

REPORT ON

# URBANIZATION and its LINKAGE to SOCIO-ECONOMIC and ENVIRONMENTAL Issues





## PREFACE

UNFPA helps countries to address emerging demographic issues such as urbanization in development and poverty eradication policies, plans and strategies. It assists countries to analyse the socio-economic implications of urbanization and provide assistance to design policies that respond to the social needs and rights of people living in cities.



Cambodia is currently undergoing an incredible rapid change, and after years of civil strife the country's economy is catching up with that of its neighboring countries. With the fast economic growth, we have observed a large rural urban migration in the country. The rural urban migration report provided the government of Cambodia and UNFPA with the evidence that many people leave the villages to move to the cities, mainly to Phnom Penh, in search of employment and better education. The recent population figures show that the country's urban population grew at a rate of 3.7% annually since the last census of 2008, but more worryingly are the population projections which predict that the Cambodian urban population will grow by around 29.5% in the next 15 years. By 2030, 5.4 million Cambodians will live in a city, with the majority of people living in Phnom Penh.

When we talk about urbanization in the Asia region, it has often been the rapid growth of mega-cities which have captured much of the public attention and the development actors' responsiveness. With this report we want to draw the attention to the fact that urbanization is a reality in Cambodia and that in the coming years, the urban growth will continue. With that urban growth, we will see that many of the problems which we have observed in those large cities of this region will also emerge here.

The impact of urbanization on people's lives in Cambodia has not been sufficiently documented. The UNFPA Cambodia country office therefore decided to commission this report, based primarily on evidence from desk reviews, backed up with interviews with key informants to explore the current impact of urbanization on socio-economic and environmental issues in Cambodia. It is the first report which also looks at the sexual and reproductive health status of people in urban settings and draws the attention to the existence of poverty in urban settings.

With this overview of current issues and challenges of urbanization in Cambodia, but also with the proposal of recommendations how the current urban growth might be more sustainable, UNFPA will continue to draw the attention to the situation of women and young people in Cambodia, their access to reproductive health services, but more importantly the fulfillment of their reproductive rights. We call upon planners, policymakers and the donor community to take proactive measures to ensure that people are the main actors who are benefiting from the current urban transformation, rather than becoming the victims of it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Derveeuw Marc', written over a horizontal line.

**Dr. Derveeuw Marc, G.L.**  
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Phnom Penh, November 2014



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## ACRONYMS

ADB	ASEAN Development Bank
ANC	Antenatal Care
CIPS	Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey
COM	Council of Ministers
CCC	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
CDC	Council for the Development of Cambodia
CSES	Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
IUD	Intrauterine Device
INGO	(International) Non-Governmental Organization
LICADHO	Cambodian Leagues for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights
MOP	Ministry of Planning
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MLMUPC	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction
MSIC	Marie Stopes International-Cambodia
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
Pop	Population
RACHA	Reproductive and Child Health Alliance
RHAC	Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RC2004/2011	Urban Reclassification Criteria 2004/2011
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STT	Sahmakum Teang Tnaut
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPDF	Urban Poor Development Fund



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Based primarily on a desk review and interviews with key informants, this study explores the impact of urbanization on socio-economic and environmental issues in Cambodia, and reviews the current regulatory framework and interventions related to urbanization. By identifying common challenges and gaps in the literature, the regulatory framework, and interventions on urbanization, the study aims to help advance UNFPA work in the area.

Due to the effect of natural population growth and rural-urban migration, Cambodia has experienced rapid urbanization over the last two decades when the urban population grew from 15.7% in 1998 to 21.4% in 2013. Cambodia's mostly unplanned and unregulated process of urbanization has resulted in several major problems: lack of infrastructure and urban services; traffic congestion; increased urban flooding; and more importantly the neglect of the urban poor and the environment and the lack of pro-poor, inclusive urbanization processes. While urbanization has offered numerous socio-economic benefits to urban dwellers, it has resulted in a growing population of urban poor locked out of the city centers and pushed to sprawling slums and informal squatter settlements on the periphery. The livelihoods of many were seriously compromised in the process.

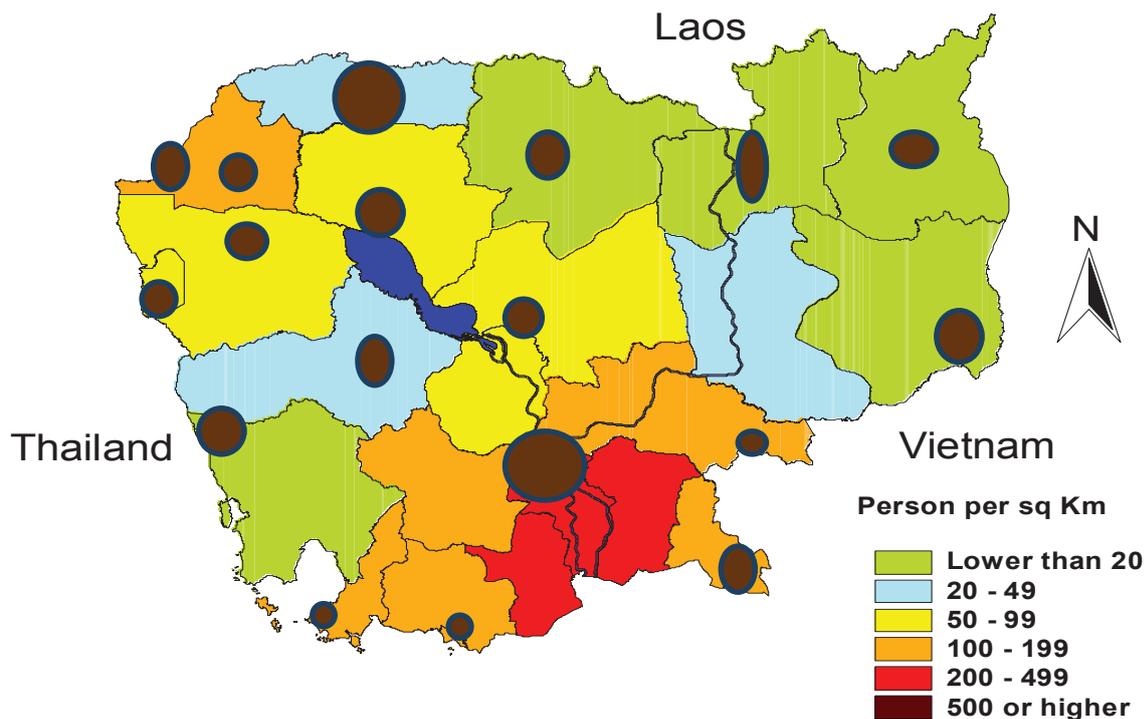
There is a lack of research addressing the socio-economic and environmental impact of urbanization. The little body of research generally focuses on Phnom Penh and adopts a narrow human rights perspective. Although a relatively large number of laws and regulations relate to urban planning, land use, and construction, because of poor articulation, and a lack of transparency and enforcement, they do not constitute a coherent, effective regulatory framework.

The slum dwellers have received limited attention from the government, (I)NGOs and Development Partners as most of the current interventions target rural areas ignoring the many challenges they faced, particularly issues pertaining to public services, SRH, gender-equity and GBV, youths and households living in slums, and degraded environments. Urban poor communities (slums) have generally benefited little from interventions that directly aimed at improving their socio-economic conditions and the environment in which they live.

This desk review offers some useful insights on future directions. There is need for further research including large-scale studies on the impact of urbanization on poor households, the needs of urban poor and vulnerable populations in relation to SRH and the availability of services, and the regulatory framework on land management, urban planning, and construction. UNFPA should work more closely with stakeholders (public institutions, development partners, and (I)NGOs) to advocate and support for:

- The availability of quality, affordable SRH services in urban areas;
- SRH education and outreach services for urban poor communities;
- The development of ID-Poor in urban areas, whereas urban poor families would be exempted from paying fees on public services (health and SRH services included);
- The improvement in tenure security for urban communities;
- The development and effective implementation of more pro-poor and inclusive urban planning processes;
- Coordinated investments and efforts for the development of urban poor communities including the provision of basic and tailored services;
- Free vocational training to youths in urban poor communities; and
- Micro-credit with no or low interest for business start-up.

## Population density and urban area



Source: 2013 CIPS

# INTRODUCTION

The world has been urbanizing at an unprecedented pace. Today, over half of the world's population lives in urban areas, and this may reach 70% by 2050 (UNHABITAT, 2012, p. 25). Due to the effect of natural population growth but more importantly rural-urban migration, Cambodia has also been experiencing a rather rapid urbanization over the last two decades. From 2,614,027 (19.5%) of the total population in 2008, the urban population rose to 3,146,212 (21.4%) in 2013 (NIS, 2012, 2013a). In 2011, out of 1,633 communes or Sangkats in Cambodia, 17.6% were considered urban (NIS, 2012, pp. 3,31).<sup>1</sup>

Urbanization is strongly associated with progress and development (Flower, 2012, p. 1). Urban spaces are gateway to global and regional economic networks that facilitate as well as promote transnational trade and investment. Well-planned and inclusive urbanization processes produce many socio-economic and environmental benefits (Daw, 2009): reduced infant and maternal mortality rate, increased literacy rate and overall welfare of the population, better service delivery, minimizing environmental degradation, and above all reducing poverty (NIS, 2012, p. 1). Urbanization necessarily involves social, economic, and environmental changes. Depending on the quality of their management, these changes can be beneficial or detrimental. Rapid but unplanned urbanization strains the capacity of national and sub-national governments to provide even the most basic services (i.e., health care, education, clean water, electricity, sanitation facilities, sewerage). Reliable data on current urbanization processes and problems are essential to inform the development of urbanization projects and regulatory framework.

