KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
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Mid-Term and Strategic Review of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018

III. Strategic Directions Towards 2030

December 2017

COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Acknowledgement

His Excellency **Yim Chhay Ly**, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and Chairman of the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-SP&FSN), is pleased to launch the findings of the Mid Term and Strategic Review of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018 (MTRS-NSFSN). In so doing, he is pleased to acknowledge the importance of the contributions and active participation made by the staff of CARD, the line ministries, the sub-national authorities, the community representatives and NGOs who participated in the consultations of the MTRS-NSFSN. In addition, H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** wishes to thank the development partners who have assisted in every aspect of the Review, including the support received from the EU, USAID, GIZ, and UN agencies, including FAO, WFP and UNICEF, and the Civil Society Alliance of the SUN Network led by Helen Keller International. The critical review provided by the World Bank is also very much appreciated.

The work of the formally constituted Advisory Board for the MTSR, chaired by H.E. Mr. **Ngy Chanphal**, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of CARD was constituted from representatives of CARD and key ministries and development partners, has been fundamental in guiding the process and validating the results. The commitment of Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Ms. **Veena Reddy**, Acting Mission Director for USAID, has been very much appreciated. Many members of the TWG-SP&FSN have participated in the MTSR and their long-standing support is much valued in dealing with ongoing challenges for food security and nutrition in Cambodia. The Food Security and Nutrition Forum has served as a vital means of communicating progress with the review and discussing results.

After extensive consultation and review, the final documents were released by H.E. Dr. **Yim Chhay Ly** on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, Ms. **Claire Van der Vaeren**, UN Resident Coordinator and Mr. **David Kaatrud**, WFP Regional Director for Asia and Pacific Bureau on 6 February 2018. Three separate documents have been generated for the MTSR to include multiple inputs and these documents have been widely circulated and discussed in draft form. The three documents are also supported by a number of contributed papers and ongoing analysis. The three main components of the MTSR are:

1. **Progress Inventory 2016**
2. **Situation Update 2017**
3. **Strategic Directions Towards 2030**

Whilst these documents are released together, they are provided as separate documents on the grounds that each of these can stand as an independent analysis. As evidenced by these documents, the MTSR has generated important findings

and guidance for the way forward. It serves as a foundation for the drafting of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2019-2023 and has given fresh impetus to national efforts to combat malnutrition. The process of consultation and discussion has also served as an important avenue for learning and capacity building at national and sub-national level.

Good progress towards the strategic objectives has been made to the end of 2016. Our directions going forward are clear. The existing strategy serves well to guide actions for the remaining period to the end of 2018. All sectoral policies and programmes should incorporate these directions and each contribute under their identified areas of responsibility and mandates. However, there is a need to strengthen the coordinating mechanisms for this work at national and sub-national levels, especially to ensure the capacity to monitor and evaluate progress is in place by the end of the strategic period. We must also ensure that all parties work together with renewed effort in order to meet the deadline for ending hunger in Cambodia by 2030. We are in a position to set an example globally, by working unfailingly towards that objective, working together with unity under wise leadership of **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the guidance of the Rectangular Strategy, the National Strategic Development Plan and other existing policies, strategies and plans.

Acronyms

Government Institutions

CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoH	Ministry of Health
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia

UN/NGOs/Institutions

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HLPE	High-Level Panel of Experts
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Others

BCC	Behavior Change Communication
DM	Disaster Management
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
GDP	Gross domestic product
HDI	Human Development Index
MTSR	Mid-Term and Strategic Review
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSFSN	National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
SUN-CSN	SUN Civil Society Network
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age

1. Introduction

The right to food is a fundamental human right recognized by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, enshrined in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by Cambodia in 1992, and supported by on-going United Nations (UN) summits and initiatives including the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 which aims towards zero hunger. The right to food recognizes that ending hunger means ensuring access to nutritious food for the most vulnerable, increasing agricultural production through sustainable and resilient food systems and tackling the multidimensional causes of malnutrition, including health and sanitation.

SDG2: Zero Hunger

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

An ASEAN memeber, Cambodia is committed to elimination of food insecurity and hunger. The nation has made great strides in improving the food security situation within the country by adopting a multi-sectoral approach to tackling malnutrition and poverty, developing comprehensive strategies and policies and making an effort to mainstream food security and nutrition into different agendas.

Improving food security is an important development priority of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), addressed in the Government's Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase III 2014-2018 (RGC, 2013), which strengthens the government's engagement in the areas of gender equality, nutrition and social protection, and in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014–2018 (RGC, 2014b) formulated to implement the Strategy and articulate it across all national sector policies. To ensure a platform for joint inter-sectorial action to enhance food security and nutrition (FSN), the RGC has entrusted the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) with the development and implementation of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN).

In 2014, the RGC launched the NSFSN 2014-2018 (RGC, 2014a) with the goal that "by 2018, poor and food-insecure Cambodians have substantially improved physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary

needs and food preferences and optimize the utilization of this food to keep a healthy and productive life." This is supported by the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020, and a commitment to SDG 2 under the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025 (RGC, 2016a). Progress is being tracked through review of the NSFSN indicators, the Joint Monitoring Indicators and the localising of SDG indicators that will be concluded by the end of 2017.

(SDG 2: Continued)

2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality

2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed[1]

Source: UN (n.d.)

1 Sub-goal 2.5 is not covered under the MTSR of the NSFSN.

With a number of key strategies relating to FSN in Cambodia needing to be reviewed and renewed, a Mid-Term and Strategic Review (MTSR) of the NSFSN 2014-2018 was launched in April 2017 to allow for a simultaneous reflection on past achievements, analysis of the current FSN context in Cambodia, and to look at how to prepare for the forthcoming strategies. The MTSR involved information gathering through a survey on past achievements, desk reviews, key stakeholder interviews and a series of formal consultations (CARD, 2017b, 2017c) at sub-national and national level, towards the following objectives:

1. Review past achievements under the NSFSN up to 2016.
2. Review challenges and barriers preventing accomplishment of the strategy and ways to resolve these issues.
3. Consider outstanding actions under the strategy as of end 2016 and update plans for completion by 2018.
4. Provide a concise situational analysis of the present situation for FSN built upon a wide-ranging analysis, incorporating cross sectional and multi-stakeholder perspectives.
5. Produce a roadmap towards 2030 and lay the foundations for the NSFSN 2019-2023.
6. Disseminate the results of the MTSR widely.
7. Ensure all data, tools employed and materials assembled for the MTSR are securely stored and widely accessible via a common information platform.

