous 5 years[140]. Rural-urban migration was the most common flow, representing 34% of the total internal migration in 2019, followed by urban-urban migration at 30%. Rural-rural migration continues to decline, but still represents 29% of all migrations over this period.In terms of international migration, Cambodia is estimated to have 1.3 million migrant workers in 2023 working in seven countries: Thailand, South Korea, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Saudi Arabia[141]. This figure may include both documented and undocumented migrants.

From an LNOB perspective, migrants can be excluded in their place of origin (leading to the decision to migrate), during the migration journey, and in their migration destination.

❖ PLACE OF ORIGIN

Several factors contribute to both internal and international migration. For example, **migration status in Cambodia is mainly associated with the socioeconomic status of the household.** Except for the purposes of marriage, migration is often due to a search for employment or the transfer of a workplace[142,143]. 23% of migrating families that are ID Poor, compared to 19% non-migrant families[144]. According to IOM[145], the key reasons for migration are no job, low income and financial debt suggesting that socio-economic factors are driving migration with most people migrating as a coping strategy when faced with economic hardship. Migrant households, especially in the **Tonle Sap region,** also tend to have significantly less land than non-migrant households[146]. On average, migrating households seem to have lower income and higher expenditures than non-migrating families, suggesting significant financial vulnerability[147]. Migrant households are more likely to have experienced crop losses (44%) compared to non-migrant households (37%)[148].

139. WFP, 2019
140. Cambodia - Migrants & Refugees Section (migrants-refugees.va); last access on 28 April 2024
141. International Migrants Day 2023 Celebration in Phnom Penh | United Nations in Cambodia; last access 28 April 2024
142. WFP, 2019. Vulnerability and Migration in Cambodia.
143. National Institute of Statistics, 2020, General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019. National report on final census results.
144. WFP, 2019
145. IOM, 2012, Assessment Report: Profile of Returned Cambodian Migrant Workers.
146. WFP, 2019
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid.

Migration also appears to be a coping mechanism linked to indebtedness. 56% of surveyed households affected by out-migration report that one or more members of the household were indebted. The main explanations for this include i) agricultural expenses to increase yields and ii) medical expenditures[149]. Migrants are also likely to take out a loan to fund a household member's migration[150]. For more information on indebtedness as a key factor behind vulnerability in Cambodia, see section 3.3.1.3.

The perception of climate change is also found to be a reason for the migration of Cambodian people[151]. A study examined the relationship between migration rate and climate change perception including the perception of drought, soil problems, new animal species, and new plant species (all factors impacting agriculture production). The study finds that migration rates in the Tonle Sap and lakeside zones are well below the national average, but the flood-prone riverside zone and drought-prone east zones demonstrate far higher levels of migrant households and the number of migrants per household[152].

❖ MIGRATION JOURNEY AND PLACE OF DESTINATION

Migrants moving to neighbouring countries face significant protection risks. In a 2019 study, 13% of migrants going to Thailand have reported safety issues crossing the border, and 10% have been their travel documents withheld by authorities[153]. Cases of detention and deportation back to Cambodia have been reported as the main problems experienced by Cambodian migrant workers to Thailand[154]. Migrant workers are also exposing themselves to other risks, especially with regards to working conditions, such as withholding of wages by employers, violence and psychological stress, and long working hours[155].

Foreign migrants and foreign nationals in Cambodia also face growing protection risks. Foreigners have been trapped into online scam operations, held against their will[156]. Approximately 100,000 individuals are forcibly engaged in these scam operations[157]. Additionally, foreign asylum seekers remain in the country without proper documentation, their status only allowing them to obtain a refugee card and with no mechanism available to apply for residency[158]. This puts asylum seekers at risk of sudden and unanticipated deportation.

Gender is an additional factor of vulnerability in migration. Female-headed households are more likely to be engaged in migration[159], and women's involvement in economic migration appears usually to be a coping mechanism to support the household. 19.5% of women migrants to Thailand were unemployed before migration, compared to 9.5% for male migrants[160]. Women are also more at-risk during migration, often linked to increased isolation due to the distance,

149. Natarajan et al. 2019. Climate change adaptation and precarity across the rural–urban divide in Cambodia: Towards a 'climate precarity' approach.
150. WFP, 2019
151. Parsons and Nielsen, 2020. The Subjective Climate Migrant: Climate Perceptions, Their Determinants, and Relationship to Migration in Cambodia.
152. Ibid.
153. WFP, 2019.
154. IOM, 2019. Flow monitoring Surveys: insights into the profiles and vulnerabilities of Cambodian migrants to Thailand (Round Two).
155. Ibid.
156. US Department of State, 2022
157. United Nations, 2023
158. US Department of State, 2022
159. IOM, 2019
160. IOM, 2019

risks of violence, and discrimination[161]. **Women with disabilities** are even more vulnerable, 40 to 50% of migrating women with disabilities reported emotional abuse and violence during the Covid-19 period[162].

According to the IOM[163], **internal migrants face poor working conditions,** with many working over ten hours per day and seven days per week. Moreover, only a small portion of migrants have health insurance. They have to travel a long distance for medical help and will resort to a pharmacy to receive medical assistance instead of going to a doctor or a clinic. They also struggle to get decent housing. Child labour is also widespread, particularly in brick kilns around the country. Migration is also associated with school dropouts (especially girls), and increased risk of injury, illness and malnutrition for children migrating with members of the household[164].

3.3.1.3. Indebtedness

Theme	Headlines
Socio-economic Financial independence	• High rates of indebtedness, particularly among the rural poor • Additional risks for households with low education levels

The microfinance environment in Cambodia has rapidly shifted from a predominantly development-oriented tool to a deregulated, for-profit financial system. The number of consumers increased from 300,000 in 2005 to 1.6 million in 2013[165]. In 2019, it was reported that one in three households could not meet monthly loan repayments, and with households commonly stacking multiple loans from different lenders, Cambodia was determined to have the highest ratio of microfinance loans to GDP of any country in the world[166]. Borrowing has become an important coping mechanism for many Cambodians, and particularly the rural poor, due to insufficient agricultural productivity[167]. Six in 10 households have at least one loan, with a median value of 3,000 USD[168]. 62% of rural households have debt, but the average loan size is almost half the amount of urban households[169].

The average loan size of microfinance institutions focusing on poor households is 70% of the median income. Potential vulnerabilities to debt-related challenges are increased for those with low financial literacy, as well as those who provide land as collateral[170]. Household heads without formal education are 50% more likely to have a loan than those with formal education, and ID poor households are 20% more likely. Women make up the majority of borrowers in most provinces, particularly Pursat, Takeo, kampong Speu, Kampong Cham and Kampong Chhnang (all above 54.3%)[171].

161. United Nations, 2022
162. United Nations, 2022
163. Cambodia - Migrants & Refugees Section (migrants-refugees.va); last access on 28 April 2024
164. WFP, 2019
165. Natarajan et al., 2019.
166. Green, W.N., 2020. Regulating Over-indebtedness: Local State Power in Cambodia's Microfinance Market. Development and Change, International Institute of Social Studies, vol. 51(6), pages 1429-1453.
167. FAO, UNICEF, WFP, 2020.
168. UNICEF, ADB, WFP. 2021. COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment. Phase II Report.
169. Ibid.
170. Asian Development Bank, 2019
171. Chamroeun, U., and Seavmey, M., 2023. Female Borrowers Outstrip Men: CBC. Cambodianess, 1 April.

Ethnographic research in southern Cambodia revealed that local authorities are often implicated in microfinance lending: signing off on loan contracts, confirming place of residence, verifying information about the borrower's livelihood, and participating in dispute resolution[172]. Migration is sometimes encouraged as a livelihood option to help overcome repayment challenges, including in precarious industries, at home and abroad[173]. Indebtedness in Cambodia has been linked with an increased **human trafficking** risk[174].

3.3.2. Persons living with disabilities and health conditions

3.3.2.1. Physical disability and mental health

Theme	Headlines
Discrimination Gender norms Domestic violence	• Women with disabilities tend to have fewer decision-making powers within their households, and family members may make decisions that do not consider the specific needs of these women. • Within their household, women with a disability have also been found more at risk of domestic violence.
Governance Access to services Policy action	• Mental health services are typically available only in urban areas of Cambodia, provided both non-governmental and governmental entities. • A lack of research on mental health services in Cambodia has been a barrier to developing evidence-based policies and approaches that can benefit those currently left behind.
Socio-economic Livelihoods Education	• Limited employment opportunities and livelihood insecurity, which in turn contributes to a lack of access to financial services • Lower access to education and vocational training. Women with disabilities tend to have a much lower level of education compared to the national average.
Shocks Emergency response	• Often overlooked during disasters and shocks, which create an additional barrier to access basic infrastructures, health services, and critical information.

Persons with disabilities (PWD) in Cambodia are facing significant barriers in terms of access to basic services and economic opportunities. PWD have lower access to education and vocational training, which reduces their chances to attain new economic opportunities[175]. This leads to more insecure livelihoods, and lower incomes: 78% of PWD are living off less than 18,000 KHR ($4.55) per day[176]. Women with disabilities tend to have a much lower level of education compared to the national average, which increases their vulnerability and reliance on the household[177].

Persons with disabilities are also particularly vulnerable during shocks. The specific needs of persons with disabilities are often overlooked during disasters and shocks, which create an additional barrier to access basic infrastructures, health services, and critical information[178]. This situation is exacerbated by underlying vulnerabilities related to limited employment opportunities

172. Green, 2020.
173. Ibid.
174. USAID, 2020
175. USAID, 2020
176. Development Pathways, 2023. Leave No-One Behind and Inclusion Analysis - WFP Cambodia
177. ActionAid, 2021. Participatory Research On The Vulnerabilities Of Women With Disabilities To Climate Change.
178. Ibid.

and livelihood insecurity, which in turn contributes to a lack of access to financial services[179]. In general, the needs of men and women with disabilities are often not considered in contingency planning[180].

Women with disabilities are more at risk than their male counterparts. They tend to have a lower education level compared to both males and non-disabled peoples[181]. Women with disabilities tend to have fewer decision-making powers within their households, and family members may make decisions that do not consider the specific needs of these women[182]. Overall, disability reduce women's independence and forces them to rely on family members[183]. Within their household, women with a disability have also been found more at risk of domestic violence[184].

Mental health services are typically available only in urban areas of Cambodia, provided both non-governmental and governmental entities. Since the sector was effectively rebuilt in the post-war era, significant treatment gaps remain and national strategies and plans to tackle mental health and substance use are not fully implemented[185]. Fundamentally, however, a lack of research on mental health services in Cambodia has been a barrier to developing evidence-based policies and approaches that can benefit those currently left behind[186].

Applying an intersectional lens, existing literature on this subject include studies on the mental health challenges of Cambodian migrants in Thailand[187], and male prisoners in Cambodia[188]. In the former, it was found that one third of migrant worker participants had a "poor quality of life" explained largely by high levels of stress caused by **their migrant living conditions.** In the latter, mental health challenges were associated with **younger prisoners from low-educational backgrounds.**

3.3.2.2. People living with HIV/AIDS

Theme	Headlines
Discrimination Social norms Internal stigma	• Specific groups are more prone to experience discrimination due to the HIV/AIDS status, including gay men, drug users, and entertainment workers. Discrimination is also reported from healthcare professionals. • Internalised stigma among people living with HIV tends to play out differently between men and women, with women having higher levels of shame and feelings of worthlessness, while men experience higher levels of guilt.

179. USAID, 2020
180. ActionAid, 2021
181. Ibid.
182. Ibid.
183. United Nations, 2022
184. ActionAid, 2021
185. Parry, S. J. and Wilinson, E., 2019. Mental Health Services in Cambodia: an overview.
186. Maddock, A., Ean, N., Campbell, A., and Davidson, G., 2023. Mental health Service Accessibility, Development and Research Priority Settig in Cambodia – A Post-Conlfict Nation. BMC Heealth Services Research, 23(183).
187. Laohasiriwong, W. et al, 2020. Mental Health Status and Quality of Life among Cambodian Migrant Workers in Thailand. F1000Research, 9, 1138.
188. Pat et al, 2021. Mental Health Problems and Suicidal Expressions among Young Male Prisoners in Cambodia: A Cross-Sectional Study. Global health Action, 14(1).

HIV prevalence in Cambodia is concentrated among specific groups of population that are already prone to discrimination. While the national HIV rate is around 0.6%, it is as high as 14% for entertainment workers[189], and 15.2% for people using injecting drugs (down from 24.8% between 2012 and 2017)[190]. Male members of the LGBT+ community are also at risk, with a HIV transmission rate of 4%[191]. While the majority of people living with HIV have never experienced or minimally experienced external discrimination, the groups listed above are disproportionately affected[192].

Internalised stigma is very high among people living with HIV. Internalised stigma tends to play out differently between men and women, with women having higher levels of shame and feelings of worthlessness, while men experience higher levels of guilt[193]. This can be explained by fewer community-based sensitisation activities and peer support groups, as well as reduced home-based support, and misunderstanding on viral load, detectability, and transmission[194].

Physical and mental health of people living with HIV, as well as their decision whether to seek medical help or not, is also strongly affected by these stigmas. While most people living with HIV have reported good health in a 2019 study, around 30% reported experiencing an illness such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, STIs, or a mental health issue[195]. Within this group, 29% had received treatment. Regarding mental health, three-quarters of peoples interviewed for the same study reported anxiety and depression symptoms, with a higher proportion of women affected compared to men. Among them, 24% have received support[196]. Healthcare stigma is also prevalent, as people living with HIV have reported discriminatory behaviour from healthcare professionals, such as disclosing HIV status to others, speaking badly about the individuals, avoiding physical contacts with HIV positive people, among others[197].

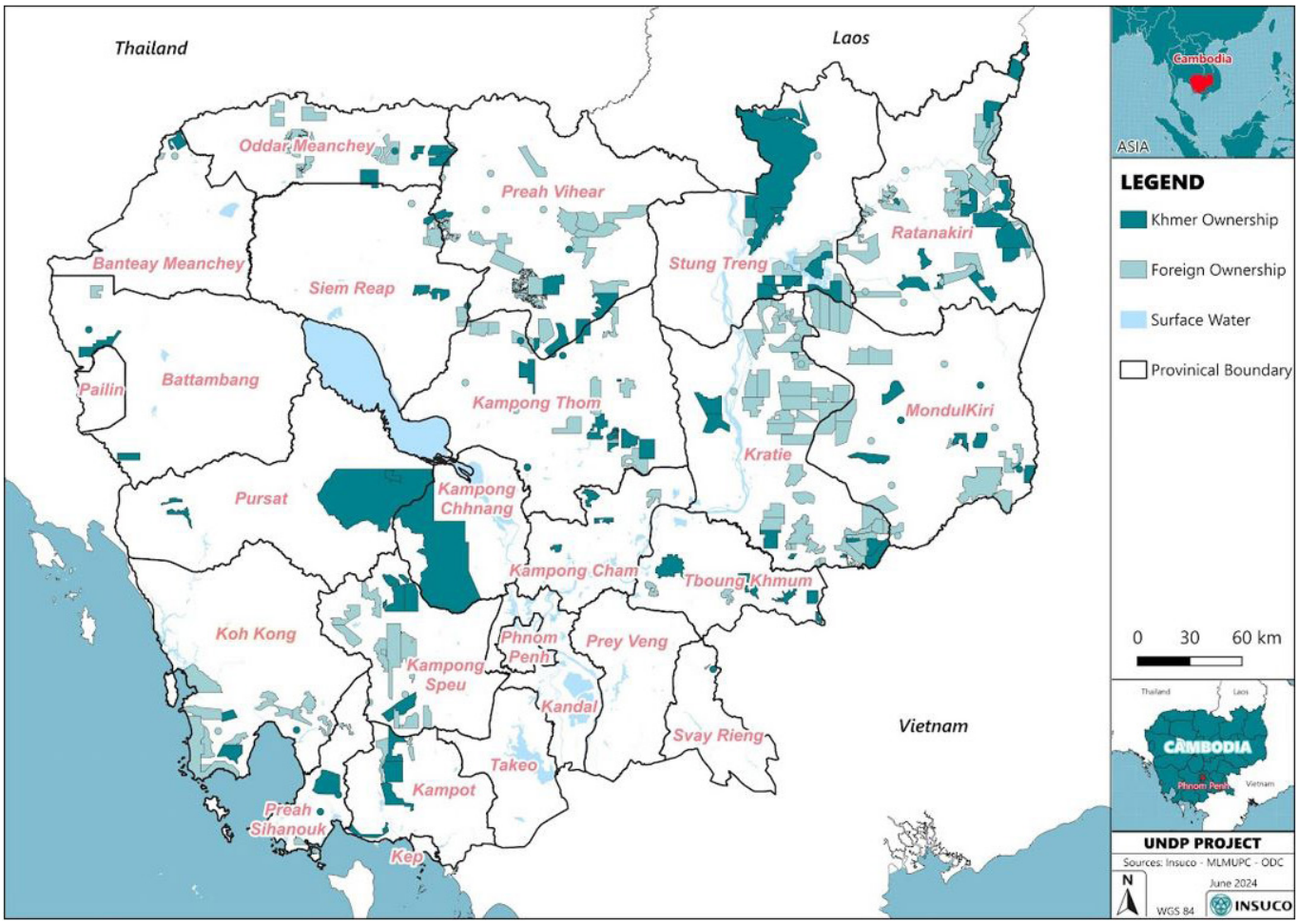
3.3.3. People adversely impacted by development processes

Theme	Headlines
Shocks Displacement	• There are substantial gaps in terms of the consultation process, compensation provision, and the handing of petitions and appeals.
Governance Access to services	• Displaced families with Cambodian citizenship are sometimes moved to formal resettlement sites, sometimes far away from their place of origin, and with poor quality services.
Socio-economic Livelihood opportunities	• Livelihoods of displaced families are also affected by the resettlement process, as they cannot rely on their land for income generation. This leads to the use of negative coping strategies and increases in household debt.

189. Sopheab et al, 2018. HIV prevalence, related risk behaviors, and correlates of HIV infection among people who use drugs in Cambodia
190. Phalkun, 2023.
191. ILGA ASIA, 2021.
192. CPN+, 2019. Cambodia : People Living with HIV Stigma Index 2.0.
193. Ibid.
194. Ibid.
195. Ibid.
196. Ibid.
197. Ibid.

Since the mid-2000s, the north and north-eastern provinces of Cambodia have undergone a rapid agrarian, social and demographic transition[198]. In these provinces, where most of the IP groups are present and were demographically the majority, this change is driven by the concentration of large commercial plantations under Economic Land Concessions (ELC) (see Map 1), which have attracted in their wake numerous small and medium-sized commercial plantations that have intensively deforested and acquired large tracts of farmland and forest, and involved large-scale immigration of ethnic Khmer from the central plains.

Figure 4 Map of Economic Land Concessions (ELC) in Cambodia



Source: Open Development Cambodia (ODC), 2019[199]

These development processes are contributing to a profound transformation in the livelihoods and existence of the indigenous populations, which are historically based on slash-and-burn shifting agriculture as well as free access to the natural resources of the forests and rivers. These land and natural resource acquisitions have historically been established independently of any possible registration of community land rights[200] as granted under Cambodian Law. According to the International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs and the Cambodian Center for Human Rights,

198. Ibid.

199. Several ELC-related land conflicts are known to have taken place in areas not recognised in the available data. For example, a forestry concession in Kratie and Stung Treng (Boeng Chas, Kampong Cham, Siem Bouk communes) reportedly includes an industrial monoculture plantation with negative biodiversity and social impacts, including on local indigenous peoples. Source: Global Atlas of Environmental Justice.

200. Pen R., and Chea P., 2015, "Large-Scale Land Grabbing in Cambodia: Failure of International and National Policies to Secure the Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Access Land and Resources", 2015 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty, Washington, The World Bank, 23-27 March.

40 community land titles (CLT) have been granted up to 2023, representing 8.7% of the 458 acknowledged IP communities[201], and the vast majority of indigenous smallholders have no hard land titles[202]. To date, government intervention intended to secure the IP communities land rights have had very little effect. Land grabbing and ELC in Cambodia are thought to have led to the disappearance of a number of small farms, an increase in landlessness, and an increase in poverty, as few ELC-linked job opportunities have benefited IPs[203]. The reduction in arable land and free access to natural resources is forcing IP households to abandon traditional shifting cultivation of rice and to depend on activities subject to market prices and uncontrolled commercial networks (cashew, cassava); ii) to sell their labour; iii) take out loans, often from unregulated providers; and iv) to take part in illegal activities such as logging or farming in protected areas[204].

The few quantitative studies carried out on populations affected by ELCs in North-East Cambodia indicate that they have negative effects on household incomes, and on products and income from natural resources, while they do not tend to create many jobs, at least not to the extent needed to compensate for the loss of agricultural income and natural resources[205].

Other studies have been conducted on the potential exclusion of displaced groups, without focusing specifically on ELCs or on the evictions of ethnic Vietnamese populations.

Displaced families with Cambodian citizenship are sometimes moved to formal resettlement sites, sometimes far away from their place of origin, impacting their sense of community[206]. **Some formal resettlement sites lack access to basic infrastructure.** People living in resettlement sites have reported a lack of drinking water (58% of respondents) and poor water supply (50%)[207]. Relocated indigenous people are more affected by these issues, with 76% reporting the lack of drinking water and 61% the poor water supply[208].

Livelihoods of displaced families are also affected by the resettlement process, as they cannot rely on their land for income generation. This leads to the use of negative coping strategies. It has been reported that while education services are in close proximity to the resettlement sites studied, 47% of respondents are not sending their children to school so they can participate in the livelihood activities of the household[209]. Indebtedness is another negative coping mechanism: one third of the respondents living in resettlement sites have reported being in debt, and 87% of them have seen these debts increase since they resettled[210].

201. CCHR, 2023. Access to Collective Land Titles for Indigenous Communities in Cambodia-2023. Presentation to the International day of World Indigenous People.

202. Luco F., 2008, “Manger le Royaume : pratiques anciennes et actuelles d’accès à la terre au Cambodge”, in: Forest A. (ed.), Cambodge Contemporain, Bangkok/Paris.

203. Milne S., 2013, “Under the Leopard’s Skin: Land Commodification and the Dilemmas of Indigenous Communal Title in Upland Cambodia”, Asia Pacific Viewpoint, vol. 54, no 3, p.323-339.

204. Ibid.

205. Jiao X., Smith-Hall C., Theilade I., 2015. “Rural Household Incomes and Land Grabbing in Cambodia”. Land Use Policy, no 48, p. 317-328.

206. FIDH-ADHOC, FIDH-ADHOC, 2022

207. UN OHCR, 2022. Study on the Human Right Situation of Communities living in resettlement Sites in Cambodia and Draft Resettlement Guidelines.

208. Ibid.

209. Ibid.

210. Ibid.

4. Discussion of Findings

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Who is being left behind?