Urbanization is one area of concern for the government (RGC, 2010). A good knowledge and understanding of urbanization processes and their impacts is essential for the formulation of national policies, strategies, and programs responsive to the diverse needs of and addressing challenges faced by the target population. To this end, UNFPA has commissioned a desk review on “urbanization and its linkage to socio-economic and environmental issues” with the aim of exploring opportunities to work with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and bring about a more effective and inclusive urbanization.

## 1.1 Objectives

The report explores urbanization issues in Cambodia and focuses on:

- a. Research conducted so far particularly that with a special focus on socio-economic and environmental impact. Special attention is paid to the problems facing the urban poor (slum dwellers), gender equity and gender-based violence (GBV), and youth sexual and reproductive health (SRH);
- b. Current regulatory frameworks;

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1. By 2011, there were 194 districts/krongs/khands, 1633 communes/sangkats, and 14,172 villages in Cambodia (Percival & Waley, 2012).

- c. Interventions and programs by government, Development Partners, and (I)NGOs, including locations and target beneficiaries;
- d. Common challenges, opportunities, and promising case studies that could be used to inform a road map for advancing UNFPA work in this area; and
- e. Limitations and gaps in these four areas of inquiry.

## 1.2 Methodology

This report is the result of a review of literature in English and Khmer, including legal and policy frameworks, technical documents/reports, trustworthy press articles, and research findings on urbanization and related matters. To gain a deeper insight into and to clarify specific issues, face-to-face discussions with senior officials at the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction (MLMUPC) and the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) of the Ministry of Planning (MOP), and officers at Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT) and UNICEF were conducted.

## 1.3 Defining “urban”

Defining an area as urban or rural is important for planning purposes because this will determine which legislation applies and which authorities are in charge of decision-making and management. There is no internationally agreed upon criteria for urban classification and the definition varies across time and space. In Cambodia the definition of “urban areas” has been changing since 1998 and while there is no doubt that the urban population is increasing, its rate of growth is difficult to assess accurately because of these changes of definition.

In 1998, “urban areas” in Cambodia were designated based solely on administrative criteria and included:

1. all provincial towns;
2. four out of 7 districts of Phnom Penh Municipality; and
3. the entire provinces of Sihanouk Ville, Kep, and Pailin (MOP, 2013c).

Such an arbitrary classification led to inconsistencies and errors; for example, remote areas of Sihanouk Ville and Pailin provinces were classified as urban. In 2004, based on census data the NIS adopted 3 criteria for urban classification (RC2004):

1. Population density exceeding 200/sq. km;
2. % of males employed in agriculture below 50%;
3. Commune total population exceeding 2,000.

The reclassification resulted in a slight increase in urban population but also provided an urban-rural framework for the 2008 census, which identified 19.5% of the population as urban. In 2011, further changes based on the 2008 census introduced the “RC2011” urban classification benchmarks as follows:

- The 27 Krongs/cities statutorily declared in the 2008 Sub-Decree on the Number of Councilors of Phnom Penh Municipality, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts, and Khans for the 1st Mandate;

- Any communes/sangkats meeting 3 criteria: (1) population density exceeding 200/sq.km; (2) % of population (both sexes) employed in agriculture less than 50%; and (3) total population exceeding 2,000; and
- Communes/sangkats that did not meet the above conditions, but were recommended by the MOP field officers/provincial directors based on fieldwork and local knowledge of the communes (NIS, 2012, p. 2).

Retroactively applying the RC2011 classification to the 2008 census data raised the urban population from 19.5% to 27.1% of the total population (NIS, 2012, pp. 4-5). The 2013 Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey (CIPS) estimated that the urban population stood at 3,146,213 or just 21.4% of the population, a decrease of 6%. However, a Deputy-Director General of the NIS indicated that it was the RC2004 that was used to provide the urban-rural framework for the 2013 CIPS therefore, resulting in 2% increase in urban population from 19.5% in 2008 to 21.4% in 2013. It is important to keep in mind the inconsistency in the classification of the urban population when considering statistics on Cambodia.

**Urban Poor Community or Slum:** In this report the terms “Urban Poor Community” and “Slum” are used interchangeably. So far, there is no official definition of the terms although they are generally understood as unauthorized settlement areas inhabited almost exclusively by the poor. Also in this report, the term “urban poor” refers to “slum dwellers”.

UN-HABITAT defines “slum household as a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following:

1. Durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions.
2. Sufficient living space which means not more than three people sharing the same roof.
3. Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts at an affordable price.
4. Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people.
5. Security of tenure that prevents forced evictions” (UN-HABITAT, 2008).

## CAMBODIA'S URBANIZATION PROFILE

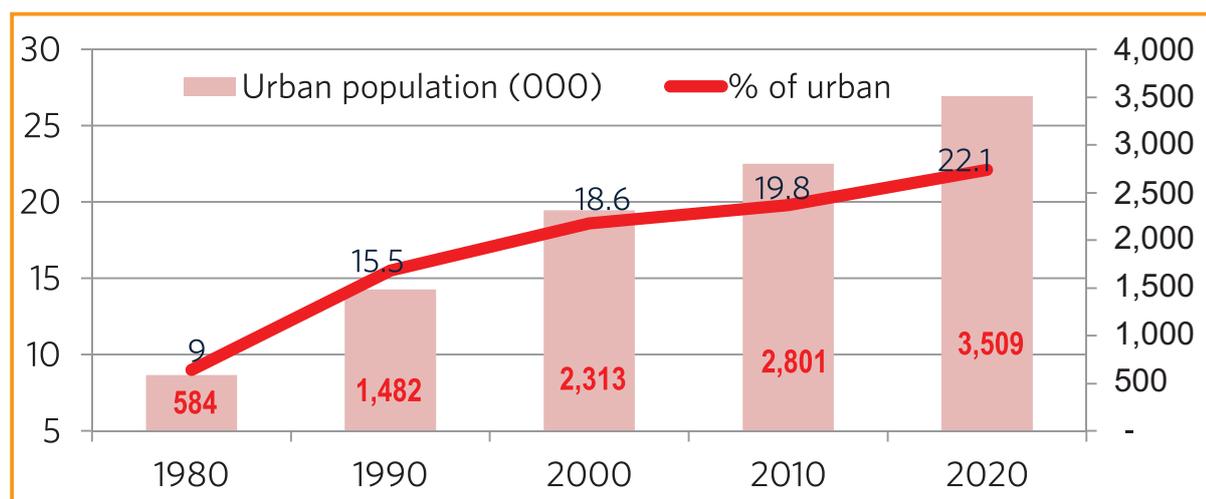
Cambodia is still a predominantly rural, agrarian society but is fast urbanizing. In 2013, over a fifth (21.4%) of the population was defined as urban compared to 17.7% in 1998 (NIS, 2013a, p. vi). The country's urban population grew at a rate of 2.2% annually between 1998-2008, and 3.7% between 2008-2013 (Table 1). By 2020, it might reach 3.5 million or 22.1% of the total population (Figure 1).

Table 1: Urban Population 1998-2013

Household size			Growth rate (%)		Annual growth rate (%)	
1998	2008	2013	1998-2008 (10yrs)	2008-2013 (5yrs)	1998-2008	2008-2013
2,095,074	2,614,027	3,146,213	24.8	20.4	2.2	3.7

Source: (NIS, 2009, 2012, 2013a)

Figure 1: Cambodia-Urban trend and projection



Source: UN Population Division, 2011 Revision (adopted from Yi, 2014, p. 4)

Table 2 presents the volume and proportion of urban population in each Cambodian province. The municipality of Phnom Penh is now essentially urbanized with an urban population of 1,501,725 or 89.9%. The provinces of Kandal, Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, and Battambang had a larger urban population than other regions but as a proportion of their total population, they were less urbanized than smaller provinces like Sihanouk Ville, Kep, Pailin, and Koh Kong.