This overview aims to provide a common analysis for alignment of strategies of national and partner strategies.

2. Progress to Date

Progress has been made on all fronts in implementing the priority actions for the NSFSN 2014-2018. Virtually all priority actions are underway, although coverage across the country has been uneven. There is strong support for a comprehensive approach to combatting malnutrition. This support extends from the highest level in Cambodia and is reflected in policy statements and high-level directives from the RGC and development partners and concerted actions throughout the country. It is based on the understanding that the basic causes of malnutrition are subject to cross-sectoral influences and that some problems require an integrated approach (integrating agriculture, health, rural development, education etc.)

"Cambodia has seen strong economic growth, enabling improvements in food and nutrition security..."

Cambodia has seen strong economic growth, averaging 7.7% per annum over the past two decades and the country is expecting to continue to maintain the average growth rate at 7% in the medium term. Economic growth, diversification and livelihood improvement have enabled sizeable improvements in food and nutrition security, as reflected in the scoring for the Global Hunger Index 2017 (von Grebmer, et al., 2017). Although still rated as having serious problems with hunger, the Kingdom of Cambodia has experienced relatively rapid improvements and is now approaching the moderate category. In the global rankings, Cambodia has achieved the highest percentage reductions for countries measured as having serious hunger or above, in the scoring of the Global Hunger Index for the period 2000-2017.

A strong planning framework and the mechanisms for coordination of development efforts are in place and the RGC calls upon all responsible line ministries, development partners, civil society, and the private sector to continue their cooperation in implementing the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018, the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025, the Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018 (MAFF, 2014), the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020 and other sectoral strategic plans relating to food security and nutrition, to ensure all Cambodian people have improved physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious foods for healthy and productive lives.

2.1 Availability

Agricultural production, with a focus on paddy rice and to a lesser degree on secondary crops, has outpaced population growth and demand resulting in improvements in food availability. Cambodia has been self-sufficient in rice production since 1996 facilitating a growing rice export drive, the production of which has increased from some four to almost ten million tonnes between 2000 and 2016 (World Bank, 2017; MAFF, 2017). The dominance of rice in agricultural production means it now accounts for some 72 percent of planted area. Undernourishment has fallen

dramatically over time from a high of 36.7 percent in 1998 to some 14 percent of the population (FAO, 2017a) in 2015 based on the national food balance sheet, and highlighting the combination of improved food production, imports and exports facilitating a shift towards more people meeting their energy requirements.

2.2 Access

Alongside improvements in availability, there have been some improvements in access, evidenced by declining poverty rates and sizeable improvements in Cambodia's Human Development Index (HDI). From 1990 to 2015, Cambodia's annual HDI growth rate of 1.84% has outpaced the average in East Asia and the Pacific, currently at 1.35%, making it among the top seven countries in the world with the fastest HDI growth rate and ranking at 143 out of 188 countries. The percentage of Cambodians living under the national poverty line has declined from 53.2% in 2004 to 13.5% in 2014 (MEF, 2016), based on income poverty headcount. Multidimensional poverty headcount stands higher at 31.6% of the population (UNDP, 2016). Cambodia's growth has seen national per capita GDP rise from US$1,215 in 2015 to US$1,435 in 2017 (Cabinet of the Prime Minister, 2018), while expenditure per capita has also grown. Spending on food increased by 5.5 percent between 2009 and 2015, while in the same period non-food spending increased by 11 percent. This suggests that there have been improvements in purchasing power, including amongst the poorest segments of society. The positive expenditure growth means that food now makes up a smaller proportion of total expenditure (NIS, 2009).

2.3 Utilization

The percentage of households with inadequate dietary diversity has declined significantly from 46 percent in 2008 to 12 percent in 2014 (NIS, 2014). Improvements in income and wealth, increased dietary diversity, education (especially maternal education), expansion of healthcare coverage, access to water and sanitation, and health and nutrition promotion behaviours such as exclusive breastfeeding, particularly in rural areas, serve as a backdrop to improvements in nutritional status (NMCHC, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). In recent years, a more enabling policy environment has also increased emphasis on improving FSN, and with strong support for an integrated approach towards these (RGC, 2014a; MoH, 2014).

Food utilization that is closely related to nutritional outcomes, has also seen some significant progress. Chronic malnutrition (stunting) rates have fallen from 50 percent in 2000 to 32 percent in 2014, on-track against objectives laid out in the NSFSN. In the same period wasting rates fell from 17 to 9.6 percent, while anaemia amongst children under five fell from 62 to 56 percent, and amongst women of reproductive age (15-49 years) from 47 to 45 percent. Alongside that, since 1990, the country has more than halved maternal mortality and achieved nearly universal primary education enrolment (NIS et al., 2015; FAO, 2017a).

2.4 Stability

A Disaster Management (DM) Law was passed in 2015, ushering in a framework for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response to support efforts to address shocks from key natural disasters such as flooding and storms. In addition, the RGC has signed up to the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), with commitments to tackle climate related vulnerabilities.

In time of shocks, taking on (additional) debt, often at exorbitant rates, is one of the key negative coping strategies adopted by vulnerable households. RGC introduced an interest charge cap of 18 percent to microfinance loans; previously interest rates could be as high as between 20-30 percent (Leng/NBC, 2016).

3. Remaining Issues

Despite the impressive strides towards improved national level growth and progress on FSN, a number of issues remain. These include an unevenness of progress across the country, demographic and socio-economic groups, while Cambodia also still lags behind on a number of human development indicators. Moreover, sustainability of progress could be challenged by economic and disaster shocks, and therefore increasing emphasis will need to be placed on risk reduction and resilience building (CARD, 2017a; RGC, 2017). These issues will need to be tackled in the context of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. While an emphasis will be on SDG 2 – zero hunger, there will need to be clear links with other critical SDGs, and particularly: 1 – no poverty, 3 – good health and wellbeing, 4 – quality education, 5 – gender equality, 6 – clean water and sanitation, 8 – decent work and economic growth, 10 – reduced inequalities, 13 – climate action, and 17 – partnerships.

3.1 Availability

From a food availability perspective, while production of rice has grown apace, this narrow production focus has meant limited crop diversification within the country. This limited diversity is reflected in household dietary consumption patterns where, despite increasing availability of food in the markets, rice remains paramount in the diet.

"while production of rice has grown apace, narrow production focus has meant limited crop diversification..."