4.1.1. Overview

Quantitative data analysis and a review of related literature have been combined to identify which population groups are currently being left behind in Cambodia. Due to limitations in the survey data available, only the following population groups are included in this part of the analysis:

Table 3 Scope of quantitative analysis

Focus of analysis	Not applicable
Gender	Indigenous peoples
Youth	Ethnic minorities
Urban/rural	LGBT+
Location (province/region)	HIV/AIDS
Poverty status	Mental health
Disability status	Displaced
Land ownership status	Household debt status

The most frequently underperforming groups, according to the data available, are identified as follows:

- **The urban poor:** households in urban areas that fall into the poorest 20% of all households are generally very low performers on almost all DHS indicators.

The literature tends to highlight differences between urban and rural populations, with the latter viewed as more vulnerable than the former. Therefore, it could be argued that urban poverty may be an area that requires greater attention, particularly as the urban population is expected to grow significantly over the coming decades.

- **Rural, landless households and rural poor:** households in rural areas that do not own land are particularly vulnerable in some categories (stunting, school attendance, employment, bank account access, personal transportation).

This is consistent with the findings from the literature review, suggesting this group are not necessarily overlooked by development actors but that acute vulnerabilities remain, and need to be addressed.

- **Individuals without a primary school education or households headed by someone without a primary school education** underperform households/individuals with a primary school education on almost all indicators, especially when it comes to violence against women. **Men without a primary school education and illiterate men under 50** tend to underperform women counterparts.

Improvement in education (attendance as well as completion) appears to be critical to socio-economic vulnerability of the Cambodian people, irrespective of gender. The finding also suggests

a clear need for vocational training and entrepreneurship support to fill this gap and support the livelihood opportunities of Cambodian youth.

Available survey data testifies to substantial **geographic variation in vulnerabilities** pertaining to socioeconomic status, governance, vulnerability to shocks, and discrimination – with several provinces frequently emerging as the most vulnerable. Specifically, the analysis found **a greater concentration of vulnerabilities in the provinces of Ratanakiri, Stung Treng, and Preah Vihear.** Comparing province-level outcomes on 23 of the indicators discussed in the paragraphs above,[211] Ratanakiri placed among the bottom three worst-performing or most left behind provinces for 13 indicators. Stung Treng placed in the bottom three on 11 indicators, and Preah Vihear placed in the bottom three on 7 indicators. The results point to a **worrying pattern in which northern provinces are excluded from many of the spoils of development that have benefited Cambodian society over the last two decades of growth.** Even more concerning, the provinces of the north are especially likely to be affected by rising global temperatures and increasingly erratic weather, threatening to further widen the disparities between the north and the rest of the country.

In addition to the north-eastern provinces, **Pursat province** also scores poorly across a number of indicators, particularly concerning out-of-school children, stunting, bank account ownership, and experience of droughts. More research is required to understand the reasons for the relatively poor socio-economic outcomes, in comparison to surrounding provinces. One explanation, based on DHS 2021/22 data, is that villages in Pursat tend to be more remote (in terms of access to health services, education services, and provincial hall) compared to villages in many other provinces.

More detailed findings are presented in the sections below at the provincial level, organised by the five LNOB factors.

4.1.2. Socio-economic vulnerabilities

The table below shows that, for socio-economic indicators in the DHS, bank account ownership rates are particularly low for **low-income groups in both urban and rural contexts,** but the urban poor are more likely to have a child (6-11) out of school. **Women with disabilities** are worse off than men with disabilities for all indicators except out-of-school children, which is also associated with men with lower educational attainment.

211. The 23 indicators cover province-level measures of the following : unemployment rate, homeownership rate, rate of having a bank account, possession of car or moto, stunting in children under 5, wasting in children under 5, primary school absenteeism, multidimensional poverty, use of unimproved or surface water, open defecation, birth registration, number of primary school classrooms per 1000 children, , number of upper secondary school classrooms per 1000 children, area with unexploded ordnance/mines, composite CVI, households affected by flood, households affected by drought, documentation of land ownership, land disputes, violence against women (last 12 months), women's economic empowerment, and HIV discriminatory attitudes. Where multiple indicators measured similar concepts, the indicator found to be most representative of the given concept was chosen.

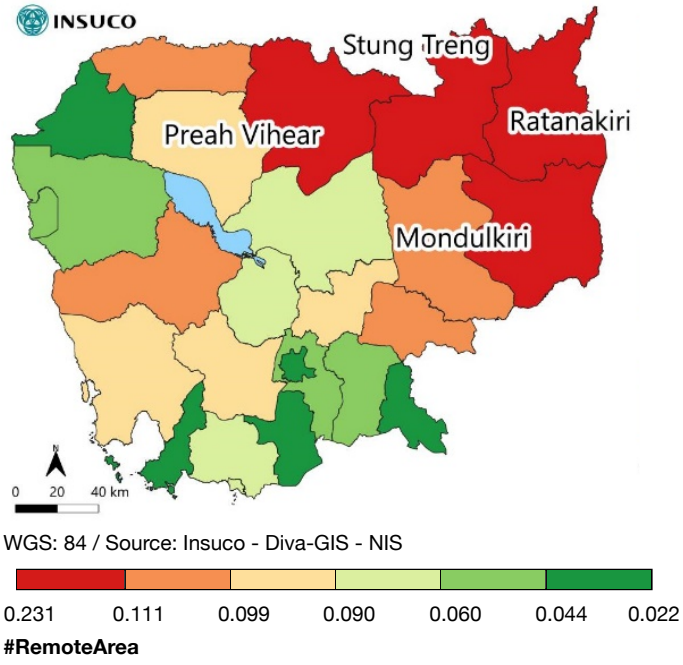
Table 4 Socio-economic indicators, DHS 2021-22

		Geography/Wealth		Gender/Disability		Gender/Education	
Indicator	Unit [212]	Urban poor	Rural poor	Men with disability	Women with disability	Less educated men	Less educated women
Member of HH has own bank account	HH	5%	4%	20%	13%	11%	12%
HH owns moto / car	HH	53%	66%	72%	53%	78%	58%
At least one child < 5 is stunted	HH	11%	17%	7%	12%	13%	13%
least one child < 5 is wasted	HH	6%	7%	4%	9%	7%	6%
At least one child aged 6-11 not in school	HH	30%	22%	24%	14%	27%	21%
Did not work	IN	21%	20%	21%	41%	3%	23%

❖ MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

There are stark differences in the prevalence of poverty across Cambodia's 25 provinces, with **poverty most pronounced in the north and northeastern provinces.** The UNDP and OPHI's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) estimates that 49% of the population of Ratanakiri, 44% of Stung Treng, and 35% of Mondulkiri lives in multidimensional poverty, with between 13% and 20% of the population in these three provinces estimated to be facing severe poverty[213]. In the provinces of Oddar Meanchey, Pursat, Kratie, and Tboung Khmum, over a quarter of the population is estimated to live in multidimensional poverty. By comparison, the MPI estimates that only 6% of the population in Phnom Penh is experiencing multidimensional poverty, and less than 1% is living in severe poverty.

Map 1 Multidimensional Poverty Index, CVI



Analysis of the DHS 2021/22 household survey in Cambodia finds that 74% of households in Ratanakiri, 67% in Stung Treng, and 62% in Preah Vihear belong to the bottom 20% nationwide in terms of wealth and assets, while less than 1% of households in Phnom Penh and 3% of households in Kandal are among the bottom 20%. The disparity highlights the extent of the **urban-rural wealth divide** in the country today; however, caution should be exercised in interpreting the low rate of multidimensional poverty in urban provinces as evidence against

212. HH = household; IN = individual

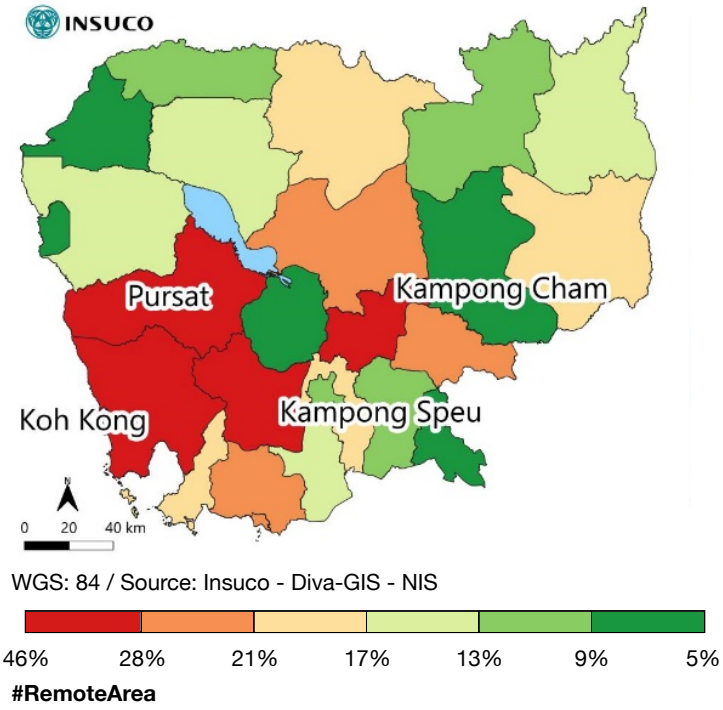
213. Alkire, S., Kanagaratnam, U., and Suppa, N. (2023). The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2023 disaggregation results and methodological note. OPHI MPI Methodological Note 56, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford

the existence of widespread urban poverty. Due to the difficulties associated with counting and accessing impoverished populations in cities, household surveys such as the DHS are known to underestimate poverty in urban contexts.[214]

❖ CHILDHOOD-LINKED VULNERABILITY

The provinces in which **children face greater vulnerabilities are not necessarily the same provinces in which multidimensional poverty is most prevalent.** Analysis of the DHS household survey finds that children aged 6 to 11 are most likely to not attend school in Kampong Speu province. In Kampong Speu, a stunning 46% of households with children aged 6 to 11 report that at least one child is not currently attending school. Other provinces with high rates of primary school absenteeism include Pursat, Koh Kong, and Kampong Cham, where 38%, 34%, and 30% of primary-school aged children, respectively, were reported to not be in school. Recent analysis by the World Bank shows that enrolment in lower secondary schools is lower among boys (43% compared to 52% of girls), among rural children (45% vs. 52%), and among poor households (43% vs. 61%)[215]. In 2019/2020, a staggering **80% of Cambodian youth (14- to 24-year-olds) had not completed secondary education.**

Figure 5 At least one child (6-11) not in school by Province, DHS 2021/22



The figure below provides an indication of the main factors associated with primary school absenteeism, based on the data available. Absenteeism is much lower in the 20% most wealthy households (11% compared to 20%), and is linked to the education status of the household head. It should also be noted that completion of secondary education has been highlighted as an area of improvement by the Royal Government of Cambodia, having increased among the furthest left behind groups from only 2% to 7% between 2014 and 2022[216].

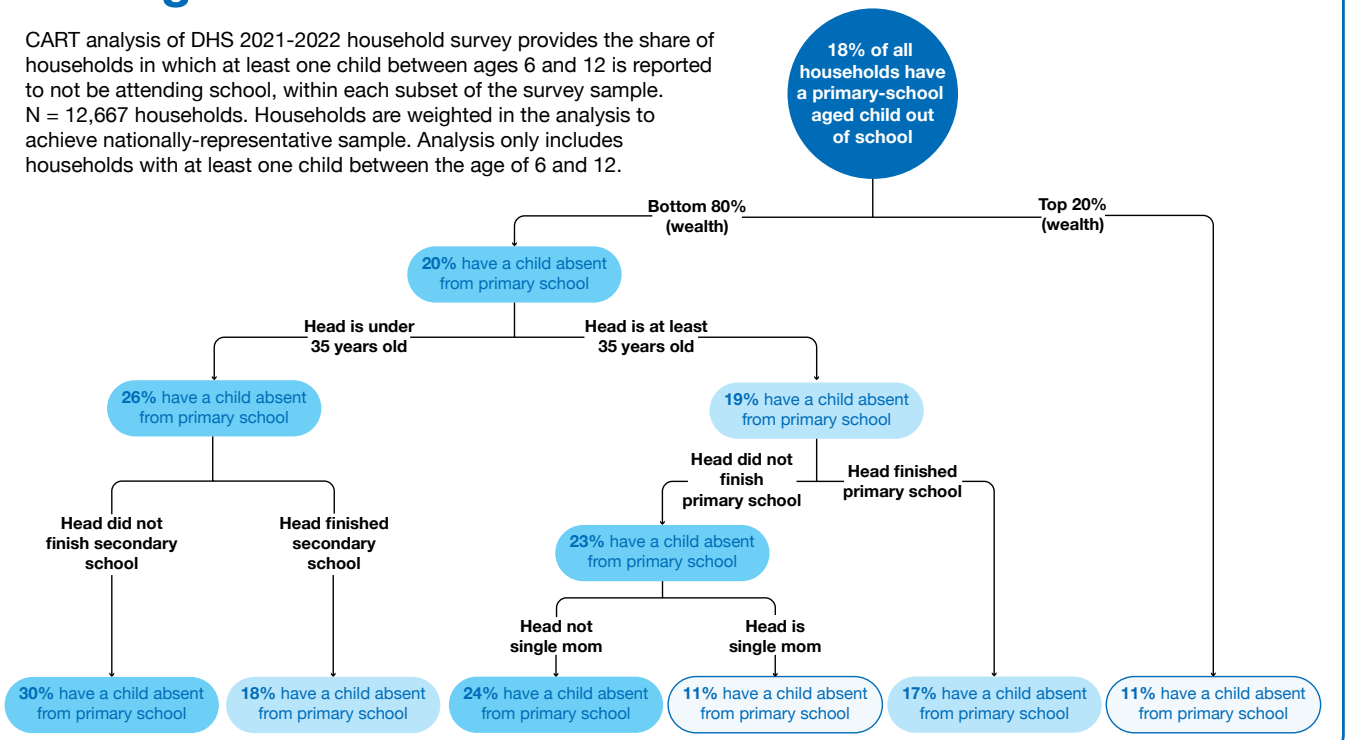
214. Lucci et al. 2018. "Are We Underestimating Urban Poverty?" World Development, 103, Mar., pp. 297–310. To mitigate this issue, urban poverty was a significant focus of this study's qualitative data collection.

215. World Bank, 2024.

216. Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023a. Cambodia's Voluntary national Review (VNR) 2023. This analysis defines "furthest left behind" as "poorer households with lower education".

Primary school absenteeism among households

CART analysis of DHS 2021-2022 household survey provides the share of households in which at least one child between ages 6 and 12 is reported to not be attending school, within each subset of the survey sample. N = 12,667 households. Households are weighted in the analysis to achieve nationally-representative sample. Analysis only includes households with at least one child between the age of 6 and 12.



Between 2014 and 2022, Cambodia reduced stunting in children from 40% to 30% nationwide among the furthest behind groups, while wasting remain at 14% across this period[217]. According to the DHS 2021/22, stunting among children under five is most common in Ratanakiri, where 19% of households with children under the age of five have at least one child who is stunted. Stunting is also widespread in Pursat, Stung Treng, Kep and Mondulkiri, where at least 15% of households have a child under five who is stunted. Wasting among children under five is most common in Kampong Chhnang – a province that otherwise performs about average in terms of socioeconomic outcomes. 17% of households in Kampong Chhnang are found to have a child under five who is wasted. Kep also has among the poorest outcomes for both indicators of child health and nutrition: 11% of households in Kep have at least one child under 5 who is wasted, and 15% have at least one child under 5 who is stunted.

❖ OWNERSHIP OF LAND AND HOMES

Despite the high prevalence of multidimensional poverty in the provinces of Ratanakiri, Pursat, Preah Vihear, and Oddar Meanchey, the majority of individuals in these provinces own their own home and land. Analysis of the DHS men and women surveys finds that at least 60% of individuals between the ages of 15 and 49 in Oddar Meanchey, Ratanakiri, Kampong Chhang, Kep, Preah Vihear, Pursat, and Svay Rieng own their own homes. Home ownership is most common in Svay Rieng, where 64% of individuals, including 80% of individuals who did not complete primary school, own a home either alone or jointly with someone else. Unsurprisingly, both home and land ownership are least common in Phnom Penh, where 78% of individuals do not own a home and 91% do not own land. Outside of the capital city, land ownership is least common in Koh Kong, where only 17% of respondents report owning their own land, despite 49% of respondents owning their own home.

217. Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023a.

Home and land ownership rates are directly correlated with age. 61% of 40–49-year-olds own land, and 81% own their home, compared to only 25% and 29% (respectively) of 20–29-year-olds (DHS 2021/22).

❖ OUT OF WORK (LAST 12 MONTHS)

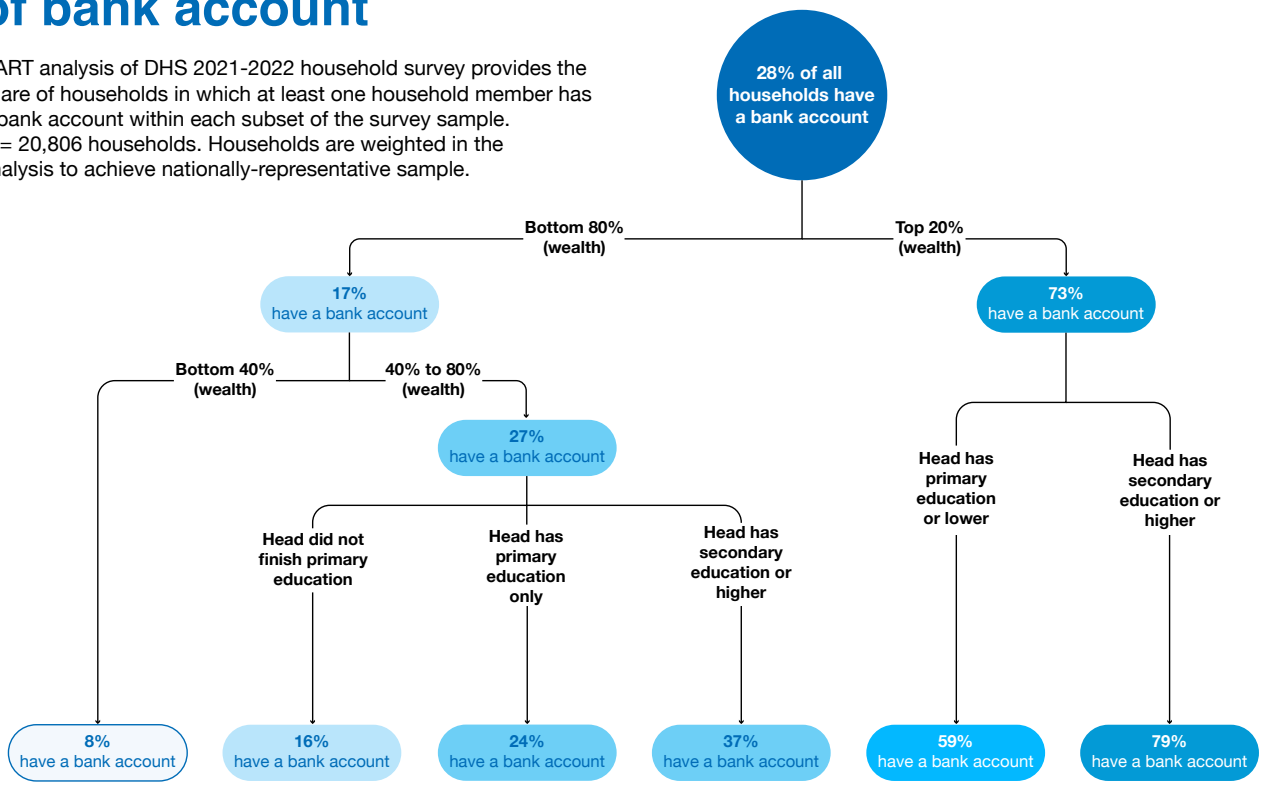
Analysis of the DHS individual survey finds **unemployment to be highest in the provinces of Prey Veng, Kep, Kampong Cham, and Pursat, where at least 30% of individuals ages 15 to 49 report not working** in the last 12 months. Concerningly, **in some provinces, unemployment tends to be substantially more common among poorer residents.** Unemployment among the poorest individuals is particularly pronounced in Kep, where 51% of individuals belonging to the bottom 20% in terms of household wealth report not having worked in the last 12 months. By comparison, only 25% of individuals in Kep in the top 20% in terms of wealth report being unemployed. High unemployment rates among the poorest populations can also be found in Preah Sihanouk, Takeo, and Prey Veng, where over 35% of individuals in the bottom wealth quintile indicate that they have not worked in at least 12 months. Mondulkiri and Svay Rieng have the lowest estimated unemployment rates, with over 90% of surveyed individuals reporting having worked in the last year.

❖ BANK ACCOUNT OWNERSHIP

Households in the **north and northeastern provinces and Pursat are the least likely to have bank accounts.** Over 80% of households in Pursat, Ratanakiri, Tboung Khmum, Kratie, Kampong Thom, Preah Vihear, and Oddar Meanchey report that no one in their household has a bank account. Bank usage is most prevalent in Phnom Penh, Preah Sihanouk, and Svay Rieng – provinces with the lowest prevalence of multidimensional poverty. The figure below provides an overview of factors associated with bank account ownership nationwide, namely, household wealth and the education level of the head of household.

Household ownership of bank account

CART analysis of DHS 2021-2022 household survey provides the share of households in which at least one household member has a bank account within each subset of the survey sample. N = 20,806 households. Households are weighted in the analysis to achieve nationally-representative sample.



❖ CHRONIC ILLNESS

Analysis of the CSES 2021 shows clear differences in rates of chronic illness according to age and gender. Overall, 14.2% of respondents reported having a disease or illness in the last 30 days, 38% of which (5%) total) were described as chronic. Rates of chronic disease were between 25% and 30% for 60-69, 70-79, and 80+ year olds, typically representing two-thirds of these population groups with at least one illness. Across all adult age groups (starting at 20-29 years old), rates of chronic illness are higher among women compared to men, except for 60–69-year-olds (29% and 30% respectively). As many as 10% of 40–49-year-old women reported suffering from a chronic illness.

4.1.3. Governance

The governance indicators selected from the DHS database are overwhelmingly associated with household poverty, as opposed to gender, disability status, or education. This includes urban poor households, many of whom lack access to electricity and adequate water and sanitation facilities.