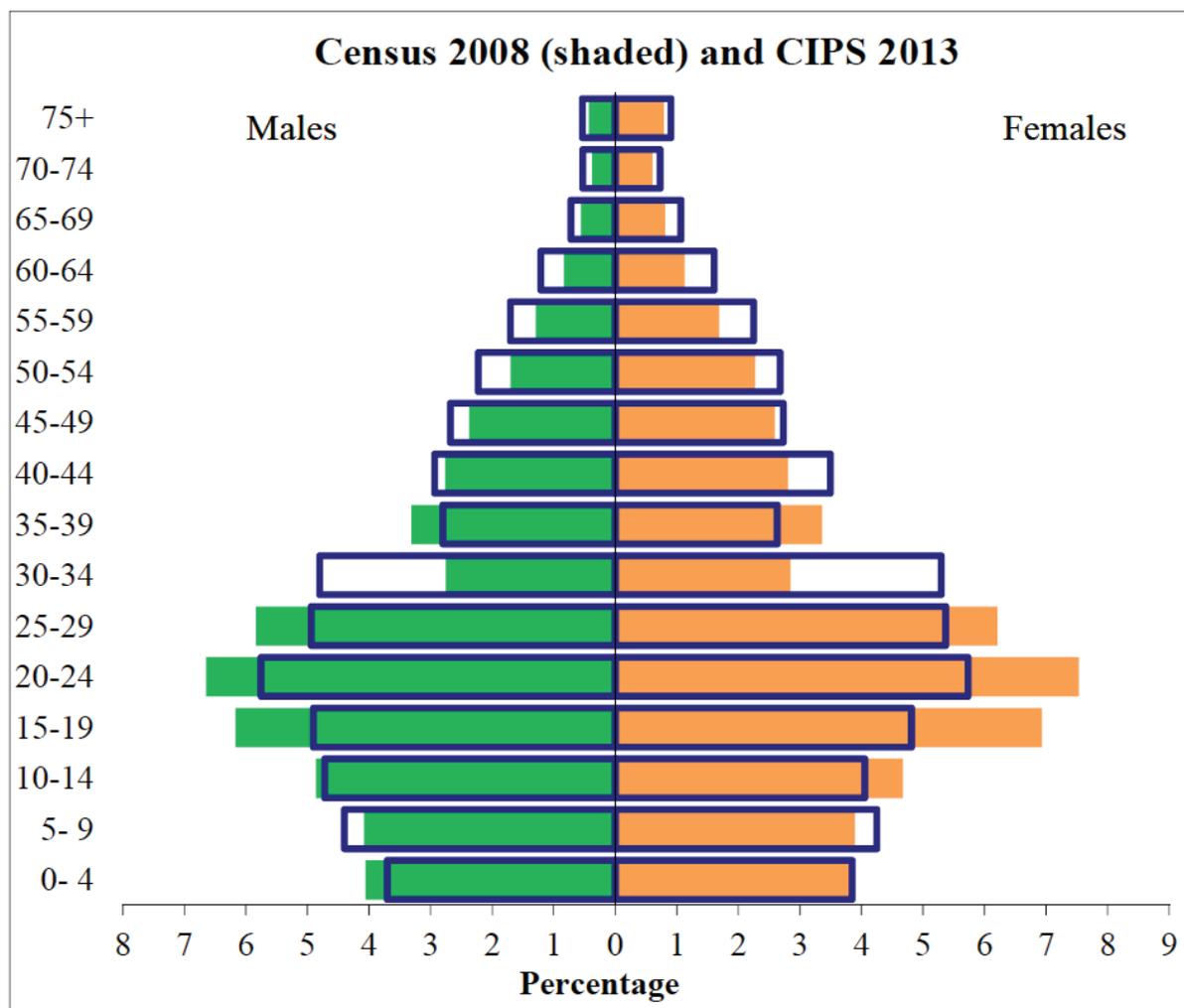
Table 2: Urban population based on Reclassification 2011

Location	Total Population (2008 census)	Urban Population (RC2011)	% of urban pop to total population
B. Meanchey	677,872	228,484	33.7
Battambang	1,025,174	228,681	22.3
K. Cham	1,679,992	245,479	14.6
K. Speu	716,944	71,861	10.0
K. Thom	631,409	61,348	9.7
K.Chhnang	472,341	43,130	9.1
Kampot	585,850	60,851	10.4
Kandal	922,854	287,067	31.1
Kep	35,753	19,573	54.7
Koh Kong	117,481	50,869	43.3
Kratie	319,217	37,475	11.7
Mondulkiri	61,107	12,340	20.2
O. Meanchey	185,819	51,414	27.7
P. Sihanouk	221,396	121,789	55.0
P. Veng	947,372	48,913	5.2
P. Vihear	171,139	21,179	12.4
Pailin	70,486	36,354	51.6
Phnom Penh	1,670,041	1,501,725	89.9
Pursat	397,161	63,628	16.0
Ratanakiri	150,466	28,982	19.3
S. Reang	482,788	77,659	16.1
S. Reap	896,443	264,034	29.5
S. Treng	111,671	30,959	27.7
Takeo	844,906	41,383	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,395,682</b>	<b>3,635,177</b>	<b>27.1</b>

Source: (NIS, 2012, pp. 29-30)

The population pyramid presented in Figure 2 is rather bulky in the middle with a relatively narrow apex, meaning that a large proportion of the population is in the working age group (15-59 years) and a small proportion consists of senior citizens. Compared to 2008 the 2013 pyramid shows a decline in the youth population aged 15-29, particularly females, but a the distinct increase in the 30-34 age-group (NIS, 2013a, p. 17). The return to their permanent homes in rural areas of thousands of female garment workers following the closure of many factories during the period following the last census may partly explain that demographic pattern (NIS, 2012, p. 30). Other reasons for the increase in the 30-34 age group include the normal population aging combined with a decrease in fertility, a slowing down of the migration of young people from rural to urban areas, and some effects of the reclassification of urban areas using Reclassification 2011.

Figure 2: Population pyramid-Cambodia's urban population 2008-2013



Source: (NIS, 2013b, p. 19)

Table 3 presents some key demographic data for urban and rural areas. Urban populations are more educated, have better accessibility to amenities, lower rate of infant and under-5 mortality, and better life expectancy than rural populations. The latter, on the other hand, have higher labor force participation, lower unemployment rate, and higher fertility rate. Remote provinces like Koh Kong, Stung Treng, Preah Vihear, Ratanakiri, Kratie, Modulkiri, Otdar Meanchey, and Kampong Speu were seriously lagging behind with rates of fertility, mortality, female illiteracy, and predictive poverty level higher than the national average (MOP, 2013c, pp. 7-8).

Table 3: Urban-rural areas- key demographic data

Description	National average	Urban areas	Rural areas
Household size	4.6	4.8	4.6
% of building by nature of construction	Per: 73.6 Semi-Per: 19.7 Tem: 6.7	Per: 93.0 Semi-per: 5.3 Tem: 23.2	Per: 68.9 Semi-per: 23.2 Tem: 7.9
% of HH using electricity as main source of light	48.0	94.0	36.0
% of HH accessible to improved sources of water	57	81.8	50.0
% of HH having toilet facility with premises	48.7	87.5	38.5
Adult literacy rate (aged 15+)	79.7	90.3	76.5
Labor force participation rate (aged 15-64yrs)	82.2	73.2	84.8
Unemployment rate (aged 15-64yrs)	2.3	4.4	1.8
% of migrant by place of last residence	28.9	49.4	23.3
Total fertility rate per 1,000 live births	2.8	2.1	3.1
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	33	9	38
Under-5 mortality rate per 1,000 live births	53	15	60
Life expectancy at birth	68.9	76.8	67.6

Sources: (NIS, 2012);

Note: Per= Permanent; Semi-per= Semi-Permanent; Tem= Temporary

## 2.1 Urbanization and migration

Of all urban areas in Cambodia, Phnom Penh is the fastest growing. Its population tripled between 1998 and 2013 from 567,860 to 1,688,040. Two major explanations for such exponential growth are natural growth (i.e., the growth due to the natural reproduction of existing Phnom Penh inhabitants) and the in-flow of migrants from rural areas or other countries. With a low fertility rate among Phnom Penh residents (2.1 for urban vs. 3.1 for rural), in-migration is clearly the dominant factor (MOP, 2012; NIS, 2013a).

By 2013, about 25% of the Cambodian population or 3,705,253 people had migrated and 85% of the urban migrants came from rural areas. Of the four streams of internal migration, rural-rural is the predominant one (58.4%), followed by rural-urban (24.5%) which is mainly to Phnom Penh, and urban-urban (12%). Urban-rural migration is negligible (5.1%). While male dominated rural-rural migration (60.3% male vs. 56.5% female), female dominated rural-urban migration (23.5% male vs. 25.5% female). The strong influx of rural-urban migration, especially to Phnom Penh, contributes to the growth of urban sprawl, affecting urban planning and the provision of basic services and amenities (MOP, 2013c, pp. 11-12). A large percentage of migrant men were engaged in construction while 58.5% of women migrated to Phnom Penh for work in garment factories (32.2%), small business (23.4%), domestic work (11.1%), and service/entertainment sector (10.3%) (MOP, 2013b, p. xi).

## 2.2 Economic performance

Over the past decade, Cambodia's annual GDP growth has been around 6.5%. GDP increased five-fold from \$1.27 billion in 1989 to \$10.3 billion in 2008. By 2012, GDP per-capita reached \$931. The World Bank estimated that Cambodia's overseas migrant workers remitted \$325 million or 4% of the GDP in 2009 (MOP, 2013c, p. 4), but it plummeted to 2.8% in 2011 (The World Population Prospects, 2010 and ADB cited in MOP, 2013a, p. 6). Poverty declined from 47.8% in 2007 to 19.8% in 2011 (Aumporn, 20 March 2013). Rates of poverty are significantly higher in rural areas than in urban areas (The World Bank, 2006). For instance, the 2009 Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES) indicated that while the national poverty rate was 22.9%, rural areas had a much higher rate compared to Phnom Penh and other urban areas (24.6% rural, 12.8% Phnom Penh, 19.3% other urban areas) (see also Aumporn, 20 March 2013). Yet, it is important to also note the growing inequality within urban areas. The UNFPA's 2007 report suggested that in many countries, poverty had increased more rapidly in urban than in rural areas but that urban poverty had generally been ignored and most of the existing assessments tended to underestimate the deep inequalities among urban populations (UNFPA, 2007, p. 15).

Cambodia's economy is driven by four main sectors: garment, tourism, construction, and agriculture. Agriculture, the main source of employment for most Cambodians, contributes to only 35% of the GDP. This sector is still generally characterized by subsistence farming highly dependent on natural patterns. The other two sectors (textile and tourism) are vulnerable to external shocks. There is clearly a need for economic diversification and a skilled-workforce to ensure continued economic growth that goes along-side with urbanization and provision of basic amenities and social services (MOP, 2013c, p. 5).