3.2 Access

Income distribution and consequently food access remains challenges as the benefits of progress have not yet been equitably distributed. Nationally representative data (except Phnom Penh) collected in December 2016 showed that 80 percent of the population accounts for only 40 percent of the total income, while less than 20 percent have 60 percent of the income (WFP, 2016). Poorer groups have made slower gains than richer groups, with the bottom 50 percent of population living off less than US$ 2.50 per person per day.

"... 80 percent of the population accounts for only 40 percent of the total income, while less than 20 percent have 60 percent of the income..."

Economic benefits have been accrued more in Phnom Penh rather than in the Plains or Tonle Sap regions, with income disparities highest in the North East of the country where some of the lowest income households reside (UNDP, 2017; WFP, 2017b). Inequality of access has meant that while food is widely available, non-affordability results in inadequate dietary diversity. Dietary diversity is lowest among poorest households, where 22 percent of the lowest quintile registered an inadequately diverse diet. In the North East, up to 66 percent of households may not be able to access the most affordable, nutritionally adequate diet (NIS, 2009, 2014; von Grebmer et al., 2014, 2017). Similarly, women continue to face inequity of access with subsequent nutritional implications (FAO, 2017b). Continued challenges related to food poverty and nutrition are compounded by related issues of access to livelihood opportunities and public services. For sustainable development to be assured for the entire population, the scale of these inequities requires redress as part of the "leave no-one behind" agenda.

3.3 Utilization

Concerns also remain on the nutritional front where, at the current trajectory, multiple key SDG targets on reducing malnutrition would not be met. There is a compelling case to prioritise nutrition as an SDG 'accelerator' that would promote early achievement of this goal. This will generate positive spill-over effects into areas such as education, health and the availability of a productive and skilled labour force. Undernutrition remains a problem for some 24 percent of the children under the age of five years, while stunting still affects one-third of children, with the associated inter-generational impact. Acute malnutrition (or "wasting") has remained steadily high with 10 percent of children wasted. This rate is well above that envisaged by SDG 2 Target 2.2 and above Middle-Income Country peers. Some 45 percent of the US$266 million annual economic burden due to malnutrition is estimated to be due to stunting, while just under three percent is associated with acute malnutrition. The economic case for tackling stunting is therefore very evident, and it also remains essential to continue efforts to treat wasting, as evidence suggests this can adversely affect child growth and development. As stunting and wasting share many common risk factors, policy efforts could therefore facilitate links towards more integrated programming (NIS et al., 2014; NMCHC, 2016; CARD et al., 2013). Without increasing efforts and accelerated impacts in dealing with these stubborn problems of undernutrtion, there is a risk that multiple key SDG targets for reducing malnutrition will not be met.

"...there is a risk that multiple key SDG targets for reducing malnutrition will not be met..."

A mother's nutrition and behaviour, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, as well as the challenges in accessing sufficient food, can adversely impact a child's nutritional status. The high nutrient demands of pregnancy also make pregnant women more vulnerable to inadequate nutritional status, and data suggests that dietary diversity which is poor in normal times, show little improvements after pregnancy (NMCHC, 2016; WFP, 2017d). Currently, the NSFSN goal for undernutrition among

Nutrition as an SDG accelerator

Optimal nutrition is essential for achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals, and many SDGs impact nutrition security. Nutrition is hence linked to goals and indicators beyond Goal 2 which addresses hunger. A multi-sectoral nutrition security approach is necessary for success (SUN-CSA, 2017).

Enhancing focus on nutrition would encourage all actions to contribute in a specific or sensitive manner to furthering nutrition targets, and in return ensure greater contribution to the remaining SDG2 targets as well as many others across the SDG spectrum.

Nutrition is Essential for the Success of all the SDGs (SUN-CSN, 2017)

women of reproductive age (WRA) is not on-track with a 14 percent prevalence of undernutrition in 2014; above the 8 percent target for 2015. Anaemia also remains stubbornly high, averaging at 45 percent amongst women, and 56 percent amongst children. According to the 2016 Global Nutrition Report, Cambodia ranks 160 out of 185 countries with the highest WRA anaemia, which is linked to physiology, rather than health and diet, and therefore potential solutions remain unclear for the country (IFPRI, 2016; NIS et al., 2001, 2015; WFP, 2017d; Wieringa et al., 2016).

Socioeconomic inequities and access to basic services, such as health, water and sanitation, and education drive many of the deprivations that can contribute to malnutrition (NMCHC, 2016). While access to water and sanitation facilities has improved, sanitation practices continue to require improvement to reflect the standards of countries with Low Middle Income Country status. The proportion of the population using an improved drinking water source rose from some 23 percent in 1990, to 75.5 percent in 2015 and the proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility rose from 2.9 to 42 percent in the same period (WHO & UNICEF, 2015; World Bank, 2017).

Moreover, the key to strengthening investment in human capital is through nutrition as well as education. Nutritional deficiencies can affect educational attainment and reduce contribution in the work place, as well as add to strains on the health sector. Investment in education can enhance awareness and reduce negative impacts (CARD et al., 2013). Cambodia has made positive progress in improving access to primary education, particularly in rural areas. Net primary enrolment increased from 81 percent in 2001 to 98.4 percent in 2015. The quality of education requires improvement as exemplified by poor learning outcomes with some 39 percent of grade 6 pupils found to have below basic proficiency in reading in Khmer (MoEYS, 2015). Limited classroom hours compared to peers and limited numbers of adequately trained teachers require address. There is also a relatively high, though largely static annual dropout rate at some 10 percent at primary and 20 percent at lower secondary level, with concerns on attendance and absenteeism. The RGC is increasing the national education budget, with an emphasis on teacher recruitment, training and retention.

3.4 Stability

Challenges in keeping apace or sustaining improvements in access and utilization also remain, with large swathes of the population remaining vulnerable to periodic shocks that can counter these positive gains. Ninety percent of Cambodia's poor live in rural areas and remain vulnerable to livelihood or climate shocks. Illustrating the vulnerability of those who live just above the poverty line, the World Bank found in 2011 that a small shock of some KHR 1,200 per day could cause many near poor households to become poor, and thus double the poverty rate at that time (World Bank 2013).