Table 5 Governance (service access) indicators, DHS 2021-22

		Geography/Wealth		Gender/Disability		Gender/Education	
Indicator	Unit	Urban poor	Rural poor	Men with disability	Women with disability	Less educated men	Less educated women
All children < 5 have birth certificate	HH	80%	78%	87%	86%	77%	86%
Has electricity	HH	67%	64%	88%	93%	83%	90%
Improved water source	HH	80%	72%	86%	91%	81%	88%
Improved sanitation	HH	6%	9%	14%	17%	12%	13%
Open defecation	HH	38%	40%	13%	10%	20%	16%

The following three figures present the main factors associated with electricity access, open defecation practices, and access to improved sanitation. This analysis draws the following conclusions:

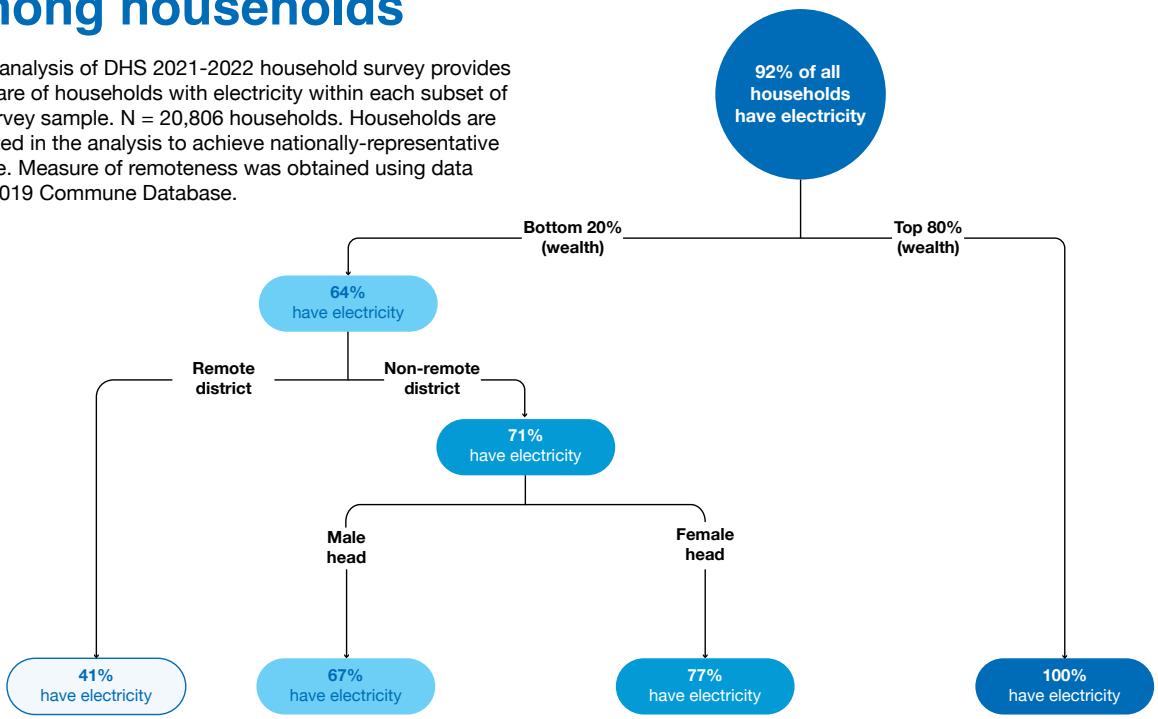
- No **access to electricity** is associated with low-income households (bottom 20%) particularly in remote locations. Electricity access is higher among non-remote households with a female head of household, compared to those with a male head.
- **Open defecation** is similarly associated with wealth (bottom 40%) and remote locations. Regardless of remoteness, rates of open defecation are higher for households with lower educational attainment (head of household not completing primary school).
- **Access to improved sanitation** is concentrated in urban contexts, and in particular among wealthier households.

Access to basic sanitation (52% of furthest left behind groups in 2022), basic drinking water (70%), and electricity (75%) have been key areas of progress in terms of the LNOB agenda in

Cambodia[218]. Between 2014 and 2022, access to these basic services increased by 40%, 24% and 58% respectively. This report highlights to extend these services to the remaining left behind populations, mostly among the urban and rural poor.

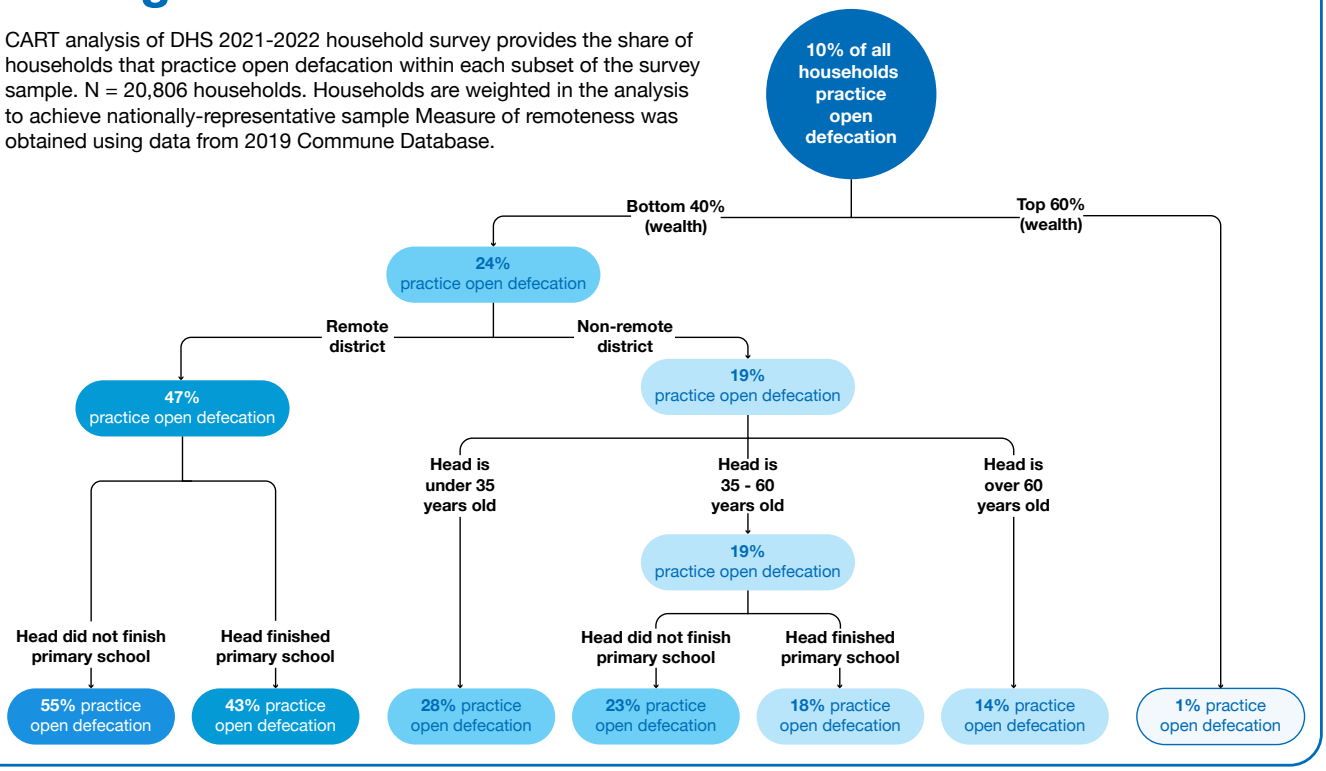
Electricity access among households

CART analysis of DHS 2021-2022 household survey provides the share of households with electricity within each subset of the survey sample. N = 20,806 households. Households are weighted in the analysis to achieve nationally-representative sample. Measure of remoteness was obtained using data from 2019 Commune Database.



Prevalence of open defecation among households

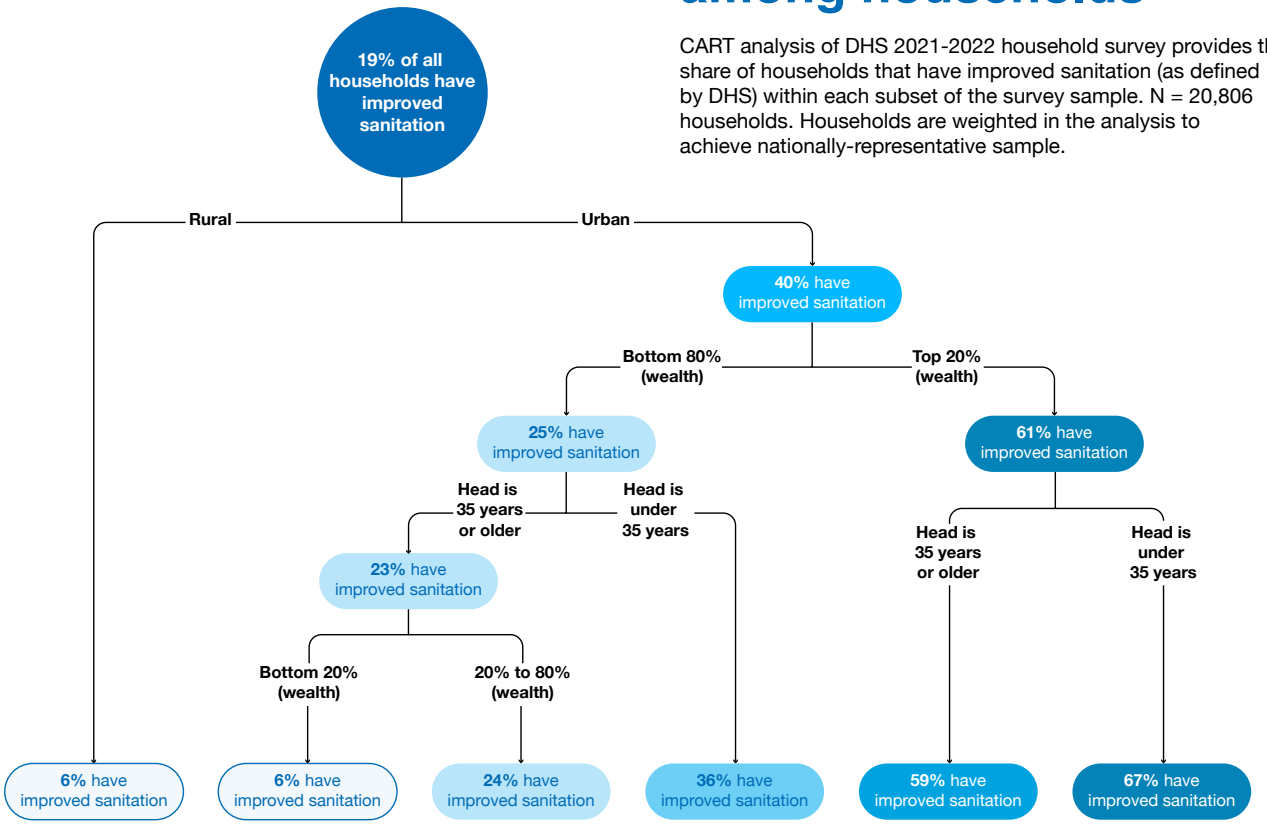
CART analysis of DHS 2021-2022 household survey provides the share of households that practice open defacation within each subset of the survey sample. N = 20,806 households. Households are weighted in the analysis to achieve nationally-representative sample Measure of remoteness was obtained using data from 2019 Commune Database.



218. Royal Government of Cambodia, 2023a.

Improved sanitation among households

CART analysis of DHS 2021-2022 household survey provides the share of households that have improved sanitation (as defined by DHS) within each subset of the survey sample. N = 20,806 households. Households are weighted in the analysis to achieve nationally-representative sample.



From a geographical perspective, access to **sanitation, water, and electricity is most limited in the provinces of Stung Treng and Ratanakiri.** Analysis of the 2021/22 DHS survey finds that 92% of households nationwide have electricity in their home. However, the high rate of nationwide electrification obscures significant disparities in access to electricity across different regions. Electricity access is particularly limited in the provinces of the north and northeast. As many as **56% of households in Stung Treng and 49% in Ratanakiri do not have electricity.** Preah Vihear, Oddar Meanchey, and Kratie also have low electrification rates, with fewer than 70% of households in each province reporting electricity use.

Unsafe management of excreta is also highest in the provinces of **Ratanakiri and Stung Treng, where 46% and 42% of households, respectively, practice open defecation.** Open defecation is also common in Mondulkiri, Preah Vihear, and Kratie. The prevalence of open defecation varies widely across provinces. The five districts below are outliers in terms of their lack of access to improved water sources and rates of open defecation. Ratanakiri and Stung Treng provinces, located in the northeast of Cambodia, each have two districts in this list.

District	Province	% HH unimproved water	% HH open defecation
Ou Ya Dav	Ratanakiri	82%	79%
Siem Bouik	Stung Treng	85%	37%
Svay Leu	Siem Reap	66%	70%
Sesan	Stung Treng	58%	67%
Andoung Meas	Ratanakiri	38%	73%

Geographic trends in access to improved water generally follow trends in electrification and sanitation practices, with some exceptions. Mirroring trends discussed in the previous paragraph, **households in Stung Treng and Ratanakiri are the least likely to have access to an improved[219] water source.** 44% and 43% of households in Stung Treng and Ratanakiri, respectively, obtain drinking water from an unprotected dug well or spring, or directly from a river, dam, lake, pond, stream, or canal. Widespread lack of access to improved water sources is common in provinces all across the country: **over a fifth of households in Pursat, Kampong Chhnang, and Kampot rely on unimproved water sources or surface water** for drinking water. As with other services, there exists extensive disparities across provinces, with over 97% of households in Svay Rieng, Phnom Penh, and Pailin having access to improved water, compared to only 57-58% in the provinces with the lowest access.

Figure 6 Access to electricity, by Province, DHS 2021/22

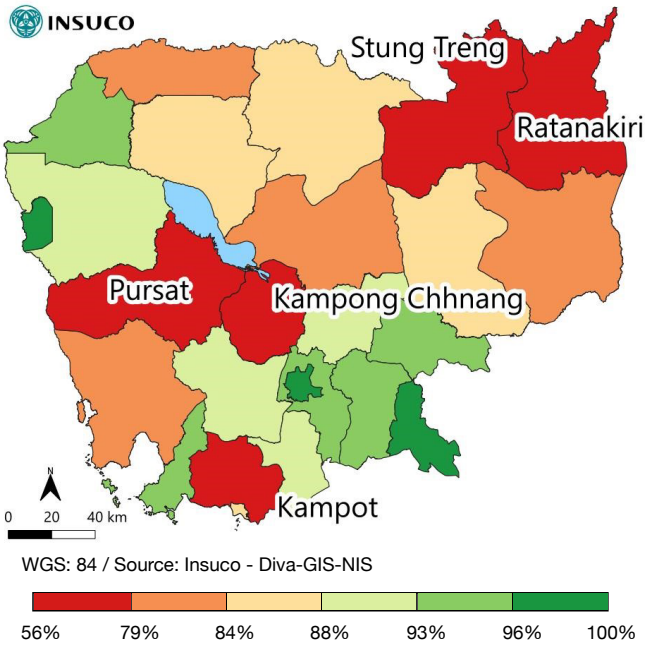
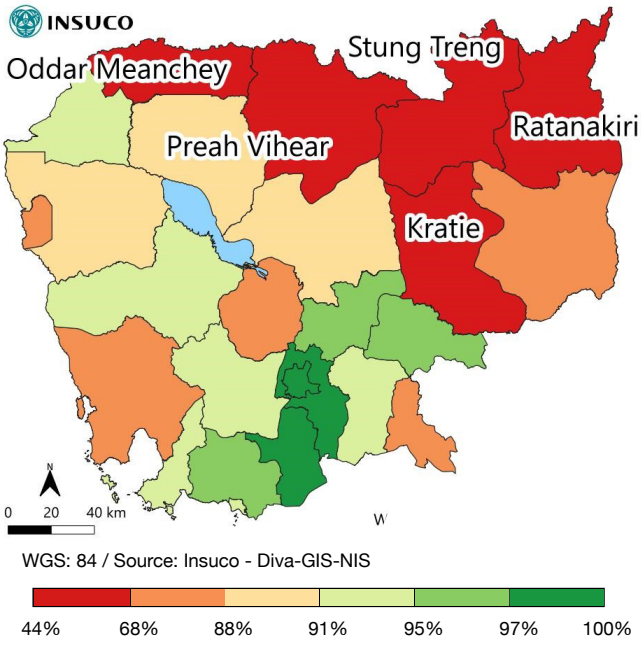


Figure 7 Access to improved sanitation, by Province, DHS 2021/22



Analysis of the 2019 CDB indicates that, in the provinces of Preah Vihear, Tboung Khmum, Takeo, Prey Veng, and Kampong Speu, **waste collection services** are practically non-existent, with less than 2% of households reported to subscribe to garbage collection services.

Despite substantial improvements over the last two decades in birth registration rates – 92% of children under five were registered with the civil authorities in 2021 compared to only 66% in 2005[220] – **registration rates vary widely across provinces, with the lowest rates of birth registration found in the northeastern provinces.** Between 34% and 36% of households with children under the age of five in Preah Vihear, Ratanakiri, and Mondulkiri have at least one child who does not have a birth certificate. In provinces with lower rates of registration, lack

219. The Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021-22 Final Report (2022, p.347) defines improved water sources as including piped water, public taps, standpipes, tube wells, boreholes, protected dug wells and springs, rainwater, water delivered via a tanker truck or a cart with a small tank, and bottled water.

220. National Institute of Statistics (NIS) [Cambodia], Ministry of Health (MoH) [Cambodia], and ICF. 2023. Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2021–22 Final Report. Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: NIS, MoH, and ICF.

of registration is particularly common in among female headed households. **53% of female-headed households with young children in Ratanakiri do not have a birth certificate** for every child under five. Among female-headed households in Mondulkiri and Kratie, 43% and 34%, respectively, do not have birth certificates for all children under age five.

4.1.4. Exposure to shocks and displacement

Exposure to climate-induced shocks varies widely across geography, with the northern provinces of Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear, and Ratanakiri the most vulnerable to overall climate hazards in coming years. The NCSD's 2021 Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) categorises Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear as having high levels of combined vulnerability to storms, floods, and droughts.

Cambodia has an extremely high exposure to flooding (riverine and flash) in particular, especially along the Mekong and Tonle Sap floodplains, which are home to 80% of the population[221]. NCSD's CVI identifies Oddar Meanchey and Ratanakiri as the two provinces most vulnerable to flooding. However, effects of flooding have been felt elsewhere as well. Analysis of the 2019 CDB finds that a stunning **11% of individuals in Stung Treng province were affected by flooding that year,** along with a non-negligible share of the populations of Kratie (4%), Ratanakiri (3%) and Koh Kong (2%).

As global temperatures continue to rise, drought is also expected to have a devastating impact on agricultural production across large regions of the country. Experts disagree on the areas most likely to be impacted : the World Bank's 2023 report on climate in Cambodia identifies the provinces of Phnom Penh, Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, and Pailin as most exposed to drought,[222] while the CVI ranks Preah Vihear, Stung Treng, and Ratanakiri as most vulnerable. Still yet, data collected in the 2019 CDB found that 8% of residents of Pursat, and 7% of residents of Battambang, Kratie, and Preah Vihear were affected by drought in 2019. These conflicting assessments attest to the widespread nature of the threat of climate change to populations throughout Cambodia.

Experiences of shocks among agricultural households – combined with underlying financial vulnerability – is also explored in section 4.1.6.2.

Beyond climate-induced shocks, **some provinces continued to be hampered by the lasting consequences of mines and unexploded ordnance.** According to the 2019 CDB, a concerning 62% of land area within Ratanakiri is known or suspected to be mined. Unexploded ordnance and mines remain a concern in Oddar Meanchey, Svay Rieng, Pailin, and Preah Sihanouk as well, with over 10% of the land area in these provinces suspected or confirmed to be mined. In addition to the casualties caused by explosives left over from the war period, research in Cambodia has noted **the lasting effects of unexploded ordnance on economic outcomes,** as farmers are less likely to plant crops in areas suspected to have unexplored ordnance, thus slowing the pace of development in heavily mined areas[223].

Another vulnerability that seems to vary across provinces is the vulnerability to displacement or to land disputes. The table below shows that tenure security is generally lower for poor rural households, and households with a male member with a disability.

221. World Bank Group, 2023.

222. Ibid., p. 7.

223. Lin, E., 2020. "How War Changes Land: Soil Fertility, Unexploded Bombs, and the Underdevelopment of Cambodia." American Journal of Political Science, Wiley Online Library.

Table 6 Displacement risk indicators, DHS 2021/22

		Geography/Wealth		Gender/Disability		Gender/Education	
Indicator	Unit	Urban poor	Rural poor	Men with disability	Women with disability	Less educated men	Less educated women
Has deed for house	IN	72%	63%	80%	83%	68%	77%
Has deed for land	IN	82%	65%	62%	90%	69%	80%
Name on house deed	IN	97%	97%	88%	99%	96%	99%
Name on land deed	IN	96%	97%	90%	99%	96%	98%

Analysis of the DHS survey finds that possession of **documents attesting to land or home ownership are least common in Ratanakiri,** where 69% of home owners and 68% of land owners do not have any legal documentation of their ownership. A clear relationship exists between this lack of documentation and the prevalence of land disputes. Analysis of the CDB finds that 661 land conflicts were recorded by authorities in Ratanakiri in 2019, or 13 conflicts per every 1000 households in the province. The number of land conflicts (normalized by population) were second highest in Stung Treng, where 11 conflicts were recorded per 1000 households and 49% of landowners lack documentation for their land, and third highest in Preah Vihear, where 10 conflicts were recorder per 1000 households 46% of landowners do not have documentation of ownership. Lack of land deeds is common outside of these provinces as well: between 29% and 32% of landowners in Siem Reap, Kratie, Mondulkiri, Kep and Oddar Meanchey report having no documentation of their ownership.

4.1.5. Discrimination

Province-level data on discrimination is notably scarcer than for other LNOB factors. No quantitative indicators pertaining to the gender wage gap or attitudes towards inclusion of different social groups were able to be identified at the level of the province. However, analysis of the DHS offers some insight into experiences of violence against women, women's economic empowerment, and discriminatory attitudes towards individuals with HIV.[224] Questions related to physical/sexual violence were only asked to women respondents, and male-only categories have been removed from the table below.

Table 7 Discrimination indicators, DHS 2021/22

		Geography/Wealth		Women and Disability/Education		National Average
Indicator	Unit	Urban poor	Rural poor	Less educated men	Less educated women	
Would discriminate against HIV	IN	29%	43%	33%	31%	**27%**
Experienced physical/sexual violence in lifetime	IN	20%	15%	16%	15%	**10%**
Experienced physical/sexual violence – past year	IN	10%	9%	9%	7%	**5%**

224. In the 2021 DHS, 66 individuals identify as HIV positive, a sample size too small to disaggregate by province for analysis.

Discriminatory behaviour regarding HIV is concentrated among rural poor households, while women's experiences of physical or sexual violence is higher among urban poor households.

❖ GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Women in Mondulkiri, Kratie, Stung Treng and Banteay Meanchey are most likely to have recently experienced physical or sexual violence. 13% of women under 49 years old in Mondulkiri report experiencing violence in the last year, along with 11% of women in Kratie, and 10% of women in Stung Treng and Banteay Meanchey. Women in Mondulkiri and Stung Treng are also the most likely to report having ever experienced physical or sexual violence: 22% of women in both province report having experienced violence at least once in their lives, along with 21% of women in Preah Vihear, and 19% of women in Battambang. LNOB analysis by UNESCAP suggests that instances of psychological violence against women is higher than physical/sexual violence, and 50% of women in Mondulkiri have experienced some form of violence in their life[225].

