



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

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OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
Council for Agricultural and Rural Development

STRATEGY BRIEF:

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION 2014-2018

Introduction

A national strategy for food security and nutrition (NSFSN) requires a multi-dimensional and integrated approach over a large range of development themes. To improve food security and nutrition, strategies, policies, and investments in the fields of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, water resources management, health, water and sanitation, education and social protection are all decisive. The NSFSN was developed to complement the existing sector strategies and plans, to fill existing gaps and to serve as a platform for joint inter-sectorial action to enhance food security and nutrition.

The NSFSN 2014-2018 contains: a long term vision, a goal and three objectives.

Long term vision: *“All Cambodians have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food, at all times, to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and optimize the utilization of this food for a healthy and productive life.”*

The overall goal: *“By 2018, Cambodians will 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.”*

The NSFSN contains three objectives as well as priority key interventions and instruments to achieve them.

Objective 1: Increase availability and access to food through more productive and diversified agriculture and livestock production, sustainable forestry and fisheries, and from non-agricultural employment and income opportunities.

Objective 2: Improve use and utilization of their food resulting in reduced child and maternal malnutrition and enhanced human and economic development.

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Objective 3: Improve food security related social protection and enhanced capacities of poor and vulnerable households to cope with risks and shocks increase the stability of their food supply.

Objective 1: Increase food availability and food access

Intensification and diversification of smallholder farming systems and increase access to food through income (from market oriented agricultural production and from developing non-farming income sources) are essential to improve household food security and to build the resilience of food insecure rural population to withstand economic and climatic shocks. To do so, the **NSFSN** has set up 4 priority actions as following:

i. Intensification, diversification and market integration of small holder farming systems:

Interventions to intensify and diversify smallholder farming in Cambodia are not new, the **NSFSN** will focus on 6 key interventions as below:

1. Enhance access of food insecure farmers to low cost, adaptable and replicable technological innovation for rice and other crops, aquaculture, livestock and vegetable production, and farm storage and processing;
2. Improve access of food-insecure farmer to small scale irrigation, specifically in drought prone areas;
3. Improve access and appropriate use of quality and safe agricultural inputs for food-insecure smallholder;
4. Enhance access to credit and saving for smallholder (micro-finance schemes.)
5. Promote mechanisms to link smallholders better to markets and develop promising value chains;
6. Support establishment of farmer organizations and agricultural cooperatives to promote food production and family income;

ii. Land distribution and titling for poor and food-insecure households:

The **NSFSN** has set up 4 priority actions to improve access to and tenure security of agricultural land holdings are important to support investment in agriculture and to protect the livelihoods of the poor and food-insecure.

1. Expand social land distribution to the poor and food-insecure;
2. Scale-up distribution of communal land titles to indigenous minorities;
3. Improve access of poor farmers who have received land titles to agricultural support services and markets;
4. Improve conservation and management of (distributed) agricultural land in order to ensure sustainable and increased productivity of food production in Cambodia;

iii. Promotion of access and sustainable use of common property fishery and forestry resources for the poor and food-insecure:

Income from common property forestry and fishery resources is a relevant source of livelihood for the poor and food-insecure and specifically helps them to cope in situations of transitory food insecurity caused by climate hazards or socio-economic crisis. To prevent illegal logging and fisheries, and to ensure the sustainability of forestry and fisheries resources, the **NSFSN** has set up 6 priority actions as below:

1. Further enhance aquaculture and rice field fishing to reduce pressure on wild freshwater fish;
2. Strengthen sustainable community-based fisheries and forestry systems to enhance quality food intake and income for food-insecure households;
3. Promote linkages between tourist markets in urban areas and forest dependant villagers with small enterprises and handicraft;
4. Secure access of indigenous communities to common property resources and promote community-based land use and agro-forestry systems;
5. Balance economic benefits with the social and environmental costs of large scale infrastructure projects (hydro-power) to minimize negative impacts on livelihoods of the poor and food-insecure;
6. Prevent the incitement of local people from outsiders to continue deforestation and occupy state land as private property illegally (especially in conservation and natural protected areas)

iv. Enhance wage employment and income opportunities for the poor and food-insecure:

Less than one third of the entire Cambodian labor force earns income from regularly paid wage employment. Development of more competitive farms and agri-business enterprises through 6 key actions are essential to absorb the increasing rural labor force and to create jobs and incomes for the rural poor. The 6 key actions are included:

1. Enhance technical and vocational educational training for the poor and food-insecure in rural and urban areas to increase skills and employability;
2. Enhance work skills needed for agro-processing enterprises, agro-economic concessions and agribusiness contracting for creating employment opportunities and increased income for food-insecure rural households;
3. Enhance social protection in the informal wage sector, especially for women;
4. Promote (specifically women) entrepreneurs engaged in micro-enterprises, handicrafts, etc. and promote their access to capital and markets;
5. Improve legal and regulatory frameworks and access to technology for SME and extend financial support to promote their integration into a global value chain;
6. Further enhance secondary road improvements and market infrastructure specifically in food-insecure regions and enable Commune Councils to scale-up and maintain tertiary rural roads network in food-insecure communities;

Objective 2: Improve use and utilization of food

Objective 2 of the **NSFSN** aims primarily at improving of the nutrition status of women and children. The focus is on the “window of opportunity” during pregnancy and the first two years of life when child malnutrition does the most harm and investments yield the highest social and economic returns. The **NSFSN** mainly focuses on five areas:

i. Scale up nutrition services and nutrition education:

This strategy will complement the existing interventions like cash transfers to the poor to stimulate demand for ante- and post-natal care, food transfers to the poor to promote access to nutritious complementary foods, and growth monitoring and promotion until two years of age and nutrition education campaigns will be applied with 8 priority actions including:

1. Ensure greater coverage of essential nutrition care and counselling during the critical 1,000 days from pregnancy to a child’s second birthday at health facilities (antenatal care, delivery, postnatal care, growth monitoring and promotion for under two years, malnutrition treatment and nutrition as part of Integrated Management of Childhood Illness);
2. Carry out mass media campaigns to change attitudes, practices on key nutrition issues in Cambodia (continue efforts on early and exclusive breast feeding, increase efforts for continued breastfeeding to two years, increase efforts on appropriate complementary feeding of children 6-23 months, dangers of bottle feeding and the importance of safe water and sanitation for improved nutrition);
3. Monitor closely the increasing trend for bottle feeding and formula use and establish an oversight board to help enforcement of the Sub-decree 133 on Marketing of Products for Infant and Young Child Feeding to prevent use of breast milk substitutes and accelerate its implementation;
4. To develop and implement a scale-up plan and ensure regular supply of multi-micronutrients for children 6-23 months;
5. Update current guidelines on micronutrient supplementation according to international guidelines;
6. Expand targeted food supplementation for pregnant/lactating women and children 6-23 months in poor and vulnerable households;
7. Develop a communication strategy to enhance awareness on the rising problem and consequences of over-nutrition in Cambodia;
8. Enhance human capacities for nutrition in the health and other sectors;

ii. Improve domestic water supply, sanitation and hygiene:

Lack of access to safe water and specifically sanitation, and poor hygiene practices increases diarrhea and parasite prevalence which in turn causes loss in nutrients and poor assimilation of food. Improving access of rural population to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (by increasing investments in related infrastructure as well as raising awareness on appropriate water use,

sanitation and hygienic practices) is therefore a high priority intervention within the **NSFSN** containing key actions as below:

1. To include safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) aspects in all child and maternal nutrition programs and specifically in community based nutrition programs;
2. To focus on educational activities and implement BCC campaigns by linking WASH to maternal and child nutrition;
3. To integrate national investment plan and strategic plan on WASH with national maternal and child nutrition programs;
4. To improve access to safe water supply and sanitation and strengthen community based management (operation and maintenance) at village level;

iii. Expand fortification of food:

Fortification of staples is one of the most cost-effective and sustainable solutions to prevent micronutrient deficiencies. To enhance more broadly the availability of fortified food in Cambodia, the RGC will also support to set up regulations and mechanisms on food fortification with 8 key interventions as below:

1. To promote the use of fortified food through awareness raising on the importance of food fortification with micronutrients in local areas and nationwide;
2. To develop national policies, technical guidelines (national standards, on food fortification levels), and relevant regulation for food fortification with micronutrients and enhance implementation and effectiveness of existing regulations;
3. Prepare legislation to manage micronutrients-fortified food for both domestic production and imports;
4. To improve the quality control and quality assurance of fortified products (iodized salt, iron fortified fish and soy sauces)
5. Strengthen the implementation of Sub-decree No 69 on the management of exploitation of iodized salt to be effective;
6. To scale-up iron fortification of fish and soy sauce and to prepare and implement legislation that makes iron fortification of fish and soy sauce mandatory for importation and for domestic production;
7. To expand food fortification to other appropriate vehicles (for example, rice and cooking oil) and ensure the quality, safety and appropriate quantity required;
8. To further develop and promote appropriate locally produced fortified complementary feeding products and/or food supplements through private sector;

iv. Increase the availability and appropriate use of nutritious food:

Enhancing the availability of nutritious and safe foods at household level through promotion of smallholder food production systems (integrating vegetable/fruit gardens, livestock development

and aquaculture) as well as the promotion of nutrition knowledge in communities to use and prepare locally available nutritious food require 3 interventions as below:

1. Raise awareness on nutritional values of local agricultural products and mainstream nutrition in agriculture extension;
2. Scale up programs promoting diversified food production, storage and processing at household level, community and schools and link these programs to the health sector;
3. Develop and reinforce implementation of laws and regulations to promote agricultural production and nutrition for better health and environment, and improved food safety including Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards (SPS) and increase public awareness on safe food;

v. Link social protection instruments to nutrition:

Poverty is impacting on child malnutrition and therefore the following 4 priority actions within the **NSFSN** are implemented.

1. Ensure close coordination between a conditional cash transfer program (CCT) and other nutrition related social protection measures with the NNP and upcoming community based nutrition interventions;
2. Reduce financial barriers to nutrition care at health facilities by expanding Health Equity Funds (HEFs) and covering all nutrition services and care;
3. Link public works programs (PWP) to improving water, sanitation and hygiene;
4. Increase nutrition-sensitivity of existing Social Safety Nets, e.g. school feeding and develop and promote a list of nutritious foods for targeted interventions;

Objective 3: Increase Stability of Food Supply

Natural disasters (floods and droughts), socio-economic shocks (like sudden food price increases) or individual crisis (unemployment or sickness) can seriously affect the stability of food access for poor households and often trigger risky coping strategies, which may render households chronically food insecure. To increase stability of food, the **NSFSN** has set up priority programs as following:

i. Scale up Food Security Related Social Protection Instruments:

The Royal Government of Cambodia has set up 5 key interventions to enhance stability of food access and resilience of food-insecure households to cope better with risk and crisis.

1. Pilot and scale-up a national Public Work Program to enhance predictable employment opportunities for the poor in food-insecure areas and communes specifically during the agricultural lean season and provide livelihoods and income-generation support for the most vulnerable;
2. Develop contingency plans to scale-up labor based works during crisis and link Public Work Program to disaster preparedness and climate change mitigation plans;

3. Implement and scale-up a Conditional Cash Transfer pilot (as outlined in the National Social Protection Strategy- NSPS) to smooth food consumption of food-insecure households and enhance child and maternal nutrition;
4. Continue and scale-up school meals in poor and food-insecure areas and targeted scholarships for poor students and increase government ownership in these programs;
5. Enhance coordination of social safety net programs targeting food-insecure households between sectors and scale-up pilots to promote integration of social protection programs to enhance food security at local level;

ii. *Improve Resilience of Households against Disasters and Climate Change:*

Strengthening of community resilience against the effects of natural and economic shocks and climate change on household food security is crucial and existing and 6 key actions below need to be further developed and scaled-up.