Findings from a study on the impact of El Nino drought in 2015-2016 (FAO et al., 2016) included 37 percent of surveyed households reporting water shortages, with higher water prices putting disproportionate financial pressure on poor households. Drought-related crop losses led to a 22 percent decline in household paddy and cassava production, and consequently 62 percent of households reported income losses in the preceding year, with 19 percent of household income lost on average; a loss of US$ 0.19 per person per day for the near poor. Attempting to mitigate such losses, affected households took on additional loans averaging US$

1,282 each, adding to a growing trend for accumulation of debt amongst poorer households. While research suggests that taking on loans can help households with existing poverty and/or vulnerability in the short-term, it also raises concerns about the sustainability of poverty reduction gains overtime (UNDP, 2017). Shocks such as El Nino also adversely affected household dietary diversity, which declined significantly. The percentage of households lacking dietary diversity increased from 12 percent in 2014, to 18 percent in 2016. Data from a vulnerability analysis also highlighted the challenge of global shocks, such as the global financial and food price crises. These combined crises also contributed to a reversal of progress for wasting, which increased from 8 to 11 percent between 2005 and 2010 (NIS et al., 2011, 2015; UNDP, 2017).

Finally, while there has been strong support for an increasingly integrated approach to tackling FSN, findings from a series of national and sub-national consultations (CARD, 2017b, 2017c) suggest the need for further strengthening of institutional arrangements to implement the NSFSN. These consultations recommended a multi-sectoral approach, including: (1) consolidating, prioritising and sequencing its current 64 priority actions and over 120 indicators; (2) strengthening sub-national linkages to ensure ground-level implementation; (3) securing increasingly local funding to ensure priorities are resourced sustainably; and, (4) shifting the focus of achievement towards outcome-oriented results with a lesser emphasis on activities and outputs. These issues are addressed in Section 6 below.

4. Emerging Issues

As well as on-going concerns, a number of new FSN issues and opportunities are emerging associated with the socioeconomic and climatic changes occurring in the country. The drivers of economic growth to date have centred on the export of goods and services, particularly garments and tourism. Export growth has been facilitated by low-skilled inexpensive labour and migration, allowing rapid change from a low base. Going forward, there is an opportunity to build on this growth. On the risk-side, in the future, these drivers may not be as effective without enhanced investment in human capital, including a particular emphasis on nutrition, to maintain productivity and competitiveness (World Bank, 2017; WFP, 2017b). The rise of wage labour has also broken the traditionally strong link between households and owned food production. Linked to that, inequities that limit access to food, as well as challenges in food utilization, will need to be tackled to address underlying poverty and vulnerability.

"...there is an opportunity to build on this growth. On the risk-side, in the future, these drivers may not be as effective without enhanced investment in human capital..."

Rural to urban migration accounts for 56 percent of total migration, predominantly to Phnom Penh, and has been driven primarily by economic factors that have helped facilitate growth and poverty reduction (UNDP, 2017; WFP, 2017a). However, the increasing pace of urbanization has also seen the growth of poorer outer city areas, polarizing urban life and seeing some of the poorest and richest people live side by side. For the urban poor, access to water, sanitation and health facilities are sometimes constrained, even though somewhat better than in rural areas. As the pace of urbanisation continues, this is expected to place increasing strain on already stretched access to services (WFP, 2017a; UNFPA, 2014). A more sophisticated measure of well-being and/or poverty – such as a Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – may prove more useful to policy makers in the future now that income poverty has reached historically low levels but vulnerability remains a risk.

Cambodia has also seen changing dietary practices toward more convenience foods, an increasing trend towards obesity especially among women, and heightened risks of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). This trend is partly linked to, but not solely an urban trend. The NSFSN 2014-2018 goal for over-nutrition among WRA is a target of 12 percent for 2018, although this stood at 18 percent in 2014 (NIS et al., 2001, 2015; NMCHC, 2016). Urbanization also has had some adverse implications for the nutritional well-being of children, with rates of exclusive breastfeeding lowest in Phnom Penh (77 percent). Certain urban environments, such as garment factories that may not have enabling legal frameworks or facilities, could also serve as an opportunity for enhancing health and nutrition awareness and practices amongst an extensive audience.

The impact of climate change has some expected adverse implications for FSN. It is expected that at current rates, the pace of climate change in the next 40 years is likely to be faster than the adaptation of local agricultural methodologies (IFPRI, 2013). Cambodia faces high risk from the impact of natural disasters, ranking ninth on World Risk Index and standing at 41 of 171 countries in terms of vulnerability (Garschagen et al., 2016; WFP, 2017b), with the most vulnerable populations residing around the Tonle Sap Basin. This risk is exacerbated by on-going degradation of natural resources. Official estimates suggest forest cover declined from nearly 60 percent in 2006 to less than 47 percent in 2014 (RGC, 2015; World Bank, 2017).

Externally financed projects have largely supported efforts towards softer developments and behaviour change in recent years, in fields such as water and sanitation hygiene (WASH), nutrition and environment, while locally financed expenditure has traditionally been allocated towards infrastructure projects. Cambodia's on-going economic development may be accompanied by shift from external grants to loans, as part of the continuing evolution of development assistance for the country. Moving forward, creative financing options from domestic and non-traditional external sources could be looked at to bolster key public expenditures for on-going development equity.

5. Strategies to Address Food Security and Nutrition Challenges

The strategies recommended in this section arise through analysis of information gathered by desk review, key stakeholder interviews and a series of consultations at sub-national and national level (CARD, 2017b, 2017c). Parallel efforts will have to continue on multiple fronts to further improve food security and nutrition. These will have to be prioritised and sequenced, with emphasis placed on accelerators of change. Prior efforts have largely focussed on strengthening availability, with a particular emphasis on rice production. There is a need to increase the focus on improving food access through more equitable and inclusive growth as well as enhanced social protection measures, and to strengthen utilization through enhanced nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive measures (UNICEF, 2015).[1]

"There is a need to increase focus on improving food access through more equitable and inclusive growth as well as enhanced social protection measures, and to strengthen utilization through enhanced nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive measures..."

These will in turn act as enablers for improved FSN. To facilitate that shift, efforts regarding food availability will have to move towards improving food diversity and quality, and a more nutrition-sensitive agriculture. While the context of the current NSFSN will continue to be shaped by the Food Security Framework, moving forward, it is suggested that a modified framework reflective of new paradigms could be considered. To ensure a more focused national strategy, its emphasis could also shift to priority cross-cutting themes that add value by bringing key stakeholders together, while line Ministry strategies could focus on taking forward specific sectoral areas of work. Strengthening the institutional arrangements and capacity building for improving FSN will need to underpin these.