Research on "urbanization in Cambodia" is sparse and narrowly-focused. An exhaustive Google search and a search based on bibliographies and reference lists in the literature identified 42 related studies published between 2006 and 2014 (see Appendix A). Over half of them focused on Phnom Penh, and the others on the overall urbanization in Cambodia or specific provinces such as Battambang, Siem Reap, Kratie, Sihanouk Ville, Banteay Meanchhey, and Kampot - mainly in relation to areas where evictions had taken place.

## EXISTING STUDIES ON URBANIZATION AND THEIR LIMITATIONS

These studies predominantly adopted a human rights perspective, as most were conducted or commissioned by human rights NGOs (see also Chhet, Ann, & Kim, 2012; Flower, 2012). Several studies, especially those by the Ministry of Planning (MOP), provide overall demographic data while others focus on regulatory frameworks. Only few look linked urbanization to socio-economic, Gender-Equity and Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and environmental issues. None were identified that exclusively examined the impact of urbanization on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH).

### 3.1 Urbanization in Cambodia

Population growth, economic development and rapid rural-urban migration have accelerated urbanization processes in Phnom Penh and major cities across the country. Notwithstanding the RGC's desire to manage rapid urbanization through a planned approach, it appears that when these urban plans exist at all, they are either not effectively implemented or are taken over by unplanned or laissez-faire developments (STT, 2012). The boom and bust in the construction sector coupled with ineffective implementation of existing regulatory framework on land management, urban planning, and construction compromises the wellbeing of the public and livability of the cities. Over the past decade cities such as Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Battambang, and Sihanouk Ville went through a boom in unbridled constructions (with few planning restrictions), massive renovations or demolition of existing buildings, sporadic but uncoordinated infrastructure development, severe traffic congestion, shrinking public spaces, flooding of streets, and filling-up of water-bodies.

A study on Phnom Penh by NGO Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT) highlighted key challenges facing its development, including the rapidity of the unplanned growth, the increasing economic and spatial disparity, the lack of affordable housing, the persistently weak tenure and titling system for its informal settlements, a weak regulatory framework and its ineffective application, the predominance of urban change driven by private developers, the poorly coordinated urbanization of the periphery, forced resettlements, and the lack of participatory urban planning (STT, 2012, p. 1).

### 3.2 Socio-economic characteristics of urban poor community

"The Phnom Penh Urban Poor Assessment" in 2012 documented the experiences of 2,033 families living in Phnom Penh's poor communities and of 281 community representatives. It generally confirmed the shocking situation of slum dwellers (Phnom Penh Municipality, 2012). Squatter settlements in Phnom Penh are commonly located on main roads, along the railways and sewage systems, on lakes, flat roofs, and in pagoda compounds. One-room wooden houses are the most common type of dwellings, and provide little protection from heat, rain, and theft.

With over 45% of their households having six or more members, the urban poor are more crowded than the average household in Phnom Penh. In addition 57% of these poor households have two children or more (the average in Phnom Penh is 1.5). One-sixth of the households have at least one vulnerable family member, and one-fourth of the families have a member with chronic disease. This is compounded by the facts that up to 38.3% of the households were female-headed compared to a national average of 25.6% (in 2008). With more family members to care for, the burden on the household heads is enormous.

Most households in urban poor communities need multiple sources of incomes, and on average two people work to support the entire family- an indication of a high dependency ratio. Partly due to their limited education, most of the slum dwellers engage in low-paid, labor-intensive occupations. Up to 60% of the households earns less than \$75 per month. With the average household size of over 5, such income translates into 50 cents per day per person- hardly enough to buy food, let alone other basic necessities.

Health problems, including HIV/AIDS and malnutrition, were one of the key challenges among Phnom Penh poor communities. For example, less than 80% of urban poor families with pregnant women attended four antenatal care visits (full prenatal care). Many (83%) poor households were therefore pushed into contracting debts for food, business start-up, health care, childbirth, and children's education.

The RGC is making efforts and investing to improve the situation of urban poor communities. With the establishment of the Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF), some improvements in the overall conditions of the urban poor communities across the country, particularly in Phnom Penh, were noticed. However, much remains to be done to assist slum dwellers, especially with regards to improving public and social service/assistance, health care, upgrading urban poor infrastructures, ensuring improved access to basic, affordable utilities and sanitation facilities, and providing access to minimal interest credit for business start-up and housing.

### **3.3 Slums and evictions**

Between 1980 and 2011, 516 urban poor communities were identified in Phnom Penh - 342 of which were recognized as such and organized and the rest (174) remained unorganized (Phnom Penh Municipality, 2012, p. 5). The lack of secure tenure and the forceful displacement of slum dwellers in violation of their rights are recurrent topics in the existing literature. For the sake of development and beautification projects, massive numbers of urban poor were forced to relocate often with little compensation or assistance (Amnesty International, 2008, p. 6). Between 1990-2011, some 29,358 families (146,790 people) living in various Phnom Penh squatter settlements were displaced either through planned relocations or forced evictions (STT, 2011). In 2013, at least 36 settlements received eviction notices (STT, 2013, p. 11). Slum households in other parts of the country had also been evicted. In 13 provinces/municipalities studied by LICADHO, 53,758 families were affected by land-related human rights violations between 2003 and 2008 (LICADHO, 2009, p. 5).

Often the resettlement of urban slums occurred under duress; relocations were swift and lacked proper planning and consideration of the challenges relocated families would encounter in new sites. There was some evidence that relocated families were dumped at new sites nearly devoid of proper housing; basic utilities and infrastructures, and education and health services (STT, 2012). Conditions at relocation sites were often unsanitary and not economically viable. Relocated far from town at places offering few economic opportunities, residents were left with little choices but to move back and resettle in other slums in the urban center. Those who chose to remain at the new sites have to spend more time and money to commute to work and other income generation opportunities. Few of the relocated poor families own motorcycles, and the lack of affordable public transportation worsens their situations. Many of the relocated reportedly became worse off.

Those who remains in urban slums continue to be regarded as illegal settlers vulnerable to eviction (STT, 2013, p. 11). Being considered illegal settlers, their existence is largely unrecognized by local authorities. A recent survey found that 14.6% of the urban poor communities are not yet accessible to portable water; 28.2% no sewage systems; 40% no garbage collection systems; and 88.8% no public toilets in the communities (Phnom Penh Municipality, 2005). For those with access to clean water and electricity, the prices of such basic utilities are far higher than the usual rates enjoyed by the general public who are generally better off (STT, 2014). Their living conditions are generally appalling characterized by crowdedness, and poor hygiene and sanitation. Poor living conditions together with limited access to basic utilities and sanitation facilities make them more vulnerable to diseases (i.e., diarrhea, typhoid, dengue, malaria, skin diseases) (NCPD, 2007, p. 9). This eventuates in economic loss among the already fragile, desperate households. The absence of their legal recognition leads to the lack of empowerment of urban poor communities making it even more challenging to advocate their needs to policymakers (NCPD, 2007, p. 3).

### 3.4 Housing

With greater demand for housing in urban areas, especially Phnom Penh, land and housing prices have increased. These soaring property prices have driven the construction boom and encouraged real estate speculation. Government's investment in public housing is negligible. In most urban areas the private sector is the main supplier of formal housing supply in most urban areas. This is problematic because private investors cater primarily for middle and upper income cohorts (STT, 2012).

Migration to urban centers has increased the demand for rental properties making them less affordable for poor migrants or low-income earners in the cities. Cheap, insalubrious rental properties, pagoda compounds, slums, streets, and other public spaces have become the only available options. Without serious action to develop affordable housing, the situation can only worsen. On 09 May 2014, the Council of Ministers (COM) approved a new National Housing Policy. The aim is to ensure that everyone, especially the poor and the vulnerable, can obtain proper housing and access to resources for house renovation (COM, 2014). Under the policy, the government will not provide housing to the people directly, but will find ways or creates necessary

conditions to help people find their homes (Kuch, 12 May 2014). It remains to be seen how effective the implementation of the policy will be, but at present the lack of housing and tenure are major problems for the urban poor.

### 3.5 Urban environment

Little attention has been given in the literature to the impact of urbanization on the environment. However, it has been noted that the rapid and unplanned concentration of people in urban areas, especially in Phnom Penh contributes to environmental degradation, which in turn reduces the livelihood and well-being of city dwellers.

The multiplication of unplanned settlements in urban centers and peripheries put increasing pressure on the already-much-stressed natural and man-made drainage systems. As hubs of multiple human activities urban areas produce larger carbon footprints than rural areas. Urban dwellers consume more than their rural counterparts and produce more wastes. Phnom Penh produces 1,200 tons of solid wastes, including hazardous wastes, on a daily basis or 438,000 tons per year (as of 2014) (CINTRI, 2014). Available statistics from 2003 indicate that annually Phnom Penh produced 6,000,000m<sup>3</sup> of industrial wastewater and 34,456,000m<sup>3</sup> of household and hospital wastewater (NCPD, 2007, pp. 6-7).

Over the past decades in Phnom Penh, more and more natural water reservoirs<sup>2</sup> (blue spaces) have been filled for development purposes. Such reservoirs are not only important parts of the eco-system but they help minimize flooding risks and could have provided greatly needed recreational areas for urban dwellers. A major consequence of filling up these water reservoirs in a city with an already poor drainage system, that is, to replace areas with infiltration capacity with hard, impermeable surfaces, is the greatly increased risk of flash flooding in the city streets following heavy rains (Yin, 2006). Flooded roads and streets worsen traffic congestion and affect the livelihood and business activities of urban populations. Back in 2006, renowned Cambodian architect Vann Molyvann had already warned that Phnom Penh's drainage system was so inadequate, heavy rains could lead to flooding in a third of the city and necessitate the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people (Vann, 2006).