1. Create capacities for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation at national and sub-national level and incorporate these issues in sectorial strategies and regional plans to minimize negative impact of climate change and natural disasters on household food security;
2. Strengthening capacities at national and sub-national level to respond adequately and timely to food crises (ensuring supply of food and other assistance) and improve coordination of emergency response between government institutions, civil society organizations and development partners;
3. Enhance communities' resilience with regard to disasters and economic shocks by promoting community-based saving and credit schemes (rice banks, microcredit), small scale irrigation and climate change adaptation community projects;
4. Streamline and integrate existing information and classification systems and tools on early warning and disaster impact assessment;
5. Build-up and manage effectively the national food (and seed) reserve to provide timely supply of food and seeds to households affected by natural disasters or economic crises and to counteract increase of food prices;
6. Maintain and rehabilitate canal, river, natural lakes for mitigating floods and droughts;

Institutional Arrangements for Implementing the NSFSN

Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) in Cambodia is the responsibility of line ministries and decentralized government institutions. The **NSFSN** adds value by providing a comprehensive framework to assist ministries and sub-national authorities in designing and implementing prioritized food security and nutrition related interventions in an effective and efficient manner. The guiding principles and priority actions to improve and further develop these institutional arrangements with regard to:

- Coordination and the policy oversight for FSN
- Monitoring and evaluation of the NSFSN and its programs

- Forming the unit in charge of FSN at key relevant line ministries such as Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Women Affairs
- FSN related knowledge and information management
- Selection of beneficiaries and targeting of FSN interventions
- Capacity development at national and decentralized level

Actions for Institutional Arrangement:

- **Action 1:** Strengthen CARD's role as the institution providing policy guidance and enhance coordination and integration of FSN related work among RGC institutions;
- **Action 2:** Strengthen the TWG-SP&FSN to effectively coordinate projects and programs based on the priorities outlined in the NSFSN across sectors and enhance harmonization and alignment of development partner's support for FSN in Cambodia;
- **Action 3:** Ensure effective coordination of FSN programs between departments of ministries, civil society organizations, development partners and the private sector at province, district and commune level;
- **Action 4:** Revise and consolidate the indicator framework for the NSFSN based on a set of indicators and realistic targets aligned with all relevant existing sector strategies and plans;
- **Action 5:** Establish appropriate M&E procedures and reporting mechanism in order to ensure effective implementation of the NSFSN and to provide evidence-based feedback for the further development of programs and interventions;
- **Action 6:** Strengthen the integration and harmonization of SP&FSN information and knowledge management in Cambodia by reinforcing linkages between various systems, approaches and products (supported by different development partners) to present coherent and consolidated FSN information to decision-makers;
- **Action 7:** Strengthen capacities for FSN related data analysis and provide predictable resources for this task to enhance sustainability;
- **Action 8:** Promote the use of FSN information products for planning and decision-making at national and decentralized levels;
- **Action 9:** Revise FSN training curricula for national and decentralized levels based on impact assessment and scale-up training at decentralized level through a cascade system;
- **Action 10:** Link capacity development for FSN at decentralized level with existing capacity-building components in the context of the NP-SNDD as well as with respective activities foreseen in the context of other national strategies (NSPS) and programs;
- **Action 11:** Develop and implement FSN human resource development plan to enhance overall capacities for FSN coordination and policy oversight at national level;
- **Action 12:** Improve targeting of FSN interventions by developing procedures and criteria for a harmonized system to identify the urban poor and food insecure;

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