1 *"Nutrition-specific interventions address the immediate causes of undernutrition, like inadequate dietary intake and some of the underlying causes like feeding practices and access to food. Nutrition-sensitive interventions can address some of the underlying and basic causes of malnutrition by incorporating nutrition goals and actions from a wide range of sectors. They can also serve as delivery platforms for nutrition-specific interventions."*

5.1 Availability: Enhance Focus on Quality, Diversity, Resilient and Nutrition-sensitive Agriculture

2 ZERO HUNGER

Sub-goal

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

Strategic Considerations for Cambodia

- *Diversify agricultural production - nutritious food production*
- *Improve value chain in production & processing – including fortification*
- *Improve food quality and safety (import, export & local market)*
- *Promote efficient, value-adding sustainable agricultural techniques*
- *Improve availability/stability and efficiency in use of inputs*
- *Review export-drive focus including comparative advantages*

Building on gains made in agriculture over the lifetime of the current NSFSN, emphasis moving forward will require a shift in focus from increasing production quantity to quality, with enhanced diversification of production to more nutritious foods and towards more nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Diversification and improving quality can raise the incomes of smallholder farmers, increase resilience to shocks and thus improve the access dimension of food security. At the same time, diversification will improve the nutrition dimension for the population in general by increasing the availability of products rich in micronutrients. Improvements in food quality and safety (in both agriculture and the food industry) will be needed to support these changes. These are integral to nutrition-sensitive agriculture that addresses the underlying causes of malnutrition, by supporting the availability, access to and utilization of diverse, safe and nutritious foods, while simultaneously providing necessary income and other resources for producers and supporting human and environmental health, including accommodating for caregiving time.

"...a shift in focus is required from quantity to quality, with enhanced diversification of production to more nutritious foods and towards more nutrition-sensitive agriculture..."

Improvements in the value chain, including enhancing post-harvest storage, processing and fortification efforts, and promoting more efficient value-adding sustainable agricultural techniques and food systems (RGC, 2016a), will facilitate the production of more high-value products. To assist this, efforts will have to be made to address the constraints faced by farmers in terms of access to credit, technology, and wider markets. The RGC has already established policies for providing agricultural credit and extension services for better technology and farming practices, and efforts are being made to cap interest rates for micro-credit. Coverage and access to extension services and credit for smallholders can be improved to ensure better access to inputs, infrastructure and technology. Strengthened agricultural cooperatives can play an enabling role in this.

High levels of risk to natural and economic crises necessitate strengthening resilience in production systems. This can be achieved through more diverse agriculture, enhancing the use of monitoring systems for weather, price and FSN to prepare for potential shocks. A wider review of the current export-drive, as well as Cambodia's comparative advantages in production, would assist in strengthening agricultural resilience. Strengthening the existing food reserve system and access to emergency credit will support preparedness for emergency response efforts when required.

Finally, an emphasis on women's empowerment and education is integral to promotion of nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Recent research has highlighted that women's empowerment can support nutrition-sensitive agriculture, including through a greater likelihood of households adopting greater diversity of production when women are empowered. In addition, production diversity combined with nutrition-related behavioural change communication (BCC), increases the likelihood of dietary diversification for the household. While the NSFSN and related policies reference the issue of gender, they require a gender analysis of the current situation of men, women, boys and girls, and considerations that enable engagement in decision-making to fully realise the benefits of a gender emphasis (FAO, 2017b; WFP, 2017e; MoH, 2014).

10 Themes for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture in Cambodia

*1. **Promoting diversified food systems** that are nutrient-dense, climate-resilient, economically viable and locally available or adaptable, **and integrated agriculture** including a mix of crop, animal and fish production to enhance diversity;*

*2. **Homestead food production** for smallholders to produce a range of healthy food all year;*

*3. Strengthening **market access and links for smallholders**;*

*4. School based programmes on food production and consumption to strengthen **nutritional awareness**;*

*5. Enhancing **consumer nutrition and food safety awareness** through use of food standards;*

*6. **Supporting mothers'** awareness of diverse safe foods and access to child care;*

*7. **Enhancing women's empowerment and education** to facilitate their participation;*

*8. **Sustainable fisheries** through improved small-scale aquaculture and protection of the natural resource base*

*9. **Improving preservation, storage and processing** to retain nutritional value, improve shelf-life and safety;*

*10. **Enhanced integration between agriculture, health and WASH sectors** for improved nutrition.*

Availability

Link with access
- *Improve livelihoods of rural poor and smallholders*

Link with utilization
- *Enhance nutrition-sensitive agriculture*

Link with stability
- *Enhance food production and price monitoring system*
- *Promote resilience in production systems*
- *Strengthen food reserve*

Gender and FSN

Women and girls play critical roles in the food system, in the production, processing, preparation, consumption and distribution of food. Gender inequalities are evident in the way that women and girls having lower levels of education, lack of economic empowerment and decision-making power, suffer higher rates of trafficking, migration, gender-based violence, limited access to productive resources. Such inequalities combined with the undervaluation of women's contributions are major factors undermining food security.

To promote gender alignment of FSN policies, a key action to ensure alignment is to conduct gender analysis to inform policy development, which should take into consideration:

- *Understanding key factors such as social norms around decision-making, division of labour, impacts of unpaid work*
- *Designing gender markers and indicators that measure the differences in participation, benefits, outcomes and impacts for women, men, boys and girls, changes in gender relations; and*
- *Collecting sex and age disaggregated data to understand different impacts and issues for men, women, boys and girls, and inform opportunities to promote women's empowerment.*

Source: WFP (2017e)

5.2 Access: More Equitable Access to Food (Leave no-one behind)

Sub-goal

2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

Strategic Considerations for Cambodia

- *Increase attention to access to food (affordability, resources)*
- *Address access inequalities – leave no one behind, social groups, gender, intra-household dynamics*
- *Review intervention strategies based on proportional, absolute and layered vulnerabilities*
- *Enhancing informed choices of food –dietary diversity*
- *Enhance social safety nets and ensure ongoing link between FSN and social protection*

With extensive improvements in food availability, increased attention will be required to strengthen access to food particularly for the most vulnerable, in line with SDG 2 Target 1, "by 2030 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round" (UN, 2016; RGC, 2016a). Food access refers not only to the resources required to acquire an affordable diverse diet, including

decent employment and livelihood opportunities, but also to the wider right to food, gender and decision-making in food access. Access is at times misunderstood as an extension of food availability, and it is therefore recommended that in future strategy this aspect is considered separately. Issues of household access to food as well as dietary diversity and utilization, have now become the key issues of food and nutrition insecurity in Cambodia, and should serve as the axes of future strategy.