Women's participation in major household decisions, a proxy for financial empowerment, varies widely across provinces, but does not seem to correlate strongly with women's experiences of violence. In 19 of Cambodia's 25 provinces, over 90% of women report that they are typically involved in decisions about major household purposes. In Mondulkiri, Kratie, and Preah Vihear in particular – provinces noted above to be the worst for experiences of violence against women – 98% to 99% of women report being the sole or joint decisionmaker regarding major purchases. Departing from the high levels of women's financial empowerment observed throughout most of the country, as many as **38% of women in Kampong Thom and 34% of women in Kampong Speu report that they are not typically involved in decisions around major household purchases.** Other outliers include Prey Veng, Kampot, and Stung Treng, where 25%, 24%, and 20% of women, respectively, report not being involved in household purchase decisions.

❖ HIV DISCRIMINATION

Discriminatory attitudes towards individuals with HIV are most prevalent in the provinces of the northeast. Despite having among the lowest rates of HIV in the country according to the CDB, **over 50% of individuals in Ratanakiri, Preah Vihear and Stung Treng indicated that they would not buy vegetables from an HIV positive vendor or that children with HIV should not be allowed to attend school.** Discriminatory attitudes are also widespread in Mondulkiri, Kampong Thom, and Kratie. In Koh Kong, where HIV is most prevalent according to the 2019 CDB,[226] 24% of individuals are found to hold attitudes that are discriminatory towards adults or children with HIV.

HIV discrimination appears to be particularly prevalent among **15-20 year olds (43%),** according to the DHS 2021/22. The drivers of this are not clear, but it is plausible that falling rates of HIV transmission, limited education and limited life experiences may result in a lack of accurate information about HIV.

225. Available from: https://lnob.unescap.org/overview-results?indicator=383&geo=158&year=2022

226. Analysis of the 2019 CDB finds that 1.0% of households in Koh Kong have a member who is HIV positive.

4.1.6. Exclusion based on geography

4.1.6.1. Urban-rural divide

Analysis of available data depicts a stark urban-rural divide in nearly all LNOB factors. Socio-economically, **rural populations are substantially more likely to face poverty.** The UNDP and OPHI estimates that 21% of the rural population of Cambodia is living in multidimensional poverty, with 6% living in severe poverty.[227] By comparison, 9% of the urban population is believed to live in multidimensional poverty, and 1% in severe poverty. The 2021/22 DHS classifies 32% of rural households as belonging to the poorest quintile, compared to just 4% of urban households. Although the gap in food security has reduced between rural and urban households, recent reports have found that 29% of rural households were food insecure during 2019-2020, including up to 40% in provinces along the **Tonle Sap** and in **northeast Cambodia.**[228] Consistent with higher rates of poverty and food insecurity, women in rural areas are less likely than those in urban areas to achieve a minimum dietary diversity, with women in the provinces of Tboung Khmum, Ratanakiri, and Preah Vihear the least likely to have achieved minimum dietary diversity.[229]

Rural areas also tend to see **poorer nutritional, educational, and health outcomes for children.** In rural areas, 25% of children under the age of five are stunted and 19% are underweight, compared to 17% and 12% of children in urban areas, respectively.[230] Compared to children in urban areas, young children in rural areas are less likely to receive their vaccines on schedule, more likely to have diarrhoea, and less likely to be taken to a health facility for treatment of diarrhoea.[231] Rural households are slightly more likely than urban households to have at least one primary-school aged child not attending school, with 17% of rural households who have at least one child between 6 and 11 indicating that their child is not in school. Rates of **primary school absenteeism** rise with poverty and education of the household head: 22% of rural households in the poorest quintile and 25% of rural households where the head did not finish primary school report that a child between 6 and 11 is out of school.[232]

Compared to urban counterparts, rural households are **more likely to lack access to clean cooking fuels, electricity, and adequate water and sanitation services.**[233] Analysis of the 2021/22 DHS finds that only 6% of rural households have access to improved sanitation, and 15% of rural households continue to practice open defecation. A non-negligible 12% of rural households still lack access to electricity, while 14% rely on surface or unimproved water sources for drinking water. Use of clean cooking fuels is particularly disparate across urban and rural populations: 78% of households in urban areas report using clean fuels for cooking, compared to only 33% of households in rural areas. **Poverty compounds rural households' lack of access to basic services.** Among rural households in the bottom wealth quintile, a stunning 40% practice open defecation, 36% lack electricity, 28% lack access to a clean source of drinking water, and 97% do not use clean fuels for cooking.

Lack of access to basic services threats to compound rural households' vulnerability to shocks, as underserviced communities are at a heightened risk of environmental issues and **climate**

227. Alkire, S., Kanagaratnam, U., and Suppa, N, 2023.
228. Development Pathways, Leave No-One Behind and Inclusion Analysis – WFP Cambodia, 2023
229. NIS, MoH, and ICF, 2023.
230. Ibid.
231. Ibid.
232. Own analysis of DHS 2021.
233. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2023. Global MPI Country Briefing 2023: Cambodia (East Asia and the Pacific).

related shocks.[234] Cambodia's rapid economic development has increased its vulnerability to climate change-induced shocks, related to 30% loss of forest cover in 20 years; infrastructural development and construction in flood-prone areas; 45% loss of natural wetlands habitats; and increases in energy-based emissions. **Rural households are far more prone to shock-induced poverty:** 18% are reported to have a per capita consumption level between 1 and 1.25 times the poverty line, compared to only 10% of urban households[235]. These vulnerabilities are exacerbated by the fact that rural households are more likely to report facing obstacles in taking action against climate change, compared to urban households[236].

4.1.6.2. Rural agricultural communities

The DHS and CDB data do not indicate significant differences between agricultural and non-agricultural households. However, analysis of the 2020 Agricultural Survey reveals several geographical variations in the socio-economic situation of agricultural households, to build on the relevant findings in the literature review.

Half of agricultural households in Preah Sihanouk and Preah Vihear are understood to be in a precarious financial situation, as defined by having a loan, no savings, and not receiving any remittances. The other provinces with more than a third of agricultural households facing the same situation are on Cambodia's western and northern borders: **Oddar Meanchey** (39%), **Pailin** (38%), **Ratanakiri** (36%), and **Pursat** (35%). When these households are filtered according to whether they experienced shock in the twelve months prior to data collection, the worst performing provinces are **Oddar Meanchey and Pursat** (30% and 28% of total agricultural household population, respectively). Specifically, regarding agricultural households, the **western and north-western provinces** of Cambodia are most vulnerable to shocks[237].

According to the survey, at least three quarters of agricultural households in 18 of Cambodia's 25 provinces claim to be unregistered sole trader businesses. Nine provinces register a rate of over 90%, highest in Strung Treng, Prey Veng, Kandal, and Kampot. Unregistered households dependent on agriculture (at least 60% of household income) are disproportionately found in Kratie, Pailin (both 22%), Oddar Meanchey (17%) and Mondulkiri (15%).

The **indicators of food insecurity among survey participants (unweighted) are highest in some of the border provinces,** rather than concentrated in a specific area or region. The table below identifies the four provinces with the highest proportion of households with at least one food insecurity indicator. Among these households, the last column provides the average number of indicators for which the households in the province appear to be food insecure. Food insecurity appears to be most severe in Pursat and Preah Vihear.

234. World Bank, 2019; and Asian Development Bank, 2019. Cambodia, 2019–2023: Inclusive Pathways to a Competitive Economy.

235. World Bank Group, 2022.

236. CCCA, 2021.

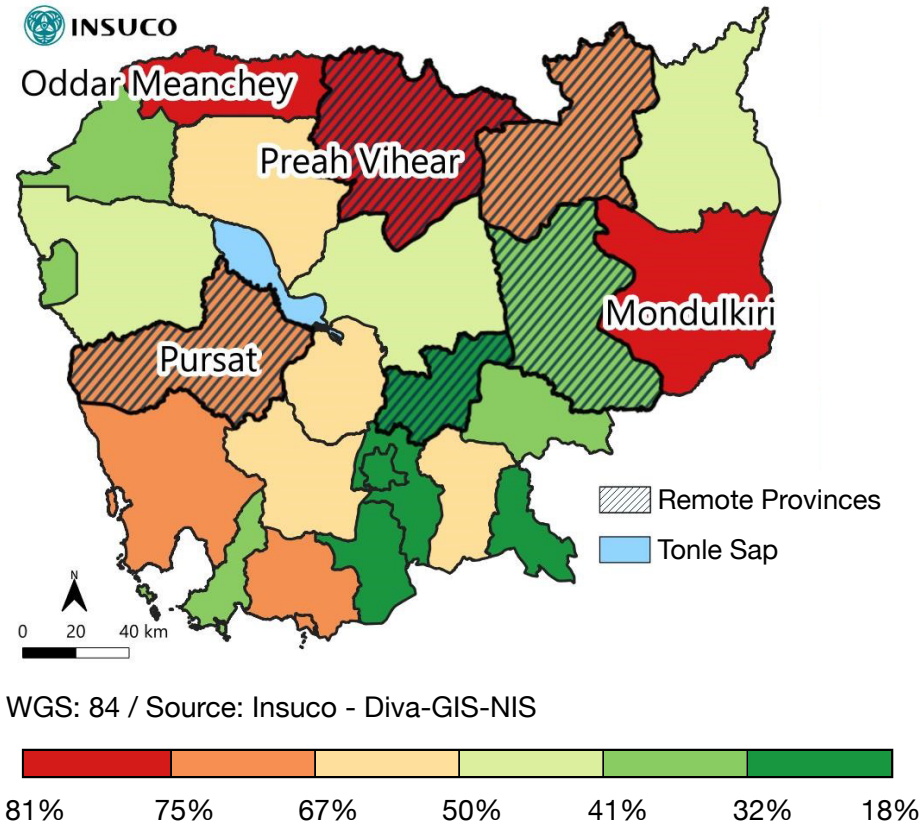
237. The questionnaire provides multiple choice options related to climate (typhoon, flood, drought), economic/human health (COVID-19), crop health (disease, insects), animal health (disease), other environmental shocks (erosion, river bank collapse), and 'other'.

Table 8 Food insecurity among surveyed agricultural households, CAS 2020

Province	Total Sample	Food insecure (at least 1 indicator)		Average food insecurity (/8 indicators)
Mondulkiri	149	121	81%	3.3 (13th)
Oddar Meanchey	205	165	80%	4.0 (6th)
Preah Vihear	266	202	76%	4.3 (3rd)
Pursat	475	357	75%	4.6 (1st)
(All 25 provinces)	**(14,722)**	**(6,945)**	**(47%)**	**(3.4)**

The proportion of households that are food insecure according to at least one indicator is illustrated in the map below.

Figure 8 Food insecurity among agricultural surveyed households, by Province, CAS 2020



Overall, the agricultural survey reveals clear vulnerabilities in the north east and north West of Cambodia, but agricultural households in coastal areas are certainly not immune to these same vulnerabilities. Households in Oddar Meanchey are perhaps perform least strongly across the indicators above.

4.1.6.3. Urban poor

Despite a clear divide in outcomes between urban and rural communities, **the urban poor are excluded from many of the advantages enjoyed by other urban dwellers, in some cases experiencing even worse outcomes than the poorest households in remote areas.** A notoriously difficult demographic to study, the urban poor can be underrepresented in national surveys due to increased itinerancy and challenges associated with accessing these

communities.[238] In the DHS 2021/22 survey of Cambodia, 4% of urban households were identified as belonging to the bottom 20% in terms of wealth and assets, but only 0.1% of households in Phnom Penh were classified as belonging to the bottom 20%. Using data from the 2021/22 DHS, the MPI estimates that 9% of the urban population lives in multidimensional poverty, including 6% of the population of Phnom Penh.[239]

Compared to other households in urban areas, urban poor households are far more likely to lack access to adequate sanitation and water services, electricity, clean fuels, or civil registration. Analysis of the DHS finds that 20% of the poorest households in urban areas access drinking water from unimproved sources, compared to just 3% of urban households overall. Access to adequate sanitation is similarly limited : only 6% of the poorest urban households have improved sanitation – compared to 9% of the poorest rural households and 40% of urban households overall – and **38% of urban poor households practice open defecation.** Only two-thirds of the poorest households in urban areas have electricity, compared to 99% of urban households overall, and only 6% use clean cooking fuels, compared to 78% of urban households overall. Civil registration is also less common among the poor in urban areas, with 20% of the poorest households in urban areas not possessing a birth certificate for all children under five.

Lack of access to basic services and civil registration among the urban poor likely compounds already **worse health and educational outcomes among children.** Previous studies have found that families among Phnom Penh's urban poor struggle to generate incomes sufficient to provide for their children's nutritional needs and education[240]. Analysis of the DHS finds that urban households in the poorest quintile are slightly more likely than urban households overall to have a child under five who is stunted or wasted. More dramatic are disparities in school attendance : 30% of urban households in the poorest quintile have at least one primary school aged child who is not in school, compared to 22% of the poorest rural households and 17% of all urban households. Among urban households, wealth strongly correlates with the likelihood of primary school attendance, with 24% and 25% of households in the second and third wealth quintiles, respectively, reporting that at least one child does not attend school, compared to 17% and 10% in the fourth and fifth quintiles. Previous reporting has found that the majority of students who do not attend school stay home due to financial constraints, with as many as 20% of out-of-school children from poor communities in Phnom Penh engaged in child labour.[241] For a discussion of vulnerabilities specific to children, see section 3.2.2.

Women and children in poor urban communities also report **high exposure to violence.** Analysis of the DHS finds that 10% of women in urban poor communities experienced sexual or physical violence over the last year and 20% experienced violence in their lifetime, compared to 3% and 9% of urban women generally. Between 65% and 66% of adolescents in Phnom Penh's urban poor settlements report having witnessed instances of domestic violence within the previous year.[242] Domestic violence often goes unreported. In poor communities especially, some women victims of domestic violence reportedly fear that their partner leaving them would only put further stress on their household's financial situation.[243]

Without intervention, the vulnerabilities faced by urban poor can be expected to worsen, as **climate-related disasters** drive more Cambodians to seek livelihoods in urban centres, putting

238. Lucci et al., 2018.

239. Alkire, S., Kanagaratnam, U., and Suppa, N, 2023.

240. UNICEF, 2018. Child Protection and Education Needs for the Children and Adolescents of Phnom Penh's Urban Poor Communities.

241. Ibid.

242. Ibid.

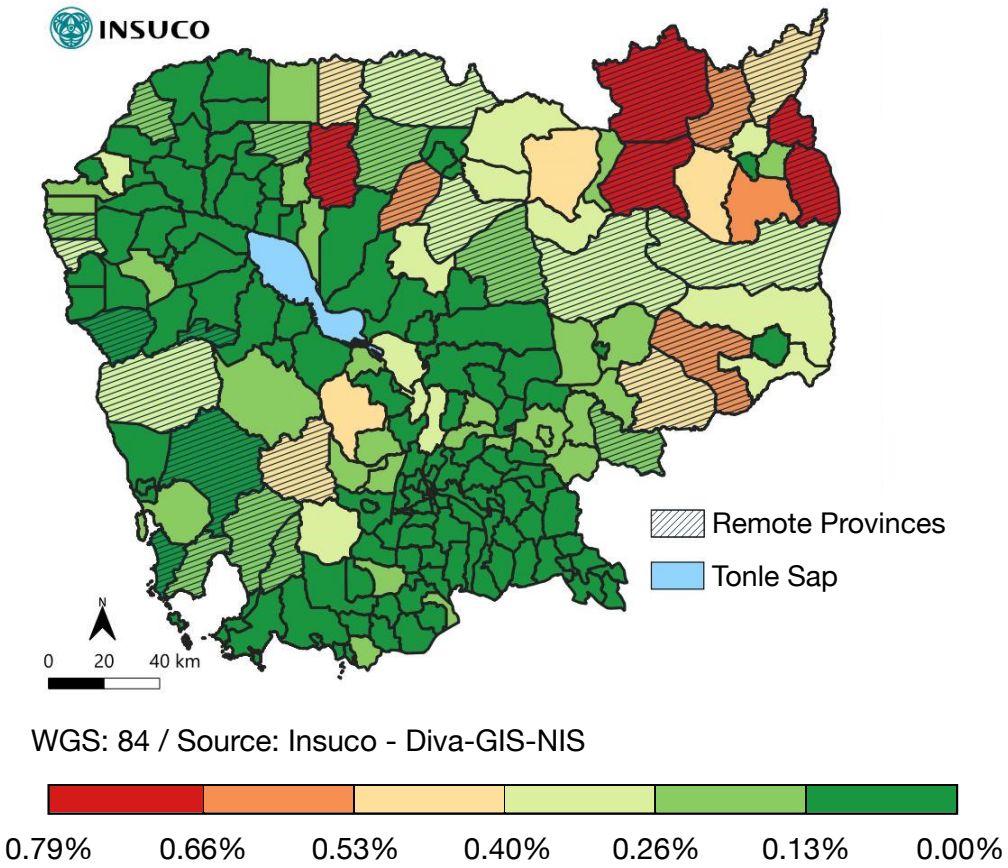
243. Ibid.

greater strain on densely inhabited and underserviced urban settlements. **Indebtedness** can also contribute to the widening class of urban poor while compounding the vulnerabilities. In one study, nearly half of indebted rural households struggling to pay back loans resorted to sending their children to work, including sending adolescents to find work in Phnom Penh as wage labourers or domestic workers[244].

4.1.6.4. Remote communities

Remote communities continue to be left behind in Cambodia's development processes. For the purpose of this analysis, remote communities are defined as districts in which the average distance for villages in that district to a health centre, an upper secondary school, and the provincial hall, fall into the third tertile among all districts.[245]

Figure 9 Rates of open defecation and remote districts, by District, DHS 2021/22



Households in remote communities are far more likely than those elsewhere to face poverty. Analysis of the DHS 2021/22 survey finds that a stunning **57% of surveyed households located in remote communities belong to the bottom 20% in terms of wealth and assets.** The disproportionate share of respondents in the bottom quintile persists despite the fact that

244. Sahmakum Teang Tnaut and LICADHO, 2019. Collateral Damage: Land loss and abuse in Cambodia's microfinance sector.

245. Data on the distance from each village to the nearest health centre, upper secondary school and province office is drawn from the 2019 CDB. These measures are then averaged by district, to obtain district-level measures equivalent to the average distance to a health centre, upper secondary school, and the provincial hall among all villages in a district. Then, districts are divided into tertiles based on each measure. Districts in which the average distance to each service falls into the upper 33% among all districts are classified as remote. Effectively, this results in districts where the average village is more than 5.3 km away from a health centre, 11.1 km away from an upper secondary school, and 48.8 km away from the provincial hall being classified as remote. While not a perfect measure, this definition of remoteness serves to identify the districts where access to health services, higher education, and commerce is most limited. 32 districts are classified as remote using this method.

respondents of the DHS in remote communities are substantially more likely than those elsewhere to report working. Households surveyed by the DHS in remote districts are **substantially less likely to have a bank account.** Poverty in remote areas is compounded by low education levels and literacy: 62% of surveyed individuals in remote districts cannot read a full sentence in Khmer, and 56% did not finish primary school. Despite higher prevalence of poverty, **home ownership and land ownership is substantially more common in remote communities than elsewhere.**

Promisingly, **children's health and primary school attendance in remote districts is similar to that of children in less remote areas.** Compared to households in less remote districts, remote households are slightly more likely to have a child under five who is stunted, slightly less likely to have a child under five who is wasted, and equally likely to have a child of primary school age out of school.

Households in remote districts are substantially less likely than households elsewhere to have access to basic services. Analysis of the DHS finds that 35% of households in remote areas do not use electricity, compared to only 6% of households in other districts throughout the country. Households in remote areas are also nearly three times as likely as households in other places to obtain drinking water from an unimproved source and are four times as likely to practise open defecation. Figure X.X shows the prevalence of open defecation across districts, with district remoteness overlaid: 36% of households surveyed by DHS in remote districts practice open defecation, compared to only 8% of households in other areas. Usage of clean cooking fuel is far less common in remote areas as well, with 23% of households in remote districts using clean cooking fuel, compared to 52% of households in other areas.

Households and individuals in remote communities are also **far less likely than counterparts to possess official documentation of children's births, land ownership, or home ownership.** Analysis of DHS data finds that **over a quarter (26%) of households in remote areas do not have birth certificates for all children under five,** compared to 13% of households elsewhere. 36% of individuals in remote areas who own a home report that they do not have an official document proving their ownership, and 40% of landowners similarly have no documentation of land ownership. Challenges associated with reaching local government offices in remote areas are likely one factor contributing to disparities in document possession: among the 1,290 villages in districts classified as remote, the average distance to the commune hall is 9.2 km and the average distance to the district hall is 27.3 km. By comparison, the average distance to commune hall and district hall in all other villages is 4.5 km and 12.3 km, respectively.

The low socioeconomic status, lack of access to basic services, and lack of widespread civil registration in remote communities is compounded by other vulnerabilities. An analysis of the 2019 CDB finds that an estimated **9% of households in remote communities belong to an indigenous ethnic group,** and 13% of the 1,290 villages in remote districts are majority indigenous. Specific vulnerabilities associated with indigeneity are discussed in section 3.2.4. Furthermore, in remote districts, 64% of adults are engaged in **agriculture as their primary occupation,** with 40% of adults engaged specifically in rice farming. Heavy reliance on agriculture in remote areas is compounded with an **acute vulnerability to climate change.** The CVI predicts communes within remote districts to be significantly more vulnerable to **droughts and floods** compared to the average commune in less-remote districts. Experiences of natural disasters are already more common in remote areas, with the average commune in a remote area reporting that 6% of the population was affected by heavy flooding in 2019 and 2% was affected by heavy droughts.

Finally, data from the DHS 2021/22 survey suggests that **women in remote areas are particularly likely to have experienced violence.** 17% of women who reside in remote districts report having

experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, compared to 10% of women elsewhere, while 10% of surveyed women in remote districts report experiencing sexual or physical violence in the last 12 months.

4.2. How and why are these groups left behind?

4.2.1. Overview

Primary data collection was carried out to investigate how and why certain groups are left behind in Cambodia, and to fill information gaps for population groups not covered by the datasets available.

Given the diversity of groups that are considered to be excluded from opportunities and support services in Cambodia, there are naturally many different reasons and contextual variations that explain how and why these groups are left behind. This section is structured according to factors of exclusion based on an individual's identity, and an individual's specific socio-economic circumstances.

Qualitative findings predominantly focused on the following reasons for persistent patterns of social exclusion:

- A lack of economic opportunities, high cost of living, and low customer demand are the major reasons for exclusion from others in the local community as well as from economic participation more broadly. Cambodia's high-growth development has not reached many remote, rural, or urban poor communities, and financial difficulties have led to widespread indebtedness, as well as risk-taking behaviour related to migration and/or income generation activities. Financial distress is also an important explanatory factor for children not attending school and thus remaining vulnerable to lifelong forms of socio-economic exclusion.

- A lack of recognition for minorities, non-conforming individuals, or other diverse groups, which restricts eligibility or access to services and underpins social discrimination. This finding mostly related to groups without legal identity, indigenous people, people with hidden disabilities or mental health challenges, and the LGBT+ community.

- Limited public finances and capacities means that many laws, regulations and policies that are promising on paper are often unable to be effectively implemented. Aside from questions of legal identity and recognition, the majority of participants believed that fundamental policy changes were not necessary to address left behind groups, but that capacity-building and sufficient and sustainable funding/finance was key to improved implementation. This includes the provision of primary healthcare, the expansion of social protection schemes, better quality schooling, and upgrades to basic services in remote areas. Fluctuations in the priorities and budgets of international organisations in Cambodia are thought to exacerbate the problem.