Another sign of insufficient urban planning and lack of thought for the urban environment is the lack of green areas in most Cambodian cities. A few decades ago, Phnom Penh was known as "the pearl of Asia" and was famous for its many parks, gardens, and canals (Englund & Rytter, 2008, p. 23). These days have long gone. Phnom Penh is a colorful city, but one color missing from the overall picture is green. Trees and greeneries not only embellish the city, they give shade and shelter to humans, animals and birds, provide space for relaxation and sporting activities, and above all help absorb carbon emissions and minimize global warming.

Cambodia's climate has been getting hotter. Long-term environmental data show that in the 1960s the average annual temperature over land in Cambodia stood between 27°C and 28°C. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had risen to just above 28°C. The rise

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2. For example, Pung Peay Lake, Boeng Kak Lake, Cheng Ek Lake, Boeng Trabek Lake.

in temperature is predicted to accelerate and the increase may range between 0.7°C and 2.7°C by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (MOE & UNDP, 2011, p.20). Such a massive rise in temperature will exacerbate the risk of catastrophic weather events and long-term environmental degradation and may affect urbanization and the livability of cities. Large-scale studies of the effect of climate change on urbanization and its impact are essential to inform future policy development and programming.

### 3.6 Gender-based violence

Studies on GBV in Cambodia are available but few looked into GBV from an urbanization perspective. ActionAid-Cambodia conducted 3 studies examining the safety/security of vulnerable groups of women in urban public spaces (ActionAid, 2011, 2013, 2014). Pushed by a lack of job opportunities in rural areas and pulled by better life prospects in towns, 58.5% of migrant women migrated to Phnom Penh for work in garment factories (32.2%), small business (23.4%), domestic work (11.1%), and the service/entertainment sector (10.3%) (MOP, 2013b, p. xi). For example, 90% of the half million garment workers in Cambodia are young women mostly aged between 18 and 25 years (ILO, 2014 cited in Cockroft, 2014, p. 4) Young, naïve, and in desperate need of money to support themselves and their families, female garment workers, sex workers, and beer promoters are highly susceptible to deception, exploitation, harassment, and violence by others, especially men.

Studies by ActionAid's highlighted the many challenges faced by garment workers, including physical and sexual violence by men at and around factories, in their residential areas, and in public spaces. In addition their living conditions were often inadequate and they suffered from a wide range of infrastructural and service deficits (i.e., extremely poor hygiene, inadequate lighting and policing, and overcrowding in rental areas). They were exposed to various health risks, including SRH problems, under-nutrition, and fainting (ActionAid, 2011, p. 7; 2013). A more recent survey of 385 female garment workers, students, sex workers, and beer promoters in Phnom Penh confirmed they suffered from a lack of access to affordable and decent housing, unsafe neighborhood characterized by poor street lighting, poor policing, and the presence of gangsters and drug-addicts, few facilities such as free public toilets and public transport, and lack of access to quality public services, which increased the women's vulnerabilities (ActionAid, 2014).

The study revealed that 21.6% of the respondents had experienced sexual/physical harassment in public spaces in 2013. Although they were abused on average 5 times, 60% of the victims took no action citing a range of reasons, including unfriendly/corrupt law enforcers. Many women were critical of the police, and some had allegedly been the victims of police's misconduct. The study highlighted the need to improve gender-responsive public service/assistance to women. Free counseling services and legal aid were not freely and widely available to women (ActionAid, 2014). In addition, the women reported very limited participation in public affairs. Few had ever attended meetings on gender-sensitive urban planning, women's safety in the Sangkat, and/or on developing urban planning or Sangkat development plan.

### 3.7 Sexual and Reproductive Health

This review could not identify any research that specifically examined the impact of urbanization on SRH. Apart from the Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS), which provides some urban-rural data on key SRH indicators, others only offer limited disaggregated data on urban and rural population. It is therefore difficult to know whether existing SRH services are sufficient to meet the demands of the rapidly growing urban population, many of whom are female migrant workers from rural, poor families. Research on the needs and availability of SRH services in urban areas is necessary.

Some progress on key SRH indicators have been reported, for example a significant drop in the rate of maternal, under-five, and infants mortality between 2005 and 2010 (NIS, 2011). Knowledge about contraception is almost universal among Cambodian women with 99% knew of at least one contraceptive method irrespective of their residential area and educational background (NIS, 2011, p. 73). From 2005 to 2010 among women aged 15-49, there was an overall increase in the use of contraception, but it was more pronounced in rural than urban areas rising from 38.3% of women in 2005 to 49.6% in 2010, but increasing by only 5.4% for urban women from 49.4% to 54.8%. A somewhat surprising result and a change from 2005, which warrants further research, is that in 2010 rural women were more likely than their urban counterparts to use modern methods of contraception than urban women (36% compared to 31%), particularly injectable (12% of rural women vs. 4% of urban women). While the use of injectable remained stable at 4% in urban areas, it increased from 8.3% to 11.8% in rural areas between 2005 and 2010. However, urban women were twice as likely to use IUDs as rural women (5% vs. 3%) (NIS, 2011, p.76).

Overall, the total fertility rate (TFR) for women aged 15-49 years has been steadily declining from 4.0 in 2000 to 3.4 in 2005, then to 3.0 in 2010. Between 2005 and 2010, TFR has dropped in the same proportion in urban areas (from 2.8 to 2.2) and rural areas (from 3.5 to 3.0) but it remains higher in rural areas (NIS, 2011, p. 58). This pattern mirrors a global pattern whereas urban women, who tend to be more educated, to be employed outside of the house and have a higher living standard, normally have fewer children.

Another global trend associated with socio-economic development and apparent in Cambodia is that women become more educated tend to delay marriage and reproduction. In Cambodia, the age of first intercourse and the age of first marriage for women aged 25-29 have both increased between 2005 and 2010, but more sharply for urban women than for rural women. In urban areas the median age of marriage was 21.4 years in 2005 rising by over 2 years to 23.5 years in 2010; in rural areas it only rose by half a year from 19.9 years to 20.4 years for the same period. However, the median age of first delivery (women aged 25-49) has increased by 1.1 year in urban areas (22.8 to 23.9 years) but has remained unchanged in rural areas (21.9 years).

Under 5% of women aged 15-49 years reported having an induced abortion. In 2010 the rate was lower in rural areas (3.9%) compared to urban areas (4.6%). However, compared to 2005 it had declined by 1% in urban areas but remained the same in rural areas. Further research is needed to explain these findings but we can hypothesize that the slightly lower rate of abortion in rural areas could be partially linked to rural women's greater reliance on modern methods of contraception. It could also be related to a question of access to public facilities and cost as a larger proportion of rural women (45%) than urban women (35%) had the abortion in a private facility but 18.7% of urban women used public facilities compared to rural women (12.7%) (NIS, 2011, p. 67-72).

A worrying trend is the rising rate of teenage childbearing (15-19 years) in rural areas, which increased from 8.3% in 2005 to 9.1% in 2010. By contrast, teenage childbearing declined in urban areas from 6% in 2005 to 4.6% in 2010. Teenage childbearing is generally higher among poor women with little education. Women in rural areas tend to get married and have children earlier than their urban counterparts, which can also explain the higher rate of childbearing for women aged 15-19 in rural areas.

There is an overall increase of around 35% in the percentage of women who made at least 4 ANC visits during their pregnancy. However, although the gap between urban and rural areas is closing, in 2010 the percentage of urban women who had 4 or more ANC visits was still much higher than that of rural women (80.3% vs. 55.3%).

In spite of the progress, there remains a strong need for more quality and affordable SRH services in both urban and rural areas. A decrease in overall satisfaction with public health services between 2011 and 2013 was also noted in a recent survey (NCDD, 2014, p. 6). SRH-related services are not integrated in all public health facilities. By 2013, only 65.8% of all public health facilities provided youth SRH services and just 33.5% of all health centers and referral hospitals provided safe abortion services (Health Information and Planning Department, 2014). Only a few NGOs (e.g., RACHA, RHAC, MSIC) and private clinics/hospitals provide such services, and some of the private clinics/hospitals are not even certified to provide them. In addition, SRH services are rather costly (Cockroft, 2014) for those in the poor segment of the society, including urban poor population, migrant workers, entertainment workers and so on.

High rates of rural-urban migration of female workers pose particular problems in relation to SRH. Such a large influx of young females to urban areas is likely to add an extra burden on the already inadequate health and SRH services. Cockroft (2014) focused on SRH issues facing female garment workers and found that reliable access to services was problematic due to lack of time, conflict between workers' working hours and clinics' opening hours, distance to the facilities, and lack of confidentiality. Another problem facing urban garment factory workers was the relatively high demand for abortion. Cockroft (2014) reported that 20% of female garment workers had sought to have an abortion compared to 5% of the general population; however, 75% of them did not know where to access this service. Urbanization patterns, therefore, need to

be considered when planning SRH services, including abortion and family planning, which should preferably be located in areas with a high female population, for example, where garment factories are located. The needs of other urban vulnerable female populations, such as entertainment workers, sex workers, domestic workers, and slum dwellers must also be examined in relation to migration and urbanization trends.

SRH services should also be available and affordable to urban poor women. Although SRH services are more likely to be available in urban areas than in rural areas, it does not necessary mean that all urban women can access those services. Accessing SRH services should be viewed from an income rather than a geographical perspective. Poor urban women tend to be exposed to higher SRH-related risks compared to other urban or rural women with better financial status. And yet due to various factors, including lack of money, time, and freedom to move about the city and/or to make household decisions they are less likely to access available SRH services (UNFPA, 2007, pp. 22-23).