Addressing access inequalities, will need to form a key part of the vision to Leave No-one Behind, and includes improving access by geography, social/ethnic groups and within households. This will require a more in-depth targeting analysis to ensure support is in areas where access is most constrained in terms of population numbers, prevalence of Multi-Dimensional Poverty is high and nutrition indicators poor. To enhance purchasing power of the poorest and most vulnerable households and maintain the gains in poverty reduction, there needs to be concerted longer-term investment in human capital in the form of improved access to resources, quality education, improved health and nutrition. In the shorter-term, emphasis will need to be on enhancing livelihoods for the rural poor and the vision to realise a 100 percent increase in smallholder productivity and income (RGC, 2016a), strengthening social safety nets, and in parallel enhancing informed choice of food purchases to ensure affordable dietary diversity across all food groups, including animal source foods.

Targeting could focus:

- *Where there is high prevalence of vulnerabilities;*
- *Where the absolute burden is highest (i.e. where due to higher population density, the absolute numbers affected are higher); or*
- *Where there is a high intensity of challenges – for example where multiple overlays of deprivation apply.*

Social protection and safety net programmes are an increasingly important and recognised means of supporting FSN improvements. The recent National Social Protection Policy Framework has provided the policy context for this, and with implementation in early stages, it is necessary to: (a) appropriate resource-allocation and reach to the most vulnerable, (b) further clarify the implementation arrangements to ensure appropriate accountabilities, (c) enhance links with shock-preparedness and response to enable the most vulnerable households to cope better with shocks, and (d) clarify provisions for the urban poor require clarification. Strengthening of

National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF)

The RGC has adopted the NSPPF 2016-2025 to promote a strong social protection system and provide resilient protection for every citizen. With regards to FSN, the policy seeks to provide assistance including emergency responses (e.g. food supplies in times of crisis), protection of pregnant women and children (e.g. improving nutrition), and school feeding programme using locally grown food products (RGC, 2016b).

social protection and safety nets therefore requires more sophisticated measuring and monitoring systems to understand the multiple dimensions of vulnerability and their triggers. This can then inform programming along a parallel track of enhancing the shock responsiveness of both the social protection system and of humanitarian response mechanisms for the protection of the more vulnerable.

Key social expenditures around health and education often tip the balance for the most vulnerable families. Cambodia still has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the region (161 per 100,000 live births in 2015) (NIS, et al., 2001, 2015). A WFP (2017e) study also found that major health expenditures after the El Nino droughts, were the most likely factor tipping households into debt. While Government spending on health and education is on the increase, standing at around 1.3 and 2.1 percent of GDP respectively in 2015, it remains heavily dependent on external funding for service delivery. School based social assistance in the form of meals and scholarship is receiving increasing attention to support regular access to schools for the most vulnerable, but further expansion would be required to meet the need.

Access

Link with availability
- *Improve livelihoods of rural poor and smallholders*

Link with utilization
- *Enhance understanding of nutritional impact of limited access*
- *Enhance understanding of prioritised/convenience access*

Link with stability
- *Enhance food production and price monitoring system*
- *Promote resilience*
- *Shock responsiveness of social protection system and enhance humanitarian response mechanisms*

5.3 Utilization: Place Nutrition at the Forefront and Address Emerging Challenges

2 ZERO HUNGER

Sub-goal

2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons

Strategic Considerations for Cambodia

- *Improve access to WASH, social and health services and associated behavior change*
- *Improve infant, young child and maternal feeding practices*
- *Lifecycle approach to nutrition; first 1000 days, (pre) school-aged children, adolescents, etc.*
- *Address the double burden of malnutrition and increasing non-communicable diseases*
- *'Nutrition = investment in human capital': enhance evidence and awareness for decision-makers & advocates*
- *Enhancing communication strategies and messaging.*

The Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020, complemented more recently by the National Action Plan for Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia 2016-2025, have sought to increase emphasis on improved nutrition towards meeting SDG 2 target 2.2: "By 2030, to end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons". During sequencing of CSDG implementation, nutrition should therefore be identified as an 'accelerator' and accorded the highest priority so that it makes a further positive contribution to SDGs 3 (health), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), 9 (industry) and 10 (inequality). Making the case for nutrition as an investment in human capital will be critical for resourcing to reflect this prioritization. This will require further raising awareness of nutrition issues amongst decision-makers and information-providers. In parallel, the specifics and implementing of a national nutrition programme would need to be clarified, with clear links to improved food security and access to water and sanitation, as well as finalising its costing and securing funding, while ensuring clear accountabilities.

"During sequencing of CSDG implementation, nutrition should therefore be identified as an 'accelerator' and accorded the highest priority so that it makes a further positive contribution to SDGs 3 (health), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), 9 (industry) and 10 (inequality)."

Nutrition-specific strategies to address malnutrition must build on an understanding of the complex and multidimensional underlying causes of malnutrition. The rates of malnutrition vary extensively by geography and population density, and are impacted by economic and socio-cultural factors, a mother's nutritional status and (often recurring) shocks that are both natural and economic. At a broader level, there is a need for a continued focus on maternal health and prevention efforts, such as ensuring that pregnant and lactating mothers are adequately nourished, and for nutrition education and counselling for pregnant women. Simultaneously, efforts to address high stunting and wasting prevalence should continue to focus on children receiving exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life and adequate complementary feeding, in addition to breastfeeding, for children aged 6 to 23 months (CARD et al., 2013; WFP, 2017d).

As noted above, economic challenges of access can be mitigated through promoting agricultural diversification as well as improving availability of micronutrient-fortified complementary and staple foods at affordable prices. The latter requires additional efforts to strengthen and implement legislation around fortification programmes (e.g. salt iodization amongst others).

There is also a need to improve access to basic health (preventative and curative), education, water and sanitation. The nutritional status of children and adults alike is highly influenced by the quality of water, sanitation, and hygiene, of which the most progress has been made in water access, though improvements in water quality testing are required to ensure enhanced safety.

Socio-cultural practices also need to be addressed through nutrition-specific interventions that include enhancing BCC messaging and strategies on nutrition (including controlled advertising particularly around the consumption of salt, sugar, fat, the use of role-models etc.), improved feeding and sanitation practices. This is particularly true in the case of stunting, which is prevalent in both areas of low and high non-affordability of food, highlighting the importance of behavioural change, if the vision of reaching zero stunted children less than two years of age is to be reached by 2030 (RGC, 2016a).

The current focus is on the first 1000 days. While there is a continuing need to invest in the early years, this will need to be expanded to a lifecycle approach to nutrition to protect the investments made in the first 1000 days. This will require simultaneous efforts for other targets groups, such as (pre)school-aged children and adolescents in particular, given high levels of teenage pregnancies.