The exclusion and vulnerabilities of Cambodian youth were not the explicit focus of primary data collection activities[246], and under 18s did not participate in any of the focus groups. However, several issues disproportionately affecting young people emerged during the consultations and are detailed in the relevant sub-sections below (for example, on gender identity and sexual orientation). The findings related to young people in Cambodia are summarised as the following:

246. Focus groups 9 (indigenous women in debt) and 12 (LGBT+ individuals) were exclusively held with participants aged 36 and under.

- The different contexts of youth-related vulnerabilities emerging from the data collection activities include: i) the increasing number of street children in urban centres (UN3), ii) children in foster care not included in the ID poor programme (UN3), and iii) child marriage (K3).

- Universal birth registration is not yet in force, and non-citizens (for example, some ethnic Vietnamese groups) are not able to register births by law, leading to exclusion from formal education and thus limiting their long-term economic opportunities (FGD1, K4).

- Poverty presents numerous challenges for households with children, including the need to choose between schooling and social protection payments (FGD3), or between finding work and looking after children (FGD11).

- There is a clear need for improved access to education and health services for children with disabilities, as well as interventions to empower youth with disabilities (UN3).

- Discrimination of LGBT+ individuals in schools is a significant contributor to school dropout rates among this group.

4.2.2. Exclusion based on identity/status

4.2.2.1. Women

Five key informant interviews focused on the social exclusion of women, including two specifically on domestic violence. The remaining primary data collection activities focused on intersectionality and multidimensional forms of exclusion, whilst ensuring a high proportion of women participants. Latter parts of this chapter include findings related to the exclusion of indigenous women, migrant women, LBT+ women, and other such groups. The focus of this section is on gender norms and sex-based discrimination.

Gender and social norms are reported to be one of the major factors contributing to vulnerability and inequality in Cambodia, and exposing several population groups to gender-based violence and discrimination. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the social code Chbab Srei, Chbab Pros details specific social standards on what women and men should do continue to affect individual, household, and social structures in many different ways (UN3).

Social perception towards domestic violence and the practice of local authorities contribute to the prospect of women (and LGBT+ populations) being left behind. Local authorities at the village or commune levels, often in a position to reconcile cases of intimate partner violence, were reported to sometimes view violence as a family/private issue and subsequently may not file a violence case report, particularly if they do not see any proof of physical injury on women (K8). Women generally prefer dealing with domestic violence cases at the village/commune level to save time and money, instead of going through the lengthy and costly court system (K8, FGD4). Thus, local authorities' cooperation/engagement in supporting victims of domestic violence is crucial (K8). This finding aligns with the existing literature on GBV in Cambodia, that mediation has been widely used as a priority response in order to preserve 'family harmony', as stated in the 2005 Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims[247]. This harmonisation practice could deny women's rights to justice when they need it. The interviewed survivor of domestic violence, who suffered different kinds of abuse from different husbands, could not get a violence case report from her local authority and instead decided to run away from home with

247. UNFPA, 2023

her children to seek legal and accommodation support from a local NGO (FGD4). The violence case report is a requirement to determine a victim's eligibility to stay in the NGO's safety centre.

Increasing access to information about support services is also a recommended strategy to minimise exclusion. The interviewed survivor of domestic violence was first introduced to a safety centre by another advocacy NGO in 2006, when she experienced physical violence in her first marriage, leading to a miscarriage. When she was affected by emotional and financial abuse in her second marriage, she searched the local NGO's name on Facebook to see if it still operates before coming to Phnom Penh (FGD4). However, she noted that it was not easy for other women, especially in remote areas, to know where or how they could access support services (FGD6). Understanding this need, some interviewed stakeholders are doing awareness raising and educational activities and even referral services for their target vulnerable populations (e.g. victims of gender-based violence, LGBT+) (K3, FGD4). However, more work is still needed (K3, FGD4, FGD6).

Targeted interventions to promote the inclusion of women (through an intersectional lens) is obstructed by the lack of data and understanding of their situation and needs. For example, there is no main data source that can provide complete information on three of the five most vulnerable groups identified by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (M1)[248]: Muslim women, LBT+ women, and indigenous women. Interventions to generate or improve data on left behind groups could have significant impact, as little can be done without an evidence-based understanding of their vulnerabilities and needs (M1).

As well as experiencing exclusion based on identity/status, women are also excluded based on their employment. See section 4.2.3.4 for work-based exclusion.

4.2.2.2. Gender identity and sexual orientation

Both key informant and LGBT+ FGD participants agreed that **transgender people are often rejected due to traditional gender norms and may experience more discrimination than their peers** due to their visible gender identity change (K5, FGD12). The requirement for dress codes to follow social and gender norms puts strong emotional pressure on some within the LGBT+ community as it is seen as an affront to their own will, identity, and freedom (FGD12). This requirement and discrimination from classmates forced one FGD participant to drop out of school during Grade 12 (FGD12), and these pressures forced some LGBT+ individuals to commit suicide (K5).

The lack of legal recognition for same-sex marriage was considered the most challenging form of exclusion among LGBT+ participants, and also a potential root cause of the persistent social discrimination and gender-based violence these groups experience (FGD12). Without a marriage certificate, same sex loving couples cannot register for co-ownership of property, forcing them to pursue alternative registration forms that entails higher costs and longer time. Without legal recognition as a couple, they also face difficulty in child adoption and cannot claim legal rights to make critical health treatment decisions on behalf of their partner (FGD12).

A lack of legal equality is perceived to contribute to discrimination in all spheres of life, starting from family, community, school, workplace, public health facilities, and so on (FGD12). Schools are implementing sexual education, but many teachers are not ready to tackle these subjects

248. MoWA's five most vulnerable target groups are: 1) girls and women with disabilities, 2) muslim women, 3) elderly women, 4) LGBT+ women, and 5) indigenous women.

effectively – particularly the older generation (K5, FGD12). Participants also argued there needs to be more support from teachers, and non-discrimination policies at schools to stop bullying. Although LGBT+ members can access health services through the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) scheme, **the exclusion of hormone therapy** from the scheme exposes low-income LGBT+ individuals to health risks as they opt for online products that may not meet safety standards, particularly in the absence of professional medical advice (K5, FGD12).

Notwithstanding the existing challenges and exclusion factors, **many respondents agreed on the need to promote good role models and change public mindsets as a way to combat identity-based discrimination, e.g. LGBT+ individuals.** Focus group participants agreed that if the society sees many cases of LGBT+ who are successful at work and have a happy family, they will consider this gender identity and sexual orientation as normal (FGD12).

4.2.2.3. Legal identity: indigenous people and ethnic minorities

Several primary data collection activities focused on how and why some people belonging to indigenous communities, ethnic Vietnamese communities, and Khmer Khrom communities experience exclusion as a result of their ethnicity.

- **Three key informant interviews** focused on the dynamics of exclusion disproportionately affecting these groups. These interviews involved experts from international organisations or local civil society active on these issues at the national level.

- **Two focus group discussions took place in Phnom Penh** in a village now home to approximately 120 ethnic Vietnamese families. Having first settled along the riverside in the 1980s, living on the water and working predominantly as fishermen, families were forcible relocated in 2021.

- **Four focus group discussions took place with Kuy indigenous communities** from three different communes in Preah Vihear. The Kuy is the main IP group in the province of Preah Vihear, numbering 13,530 people in 2021[249].

The participants belonging to the Vietnamese minority do not have access to citizenship, ID documents or legal registration. The Kuy participants are Cambodian citizens, but perceive that their ethnicity, cultural specificities, and IP status are not recognised. The participants also believe that their rights to Cambodian citizenship are not fully respected in practice (KI 7, FGD5 and 6).

The Vietnamese participants reported that their lack of legal identity forces them and their peers into an informal and precarious existence, particularly in terms of a lack of access to social protection and health and education public services (K1 and 4, FGD1). During the consultations, the Vietnamese ethnic participants ranked the lack of Identification Document as the top factor of exclusion. Nowadays in Cambodia, official identification is required for accessing housing, property (i.e.: land, business or vehicle), banking and financial services, public safety net like the National Social Security Fund or communication and access to salaried employment (FGD1, K4). Similarly, the participants raised that for instance, the absence of birth certificate denies school registration for children. Without formal identification, this population is de facto marginalised from Cambodian society, and obtaining ID and birth registration are their main priorities and aspirations (FGD1, K4).

249. Ministry of Planning, 2021, National Report on Demographic and Socio-economic Status of IPs in Cambodia (in Khmer).

More generally, ethnic Vietnamese and IP participants reported feeling discriminated against and disadvantaged because of their ethnicity when processing administrative acts, accessing services and property (FGD1, K4), accessing public services (health structures, education and justice), in social participation (i.e., public meetings) or when applying for jobs (FGD1, 5 and 6). A common observation of the participants is the **low representation of non-Khmer among local authorities, police and security forces and public services.** A particular grievance given by the participants is the access to justice, as participants feel denied, disadvantaged or misled because of their ethnicity, when they are involved in legal proceedings (FGD1, 5, 6). For instance, two focus group discussions with IPs similarly showed that participants whose communities have been involved in numerous land disputes observed "IP never win legal cases" (FGD5, 6). Moreover, the consultations with IP community members revealed that authorities are believed to support interests antagonistic to minorities or IP rights. Similarly, IP right activists interviewed stated that communities involved in land disputes or IP rights promotion are sometimes stigmatised and face pressure from authorities over their right of association. According to consulted IP, this results in summons and arrests, police operations under false pretences (house searches for drug possession) or being scrutinised by local authorities during meetings (KI 1 and 7, FGD 5).

Other frequently perceived forms of discrimination relate to language (native language, accent, poor Khmer), name (K4), appearance (skin colour, clothing, signs of poverty) and way of life (e.g., indigenous people are "people of the forest" and "eat raw meat") (FGD1, 5 and 6).

Moreover, while ethnic Vietnamese feel denied the chance to assimilate into Cambodian society, IP participants consider that they are forced to assimilate into the dominant Khmer culture, damaging the recognition and preservation of their own distinct cultural identities and practices. In particular, this is articulated in terms of Cambodia's legislative framework (i.e., the removal of the "indigenous" label in favour of "local community" in the recent revision of the Environmental Code) (K7, FGD5 and 6). In fact, indigenous participants claimed their culture is **part of the Cambodian heritage** and should therefore be promoted (K7, FGD5).

Both IP and ethnic Vietnamese participants perceive that administrative processes, including census data collection, minimise or erase their ethnicity, and there appears to be widespread belief that their communities have a higher population than official statistics suggest (FGD1 and 5, K4 and 7). This is leading to an **information gap** in literature and statistics on the actually existing situation of minorities and IP in the country. In this regard, **the absence of minority languages in the education system** is perceived as emblematic of their discrimination and is a significant point of contention for both the IP and ethnic minority participants (UN3, K7, FGD5 and 6). Moreover, the agricultural, economic development, forestry and environment policies (i.e.: conservation areas) supported by the authorities are perceived to lead to the loss of lands, abandon of shifting cultivation and transition to commercial cultivation and wage-employment, and are seen as **a threat to their traditional agricultural practices and cultural identity** (FGD5 and 6). It should be emphasised that in the IP context, a large part of the social and religious organisation is based on rice cultivation and shifting cultivation. For the IPs, the ban of this agricultural method goes beyond a land or economic loss but prohibits the perpetuation of the social organisation and religious rites.

Ethnic minorities and IP participants highlight the **intergenerational consequences of discrimination and lack of access to rights, forcing them and their peers into a cycle of marginalisation and poverty** (K4, K7, FGD5). Additional insights regarding these groups are included in section 4.2.3, focusing on the ways in which these communities are disproportionately impacted

by local development projects requiring access to occupied land, and thus excluded from the potential benefits of such projects.

4.2.3. Exclusion based on circumstance

4.2.3.1. Rural and urban poor

Rural and urban areas present different challenges for low-income Cambodians. While development interventions have typically focused on the rural poor, this group remain excluded from full socio-economic participation compared to many of their urban and non-poor counterparts. The exclusion of rural poor was reported by many key informants to manifest as a lack of health and education services, in terms of availability and affordability of quality care, thus disproportionately affecting children and persons with disabilities and serious health conditions. While healthcare costs impact both rural and urban communities, **older persons residing in rural areas are understood to be most at risk from falling into poverty** as a result of these costs (UN2). Among the rural communities consulted in Preah Vihear, the affordability of healthcare was highlighted as a key barrier to the social inclusion of two focus groups, both attended by indebted Kuy households (men and women). However, the affordability of healthcare was a key concern of the female entertainment workers consulted in Phnom Penh, who must manage other costs like schooling for their children and cannot afford to contribute to a social protection scheme (FGD3).

The exclusion of remote indigenous communities is distinctive (see section 4.2.2 above), almost all focus groups in Preah Vihear identified a lack of economic opportunities as a major reason for being left behind. Several groups, particularly older veterans with disabilities and Kuy individuals with debts or affected by land grabbing, identified a desire to remain living in their local area, and preferring local job opportunities rather than migration. Skills training and local development were highlighted as key topics of intervention that could improve their levels of inclusion.

Among several key informants, **the rural poor are also understood to be more vulnerable to climate shocks,** particularly those working in agriculture and/or reliant on natural resources for their livelihoods (UN3). One interviewee expressed that these rural communities are not immune to the broader economic context in Cambodia, and have also had to manage **increased living costs and reduced demand** for their micro-business products (for example, handicrafts) (K2).

Within the UN system, it was acknowledged by one key informant that there has been a traditional focus on the rural poor, but there is growing concern of poverty cases in urban areas, particularly with regards to street children and drug use (UN3). One focus group in Phnom Penh took place in a so-called “slum” area, involving illegal occupation, unsanitary conditions, and high levels of environmental pollution. The participants describe life as very challenging, with household expenses exceeding income, **drug use, high crime rates, and gang activity.** None of the participants were recipients of social protection, but all received support from NGOs and district authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RGC and international community are openly committed to the continuous expansion of social protection in Cambodia, in order to provide a safety net to the most vulnerable, including the rural and urban poor. Recent expansions stand to benefit persons with disabilities, female entertainment workers, and people living with HIV, it is understood that rural and urban poor populations more broadly are not fully included in the system. As eligibility for ID Poor is tied to

the decisions of local authorities, any tensions between the authorities and local poor individuals may impact their access to the system.

4.2.3.2. Low-income migrants

Risks present themselves along the migration journey, from discrimination as "outsiders" and potentially limited access to services, returning migrants can face economic, social, and psychological challenges, particularly around community integration (UN1). At present, there are gaps in the protection of migrant rights and wellbeing, although the new Labour Migration Policy (2024-2028) is reportedly geared to address these issues (UN1). In general, it is widely perceived among key informants that the recognition of migration vulnerabilities has improved as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, when suddenly a large migrant population across Cambodia (including those returning from abroad) were without jobs and without social protection.

Several key informants identified patterns of internal migration from rural to urban areas. Relocating to cities to seek greater economic opportunities comes with potentially **higher financial pressures** (rented accommodation, higher living costs) and an increased risk of **homelessness** (K1). The exclusion of these migrants is also explained by **instances of discrimination** from local authorities, who do not always support them gain access to local services (K6). This is further compounded by limited knowledge on the part of the migrants themselves, who often do not know what they are eligible for in their new place of residence.

The participants who migrated to Preah Vihear from other provinces[250] did so before COVID-19 and for largely economic reasons and land pressure in the area of origin (FGD10). Firstly, the unavailability and cost of land in their places of origin was noted as a key push factor, and the participants held the perception that land was cheaper and more freely available in Preah Vihear. In fact, the participants were able to sell their land and purchase larger surfaces (sometimes several hectares) in the area they currently reside. **As Khmer citizens, they have been able to obtain soft titles, and are able to access health and education facilities and face no problem from the local authorities.** While this group cannot be considered "left behind", their successful migration stories demonstrate how the absence of key issues can help with migrant inclusion (accessibility and affordability of land, access to services). Nevertheless, the participants state that migrants can suffer from more limited job opportunities, compared to local Khmer communities, due to fewer local connections.

4.2.3.3. Indebtedness

Key informants did not identify **indebtedness** as a key marker of social exclusion, except in the context of households displaced by development projects without sufficient compensation and/or access to livelihood opportunities (KII 1). Focus groups were organised with indebted individuals from different communities, in Phnom Penh and in Preah Vihear, to understand whether household debt emerges as a potential cause of exclusion, or appears as an outcome or indicator of underlying socio-economic vulnerability, explained by other factors.

In these cases, loans are often used to cover basic needs and daily expenses in the absence of adequate income opportunities. For displaced participants in the south of Phnom Penh, **the loans were a coping mechanism of displacement** as well as economic pressures during COVID-19, and an inability to repay loans has reportedly led to 30% - 40% of villagers selling their property or land. Becoming debt-free was the main aspiration of the group (FGD11).

250. Kampong Thom (n=3), Battambang (n=2), Kampong Cham (n=2)

For one group of young Kuy women in Preah Vihear (FGD9), loans were sought to purchase agricultural machinery and to build houses. 6 of the 7 participants had taken loans from a local moneylender and a much higher interest rate than microfinance institutions (5% compared to 1.5%), but without the need for land titles as collateral. **The participants describe a "vicious circle" of debt,** whereby additional loans are required to service existing debts, further limiting the potential for long-term saving and culminating in feelings of guilt and non-participation in community events. Being debt-free was also the main aspiration of this group, along with access to skills and job training. A group of male Kuy in the same community linked debts with a lack of economic opportunities, and knew of cases where indebted individuals turned to illegal logging activities to generate additional income (FGD8).

4.2.3.4. Work-based exclusion

Female Entertainment Workers

One key informant and participants of the female entertainment workers (FEW) focus group confirmed that **the most challenging issue for FEW is related to health.** The most common and critical health issue for women working in this sector, according to the FEW participants, is linked to excessive and regular alcohol consumption[251] (FGD3). Some FEWs are also at significant risk of getting infected with HIV if they provide sexual services without proper protection, and the risk is higher for transgender entertainment workers (K5). Due to small and irregular income, and the health risks described above, **FEW participants placed significant importance on having access to an affordable health insurance scheme that covers serious illnesses.** Since their employment is informal, their employers are not obliged to provide access to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). FEWs are aware of the schemes and would like to enrol, but all FEW FGD participants confirmed that the current NSSF scheme is unaffordable for them (FGD3). FEW participants suggested they would face difficulties balancing regular NSSF payments with their other household expenditures, including the children's schooling.

The second top concern for this population group is **security while traveling back from work at night.** These women face an increased risk of rape and sexual assault (K5), and due to this concern, some FEWs choose to work only at entertainment facilities close to their community, which often restricts their income potential (FGD3). FGD participants agreed that violation at work is reducing as employers seem to provide more protection to their staff and customers are also less likely to force FEWs to provide sexual services, due in part to the fear of social media and increased understanding of FEWs' rights to refuse (FGD3). Similarly, since COVID-19, the public view of this line of work has improved as people better understand the difficulties of finding a job and making a living (FGD3). However, one stakeholder who works with entertainment workers holds a strong view on the persistent discrimination against this population group and the need to have a holistic approach of support that encompasses support services, engagement at the policy and law levels, investment, long-term engagement, and committed funding (K5).

FEWs also face the challenge of irregular income. Based on the FGD with FEWs (FGD3), the approximate monthly salary for this line of work is $150, plus tips from customers. However, the participants have received fewer customers since COVID-19, and the announcement of alcohol control at night (starting in January 2024) has also had an impact on customer numbers. As a result, the participants agreed that the job is becoming more difficult for them, in terms of making a living, but they still choose to continue for two reasons. First, there are limited job opportunities in their community or elsewhere. Second, other jobs can give them only a regular monthly salary,

251. FEW face many forms of health risks, and this and other FGD findings are not necessarily representative of the wider FEW population in Cambodia.

which is very low, but this job gives them daily tips that they can use to cover daily household expenses.

All FEW participants noted that skills training would help improve their livelihood opportunities. The FGD participants believed that they and their peers would be interested in attending skills training in salons, cooking, and coffee making (FGD3)[252]. Most FGD participants hoped they could save enough money to run their businesses in the next five years, in order to spend more time with their family and children. Single FEW participants wished to find a good husband and get married.

Other work-based exclusion

The literature review highlighted that a large number of indebted individuals and households, often from agricultural backgrounds, turn to **the brick industry** as a means of substituting their labour for debt relief/support (see Section 3.3.1.1). While it was not possible to interview brick workers as part of this study, one key informant described a lack of education facilities and poor living conditions at these sites, which is particularly problematic as many workers must bring their families with them (K5). Some stakeholders are working with local authorities to provide targeted support for this women population group, for example, literacy classes and sanitary improvement measures (K5).

From another key informant, women in **the garment sector** face many forms of risk and exclusion (K6). Women, who make up the majority of the workforce and are underrepresented in supervisor positions, are at high risk of harassment, and many reportedly to not often recognise acts of harassment as such. Although sexual harassment is prohibited in the Labour Law and the Criminal Code, there is no clear definition and examples of its forms stipulated in these two legal instruments; therefore, it is challenging for duty bearers to implement the law and for victims to seek help[253]. Future prevalence studies to understand gender and social norms that drive GBV in this sector are warranted.

In some instances, they are also exploited through exchange rate profiting by management, delaying payment to suit the factory finances. In some factories, workers can take loans from the accounting department at a high interest rate (20%) (K6). Pregnant women in the garment sector often continue to work long hours, including overtime, with little rest, while new mothers may sometimes be forced to bring their babies and children to the factory, in dangerous conditions. A lack of childcare in urban areas and nearby factories is highlighted as a significant problem that has not yet been addressed across the sector (U3).

Around the world, COVID-19 showed conclusively the drawbacks of an employment-based health protection system, and in Cambodia the challenges were particularly acute given the size of its **informal sector** (U3). The consultations for this study suggested that the health and social protection system in Cambodia is not yet ready to accommodate all informal workers, and future expansions need to continue to target the population group that are ready to formalise, meeting the needs of as many people as possible with the resources available (U1). Social protection in Cambodia is moving in the right direction with coverage increasing from 20-25% of the population in 2019/2020 to around 40% today (U1). This expansion has mostly benefited sections of the

252. Given the nature of entertainment work, skills training and other activities to improve livelihoods are often carried out at inconvenient times. The participants stated that training should be conducted mid-to-late morning, to allow them to recover from working the previous evening, and preparing for work in the afternoon.

253. UNFPA, 2023

rural poor, and persons with disabilities. However, there will be a number of left behind groups that are the last to benefit from these schemes, particularly those that are not currently eligible, are hard-to-reach, and/or are discriminated against in their local areas.

4.2.3.5. Living with disabilities and health conditions

Persons with disabilities were identified by a majority of key informants as a population group facing acute forms of exclusion in Cambodia, although this was one area in which there was broad agreement that recent initiatives have improved their levels of exclusion. The official definition of disability has expanded: once restricted to clear and obvious physical disabilities, the Government officially recognises long-term and hidden disabilities and extends disability support to these groups (M2).