### 3.8 Traffic congestion and road accidents

Traffic congestion in urban areas and road accidents have become a daily reality in Cambodia. Rapid growth in urban population and ownership of motor vehicles at time when road infrastructures are either poorly or improperly developed, causes traffic congestion and partly as consequence, road traffic accidents. This contributes to increasing air-pollution, and eventuates in loss of time and money. To what extent, traffic congestion contributes to urban air-pollution and global warming as a whole and the loss of time and money remains to be further explored. What is known is that in Cambodia, road traffic accident has quickly taken over AIDS as the primary killer. Everyday, about 42 people die or are injured in road traffic crashes, some suffering permanent disabilities (MOP, 2013a). As a major man-made disaster, road crashes cost increasing economic loss to Cambodia starting from \$116 million in 2003 to \$337 million in 2013 (National Road Safety Committee, 2013, p. 3). In 2011, the RGC and NGOs reportedly spent \$4.5 million on actions to improve road safety (National Road Safety Committee, 2012), but only \$1.7 million in 2012. Despite efforts of the RGC and relevant agencies, the rate of traffic accidents shows no sign of abating.

Internet search (i.e., on CDC website and other relevant websites) and the collection of documents from the MLMUPC identified a list of 261 legal and policy texts related to land management, urban planning, and construction for the period 1989 to 2014.<sup>3</sup> The list comprises 11 laws, 7 Royal-Decrees, 156 Sub-Decrees, 31 (inter-ministerial) Prakas, 26 Decisions/Directives, 18 Circulars, 8 Announcement, and 4 Policy Papers. Despite the exhaustive search, it is likely that the Directory of Regulatory Framework on Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction and a quick review of some of the regulatory framework provided at Appendix B is incomplete. Therefore the directory should only serve as a reference rather than a complete list of all legal and policy documents on the subject.

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3. No information available for 1995 and 1998.

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ON URBANIZATION

Of the 261 identified regulatory papers, 20 appear to be most relevant to urbanization/urban planning. They are:

1. Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia (1993)
2. Law on Organization of Municipalities and Provinces (1994)
3. Law on Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction (1994)
4. Act on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (1996)
5. Sub-Decree on Building Permits (1997)<sup>4</sup>
6. Sub-Decree No. 36 on Solid Waste Management (1999)
7. Sub-Decree No. 27 on Water Pollution Control (1999)
8. Sub-Decree No 62 on the Organization And Functioning of Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning And Construction (1999)
9. Sub-Decree No. 42 on Air Pollution and Noise Disturbance Control (2000)
10. Law on Land (2001)
11. Sub-Decree No. 19 on Social Land Concession (2003)
12. City Development Strategy 2005-2015 (2005)
13. Law on the Administrative Management of the Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts, and Khans (2008 Organic Law)
14. Circular No.03 “Resolution on Temporary Settlement on Land which has been illegally Occupied in the Capital, Municipal, and Urban Areas” (2010)
15. National Policy on Spatial Planning of the Kingdom of Cambodia, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 08 April 2011 and Prepared by the General Secretariat of the Council for Land Policy (2011).
16. Royal-Decree on Establishment of National Committee for Land Management and Urbanization (2012)
17. Sub-Decree No 77 on Establishment of Committee for Land Management and Urbanization at the Level of Municipality, Province, District and Khan (2012)
18. Sub-Decree No 108 on Organization and Functioning of the General Department of the National Urbanization and Land Management Committee (2013)
19. Sub-Decree on Urbanization of Capital, Municipal, and Urban Areas (Draft as of 16 January 2014).<sup>5</sup>
20. The National Housing Policy (2014)

This review of regulatory texts related to urbanization identified a huge amount of legal and policy papers currently in force. Twenty pieces of legislation (above) appear to be most pertinent to urbanization/urban planning and cover areas such as:

- Spatial planning, urban planning and construction
- Land use and land concession
- City development strategy and urbanization of capital, municipal and urban areas

4. Will be amended. Updated status is unknown (GSCLP, 2011, p. 11).

5. H.E. Ms. Suos Sophal, Deputy Director General and Deputy Secretary General of the National Committee for Land Management and Urban Planning, indicated that the draft Sub-Decree maybe adopted at the end of 2014.

- Waste management, water pollution control, air pollution and noise control (1999)
- Housing Policy
- Protection of cultural heritage

The 2011 Policy on Spatial and Urban Planning announced the future amendment of the 1994 Law on Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction and the 1997 Sub-Decree on Construction Permits. It also mentioned the development of urban building codes, and further legislation on construction; roads, railways and waterways; spatial planning; and a new urban plan. The substance of the proposed amendments and development of the above regulatory framework is not yet known.

## Gaps

These legislations and policy papers are supposed to provide a regulatory framework for proper urban planning to ensure the beauty and livability of cities, protect the environment and the cultural heritage, and implement basic rights to housing. The framework and its application, however, have long been the subject of various criticisms. STT argued that “The lack of an effective regulatory framework is tangible throughout the entire development paradigm. The poorly articulated responsibilities of different authorities, a lack of harmonization of legislation and policy, a lack of transparency and inconsistencies in application culminate in a pervasive uncertainty around the framework” (STT, 2012, p. 42).

Beside the lack of a sound framework, there are problems with the effective enforcement of regulations allegedly caused by a lack of political will and technical competency among implementers, corruption, and too-much reliance on affluent and powerful private construction investors (STT, 2013). STT suggested that regulations to safeguard the public interest in various areas (i.e., environmental management, heritage conservation, road traffic management, public services, and land and property rights) were “frequently subverted.” According to STT this “subversion” is strongly associated with the dominant control left to private sector’s interests (STT, 2012, p. 42).

Finally, it is difficult to assess whether this volume of laws and regulatory texts constitutes a well-articulated framework for effective regulation or if it is merely a collection of disparate legislations. For example, Trzcinski and Upham’s (2013) study of laws relating to land use and tenure in Cambodia argued that the legislative framework was inconsistent and sometimes contradictory, and included policy transfers from donor countries that were ill-adapted to the Cambodian context (see also Thiel, 2010). It is likely that the legislative body related to urbanization suffers from similar shortcomings and would greatly benefit from a comprehensive and critical analysis of the structure of that legal framework to highlight gaps, overlaps, and inconsistencies, and ensure an adequate and coordinated regulation of urbanization processes.

## EXISTING INTERVENTIONS

Many existing interventions by government, development partners, and (I)NGOs address the diverse problems encountered by urban populations or that emerged as a consequence of urbanization. Interventions target issues such as health, education, child/human rights, SRH, GBV, environment, housing, agriculture, illegal drugs, and so on. For that reason, mapping all interventions responsive to urbanization goes beyond the scope of this short assignment. The following, thus, only looks at key interventions on specific issues of interest to UNFPA such as youth SRH, gender-equity and GBV, environment, and those to improve the socio-economic situation of households in urban poor communities.

The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) Directory listed 243 (I)NGOs operating out of and/or working in Phnom Penh but most of their programs targeted rural areas (CCN, 2012). The Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) database contains information on 273 registered projects (CDC, 2014). There are 143 health-related projects - 12 are directly related to SRH of youths and others, 14 projects are on gender equity and GBV, and 26 on environmental issues (see Appendix C). Under the “Urbanization Category”, the CDC and CCC databases do not record any project or NGO. This review has not identified any NGO known to have been engaging in improving the urban environment, especially in terms of supporting and/or advocating for more trees, parks, and blue spaces in urban areas.

Not only urban poor, slum dwellers in particular, have for a long time received limited attention from the government, they have also been largely ignored by (I)NGOs and Development Partners. The most up-to-date list of NGOs working in the area of urbanization compiled from UNICEF and a literature review reveals few interventions by government, development partners, and (I)NGOs that aim at bettering the socio-economic situation of urban poor households (see Appendix C). The urban poor have benefited little from interventions by (I)NGOs as most of them target rural areas, and often failed to receive the basic development and health assistance that has benefited rural, poor populations.

Key government agencies involved in land management, urban planning, and construction projects include the MLMUPC, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Economics and Finance, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Environment, and last but not least the Municipal/Provincial Authority. Table 4 briefly describes the mandate of each agency.

Table 4: Key public agencies involved in land management, urban planning, and construction

No.	Agency	Mandate
1.	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction (MLMUPC)	Governing body for Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction Projects. It chairs the National Committee for Land Management and Urbanization- an inter-ministerial committee tasked to initiate, prepare, and coordinate the development of effective, sustainable, and equitable spatial and urban planning, and land use management and planning at national, regional, and sub-national levels.
2.	Ministry of Interior (MOI)	Headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, it is the leading and arguably the most powerful central agency with a broad mandate at national and sub-national level. Its key mandate includes public/local administration/development, law enforcement, and conflict resolution.
3.	Ministry of Economics and Finance	Managing state properties, including state land/assets.
4.	Ministry of Health	Governing body for health, including SRH services.
5.	Ministry of Environment	Governing body for environment-related issues, including air/water/noise/waste pollution control.
6.	Municipal/provincial authorities	Under the MOI, they head the sub-national government and chair the Committee for Land Management and Urban Planning at their respective level. They are responsible for developing and implementing urban master plans, land-use planning, and local development plans. They supervise the municipal/provincial offices of all ministries, and public agencies and authorities, including the Water Supply Authority, Électricité du Cambodge (ECD), and the Waste Management Authority.

Large development partners (i.e., World Bank, ADB, JICA, KOICA, AusAid, UNDP, and Government of China) generally focus on providing technical and financial support for the rehabilitation and enhancement of public services, basic utilities, drainage systems, flood protection system, and public infrastructure constructions. By contrast UN agencies and (I)NGOs tend to focus on the promotion and protection of the human rights of urban poor, ensuring better housing and more effective resettlement programs, and financial assistance to urban poor communities.