Undernutrition prevalence rates remain high throughout the country, but are particularly high in the Plateau areas of the North East. However, higher population density along the Tonle Sap also means higher absolute numbers, for example concerning stunting. Therefore, smart intervention strategies will be required to ensure limited funds can address the needs in areas where absolute numbers affected are highest, as well as in those of highest prevalence.

As well as on-going efforts to target high stunting levels, serious attention must be paid to the problem of acute malnutrition (wasting) among children under five, which has shown little improvement over the years. The RGC provides guidance on treatment of both moderate and severe acute malnutrition, though geographic coverage requires further improvement.

Finally, an additional strand of strategy will be to tackle changing dietary practices around convenience food consumption, the increasing problem of overweight and the rise in NCDs. These are linked to rapid urbanisation, the excessive consumption of rice in the diet and growing consumption of snack foods particularly amongst children. This is primarily associated with women of reproductive age in urban areas, but is also growing in rural areas and cutting across the social divide. In urban areas 22.5 percent of women were overweight or obese compared to 17 percent in rural areas, and 2 percent of children under 5 years (NMCHC, 2016; NIS et al., 2015; WFP, 2017d).

Based on the critical nutrition indicators, key target groups identified in consultation with stakeholders included children and pregnant and lactating women throughout the first 1000 days, (pre)school age children and adolescent girls. However, recognising the key role that men play in their families and the growing role of the elderly as caregivers in place of migrating parents, these will also need to be targeted as part of awareness-raising efforts.

Utilization	
	Link with availability • *Nutrition-sensitive agriculture* • *Nutritionally-enhanced foods including fortification (e.g. salt-iodisation amongst others)* *Link with access* • *Enhance awareness of affordable diet* *Link with stability* • *Continued access to services, minimising disruption to services caused by shocks (e.g. floods, drought etc)*

5.4 Stability: Protect Availability, Access and Utilization from Shocks and Stresses through Risk-reduction and Social Protection Measures.

Sub-goal

2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality

Strategic Consideration for Cambodia

- *Improve shock-responsiveness of Social Protection mechanisms with a view to FSN*
- *Increase focus on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR), including protection against environmental degradation*
- *Continue to strengthen disaster management (risk reduction, preparedness and response) mechanisms for all possible shocks (incl. climate, economic, health etc)*
- *Enhance community resilience to shocks*

With Cambodia susceptible to both natural and economic shocks, on-going efforts will be required to improve implementation and the shock-responsiveness of Social Protection mechanisms with a view to protecting food security and nutrition attainments, while simultaneously enhancing community resilience to climate and manmade shocks. Current low awareness and coverage of social assistance and social insurance mechanisms[2] will have to be coupled with the expansion of their resourcing and implementation arrangements. Increasing migration trends

2 *Social Assistance programmes include: 1. The Food Reserve, 2. Nutrition programmes for pregnant women and children, 3. Primary education scholarships, 4. the school feeding programme, and 5. vocational training. Social Insurance programmes include the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), as well as specific Funds for Civil Servants Veterans and People with Disabilities, and the Health Equity Fund (HEF), to protect against income insecurity*

have acted as a coping mechanism for many, and contributed valuable resources to families through remittances, with some further analysis required on the impact of migration on social protection. The National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2015 has the goal of developing a strategic plan for the RGC to ensure income security and reduce the economic and financial vulnerability of its citizens.

With rapid urbanisation and infrastructure expansion, it will be critical to implement robust urban planning and strengthen the resilience of Cambodia's infrastructure, including constructing flood-resilient roads, adopting minimum building standards, updating urban plans, and raising the platforms of wells and sanitation facilities to prevent flooding during the rainy season. Simultaneously the maintenance of natural resources will need to be strengthened through the sustainable management of protected areas and forests, as a foundation for climate resilience.

The framework for disaster management (DM) has been laid out through the Law on Disaster Management 2015, however, clarity for its implementation requires the passage of supporting sub-decrees to clarity accountabilities and secure associated budget towards implementation. The latter will require increased focus on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR), including protection against environmental degradation, as well as strengthening national and sub-national mechanisms for DM (risk reduction, preparedness and response) for all possible shocks (climate, economic, health shocks etc).

To support risk reduction, preparedness and response efforts, the gathering, analysing and dissemination of relevant information on population vulnerabilities by geography, weather monitoring and early warning, and monitoring of price patterns will be required to increase awareness of possible shocks, and guide policy-makers.

Stability

Link with availability

- *Monitoring and early warning of weather, price patterns and increase awareness of possible shocks*
- *Enhance resilience of farming systems (e.g. through production diversification, irrigation improvement)*

Link with access

- *Enhance social protection safety nets and awareness of these*

Link with utilization

- *Ensure adequate water and health conditions*
- *Uninterrupted access to health and social services*
- *Safeguard child feeding*

6. Food Security and Nutrition Governance Arrangements

Food security and nutrition issues remain key concerns in Cambodia and critical to human capital development. To facilitate coordination of these cross-cutting issues, CARD was established to provide oversight and lead on the NSFSN. The NSFSN serves both as policy framework and strategy, and moving forward requires a clear direction alight with related documents such as ministry strategies, the National Action Plan for Zero Hunger Challenges in Cambodia 2016-2025 and the Fast Track Road Map for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020. The increasing focus on nutrition has been a relatively recent development in policy terms, with emphasis now required to place it at the forefront of implementation efforts. Concurrently, there is a need to ensure that the interlinked nature of food security and nutrition is understood. Wider trends related to livelihoods, employment, migration and urbanization also need to be taken into account to understand the full policy context and ensure coherent response.

Currently the NSFSN has over 60 priority actions and over 100 related indicators. To aid priority setting these could be narrowed down to a few core cross-cutting priorities that are sequenced over time, and a smaller combination of indicators. This will allow articulation of line ministry strategies and monitoring of more detailed sectoral activities. To enable policy realisation, implementation arrangements for the cross-cutting NSFSN and related strategies need further strengthening by ensuring that the RGC is firmly in the driving seat, agreeing areas where there is added value from integrated work and where individual line ministries can move forward independently. Clear accountabilities for line ministries must be articulated and focal points empowered to action these. Cross-cutting horizontal priorities could include: (1) strengthening targeting to leave no one behind, (2) promoting a "whole of society engagement", (3) strengthening domestic, public and private financing of the priority areas identified above, (4) enhancing knowledge management on FSN to ensure informed and evidence-based decision-making, and (5) mobilizing multi-sectoral support for selected cross-cutting initiatives such as fortification, and improved water quality and sanitation.