The sign of progress most often articulated by key informants related to the introduction of disability ID cards, and the expansion of social protection to involve more persons with disabilities. Disability cards began to be issued in October 2023, at the commune level, and is expected to take a long time to implement nationwide. Having a disability card will provide access to free-of-charge healthcare and legal services, among others, and in theory should reduce PwD reliance on microfinance loans to meet basic needs (K2). People with serious disabilities have also had access to pensions, although the introduction of disability cards has limited the attention placed on expanding and improving this scheme (K2).

The group of disabled war veterans consulted in Preah Vihear explained that they receive support through a pension scheme (5/6 participants) and the ID Poor scheme (3/6), and argue that young persons with disabilities and non-veterans with disabilities, particularly women, are at greater risk of exclusion (FGD7). The reason given for women's heightened risk of exclusion is that they are more likely to be balancing their condition with caring for older relatives or for children. On the subject of children with disabilities, one key informant stated that disability status has a significant impact on the child's access to both education and health, contributing to a lifetime of exclusion.

Emphasise was also placed on hidden disabilities by some key informants, both in terms of **chronic conditions and mental health issues.** One key informant (K2) explained the impact of COVID-19 on many Cambodians:

> ***"After COVID-19, mental health challenges have affected many people, due to the loss of property, of jobs, a lack of funding, and the loss of family members. When these people need support, it is very difficult to find, and they lack the confidence to seek it out."***

Currently, the support in place for people living with physical disabilities is much more established than support for people with mental and psycho-social disabilities (UN1). For example, projects may be designed to include wheelchair access (ramps) as an alternative to steps, but other forms of disability accommodation may be more challenging to identify and implement. One ministry official explained that the Government recognises people with disabilities as a vulnerable group, and while their needs are considered in policy and planning interventions, there is limited financial support available for implementation (for example, meeting educational needs) (M2).

Nevertheless, participants articulated a need for greater publicity for disability-friendly infrastructure and facilities, in order to encourage a wider adoption of the practice. This extends

to education (M2) any kind of role model and intervention that can promote gender equality and social inclusion (M1). In addition, interventions to change public opinion on "traditional" gender roles is also needed for persons with disabilities, and particularly women with disabilities, who may be more confined to the home doing unpaid work and/or with care responsibilities. At present, parts of society remain narrow-minded and even family members may not appreciate their value/contribution (M1). Over time, discriminatory views have become less widespread, and greater societal acceptance has been linked to fewer mobility restrictions placed on people with disabilities by family members (M2).

While the fight to combat HIV/AIDS is said to be in its "last mile" in Cambodia (UN2), noting the significant reduction in HIV rates over the last forty years and the inclusion of HIV positive individuals in social protection schemes, some key challenges remain. **Stigma and discrimination continue to impact people living with HIV,** and young people are thought to be particularly vulnerable to this given their lack of experience dealing with such reactions, compared to older people (UN2). Furthermore, out-of-school youth are believed to be particularly prone to exposure to HIV and sexually transmitted diseases, and in general there is a lack of reliable information and services available to support prevention.

One key informant explained that female entertainment workers have historically received support regarding HIV awareness, prevention, and/or treatment (K5). However, the informant also suggested that funding for these activities declined as other priorities emerged, and there remains some **uncertainty over the sustainability of HIV prevention and treatment.**

4.2.3.6. Development-based exclusion

The consultations show that **access to land and property appear to be essential for populations to secure their livelihoods.** Evictions, dispossessions, and the inability to access a land title are placed as primary factors of poverty and exclusion.

The evictions and conditions of resettlement are unanimously emphasised as reasons for exclusion, with several participants reporting gaps in consultation processes, short eviction notice periods, forced eviction (accompanied in some cases by threats or harassment from local authorities or company staff) as well as inadequate and insufficient compensation systems (K1, 4 and 7, FGD1, 5 and 6). The poorest populations (notably urban poor) appear to face the greatest challenges in this regard, as well as ethnic minorities and IPs (K1, 4 and 7). The absence of legal identity excludes ethnic Vietnamese from compensation systems and to the right to obtain a land title or even to access formal employment (K1, FGD1). Financial compensations for involuntary resettlement are reportedly insufficient, in terms of market prices and cost of living (i.e. land often bought at below-market rates), and in terms of a lack of livelihoods restoration opportunities.

Compensation systems are considered to not reflect local contexts and specificities (K4, FGD5 and 6). For example, IP communities' traditional system of shifting cultivation (including fallow plots) is not included in compensation systems which acknowledge only cultivated plots at the time of resettlement, reflecting the Khmer agricultural methods model (FGD 5 and 6). Thus, affected IP households are losing a significant part of their land capital and any possibility of restoring their livelihoods without abandoning their traditional cultivation practices. Even if land plots and land titles are provided, affected people highlight relocation in remote areas with fewer services, less infrastructure (health, education, markets, etc.) and offering fewer job opportunities. **These situations worsen preexisting precarious economic situation,** and challenge household capacities to meet basic needs, thus increasing the likelihood of requestions loans and/or becoming economic migrants (K4, FGD1, 5 and 6).

The legislative framework and its enforcement are perceived as offering little protection for affected local populations, with no recourse against resettlement (other than long, difficult, costly and uncertain legal process), and the framework is perceived to be designed or implemented to favour external economic interests (K4 and K7, FGD1, 5 and 6). The affected populations participating in the study, and in particular the IP communities, perceive that the legislative framework encourages land grabbing and the commercial use of forest resources, while at the same time excluding IPs and in some instances criminalizing them for local economic activities (K7, FGD5 and 6). IP participants have been accused of deforestation and illegally occupying their land, which in turn is used to justify the ban on their traditional agricultural practices (K7, FGD 5 and 6).

These experiences lead affected participants to claim for a permanent mechanism of consultation with affected communities, minorities and IPs and their effective participation in decision making institutions and fora (K1, 4 and 7, FGD5). Assistance provided by international organisations is perceived to generate few concrete positive impacts, because of insufficient resources, approaches that are too broad and theoretical, and safeguards or commitments that are easily bypassed. Local participatory solutions, such as local forest conservation management, are seen as positive steps towards social and economic inclusion and includes recognition of IP and local community attachment to their lands (K7, FGD5).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of findings

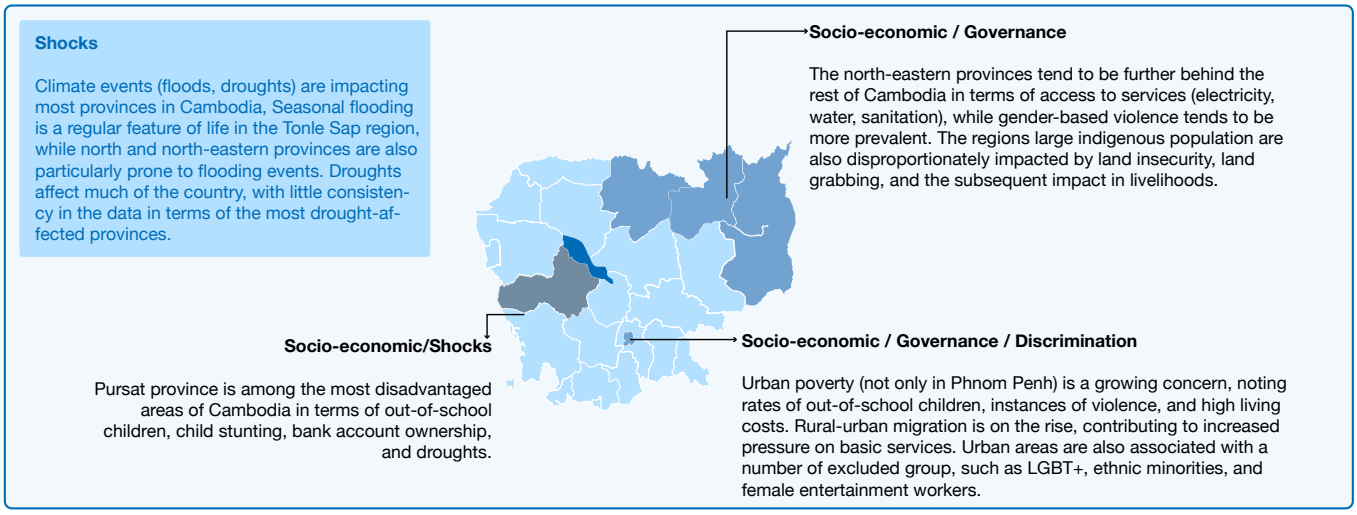
The concept of Leave No One Behind necessitates an intersectional approach, recognising a diversity of experience within any single population category, and ensuring that funding and financing available to support excluded groups is as targeted as possible, reaching as many of those in need as possible.

In the Cambodian context, this study presents exclusion as a layering process that reflects an individual's identity and status, as well as an individual's present life circumstances and living conditions. An intersectional approach identified individuals and groups that experience both forms of exclusion as being the most left behind, or at least the greatest risk of becoming left behind.

Identity and social status provide the basis for exclusion, related to systematic discrimination and a lack of access to a range of public services, limiting the chances of living a healthy and financially secure life. Many groups, whether a result of their identity or other socio-economic factors, experience exclusion through the limitations and dangers of their work, or the everyday difficulties they face, or geographic inequalities that keep some areas more isolated than others – including within urban environments. In these situations, a lack of opportunities can lead to decisions that further deepen the level of exclusion, for example through debt dependence or through dangerous or high-risk income generating activities.

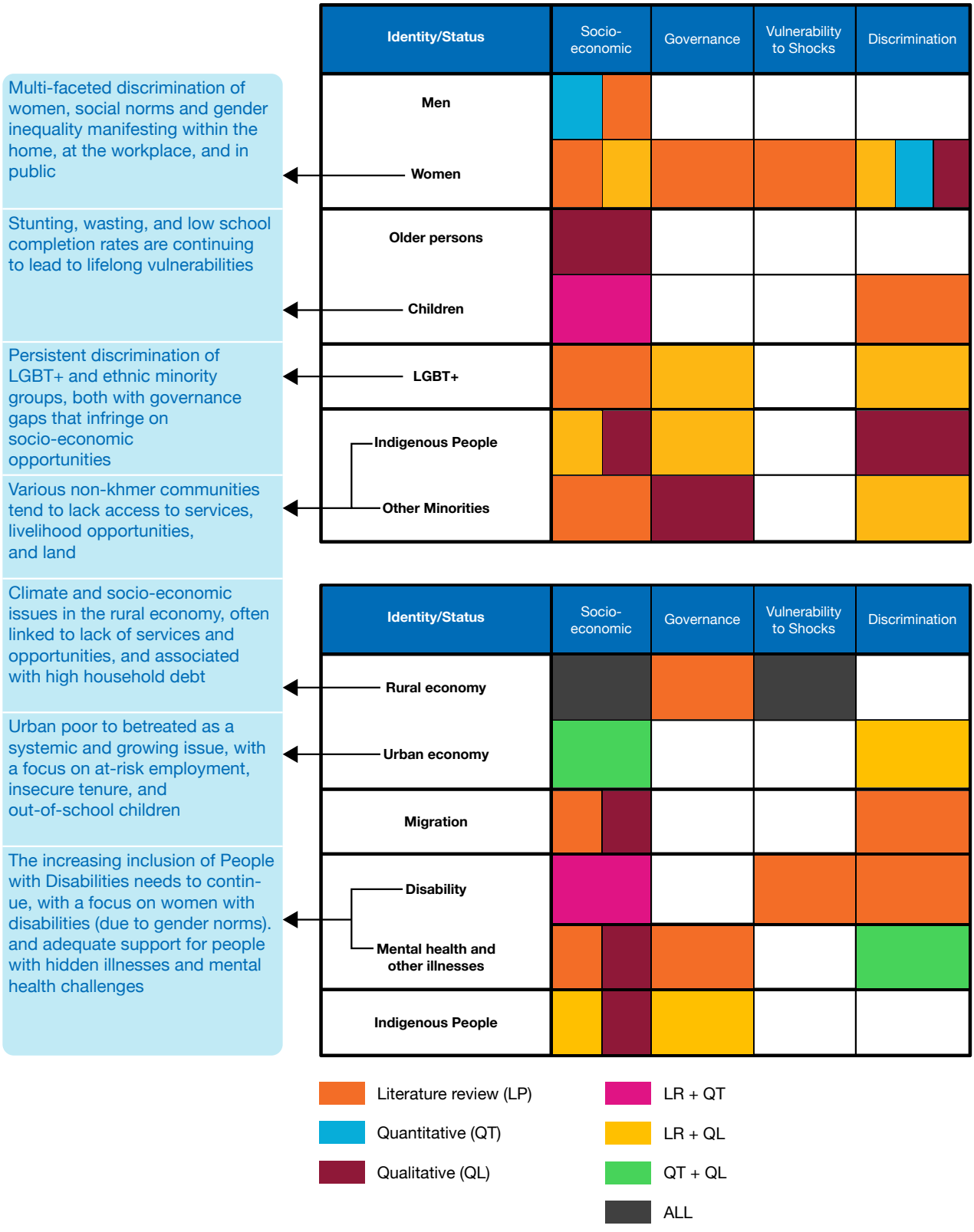
The study reveals a pressing need to explore poverty and economic insecurity within groups who face different forms of discrimination, and to understand regional differences impacted by variations in local governance, service access, and climate pressures. The figure below summarises the main geographical findings of this research, showcasing multi-dimensional vulnerabilities in the largely rural and remote contexts of the north-eastern provinces, the growing concerns around urban poverty in Phnom Penh, the key areas of concern in Pursat province, and the general climate risks impacting much of the country.

Figure 10 Selection of key findings, by geography



This research used a mix-methods approach to explore various forms of exclusion across different population groups. The figure below provides a visual overview of how these different methods combined to identify major forms of exclusion for different population groups and LNOB factors. Five key focus areas are presented on the left side, and focus on i) women, ii) LGBT+, iii) issues of legal identity among indigenous and other ethnic minority groups, iv) rural issues, and v) urban poverty.

Figure 11 Summary of findings, by population group, LNOB factor, and method



This figure provides an overview only of findings perceived to be particularly significant to the question of socio-economic exclusion. Indeed, statistics and specific cases of exclusion can be found for most groups and factors indicated. The table helps illustrate the wide-ranging socio-economic vulnerabilities of all groups listed, while discrimination is emphasised for all listed populations except for men, older persons, and displaced/landless communities. This is not to suggest that discrimination does not apply to these groups, but that the focus of discrimination in Cambodia tends to be targeted elsewhere (e.g., women, various minority groups, people with disabilities or living with HIV/AIDS, and migrants.

5.2. Exclusion pathways

Based on this research, three broadly defined exclusion pathways are presented in the table below, to generate discussion around how certain groups and individuals are at risk of being left behind, and what stages of intervention could help to mitigate the compounding of risks they experience. A lifecycle approach is useful in identifying how early-stage interventions can help prevent groups becoming left behind at a later stage in their lives.

Table 9 Selected pathways for socio-economic exclusion in Cambodia

Pathway	Description
#1 Entrenched social exclusion	Living in **remote areas** with limited access to educational and health services, among others, can limit an individual's earning potential. The same can be true for **persons with disabilities** and other groups who experience a limit to their economic integration. Economic insecurity can lead to a number of financial coping strategies. Taking on **debts** is commonplace in Cambodia, with varying interest rates and repayment schedules, and possibly involving land or housing as collateral. Selling assets (land, house, etc.) may provide short-term relief, while **migration or high-risk economic activities** can open new avenues for income generation. However, as we have seen, the latter two strategies can lead to instances of discrimination, and a heightened risk to the individual's safety. At present, none of these coping strategies appear to provide concerned groups with the economic certainty and social inclusion they may seek.
#2 Persistent and multi-faceted discrimination	Several groups face discrimination based on their **identity and status,** and discrimination emerges both in terms of discriminatory access to services (health, education, social protection, judicial) as well as access to jobs and other forms of social inclusion. Among a number of the focus groups with left behind groups, and particularly in Preah Vihear, participants recognised the importance of good community relations in mitigating some of these issues. For others, **migration** can provide a "way out" from localised experiences of discrimination, and this is perhaps particularly true for **LGBT+ individuals** who may not feel accepted within their family or local community. While migration can lead to the discovery of new and important social networks, and thus a new and inclusive sense of community, it can also lead to another form of marginalisation and "outsider status". For financial reasons, driven by a lack of economic opportunities available to them, groups that face discrimination may turn to **high-risk activities** for income generation. This research has highlighted several and varying risks related to employment in the brick industry, entertainment sector, garments sector, in construction, and illegal activities in conservation areas.

Pathway	Description
#3 Cyclical, intergenerational exclusion	A life cycle approach provides evidence not only of how patterns of exclusion can become entrenched for certain groups over time, but also how these patterns can get passed on from one generation to another. This is particularly the case where **low-income** populations do not possess the means to improve and stabilise their financial situation, either directly themselves or through integration into social protection schemes and other forms of support. Today in Cambodia, **access to education and healthcare** are not guaranteed, particularly for low-income households in remote areas and/or in urban areas with a high cost of living. Leaving school at an early age to contribute to household income generation can reduce the long-term earning potential of the child and, by extension, the household. A limited education can also contribute to a lack of knowledge about available support systems, risky coping strategies (high-interest loans) or one's legal rights, particularly in migration contexts. The risk of intergenerational exclusion emerges where a child's socio-economic situation has not improved sufficiently by the time they reach adulthood. The expansion of social protection schemes and policy innovations can help break this cycle, to provide a level of household financial stability that can keep children in school, to raise awareness of people's rights to support schemes and services, and to legislate for improved public health. Finally, economic growth and a commitment to fair and just development can help widen the employment opportunities of individuals and groups that might otherwise be excluded from participating in the Cambodian economy.

The study also suggests that there is widespread recognition of exclusion and vulnerability – among policymakers and international development practitioners – for specific key groups: particularly women, persons with disabilities (progress mostly on physical disabilities), migrants and informal workers (particularly post-COVID-19), and children (often among rural poor). Even for these groups, the implementation of existing laws and support systems is constrained by lack of funding and institutional capacity.

Currently in Cambodia, with notable exceptions, there appears to be less of an institutional focus on addressing legal identity issues, insecure land tenure and pressure of eviction, resettlement, and access restrictions (indigenous people and low-income urban periphery households).

5.3. Recommendations

To support UNDP in the implementation of their CPD 2024-2028, this report ends with a review of its indicative outputs, identifying priority areas of intervention based on the findings summarised above and detailed at length in this report.

5.3.1. Shift One: Economic diversification, inclusive growth and human development

- Cooperation Framework Outcome Involving UNDP #1: By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, are healthier and benefit from improved gender-responsive education and social protection.

Output 1.1. Resilient people-centred health systems supported

Resilient and people-centred health systems need to be accessible, non-discriminatory, affordable, and with good quality service provision. This study recommends the following:

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Supporting investment in primary healthcare for underserviced areas, improving both the availability and affordability of basic healthcare	• Remote rural communities • Low-income households • People with disabilities and chronic illnesses • Single mothers	Geography Governance Socio-economic
Supporting investment in improving prevention, which requires further gains in terms of access to safe water and health education interventions	• North-eastern provinces • Rural and urban poor	Governance Socio-economic
Conducting research into the causes of differential access to health services, due to a number of different potential factors including accessibility, affordability, trust, stigma, fear of discrimination, etc.	• People with HIV/AIDS, hidden illnesses, or mental health challenges • Indigenous and other ethnic minority groups • LGBT+ community	Governance Discrimination Socio-economic

Output 1.2. Inclusive social protection systems to increase the resilience of people

Social protection has expanded across Cambodia in recent years, including a rapid COVID-19 response, the expansion of ID Poor, increased pension provisions, and targeting informal workers, among others. However, further expansions to social protection schemes are expected to target groups that are best prepared for integration, and not necessarily groups that are considered the most left behind. Therefore, UNDP can play an important role in the following:

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Supporting the ongoing improvement of the ID Poor registration process with a specific focus on the inclusion of left behind groups	• [Unregistered…] • Rural and urban poor • Women-headed households • Single mothers • People with disabilities • Older persons • Children in foster care	Governance Socio-economic
Supporting the expansion of social protection to the informal sector by focusing on the inclusion of informal workers belonging to left behind groups	• [Unregistered…] • Agricultural workers • Female entertainment workers • Brick industry workers • Internal migrant workers	Governance Socio-economic

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Supporting the preparedness of different left behind populations for the future expansion of social protection schemes, for example through awareness raising activities and financial inclusion interventions.	• [Unregistered…] • Remote rural communities • Urban poor communities	Governance Socio-economic Geography Vulnerability to shocks

Output 1.3. Increased human security underpinned by mine action which expands access to safe land, livelihood opportunities, and victim assistance

Mine action was not a focus of this research. However, several recommendations related to land security and sustainable livelihoods are applicable to these groups.

- **Cooperation Framework Outcome Involving UNDP #2:** By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from and contribute to a productive, diversified, formalized and low carbon and climate adapted economy.

Output 2.1. Businesses and young entrepreneurs are prepared and equipped for future markets and contribute to employment opportunities and economic diversification

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Supporting access to adult educational and vocational training, in order to improve the livelihood opportunities of vulnerable groups, particularly those from low-income and low educational backgrounds. Adult educational and vocational training can also help others transition out of high-risk employment or adapt to localised economic and climate pressures. **Ensure training opportunities reflect the aspirations of the target groups and are arranged in a manner that does not jeopardise their existing work or family commitments.**	• Rural and urban poor • Female entertainment workers • People with disabilities • Communes with high climate vulnerabilities • Communities whose livelihoods are under threat, e.g., due to climate change, land use conversion, displacement	Socio-economic Vulnerability to shocks

Output 2.2. The shift from funding to financing supported in preparation of LDC graduation, and SDGs acceleration

Despite substantial progress on several fronts, in terms of vulnerability and exclusion, key issues remain particularly in relation to educational attainment and the accessibility and affordability of healthcare. This study recommends:

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Research into innovative financing strategies for both primary healthcare provision and education services, both to strengthen and supplement existing state-run services, noting the importance of increasing healthcare expenditure per capita and reducing out-of-pocket expenses.	• Rural and urban poor • People with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses	Socio-economic Governance Vulnerability to shocks
Monitoring changes to national and sub-national budget allocations for their potential impact on left behind populations (particularly related to health, education, social protection, gender and disability).	All	Governance
Assessing the feasibility of inter-agency taskforces to improve the coherence and efficiency of LNOB implementation across the UN system, noting the different sources and forms of financing available to different UN agencies.	All	Governance

5.3.2. Shift Two: Climate Action and Nature-Based Solutions for Growth and Human Security

- **Cooperation Framework Outcome Involving UNDP #3:** By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from and contribute to a productive, diversified, formalized and low carbon and climate adapted economy.

Output 3.1. Natural resources are sustainably managed, protected and restored

Natural resource management was not a focus area for this research. Nevertheless, findings related to livelihood pressures and land availability has led to the following recommendation:

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Supporting reforestation and landscape conservation projects through climate finance solutions, with an explicit focus on developing the sustainable livelihoods of local communities	• Rural poor • Indigenous communities • Climate-impacted regions	Socio-economic Vulnerability to shocks Geography

Output 3.2. Circular economy promoted to reduce pollution and improve consumption behaviours and production practices

The circular economy was not covered by the scope of this research and analysis, nor people's knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to sustainable consumption and production.