A review of existing interventions on key urbanization issues relevant to the work of UNFPA identified limited interventions pertaining to SRH, gender-equity and GBV, and environmental issues. For a more inclusive and effective urban planning, the urban poor as well as the government would benefit from more assistance and participation of (I)NGOs and Development Partners on urban/spatial planning.

## CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES

Roberts and Kanaley (2006) identified key challenges of urbanization in South East Asia, which included:

- Lack of long-term and comprehensive urban planning (mainly due to a focus on economic development rather than proper urbanization)
- Lack of major infrastructures
- Collusion between government, business and political elites resulting in opacity in decision-making
- Lack of popular and community consultation
- Urban development tends to benefit high-income earners rather than low income, resulting in the exodus of low-income earners (urban poor) from the center to the periphery, and the spread of informal settlements and slums.

The case studies presented here address some of these challenges. Successful responses to these challenges in the form of “good practices” in turn provide criteria for evaluating urbanization projects and become useful tools to construct a “road map” for advancing work in the area of urbanization in Cambodia. These criteria and how they are exemplified in the case studies are presented in Appendix D. From these case studies and previous research (Roberts & Kanaley, 2006) important lessons have been learned and “good practices” such as:

- Good governance
- Sound urban planning and management
- Development of infrastructure and service provision
- Attention to finance and cost recovery
- Social and environmental sustainability
- Ownership by communities
- Innovative thinking

### 6.1 Lessons learned from Thailand

Bangkok’s uncontrolled growth has resulted in many problems and in some ways provides an example of what not to do. For example, in relation to traffic, it demonstrates the need to develop a comprehensive urban plan very early on to avoid having to retrofit cities at a much higher cost. Bangkok quickly became one of the most congested (and polluted) cities in the world. The cost of reducing congestion in Bangkok is now higher by one or two orders of magnitude from what it would have been had adequate rights-of-way been secured earlier” (Roberts & Kanaley, 2006).

Three case studies from Thailand describe environmental projects conducted in relatively small urban centers (under 25,000 inhabitants), where the mayor initiated the idea and led the community: one involved the clean up of a river and the others dealt with waste management and recycling (Vorratnchaiphan & Villeneuve, 2006). The rehabilitation of a polluted river involved youth groups who monitored pollution levels while the municipality cleaned up the pollution and installed anti-pollution systems.

The youth then adopted a leadership role in promoting and exemplifying the use of sustainable and environmentally sound practices in their communities. Outcomes included the rehabilitation and regeneration of the river life, which in turn led to higher incomes from fishing and tourism.

In two other towns, communities set up waste management systems managed by community committees to separate and sell recyclable wastes, including the manufacturing of fertilizer from green waste. They successfully reduced the amount of landfills and generated a small income from selling to recycling plants and farmers. One lesson learned from these three projects is that effective local leaders who go beyond merely managing problems to proposing a vision for the future, raising awareness then mobilizing the population to put ideas in practice are important.

The last case from Thailand involves a much larger project developed in response to a housing crisis due to rapid increase in the population of urban poor (Vorratnchaiphan & Villeneuve, 2006). Starting in 2003, the Baan Mankong or “secure housing” scheme provided a means for communities to secure and upgrade their housing. The scheme relied on cooperation and good coordination between low-income communities, government authorities, architects and planners, and NGOs. The first step consisted of setting up community saving groups, which, as they grew, allowed residents to access government loans. These saving groups were managed by community management teams and supported by a public organization, the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), which managed revolving funds for microcredit purposes and provided a bridge between government and civil society groups.

In this scheme, communities needed to negotiate tenure with the government or landowner in the form of short-term renewable or long-term leases to the community. Upgrading of housing took many forms from complete demolition and rebuilding of communities to upgrade of onsite infrastructure. Once tenure was granted and a loan obtained, communities with the assistance of planners and architects drew up a plan and contracted suppliers and builders to conduct the building work.

By 2011 the scheme had helped over 90,000 households in 1,557 communities across 278 Thailand cities to upgrade their housing conditions (Nielsen, 07 January 2009). Archer’s (Usavagovitwong, 2012, p. 45) evaluation in Bangkok suggested that 80% of her sample of participants perceived that their tenure security had improved with the scheme and 83% were willing to invest further in their housing. Archer (2010, p.1) attributed the success of the scheme to its “participatory upgrading process [that] allows communities to bypass economic and institutional constraints in order to meet their housing needs, creating opportunities for collaboration between society and the state, and ultimately, a more sustainable form of urban development.”

Din Sometharith from UN-Habitat pointed out that poor countries like Cambodia do not have the resources to build new social housing for the urban poor and suggested that a better option may be to improve existing informal settlements. He cited the Thai

Baan Mankong upgrade scheme as a promising alternative for Cambodia (2010). A similar scheme has indeed started in Cambodia led by the Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF), which provides loans and assistance for community-led infrastructure projects. By 2009, the UPDF was supporting 2,000 saving groups in 26 cities (Nielsen, 07 January 2009). The UPDF also fosters links between urban community organizations and government to facilitate the development of new projects.

## 6.2 Lessons learned from Vietnam

In Vietnam, urbanization has occurred in a haphazard manner resulting in inadequate and insufficient infrastructure. Most Vietnamese cities are overcrowded, congested, and polluted. Local governments are often unable to control and monitor building activities, and lack the capacity and/or will to enforce building regulations, environmental controls, and make sure that provisions for treatment of sewerage, drainage, waste disposal, and basic services are in place. Unlike Thailand, Vietnam is a significant recipient of foreign aid and the case studies illustrate ways that ODA can assist sustainable development of urban centers. The case studies from Vietnam consist of large resource-intensive projects that engaged communities and resulted in better infrastructure and quality of life (N'Guyen, 2006).

Two projects consisted of upgrading and rehabilitating infrastructure in two cities near Hanoi. The first drew on technical and financial assistance from UNDP to upgrade the city's infrastructure and improve its institutional and managerial capacity. Through the project, educational seminars, training activities, and surveys were conducted. The physical upgrade included water and sanitation, storm water drainage, electricity, and health, education, and recreation projects. On all aspects improvements were noted. The long-term success of the upgrade was reinforced by activities to raise the population's awareness of environmental protection issues. Finally, the local governance system was streamlined, and the tasks of all members were clearly defined to ensure proper enforcement of regulation and effective monitoring and evaluation by local authorities. The second project was partially funded by the World Bank and targeted an area with high poverty and poor environmental conditions. It included work on sewerage, drainage, water supply, roads and improvement to social infrastructure such as schools. The project also aimed at capacity-building through participatory planning and management, and involved public consultation and co-management by community groups.

The last case study consisted of the cleaning and improvement of a canal in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), a project supported by the World Bank. The open sewerage canal posed a grave health risk to adjacent populations, particularly as it overflowed during rainy season. Attempts at cleaning up the canal had been made in the mid-80s but stopped because people refused to move. This time the project involved extensive public consultations to generate public understanding of its realization and benefits, which included a compensation and resettlement scheme. Specific taskforces were created to research and implement the different phases and components of the project, and to monitor and oversee its progress. In order to partly finance the project, the HCMC council sold public houses, and apartment blocks were built to accommodate

people displaced by the work. At completion, sludge in the canal had been cleaned and wastewaters redirected to cleaning stations. Storm water drainage was improved to prevent flooding, and the land surrounding the canal became a recreational facility.

The three case studies in Vietnam again highlight how good planning, consultation, and community engagement in the planning, delivery, and ongoing maintenance of infrastructure are essential for successful projects. They also demonstrate the need for sound implementation arrangements at all levels of government. Community participation was a key factor of the success. While ownership of such projects by the community is critical for success, ensuring effective community participation takes time and effort, and can only be achieved through political, economic, and social empowerment of beneficiary communities.

### **6.3 Lessons learned from Lao PDR**

Lao PDR is urbanizing slowly. Lao has a centralist system of government, including planning for urban areas and receives relatively large amounts of foreign aid. In 2000 and with ADB financial assistance, a large project started in Vientiane to upgrade the road and drainage network at the level of villages to reduce flooding, which occurred regularly and led to unsanitary conditions. Funding was shared between the government and a project loan but required village contribution of 10%. To ensure villagers commit to the project, regular consultation meetings were held, and the upgrade was driven by the villagers themselves, who collectively decided the priorities and the shapes the work should take in their village. A large focus of the project was to first explain to villagers how to participate, which was achieved through the work of community associations that also provided day-to-day liaison between the villagers and the project. Empowered by their participation and perceived ownership of the projects, villagers monitored the work done and were able to alert engineers of any problems or any required alterations to the design. This was the first time a participatory project of this scale was implemented in Lao (Mabbitt, 2006).

### **6.4 Lessons learned from Cambodia**

This section starts by examining three “good practice” case studies in Battambang, Kratie, and Phnom Penh. Since 2002 the RGC has been encouraging decentralization and devolving greater power at the provincial and municipal levels. In both Battambang and Kratie, the focus was on designing at the local level master plans for urban development and management. Both municipalities implemented an inclusive consultation process with all relevant stakeholders in the district and province. Government departments, district line offices, (I)NGOs, the private sector, local authorities, and communities were involved.

Battambang piloted the “one-window service” in which all administrative services were coordinated and provided under the one roof, thus saving time and effort visiting different offices to obtain required services and cutting down formal and informal costs. Administrative departments were streamlined and financial incentives based on efficiency, commitment, and performance, were introduced for government employees.