Strong support has been built for an integrated approach, allowing progress against the NSFSN on all fronts. To build on this, priority actions need to be costed and resourced both in human and financial terms, with domestic planning and resourcing processes aligned to ensure this. Creative domestic financing approaches will need to be galvanized and complemented by external assistance that continues to acknowledge nutrition and social protection issues in Cambodia. There are opportunities for building creative domestic financing solutions through stronger government budget allocation, innovative public-private partnerships, and incentivizing remittances to be channelled into productive investments that promote wider household food security. To ensure appropriate resourcing, strategies need to be appropriately

costed. Currently this has only been done for a few areas; the Fast Track Roadmap for Improving Nutrition 2014-2020 was recently costed at approximately USD 50 million, with only some 30 percent of funds secured towards this. Similarly, for the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Public Investment Program (PIP) budget for 2018-2020 of USD 275 million, only some USD 42.4 million has been committed. External funding through concessional loans from financial institutions such as IFAD and ADB represents more than 50 percent of the required total. The NSFSN itself does not have associated budget, and resourcing for CARD is limited (WFP, 2017c).

Effective implementation also requires strengthening of implementation arrangements at sub-national level. Current emphasis of the NSFSN is at national level, with no sub-national arrangements in existence. Decentralisation efforts underway though provincial governance structures can be further built on to in cooperate FSN issues, coordinating with provincial line departments and beyond. Key to this will be to ensure civil society engagement, to strengthen public services through community-based approaches, including for example, building on existing volunteer structures.

Cambodia has taken an important step by joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in July 2014, with efforts underway to build clear strategy and accounts of efforts to achieve the targets. Moving forward a "whole of society approach" will facilitate engagement of all relevant stakeholders. Formally appointed and authorised focal points are needed to lead or engage in the process at national and sub-national level. Policy-makers and administrators need to be engaged, capacitated and empowered in their appropriate space, for example, parliamentarians, governors, commune councils. More effective engagement with the private sector is required to raise awareness and scope out potential resources (technical, material, financial, capacities) and partnerships. For example to enhance awareness in the garments industry or scope out means to strengthen implementation of food fortification legislation and policies (WFP, 2017f). These need to be in parallel with efforts to reach out to the media to encourage informed reporting and academia to support research efforts.

To fully enable a coordinated multi-level and cross-sectoral approach, information gathering, analysis and dissemination will need to be strengthened and made available through a common platform, building on the expanding access to technologies across Cambodia and ensuring capacity building of staff at all levels. Improved, sustainable FSN results will require a scaling up of awareness raising including through mass media, schools and community mechanisms.

A Holistic FS Framework

Global effort is underway to adapt the framework for Food Security allowing it to reflect emerging trends and the complexity and interconnectedness of multiple factors. A new framework outlined in the recent report on nutrition and food systems, by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE, 2017) could provide a more holistic approach to reflect the evolving context in Cambodia. The framework provides a theory of change well suited to future strategic planning and something currently under-developed in the existing strategy. The basis of food security and the alignment with the SDGs are reflected in this framework.

7. Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

With strong support for a comprehensive approach to combatting food insecurity and malnutrition, and sizeable progress made on all fronts in implementing the priority actions for the NSFSN 2014-2018, this positive trajectory needs to be maintained moving forward. At this critical juncture, investments in combatting malnutrition will serve to accelerate progress in other areas and to sustain economic growth. Multiple policies and strategies relating to food security and nutrition are in place, and there is strong commitment to place nutrition at the forefront of efforts. This review confirms that the current strategy is sound and in 2018, it should continue to guide the efforts of all those involved to address the stated targets. The review process has in itself served to strengthen awareness and re-focus efforts around the core actions and responsibilities. This energy must be maintained and the efforts accelerated in order to reach the targets laid down for 2018. It is foreseen that the same challenges posed for the review in terms of the collection of data and evaluation of progress will also be encountered at the conclusion of the strategic period because of the heavy dependency on the CDHS to measure many aspects of progress.

To build on the strong efforts and prepare for the next NSFSN, in the short-term through 2018, focus could be on:

- Refine the FSN Roadmap 2030 based on the endorsed Cambodia SDGs, and existing actions and indicators in the JMIs and NSFSN, to rationalise indicators, targets and information sources;
- Identify financing sources that could be drawn on in future to help realize underfunded areas; this will require continued strong communication on the importance of FSN as key to development, and advocacy to continue to influence decision makers;
- Undertake an institutional and capacity analysis for the 2030 FSN agenda, to clarify accountabilities towards realising the future strategy;
- Revisit the existing FSN framework, to review the purpose of the NSFSN, and its alignment to other sectoral frameworks, policies, strategies and plans, applying the MTSR learnings;
- Continue research and analysis to improve vulnerability monitoring and response and inform robust action to 'leave no-one behind'.

Participatory planning and implementation: Lessons from the MTSR

- *A 'whole of society' consultative approach– increasing engagement at planning, implementation and review stages with a wide range of stakeholders.*
- *Subnational stakeholder participation– reflecting on regional analyses and prioritization.*
- *The 'right' people in the room – ensure key focal points are empowered to engage through the lifecycle of the process.*
- *Combine specialized (issue-specific) and generic (touching on all themes) consultations to strike balance and overview of priorities.*
- *Compile and share the knowledge base and undertake context analysis. challenges – for example where multiple overlays of deprivation apply.*

As preparations commence to develop a follow-on strategy, emphasis will need to be on scaling of strategic directions noted in this review, with respect to enhancing access and social protection as well as nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. This would require additional local resource allocation in recognition of the important investment into human capital. This can be further strengthened by re-enforcing a rights-based approach that explicitly recognises people's right to food and adequate nutrition, and ensuring accountabilities to facilitate achieving zero hunger by 2030.

The challenges of food and nutrition insecurity are inherently multidimensional and cross-cutting, requiring actions to be taken on multiple fronts and levels at the same time. Building on the current NSFSN, this review recommends five key areas of focus, each of which incorporates some more detailed and illustrative recommendations, which guide the formation of key strategies towards 2030.

1 *Availability*
Enhance focus on food quality, diversity, resilient and nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

2 *Access*
More equitable access to food (Leave no-one behind).

3 *Utilization*
Place nutrition at the forefront and address emerging challenges.

4 *Stability*
Protect availability, access and utilization from shocks and stresses through risk-reduction and social protection measures.

5 *Strengthening*
Enhance food security and nutrition governance arrangements.

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