Output 3.3. Climate change action and transparency are strengthened with involvement of various socioeconomic actors

This recommendation, an adapted version of one of the recommendations for Output for 4.2, is based on a general consensus among many participants for the need of improved engagement and outreach practices between institutions and left behind groups.

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Engage in sustainable, long-term, meaningful stakeholder engagement with climate vulnerable and low-income communities – led and facilitated by civil society groups – recording experiences of climate change and gathering feedback on proposed climate change actions	• Northernmost provinces • Pursat province	Socio-economic Vulnerability to shocks

Output 3.4. The adaptive capacity of systems and communities to climate change and disasters is strengthened

Primary data collection activities did not focus on climate adaptation, while secondary data analysis focused on climate vulnerability. There is a need to understand adaptive capacities among local government actors and communities in climate vulnerable provinces with notable left behind populations (in terms of poverty, access to services, and the presence of indigenous communities, for example).

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Conduct focused research on the adaptive capacities of climate vulnerable communities, ideally through the dedicated stakeholder platform outlined in the recommendation for Output 3.3.	• Northernmost provinces • Pursat province	Vulnerability to shocks

5.3.3. Shift Three: Strong institutions, civic space, and people-centred digital governance for a peaceful and resilient society

- **Cooperation Framework Outcome Involving UNDP #4:** By 2028, people in Cambodia, especially those at risk of being left behind, live in an increasingly gender equal and inclusive society with active civic space and enjoy more effective and accountable institutions.

Output 4.1. Selected subnational administrations deliver services in a transparent and inclusive manner responsive to constituent needs

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Provide technical assistance at local, national, and regional levels to promote and support governance mechanisms that require more openness, inclusiveness, and accountability to marginalised groups.	All	Governance
Supporting the ongoing improvement of the ID Poor registration process with a specific focus on the inclusion of left behind groups	• [Unregistered…] • Rural and urban poor • Women-headed households • Single mothers • People with disabilities • Older persons	Governance Socio-economic
Providing institutional support to the government to improve the implementation of community land titling processes for indigenous communities.	Indigenous communities	Governance
Advocating for the proper implementation of national regulations concerning physical and economic displacement, including additional compensation provisions for vulnerable groups	• Indigenous communities • Other ethnic minorities • Landless households	Governance Socio-economic Vulnerability to shocks
Support for rigorous and more detailed social and economic data collection, at the provincial and commune levels as well as at the programme/project level	• Indigenous communities • Migrant populations	Governance Socio-economic

Existing data collection activities at national, provincial, and commune levels need to be supported in order to ensure comprehensive and rigorous data collection, including expanding the census answer options to recognise the diversity of the Cambodian population. The timely sharing of data in the public realm will also allow development institutions and stakeholders to develop evidence-based programmes that are responsive to left behind groups.

It is not currently feasible to implement systematic data collection on LGBT+ populations (nor develop questions on gender identity and sexual orientation). Rather, key stakeholder groups must first engage LGBT+ representatives in long-term stakeholder engagement processes to understand the sensitivities , discrimination, and stigma surrounding these issues. Appropriate

and sensitive data collection must emerge from this process, validated by representative organisations.

Programmes and initiatives must conduct comprehensive contextual analysis where possible, in order to understand the latest socio-economic trends and political contexts and how they relate to the proposed initiative. Furthermore, work should be done to help systematically institutionalise the findings of these studies within and across different Agencies, who can then build on the latest assessment findings, and to ensure intervention plans are responsive to left behind groups, and that budgets are responsive to gender issues, disability issues, and so on.

Output 4.2. Increased civic participation including women and marginalized groups in decision-making at all levels

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Engage in sustainable, long-term, meaningful stakeholder engagement with left behind groups – led and facilitated by civil society groups	• Indigenous communities • LGBT+ community • Other minority groups	Governance
Supporting civil society and community-based organisations in the promotion of human rights	• Women • Children • Indigenous communities	Governance Discrimination

Through this research, gaps have also been identified in terms of a need for long-term, meaningful, sustainable stakeholder engagement and consultation, with left behind groups and the grassroots organisations supporting them.

This study advocates for the development of a collective, institutional understanding of the issues and challenges faced by specific left behind groups, driven by engagement processes and feedback mechanisms that last beyond specific funding cycles and strategic plans. These mechanisms should occur regularly, while providing time and space for internal conversations within the networks of left behind groups and representative organisations.

These processes should occur outside of existing formal consultation settings, led and facilitated by civil society organisations but with support and recognition from UN agencies and other institutional stakeholders. Rather than be engaged on a project-by-project basis, with limited opportunity to implement lessons learned, these fora should primarily be opportunities for institutional stakeholders to listen to the discussions and debates taking place at a grassroots level, and as a mechanism to evaluate the responsiveness of policies and initiatives to the needs and perspectives of left behind groups. One key area of engagement involved indigenous people and local authorities, while on the national level, the study observes a consultation process with LGBT+ groups that are limited to specific UN agencies, and dependent on the commitment of those agencies for their continued development.

With greater engagement and the building of trust between UNDP and left behind groups, it will become possible to advocate for inclusive job access for such groups in public administration as well as the private sector.

Output 4.3. People and institutions are equipped with capabilities and opportunities to participate in an inclusive digital society

Recommendation	Target populations	Relevant LNOB factors
Improve coverage and access to banking and finance for small businesses and marginalised groups	• Women entrepreneurs • Rural and urban poor • Low-income migrants	Governance Socio-economic
Advocate at the national level and provide technical assistance to regulate the microfinance sector, to provide more secure and sustainable loan offers to the most vulnerable and left behind households.	• Indebted households • Rural and urban poor	Governance Socio-economic
Integrating training opportunities with support to setup bank accounts, to improve access to credit while reducing vulnerability to predatory microfinance lenders.	• Low-income households (rural and urban settings)	Governance Socio-economic
Supporting the preparedness of government for the future expansion of social protection schemes, for example through the digitisation of public administration and advocacy for the integration of vulnerable and near-poor populations.	• Remote rural communities • Urban poor communities • Illiterate households	Governance Socio-economic Geography Vulnerability to shocks

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Annex

Annex 1 – Key Documents for the Structured Literature Review

№	Type	Author	Year	Title
1	International strategic document	UN	2023	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, November 2023
2	International strategic document	World Bank	2019	FY19-FY23 Country Partnership Framework for the Kingdom of Cambodia
3	International strategic document	Asian Development Bank	2019	Cambodia, 2019–2023: Inclusive Pathways to a Competitive Economy
4	International strategic document	USAID	2020	Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)
5	Governance	FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) and the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)	2022	FIDH-ADHOC submission to Universal Periodic Review: Cambodia (Joint Submission)
6	Governance	Royall Government of Cambodia	2023	Cambodia's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2023: Accelerating the Recovery from COVID-19 and the Full Implementation of the 2030 Agenda
7	Discrimination	US Department of State	2022	Cambodia 2022 Human Rights Report
8	Discrimination	UNFPA	2023	Harmful Social Norms related to Gender-Based Violence in Cambodia: Annotated Bibliography
9	Geography	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative	2023	Global MPI Country Briefing 2023: Cambodia (East Asia and the Pacific)
10	Geography	Natarajan, N., Brickell, K. and Parsons, L.	2019	Climate change adaptation and precarity across the rural–urban divide in Cambodia: Towards a 'climate precarity' approach
11	Vulnerability to shocks	Cambodia Climate Change Alliance	2021	A Third Study on Understanding Public Perceptions of Climate Change in Cambodia: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
12	Vulnerability to shocks	FAO, UNICEF and WFP	2020	Roadmap – Developing a risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection system (Cambodia)
13	Socio-economic status	Development Pathways, for WFP	2023	Leave No-One Behind and Inclusion Analysis – WFP Cambodia
14	Socio-economic status	World Bank Group	2022	Cambodia Poverty Assessment—Toward A More Inclusive and Resilient Cambodia.
15	Women	United Nations	2022	Gender Equality Deep-Dive for Cambodia
16	Women	IBF International Consulting, for the European Union	2021	2021 Gender Mainstreaming and Analysis for Cambodia
17	Age	UNICEF	2023	An analysis of the situation of children and adolescents in Cambodia 2023
18	Age	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation	2021	Older People's Income and Social Protection in Cambodia during COVID-19 and Beyond

№	Type	Author	Year	Title
19	Ethnic minority/IP	Ministry of Planning	2021	National Report on Demographic and Socio-economic Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia
20	Ethnic minority/IP	Sperfeldt, C.	2021	Legal Identity and Minority Statelessness in Cambodia: Recent Developments
21	Sexual minority	ILGA Asia	2021	Cambodia LGBT+ Rights Report : Rainbow in the Rain
22	Sexual minority	Sreyleak, H.	2018	Workplace Stigma and Discrimination against LGBTs in Cambodia
23	Disability	UNPRPD	2022	Situational Analysis of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Cambodia
24	Disability	ActionAid	2021	Participatory Research On The Vulnerabilities Of Women With Disabilities To Climate Change
25	HIV/chronic disease/ drug use	CPN+	2019	Cambodia : People Living with HIV Stigma Index 2.0.
26	HIV/chronic disease/ drug use	Sopheab, H., Chhea, C., Tuopt, S. and Muir, J. A.	2018	HIV prevalence, related risk behaviours, and correlates of HIV infection among people who use drugs in Cambodia
27	Landless/evicted	UNOHCR	2022	Study on the Human Right Situation of Communities living in resettlement Sites in Cambodia and Draft Resettlement Guidelines
28	Landless/evicted	Sahmakum Teang Tnaut Organisation (STT)	2023	The Phnom Penh Survey 2023 on Urban Settlements
29	Migration	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	2019	Flow monitoring Surveys: insights into the profiles and vulnerabilities of Cambodian migrants to Thailand (Round Two)
30	Migration	World Food Programme	2019	Vulnerability and Migration in Cambodia

Annex 2 – Data Saturation Grid

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Annex 2 – Data Saturation Grid

LNOB Factor	Population	Strategic Documents				LNOB Factor Specific Documents										Population Specific Documents																Sub-totals			Sub	Factor
		KD1	KD2	KD3	KD4	KD5	KD6	KD7	KD8	KD9	KD10	KD11	KD12	KD13	KD14	KD15	KD16	KD17	KD18	KD19	KD20	KD21	KD22	KD23	KD24	KD25	KD26	KD27	KD28	KD29	KD30	ISD	Factors	Pop	TOTAL	TOTAL
Discrimination	Women	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1		1	1							1	1				1			4	7	5	16	67
	Youth/Elderly	1			1	1		1	1				1	1		1		1				1		1								2	5	4	11	
	Ethnic/Religious minorities & IP				1	1		1													1											1	2	1	4	
	Sexual minority	1	1		1			1						1		1	1					1	1			1						3	2	5	10	
	Physical disability & mental health issues		1		1		1	1	1					1										1	1							2	4	2	8	
	HIV/Chronic diseases/drug users																	1				1				1						0	0	3	3	
	Landless/Evicted					1															1								1			0	1	2	3	
	Migrants (and refugees/asylum seekers)	1					1	1	1							1	1				1									1	1	1	3	5	9	
	Other							1	1							1																0	2	1	3	
Governance	Women	1				1	1	1	1			1		1		1	1								1							1	6	3	10	46
	Youth/Elderly	1				1	1	1	1							1	1	1	1													1	4	4	9	
	Ethnic/Religious minorities & IP	1				1		1								1				1	1											1	2	3	6	
	Sexual minority				1				1													1	1									1	1	2	4	
	Physical disability & mental health issues	1					1																	1	1							1	1	2	4	
	HIV/Chronic diseases/drug users																									1						0	0	1	1	
	Landless/Evicted					1		1													1							1	1			0	2	3	5	
	Migrants (and refugees/asylum seekers)							1																						1		0	1	1	2	
	Other	1				1		1		1					1																	1	4	0	5	
Geography	Women	1														1																1	0	1	2	33
	Youth/Elderly			1	1		1									1												1				2	1	2	5	
	Ethnic/Religious minorities & IP		1		1									1		1												1				2	1	2	5	
	Sexual minority								1																							0	1	0	1	
	Physical disability & mental health issues						1																	1	1							0	1	2	3	
	HIV/Chronic diseases/drug users																															0	0	0	0	
	Landless/Evicted						1																					1			1	0	1	2	3	
	Migrants (and refugees/asylum seekers)				1									1														1		1	1	1	1	3	5	
	Other* (predominantly rural/out-of-reach areas)	1	1	1			1			1		1		1														1	1			3	4	2	9	
Shocks	Women	1	1						1			1	1		1	1	1								1							2	4	3	9	26
	Youth/Elderly												1					1														0	1	1	2	
	Ethnic/Religious minorities & IP																															0	0	0	0	
	Sexual minority																															0	0	0	0	
	Physical disability & mental health issues												1			1								1	1							0	1	3	4	
	HIV/Chronic diseases/drug users																															0	0	0	0	
	Landless/Evicted										1																					0	1	0	1	
	Migrants (and refugees/asylum seekers)								1		1			1																	1	0	3	1	4	
	Other* (rural / underserviced communities)		1	1							1		1	1	1																	2	4	0	6	
Socio-economic	Women	1	1	1					1			1		1	1					1					1		1			1	1	3	4	5	12	66
	Youth/Elderly	1	1	1			1	1	1			1		1	1			1	1												1	3	6	3	12	
	Ethnic/Religious minorities & IP	1												1						1												1	1	1	3	
	Sexual minority																					1										0	0	1	1	
	Physical disability & mental health issues	1												1					1													1	1	1	3	
	HIV/Chronic diseases/drug users																		1						1	1	1					0	0	4	4	
	Landless/Evicted							1						1														1	1	1		0	2	3	5	
	Migrants (and refugees/asylum seekers)								1		1					1		1				1			1				1	1	1	0	2	7	9	
	Other* (predominantly indebted households)			1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1							1			1	1	1		2	9	6	17	

Annex 3 – Quantitative findings summary

Case counts - DHS 2021/22			
Weighted # of households*		**Weighted # of individuals****	
LNOB Single Dimension			
Urban/rural status		**Urban/rural status**	
Urban	8066	Urban	12289
Rural	12740	Rural	16587
Disability status		**Disability status**	
No disability HoH	19513	No disability	28569
Has disability HoH	1293	Has disability	307
Gender		**Gender**	
Male HoH	14342	Male	9097
Female HoH	6464	Female	19780
Age		**Age*****	
60+ years HoH	4473	40-49 years	6405
35-60 years HoH	12325	30-39 years	1809
< 35 years HoH	4008	20-29 years	1702
		15-20 years	4559
Landownership		**Landownership**	
No agricultural land	9434	Does not own land	18429
Owns agricultural land	11372	Owns land	10448
Homeownership		**Homeownership**	
Does not own home	-	Does not own home	15452
Owns home	-	Owns home	13424
Education		**Education**	
HoH did not finish primary school	4044	Did not finish primary school	11042
HoH finished primary school	16584	Finished primary school	17834
Literacy		**Literacy**	
Illiterate	-	Illiterate	13167
Literate	-	Literate	15668
Religion		**Religion**	
Non-Buddhist	-	Non-Buddhist	766
Buddhist	-	Buddhist	28111
LNOB Multidimensional			
Urban/Rural Poor		**Urban/Rural Poor**	
Urban HH in poorest quintile	341	Urban HH in poorest quintile	400
Rural HH in poorest quintile	4076	Rural HH in poorest quintile	4587
Rural Landlessness		**Rural Landlessness**	
Rural HH with no agric. land	3893	Rural, does not own land	8823
Single mother status		**Single mother status**	
HoH is single mother	680	Single mother	476
Gender and disability		**Gender and disability**	
Male HoH with disability	736	Male with disability	110
Female HoH with disability	557	Female with disability	197
Gender and education		**Gender and education**	
Male HoH did not finish primary school	2043	Male, did not finish primary school	2955
Female HoH did not finish primary school	2001	Female, did not finish primary school	8087

Province			
Banteay Meanchey	893	Banteay Meanchey	1104
Battambang	1439	Battambang	2009
Kampong Cham	1369	Kampong Cham	1725
Kampong Chhnang	722	Kampong Chhnang	970
Kampong Speu	1216	Kampong Speu	1798
Kampong Thom	924	Kampong Thom	1187
Kampot	861	Kampot	1133
Kandal	1507	Kandal	2192
Koh Kong	161	Koh Kong	207
Kratie	554	Kratie	679
Mondulkiri	110	Mondulkiri	163
Phnom Penh	2953	Phnom Penh	4779
Preah Vihear	327	Preah Vihear	499
Prey Veng	1354	Prey Veng	1868
Pursat	652	Pursat	623
Ratanakiri	327	Ratanakiri	456
Siem Reap	1569	Siem Reap	2313
Preah Sihanouk	266	Preah Sihanouk	364
Stung Treng	193	Stung Treng	281
Svay Rieng	809	Svay Rieng	1077
Takeo	1203	Takeo	1657
Oddar Meanchey	274	Oddar Meanchey	365
Kep	57	Kep	86
Pailin	110	Pailin	141
Tboung Khmum	954	Tboung Khmum	1202

*note, counts are different for indicators about nutrition, education and registration of children (only asked to respondents with children of a certain age.

**note, counts are different for domestic violence questions (only asked to some women) and questions about land deeds/home deeds (only asked to landowners or homeowners)

***DHS only surveys individuals between the ages of 15 and 49

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SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Household-Level Indicators

	Member of HH has bank account	HH owns moto or car	At least one child < 5 is stunted	At least one child < 5 is wasted	At least one child age 6-11 not in school
Total	**28%**	**82%**	**11%**	**5%**	**18%**
Urban/rural status					
Urban	44%	86%	9%	5%	17%
Rural	18%	79%	13%	6%	19%
Disability status					
No disability HoH	29%	83%	12%	5%	18%
Has disability HoH	17%	64%	9%	6%	20%
Gender					
Male HoH	30%	88%	11%	5%	18%
Female HoH	24%	69%	12%	5%	18%
Age					
60+ years HoH	24%	70%	10%	4%	19%
35-60 years HoH	29%	86%	11%	5%	17%
< 35 years HoH	31%	84%	13%	5%	24%
Landownership					
No agricultural land	31%	77%	11%	5%	20%
Owns agricultural land	25%	86%	12%	5%	17%
Homeownership					
Does not own home	-	-	-	-	-
Owns home	-	-	-	-	-
Education					
HoH did not finish primary school	11%	68%	13%	6%	24%
HoH finished primary school	32%	86%	11%	5%	17%
Literacy					
Illiterate	-	-	-	-	-
Literate	-	-	-	-	-
Religion					
Non-Buddhist	-	-	-	-	-
Buddhist	-	-	-	-	-

Individual-Level Indicators

	Did not work	Owns home	Owns land	Involved in HH purchase decisions
Total	**20%**	**47%**	**36%**	**89%**
Urban/rural status				
Urban	17%	38%	22%	91%
Rural	23%	53%	47%	87%
Disability status				
No disability	20%	46%	36%	89%
Has disability	34%	53%	38%	83%
Gender				
Male	9%	41%	33%	80%
Female	25%	49%	38%	92%
Age				
40-49 years	16%	81%	61%	88%
30-39 years	13%	59%	47%	89%
20-29 years	16%	29%	25%	90%
< 20 years	50%	4%	3%	91%
Landownership				
Does not own land	24%	24%	-	90%
Owns land	13%	86%	-	87%
Homeownership				
Does not own home	25%	-	9%	90%
Owns home	14%	-	67%	88%
Education				
Did not finish primary school	18%	63%	49%	88%
Finished primary school	22%	36%	28%	89%
Literacy				
Illiterate	18%	56%	44%	88%
Literate	22%	38%	30%	90%
Religion				
Non-Buddhist	26%	40%	30%	89%
Buddhist	20%	47%	36%	89%

April 2024 **LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND** Analysis in Cambodia

SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Household-Level Indicators						Individual-Level Indicators				
	Member of HH has bank account	HH owns moto or car	At least one child < 5 is stunted	At least one child < 5 is wasted	At least one child age 6-11 not in school		Did not work	Owns home	Owns land	Involved in HH purchase decisions
Total	**28%**	**82%**	**11%**	**5%**	**18%**	**Total**	**20%**	**47%**	**36%**	**89%**
LNOB Multidimensional						**LNOB Multidimensional**				
Urban/Rural Poor						**Urban/Rural Poor**				
Urban HH in poorest quintile	5%	53%	11%	6%	30%	Urban HH in poorest quintile	21%	53%	28%	85%
Rural HH in poorest quintile	4%	66%	17%	7%	22%	Rural HH in poorest quintile	20%	56%	49%	86%
Rural Landlessness						**Rural Landlessness**				
Rural HH with no agric. land	14%	68%	14%	6%	25%	Rural, does not own land	30%	22%		88%
Single mother status						**Single mother status**				
HoH is single mother	28%	83%	11%	5%	18%	Single mother	11%	72%	44%	100%
Gender and disability						**Gender and disability**				
Male HoH with disability	20%	72%	7%	4%	24%	Male with disability	21%	42%	30%	63%
Female HoH with disability	13%	53%	12%	9%	14%	Female with disability	41%	58%	42%	92%
Gender and education						**Gender and education**				
Male HoH did not finish primary school	11%	78%	13%	7%	27%	Male, did not finish primary school	3%	57%	45%	77%
Female HoH did not finish primary school	12%	58%	13%	6%	21%	Female, did not finish primary school	23%	65%	50%	91%

April 2024 **LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND** Analysis in Cambodia

SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

	Household-Level Indicators					Individual-Level Indicators				
	Member of HH has bank account	HH owns moto or car	At least one child < 5 is stunted	At least one child < 5 is wasted	At least one child age 6-11 not in school		Did not work	Owns home	Owns land	Involved in HH purchase decisions
Total	**28%**	**82%**	**11%**	**5%**	**18%**	**Total**	**20%**	**47%**	**36%**	**89%**
Geography										
Province						**Province**				
Banteay Meanchey	26%	79%	8%	5%	5%	Banteay Meanchey	25%	42%	32%	84%
Battambang	23%	80%	9%	5%	17%	Battambang	25%	41%	42%	86%
Kampong Cham	24%	58%	12%	4%	30%	Kampong Cham	30%	45%	30%	88%
Kampong Chhnang	23%	79%	11%	17%	7%	Kampong Chhnang	13%	60%	54%	97%
Kampong Speu	28%	84%	12%	6%	46%	Kampong Speu	12%	55%	49%	76%
Kampong Thom	17%	83%	13%	4%	24%	Kampong Thom	19%	56%	52%	71%
Kampot	29%	81%	14%	5%	22%	Kampot	23%	53%	47%	75%
Kandal	27%	87%	8%	6%	21%	Kandal	16%	52%	20%	91%
Koh Kong	29%	76%	13%	6%	34%	Koh Kong	22%	49%	17%	94%
Kratie	16%	87%	10%	1%	9%	Kratie	20%	47%	44%	68%
Mondulkiri	29%	91%	15%	7%	18%	Mondulkiri	7%	52%	39%	94%
Phnom Penh	53%	87%	8%	3%	10%	Phnom Penh	17%	23%	9%	97%
Preah Vihear	19%	78%	15%	4%	18%	Preah Vihear	11%	62%	56%	93%
Prey Veng	21%	84%	12%	4%	11%	Prey Veng	32%	47%	45%	97%
Pursat	12%	80%	18%	5%	38%	Pursat	30%	63%	55%	89%
Ratanakiri	15%	86%	19%	6%	15%	Ratanakiri	25%	60%	61%	75%
Siem Reap	29%	86%	12%	6%	16%	Siem Reap	22%	50%	39%	97%
Preah Sihanouk	33%	86%	14%	4%	19%	Preah Sihanouk	22%	42%	18%	72%
Stung Treng	21%	82%	16%	4%	13%	Stung Treng	12%	55%	52%	94%
Svay Rieng	33%	84%	10%	6%	5%	Svay Rieng	9%	64%	56%	95%
Takeo	27%	84%	14%	3%	15%	Takeo	24%	54%	49%	83%
Oddar Meanchey	19%	81%	12%	4%	11%	Oddar Meanchey	12%	60%	51%	85%
Kep	27%	88%	15%	11%	28%	Kep	32%	60%	51%	83%
Pailin	30%	89%	11%	3%	7%	Pailin	20%	48%	27%	90%
Tboung Khmum	16%	82%	14%	7%	25%	Tboung Khmum	17%	45%	32%	96%
Total	**28%**	**82%**	**11%**	**5%**	**18%**	**Total**	**20%**	**47%**	**36%**	**89%**

GOVERNANCE INDICATORS					
Household-Level Indicators					
	All children < 5 have birth certificate	Has electricity	Improved water source	Improved sanitation	Open defecation
Total	**86%**	**92%**	**90%**	**19%**	**10%**
LNOB Dimensions					
Urban/rural status					
Urban	88%	99%	97%	40%	3%
Rural	85%	88%	86%	6%	15%
Disability status					
No disability HoH	86%	92%	91%	20%	10%
Has disability HoH	86%	90%	88%	15%	12%
Gender					
Male HoH	85%	91%	90%	19%	10%
Female HoH	87%	94%	92%	20%	10%
Age					
60+ years old HoH	88%	94%	91%	16%	8%
35-60 years old HoH	86%	92%	91%	19%	10%
Under 35 HoH	83%	89%	89%	25%	15%
Landownership					
No agricultural land	85%	94%	94%	30%	9%
Owns agricultural land	86%	90%	87%	11%	11%
Homeownership					
Does not own home	-	-	-	-	-
Owns home	-	-	-	-	-
Education					
HoH did not finish primary school	81%	86%	85%	12%	18%
HoH finished primary school	87%	93%	92%	21%	8%
Literacy					
Illiterate	-	-	-	-	-
Literate	-	-	-	-	-
Religion					
Non-Buddhist	-	-	-	-	-
Buddhist	-	-	-	-	-
LNOB Multidimensional					
Urban/Rural Poor					
Urban HH in poorest quintile	80%	67%	80%	6%	38%
Rural HH in poorest quintile	78%	64%	72%	9%	40%
Rural Landlessness					
Rural HH with no agric. land	82%	88%	89%	5%	18%
Single mother status					
HoH is single mother	85%	93%	91%	21%	13%
Gender and disability					
Male HoH with disability	87%	88%	86%	14%	13%
Female HoH with disability	86%	93%	91%	17%	10%
Gender and education					
Male HoH did not finish primary school	77%	83%	81%	12%	20%
Female HoH did not finish primary school	86%	90%	88%	13%	16%

GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

Household-Level Indicators

	All children < 5 have birth certificate	Has electricity	Improved water source	Improved sanitation	Open defecation
Total	**86%**	**92%**	**90%**	**19%**	**10%**
Geography					
Province					
Banteay Meanchey	79%	96%	95%	9%	12%
Battambang	86%	90%	90%	5%	7%
Kampong Cham	97%	97%	94%	2%	13%
Kampong Chhnang	85%	86%	79%	1%	20%
Kampong Speu	86%	93%	89%	29%	14%
Kampong Thom	76%	91%	82%	12%	8%
Kampot	86%	97%	79%	6%	9%
Kandal	90%	100%	96%	4%	3%
Koh Kong	91%	88%	81%	3%	14%
Kratie	71%	68%	86%	5%	29%
Mondulkiri	66%	75%	81%	25%	36%
Phnom Penh	90%	100%	100%	82%	0%
Preah Vihear	64%	65%	86%	11%	30%
Prey Veng	93%	96%	96%	2%	4%
Pursat	80%	93%	77%	35%	10%
Ratanakiri	65%	51%	58%	20%	46%
Siem Reap	95%	89%	88%	14%	12%
Preah Sihanouk	76%	96%	95%	5%	6%
Stung Treng	75%	44%	56%	8%	42%
Svay Rieng	94%	88%	100%	1%	4%
Takeo	69%	99%	90%	9%	9%
Oddar Meanchey	90%	66%	85%	6%	19%
Kep	90%	96%	87%	17%	6%
Pailin	86%	79%	97%	29%	11%
Tboung Khmum	88%	97%	96%	2%	16%
Total	**86%**	**92%**	**90%**	**19%**	**10%**

DISCRIMINATION INDICATORS			
Individual-Level Indicators			
	Would discriminate against someone with HIV	**Experienced physical or sexual violence ever**	**Experienced physical or sexual violence in last year**
Total	**27%**	**10%**	**5%**
Urban/rural status			
Urban	19%	9%	3%
Rural	32%	11%	6%
Disability status			
No disability	26%	10%	5%
Has disability	29%	16%	9%
Gender			
Male	27%		
Female	26%	10%	5%
Age			
40-49 years	25%	17%	8%
30-39 years	19%	15%	7%
20-29 years	27%	9%	3%
< 20 years	43%	4%	2%
Landownership			
Does not own land	27%	8%	4%
Owns land	26%	13%	6%
Homeownership			
Does not own home	29%	8%	3%
Owns home	24%	13%	6%
Education			
Did not finish primary school	33%	15%	7%
Finished primary school	23%	7%	3%
Literacy			
Illiterate	34%	13%	7%
Literate	21%	7%	3%
Religion			
Non-Buddhist	35%	11%	7%
Buddhist	26%	10%	5%

DISCRIMINATION INDICATORS			
Individual-Level Indicators			
	Would discriminate against someone with HIV	**Experienced physical or sexual violence ever**	**Experienced physical or sexual violence in last year**
LNOB Multidimensional			
Urban/Rural Poor			
Urban HH in poorest quintile	29%	20%	10%
Rural HH in poorest quintile	43%	15%	9%
Rural Landlessness			
Rural, does not own land	34%	9%	5%
Single mother status			
Single mother	25%	30%	13%
Gender and disability			
Male with disability	22%		
Female with disability	33%	16%	9%
Gender and education			
Male, did not finish primary school	37%		
Female, did not finish primary school	31%	15%	7%

DISCRIMINATION INDICATORS			
Individual-Level Indicators			
	Would discriminate against someone with HIV	**Experienced physical or sexual violence ever**	**Experienced physical or sexual violence in last year**
Geography			
Province			
Banteay Meanchey	27%	17%	10%
Battambang	34%	19%	7%
Kampong Cham	32%	5%	2%
Kampong Chhnang	24%	8%	4%
Kampong Speu	11%	9%	4%
Kampong Thom	37%	15%	8%
Kampot	28%	9%	6%
Kandal	29%	8%	3%
Koh Kong	24%	4%	4%
Kratie	36%	11%	11%
Mondulkiri	43%	22%	13%
Phnom Penh	19%	9%	3%
Preah Vihear	54%	21%	7%
Prey Veng	23%	8%	4%
Pursat	26%	5%	3%
Ratanakiri	62%	7%	7%
Siem Reap	23%	12%	8%
Preah Sihanouk	32%	6%	2%
Stung Treng	51%	22%	10%
Svay Rieng	33%	10%	4%
Takeo	14%	8%	2%
Oddar Meanchey	24%	5%	2%
Kep	10%	6%	5%
Pailin	18%	17%	4%
Tboung Khmum	35%	7%	4%
Total	**27%**	**10%**	**5%**

SHOCKS INDICATORS	
Household Indicators	
	Uses clean fuel for cooking
LNOB Dimensions	
Urban/rural status	
Urban	78%
Rural	33%
Disability status	
No disability HoH	51%
Has disability HoH	36%
Gender	
Male HoH	51%
Female HoH	49%
Age	
60+ years old HoH	42%
35-60 years old HoH	51%
Under 35 HoH	59%
Landownership	
No agricultural land	63%
Owns agricultural land	40%
Homeownership	
Does not own home	
Owns home	
Education	
HoH did not finish primary school	31%
HoH finished primary school	55%
Literacy	
Illiterate	
Literate	
Religion	
Non-Buddhist	
Buddhist	
LNOB Multidimensional	
Urban/Rural Poor	
Urban HH in poorest quintile	6%
Rural HH in poorest quintile	3%
Rural Landlessness	
Rural HH with no agric. land	35%
Single mother status	
HoH is single mother	53%
Gender and disability	
Male HoH with disability	33%
Female HoH with disability	39%
Gender and education	
Male HoH did not finish primary school	28%
Female HoH did not finish primary school	33%

SHOCKS INDICATORS	
Household Indicators	
	Uses clean fuel for cooking
Geography	
Province	
Banteay Meanchey	30%
Battambang	34%
Kampong Cham	37%
Kampong Chhnang	30%
Kampong Speu	54%
Kampong Thom	32%
Kampot	59%
Kandal	72%
Koh Kong	64%
Kratie	26%
Mondulkiri	39%
Phnom Penh	97%
Preah Vihear	14%
Prey Veng	40%
Pursat	23%
Ratanakiri	20%
Siem Reap	38%
Preah Sihanouk	81%
Stung Treng	24%
Svay Rieng	59%
Takeo	59%
Oddar Meanchey	13%
Kep	75%
Pailin	55%
Tboung Khmum	34%
Total	**50%**

DISPLACEMENT INDICATORS

Individual-Level Indicators

	Has deed for house	Has deed for land	Name on house deed	Name on land deed
Total	**77%**	**79%**	**98%**	**98%**
Urban/rural status				
Urban	84%	89%	98%	98%
Rural	73%	76%	98%	97%
Disability status				
No disability	76%	79%	98%	98%
Has disability	82%	82%	96%	97%
Gender				
Male	70%	72%	95%	95%
Female	79%	82%	99%	98%
Age				
40-49 years	81%	84%	99%	98%
30-39 years	76%	81%	98%	97%
20-29 years	71%	75%	96%	96%
< 20 years	45%	48%	88%	87%
Landownership				
Does not own land	76%		96%	
Owns land	77%	79%	99%	98%
Homeownership				
Does not own home		75%		96%
Owns home	77%	80%	98%	98%
Education				
Did not finish primary school	75%	78%	98%	98%
Finished primary school	79%	81%	97%	97%
Literacy				
Illiterate	74%	77%	98%	98%
Literate	80%	82%	97%	97%
Religion				
Non-Buddhist	67%	75%	98%	97%
Buddhist	77%	80%	98%	98%

DISPLACEMENT INDICATORS

Individual-Level Indicators

	Has deed for house	Has deed for land	Name on house deed	Name on land deed
Total	**77%**	**79%**	**98%**	**98%**
LNOB Multidimensional				
Urban/Rural Poor				
Urban HH in poorest quintile	72%	82%	97%	96%
Rural HH in poorest quintile	63%	65%	97%	97%
Rural Landlessness				
Rural, does not own land	71%		96%	
Single mother status				
Single mother	87%	89%	98%	97%
Gender and disability				
Male with disability	80%	62%	88%	90%
Female with disability	83%	90%	99%	99%
Gender and education				
Male, did not finish primary school	68%	69%	96%	96%
Female, did not finish primary school	77%	80%	99%	98%

DISPLACEMENT INDICATORS

Individual-Level Indicators

	Has deed for house	Has deed for land	Name on house deed	Name on land deed
Total	**77%**	**79%**	**98%**	**98%**
Geography				
Province				
Banteay Meanchey	76%	84%	97%	98%
Battambang	55%	80%	98%	97%
Kampong Cham	80%	80%	96%	97%
Kampong Chhnang	83%	90%	99%	95%
Kampong Speu	90%	92%	99%	99%
Kampong Thom	71%	73%	99%	99%
Kampot	74%	82%	97%	97%
Kandal	81%	90%	94%	97%
Koh Kong	92%	83%	100%	99%
Kratie	65%	68%	94%	95%
Mondulkiri	74%	69%	99%	99%
Phnom Penh	84%	86%	98%	99%
Preah Vihear	73%	54%	95%	97%
Prey Veng	87%	89%	99%	97%
Pursat	89%	90%	96%	97%
Ratanakiri	31%	32%	91%	96%
Siem Reap	75%	68%	100%	100%
Preah Sihanouk	79%	85%	93%	91%
Stung Treng	53%	51%	96%	94%
Svay Rieng	61%	75%	99%	99%
Takeo	81%	84%	99%	97%
Oddar Meanchey	82%	71%	99%	99%
Kep	61%	70%	98%	98%
Pailin	91%	92%	99%	98%
Tboung Khmum	81%	86%	99%	97%
Total	**77%**	**79%**	**98%**	**98%**

ALL INDICATORS Household Indicators					
	% of agricultural households not registered AND dependent on agriculture (more than 60% of HH income)	% of agricultural households with loans, no savings, and no remittances	% of agricultural households with loans, no savings, and no remittances, AND experienced a shock in previous year	% of respondents who are food insecure for at least 1 of 8 indicators	Among those with food insecurity, the average number of indicators (/8) for which the households register as food insecure
Geography					
Province					
Banteay Meanchey	2%	12%	11%	34%	3.0
Battambang	6%	30%	20%	48%	4.0
Kampong Cham	6%	25%	12%	32%	4.1
Kampong Chhnang	11%	22%	11%	67%	3.1
Kampong Speu	2%	29%	3%	57%	2.1
Kampong Thom	15%	18%	9%	50%	2.8
Kampot	3%	23%	5%	70%	4.0
Kandal	10%	24%	9%	28%	3.0
Kep	3%	20%	1%	75%	3.3
Koh Kong	2%	9%	5%	73%	3.1
Kratie	22%	26%	7%	41%	4.5
Mondul Kiri	15%	32%	7%	81%	3.3
Otdar Meanchey	17%	39%	30%	80%	4.0
Pailin	22%	38%	22%	38%	3.9
Phnom Penh	1%	21%	5%	18%	2.2
Preah Sihanouk	10%	51%	15%	36%	3.9
Preah Vihear	11%	50%	11%	76%	4.3
Prey Veng	11%	27%	9%	52%	3.2
Pursat	8%	35%	28%	75%	4.6
Ratanak Kiri	11%	36%	15%	49%	2.6
Siem Reap	10%	26%	9%	55%	4.0
Stung Treng	9%	17%	6%	72%	4.2
Svay Rieng	2%	27%	2%	28%	2.5
Takeo	6%	23%	4%	30%	3.2
Tboung Khmum	12%	19%	7%	41%	2.9

Annex 4 – List of consultations

The key informants participating in this research are summarised in the following table:

#	Scope	Date	Location	Participation
UN Consultations (n=3; with 8 agencies)				
1	Rights, Governance and Policy related to LNOB Principle	25/1/24	Online	OHCHR (x2) ILO IOM
2	Health inequalities (opportunity and outcome)	30/1/24	Online	UNFPA (x2) UNAIDS (x2) WHO
3	Socio-economic factors related to LNOB Principle	2/2/24	Online	OHCHR (x2) UNICEF (UN Women – written response)
Ministry Consultations (n=2)				
1	Women and girls	5/2/24	Phnom Penh	Ministry of Women's Affairs
2	Disability, illness, mental health	24/5/24	Online	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation
Key Informant Interviews (n=8)				
1	Land rights/issues	9/1/24	Online	Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR)
2	Disability	10/1/24	Online	Cambodia Disabled People's Organisation (CDPO)
3	Gender	22/1/24	Online	Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC)
4	Legal identity	23/1/24	Online	The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI)
5	LGBT+	25/1/24	Online	Rainbow Community Kampuchea (RoCK)
6	Gender	29/1/24	Online	Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD)
7	Indigenous Peoples	31/1/24	Online	Cambodia Indigenous People's Organisation (CIPO)
8	Domestic violence	2/2/24	Phnom Penh	Cambodian Women's Crisis Centre

Annex 5 – Quantitative Indicators Table

Factor	Indicator/Group	Measure		
		Individual Level	Household Level	Commune Level
LNOB group	Rural	Respondent surveyed in a cluster classified as rural (DHS)	HH is in a cluster classified as rural (DHS)	-
	Women	Respondent identifies as female (DHS)	HoH identifies as female (DHS)	Share of HHs with a female head (CDB)
	HIV positive	Tested positive for HIV (DHS)	-	Share of HHs in which at least one member has HIV (CDB)
	Has disability	Respondent has "a lot of difficulty" seeing, hearing, remembering, communicating, walking, or caring for themselves (DHS)	HoH has "a lot of difficulty" seeing, hearing, remembering, communicating, walking, or caring for themselves (DHS)	Share of population that has a disability (CDB)
	Younger persons	Respondent's age (ranging from 15 to 49) (DHS)	HoH is under 35 years old (DHS)	Share of population under 18 (CDB)
	Elderly persons	-	HoH is over 60 years old (DHS)	Share of population that is elderly without a caretaker (CDB)
	Ethnic minority	-	-	Share of HHs who belong to an indigenous ethnic group (Phnong, Kouy, Stieng, Mil, Kroal, Thmorn, Khaonh, Tompuonn, Charay, Kroeung, Kavet, Saouch, Lun, Kachak, Praov, Rordei, Chorng, Por, Soury, or other)[254] (CDB)
	Religious minority	Respondent does not identify as Buddhist	-	-
	Homeless	-	-	Share of population that does not have a permanent home (CDB)
	Landless or Land Insecure	Respondent does not own land, either by one's self or with someone else (DHS)	No member of HH owns agricultural land (DHS)	-

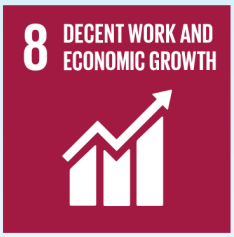
254. Note, the CDB provides data at the village level for the number of HHs who belong to each listed ethnic group (i.e., number of Phnong households, number of Kouy households, number of Stieng households, and so on). However, membership in one ethnic group does not exclude HHs from also identifying with another ethnic group. As such, some households might be counted two times, leading to shares over 100%. The share of HHs who belong to an indigenous ethnic group is thus best interpreted as an estimate of the share of a commune population that is indigenous, that may overestimate the prevalence of indigenous individuals in a community.

	Illiterate persons	Respondent cannot read full sentence in Khmer (DHS)	-	-
	Poor	Respondent resides in a HH classified as belonging to the lowest 20% of all surveyed HHs in terms of assets and wealth (DHS)	HH is classified as belonging to the lowest 20% of all surveyed HHs in terms of assets and wealth (DHS)	-
	Single mother	Respondent is a female HoH who is not currently living with a partner or married and who has at least one child under 18 who lives with them (DHS)	-	-
	Drug user	-	-	Share of HHs with a family member who uses drugs (CDB)
Governance	Access to identification documents	-	All children under 5 have a birth certificate (among HHs with children < 5 only) (DHS)	-
	Access to improved water source	-	HH accesses water through one of the following means: piped water, public taps, standpipes, tube wells, boreholes, protected dug wells and springs, rainwater, water delivered via a tanker truck or a cart with a small tank, or bottled water (DHS)	-
	Access to improved sanitation	-	HH uses one of the following for sanitation : flush/pour flush toilets that flush water and waste to a piped sewer system, septic tank, pit latrine, or unknown destination; ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines; pit latrines with slabs; or composting toilets.(DHS)	-
	Access to electricity	-	HH has electricity	-
	Access to solid waste collection	-	-	Share of HHs who receive garbage collection (CDB)
	Access to health services	-	-	Average distance to a health center, across all villages in the commune (CDB)

	Access to education services	-	-	Number of primary school classrooms in commune, per 1000 children under 18 (CDB)
		-	-	Number of lower secondary school classrooms in commune, per 1000 children under 18 (CDB)
		-	-	Number of upper secondary school classrooms in commune, per 1000 children under 18 (CDB)
Socio-economic	Employment	Respondent has not worked in last 12 months		-
	Home ownership	Respondent owns house (either by self or jointly)		-
	Land ownership	Respondent owns land (by self or jointly)		-
	Access to banking	-	At least one member of the HH has a bank account (DHS)	-
	Access to personal transportation	-	At least one member of HH owns a moto, car, or both (DHS)	-
	Child health / malnutrition	-	At least one child under 5 is stunted (among HHs with children < 5 only) (DHS)	Number of children under 5 in the commune who died in 2019, per 1000 children under 5 (CDB)
		-	At least one child under 5 is wasted (among HHs with children < 5 only) (DHS)	-
	Child absenteeism	-	At least one child between 7 and 11 years old is not attending school (among HHs with children between 7 and 11 only) (DHS)	-

Discrimination	Discrimination by HIV status	Respondent indicates they would discriminate against someone with HIV (indicates they would not buy vegetables from someone with HIV or/ and indicates that children with HIV should not be able to go to school) (DHS)	-	
	Victim of violence	Respondent ever experienced physical or sexual violence (women only) (DHS)	-	Number of victims of sexual abuse in 2019, per 1000 people (CDB)
		Respondent experienced physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months (women only) (DHS)	-	Number of victims of domestic violence in 2019, per 1000 people (CDB)
				Share of HHs experiencing violence in the home (CDB)
	Financial empowerment	Respondent decides on large household purchases either alone or jointly with partner	-	-
Exposure to shocks	Unexploded ordinance			Share of land area in commune that is mined or is suspected to have mines/ERW (CDB)
	Climate vulnerability			Composite vulnerability index of commune vulnerability to storms, floods, and droughts (NCSD CVI)
Displacement	Land security	Respondent has a title deed or government document for any land they own (among persons who own land) (DHS)		Number of land conflict cases in the commune in 2019, per 1000 HHs (CDB)
	Land security	Respondent has their name on the title deed or document for land they own (among persons who own land and possess documents) (DHS)		-
	Home ownership security	Respondent has a title deed or government document for any house they own (among persons who own a house) (DHS)		Share of families living in a house located on public land (CDB)

	Home ownership security	Respondent has their name on the title deed or document for houses they own (among persons who own a house and possess documents) (DHS)	-
Geography	Province	DHS can be analysed at the province level, and **is representative**	CDB and NCSD CVI can be analysed at the province level
	District	DHS can be analysed at the district level, but is **not representative**	CDB and NCSD CVI can be analysed at the district level
	Commune	DHS cannot be analysed at the level of commune/sangkat	CDB and NCSD CVI can be analysed at the commune level



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