In addition, the new Office for the Population, which includes elected representatives, was introduced to make services more accessible to the population and set up a complaint process. Kratie designed and started to implement a strategy for growth and development of the northeast region with the aim of making the town attractive to investors while preserving its resources and identity. The private sector and foreign donors complemented government financial contributions for infrastructure and the provision of services such as schools; however, communities were also required to contribute to the cost of local infrastructure projects, which has been beneficial to ensure projects were well maintained at post-completion (Benghong, 2006).

The final case study illustrates the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation, to ensure the best outcomes are reached. Following the trend in private sector-led developments in other parts of Asia, Phnom Penh has plans for building five satellite cities, two of which – Camko City and Grand Phnom Penh International – were underway in 2012 (BAU, 2007; Paling, 2012; STT, 2012). Satellite cities are self-contained urban developments combining residential uses, commercial, industrial and business areas, and educational, health and recreational facilities. Sometimes described as “gated cities,” satellite cities are typically driven by foreign direct investment from East Asia and oriented toward a local and foreign clientele with high income. Supporters argue that satellite cities provide a response to urban congestion in Phnom Penh and to shortage of high quality housing and office space. On the other hand, critics claim that they reinforce spatial segregation, and have led to the displacement of local residents and environmental damages through the filling up of waterways (Paling, 2012; Percival & Waley, 2012). In addition, the financing and approval process for these developments is opaque, and the design has not involved wide ranging consultation. Little research on the impact of such developments in Cambodia and elsewhere has been conducted so far, and it is too early to assess whether the satellite cities will be beneficial or detrimental to the urban expansion of Cambodia. However, because of the scale and the cost of these projects, it will be important to monitor their development and future consequences in terms of governance, socio-economic and environmental impacts.

## CONCLUSION

Cambodia has experienced a rapid urbanization over the last two decades. Urbanization can both solve and create socio-economic and environmental problems. A well-planned urbanization process has numerous benefits for socio-economic development and the environment. This review, however, suggests that Cambodia's largely unplanned and unregulated process of urbanization has resulted in several major problems including the lack of infrastructure and urban services, traffic congestion, increased urban flooding, and the neglect of the urban poor and the environment. Urbanization has offered many socio-economic benefits to urban dwellers, but it has also resulted in a growing population of urban poor, locked out of the city centers by rocketing land prices and speculation, and pushed to sprawling slums and informal squatter settlements on the periphery.

The urban poor have generally received limited attention from the government, (I)NGOs and Development Partners. Although most (I)NGOs are based in Phnom Penh or provincial towns, their programs commonly target rural areas and ignore the many challenges encountered by the urban poor, particularly issues pertaining to SRH, gender-equity and GBV, youths and vulnerable households living in slums, and degraded environments. Presently, urban poor communities benefit little from interventions that directly aim at improving their socio-economic conditions and the environment in which they live.

There is a lack of research addressing the socio-economic and environmental impact of urbanization. The little body of research tends to focus on Phnom Penh and adopts a narrow human rights perspective. There is a relatively large number of laws and regulations, which, due to a lack of transparency, and poor articulation and enforcement, do not constitute a coherent framework.

The demand for effective and inclusive urbanization processes and some assistance for the urban poor households are increasing. The RGC is becoming more open to the involvement of the citizen, civil society or organizations, and private stakeholders in urban planning and management. This is an encouraging sign, but more needs to be done to increase popular participation. Lessons learnt from the case studies in Cambodia and neighboring countries show that sustainable urban development requires good strategic planning in the form of urban master plans and inclusive, participatory local planning. The process needs to be combined with localized community planning regarding the needs of the residents. The aim is to facilitate the involvement of communities into determining their own priorities, which in turn should have a direct and sustainable impact on poverty reduction. In Cambodia, within the framework of decentralization some structures to facilitate consultation and community participation are already in place, which could be utilized to increase participation. Transparent and open governance systems are also essential not only to plan sustainable and well-serviced cities, but also to ensure that investors have sufficient trust to fund projects. This involves increasing consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### UNFPA

- a. Cooperate with UN agencies (e.g., UNICEF, UNDP, UN-HABITAT), (I)NGOs, and/or public institutions (e.g., the MLMUPC, MOP) to commission empirical studies on the impact of urbanization with a clear vision of which urbanization problems are examined; for example, do problems relate to a lack of urbanization or to a crisis due to unplanned urbanization?
- b. Many urban poor households live in poverty, and poverty disproportionately affects young children, pregnant women, and elderly than others. Living in destitution coupled with limited access to basic services and infrastructures, it is presumable that those vulnerable groups of urban poor populations have poor health and SRH status, and that malnutrition and anemia prevail among the cohorts. Large-scale research looking into the cohorts' wellbeing would be a worthwhile investment to inform future policies and programing.
- c. Support a large-scale study on SRH needs and availability of services in newly urbanized areas, especially for poor youths and vulnerable populations. Findings from the study would inform the development of effective policies and advocacy works on SRH.
- d. Technically and financially support the Ministry of Health and NGOs to improve urban poor women's access to quality, affordable and comprehensive SRH services, including outreach activities for SRH education and services expanded to all urban poor communities targeting in particular youth and women of childbearing age.
- e. Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to identify and address risk factors that contribute to unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, and GBV; and to scale up prevention programs and socio-economic initiatives aiming to increase gender equity and income-generation capacity, especially of youth and women in urban poor communities.
- f. Work in partnership with UNICEF, GIZ, MLMUPC, and MOP to assess the situations of urban poor communities and provide ID-Poor Cards to poor households in urban areas. This would ensure that the right services are provided to the right people and those with ID-Poor<sup>6</sup> Cards would be exempted from paying fees on public services, including health care and SRH services.
- g. Support the MLMUPC to conduct a comprehensive study that explores the consistency, effectiveness, articulation, and gaps among the huge amount of current legal and policy texts on land management, urban planning, and construction. Current studies only provide a cursory analysis of regulations but do not propose a synthesis that would help the development of a coherent regulatory framework.
- h. Cooperate with relevant government and non-government partners to ensure improved socio-economic assistance for the urban poor, including access to free or affordable health care (SRH included), upgraded infrastructures (road, electricity, sewerage), and improved housing and tenure security.

6. GIZ has been working with MOP to assess and provide IDPoor cards (level 1-3) to people in many provinces across the country. However, at time of writing this report, the IDPoor assessment for urban households, especially in Phnom Penh is not yet carried out.

- i. With many urban poor communities are not yet recognized and therefore lack of access to Water and Sanitation (WASH) services, there is need for collaborative, multi-sectoral efforts for the provision of accessible and affordable clean water, toilet, and waste collection services. This not only helps improving the living condition of families living in informal settlements, but also preventing outbreak of diseases/ infections.
- j. Work with the NIS to develop an accurate and scientific framework for classification of urban and rural areas and to use this framework consistently to ensure the availability of consistent and systematic data on urbanization, demographic profile, socio-economic data, and gender and health related issues disaggregated by geographical and rural-urban areas for planning purposes.
- k. Collaborate with relevant UN agencies, e.g. UNICEF, and (I)NGOs, e.g. NGO Forum, to conduct joint advocacy work for a moratorium on eviction of squatter settlements and increased assistance for the urban poor. UNICEF has been working with government and non-government stakeholders in a bid to improve the socio-economic status of Phnom Penh poor dwellers. The NGO Forum on Cambodia- an umbrella NGO- has long been involved in coordinated advocacy on land rights, and has organized regular network meetings on the issue.
- l. Raise awareness among the general public and policy makers of the need for the development of urban poor communities and how the effort would in turn benefit the overall development of urban areas.

### **The Royal Government of Cambodia**

- m. National, sub-national, and local governments should increase cooperation with each other and with relevant civil society organizations, UN agencies, and development partners to ensure the development and effective implementation of a more pro-poor and inclusive urban planning and to increase investments and efforts for the development of urban poor communities.
- n. As many urban poor communities are not yet formally recognized by the government, it is imperative to study the feasibility and suitability of formally recognizing and organizing those communities. Formal recognition would allow access by urban poor communities to security of tenure, increased government service/assistance, and would increase advocacy power and chance to take part and have ownership in the development of their communities.
- o. Local authorities should be empowered to work with urban poor communities in local planning and development of the communities, and have sufficient financial, human, and technical resources to realize local development plans with active participation from local communities and stakeholders.
- p. Since slum dwellers tend to engage in low-skill and labor intensive occupations and consequently earn little, youths in urban poor communities would benefit from free vocational training as well as credit with low or no interest to encourage business start-up.

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## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: List of literature related to urbanization in Cambodia (2006-2013)<sup>7</sup>

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## Appendix B: Regulatory framework on land management, urbanization, and construction

### Regulatory framework by year

Year	Law	Royal-Decree	Sub-Decree	(Inter-Ministerial) Prakas	Circular	Announcement	Decision/Directive	Policy	Total
2014			1					1	2
2013			2	2			2		6
2012		1	2				1		4
2011			3	1				1	5
2010		2	52	1	2		8		65
2009		1	32	1	1		2		37
2008	1		21	1					23
2007		1	18	1	4		3		27
2006		2	6	1			1	5	15
2005			3		1		1	1	6
2004				2			1		3
2003			2	1					3
2002			3	13		1	1	2	20
2001	3		1	1		2			7
2000			4		1	1			6
1999	1		1	1					3
1997			2						2
1996	3					1			4
1994	2		1	1			1		5
1993	1		1	1	1	1			5
1992			1	1	1	1			4
1991				1	1		1		3
1990					4				4
1989			1	1	2				4
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>261</b>





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