

# CAMBODIA 2026-2029



## COUNTRY PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

“A better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world.”



**UN-HABITAT**

## UN-Habitat Cambodia Country Programme Overview

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# OPENING

The Country Programme Overview (CPO) 2026-2029 for the Kingdom of Cambodia serves as the strategic framework for UN-Habitat's programming in the country. It has been developed with relevant stakeholders and is aligned with global, regional and national frameworks, including the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2026-2029, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)'s Implementation Strategy 2026-2029, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2024-2028.

An important dimension of the CPO is to identify and respond to emerging urban development challenges in line with governmental priorities and strategic directions of the UNSDCF 2024-2028. It highlights critical issues affecting quality of life in an urbanizing Cambodia, including poverty, unemployment, migration, environmental degradation, climate vulnerability, inadequate housing, limited access to WASH services, weak solid waste management, gender inequality, and infrastructure gaps.

The CPO outlines UN-Habitat's proposed country programming and the strategies that will guide implementation over the period 2026-2029. It serves as a planning framework and a reference document to strengthen the coordination and delivery of urban and human settlements interventions across Cambodia.

UN-Habitat Cambodia remains committed to supporting the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) in advancing inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban development. Through the priorities set out in this CPO, UN-Habitat aims to help Cambodia maximise the benefits of urbanisation while ensuring that no one and no place is left behind.





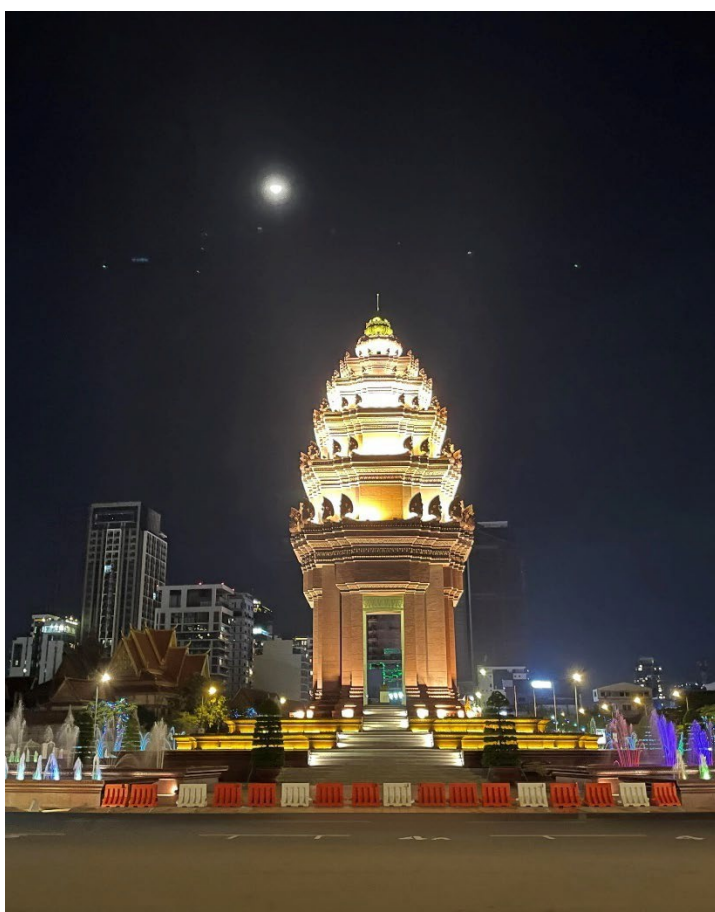


## 02

# COUNTRY ANALYSIS

Currently, 41% of Cambodia's population resides in urban areas, with the country maintaining a 2.1% population growth rate. Access to critical infrastructure remains a priority, as coverage for basic drinking water is at 76.7%, sanitation at 67.9%, and hygiene services at 83.4%.

The country is set to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in December 2029. This transition highlights the need to build resilience, reduce inequalities, and promote inclusive and sustainable development in line with the Leave No One Behind principle.





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03

# FACTSHEET



17.3M

**POPULATION**  
(2024)



2.1 %

**POPULATION**  
**GROWTH**  
(2024)



10.1%

**AGING RATE**  
(2024)



7.2 M (41%)

**URBAN**  
**POPULATION**  
(2024)



2,800 USD

**GDP**  
per capita  
(2025)



0.606

**HDI INDEX**  
(2023)



## 04

# URBAN CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Cambodia is urbanising rapidly, creating both significant opportunities and growing development challenges.



## POVERTY

From 2014 to 2022, the rate of multidimensional poverty was reduced by half, declining from 36.7% to 16.6%. The RGC aims to reduce the population living below the national poverty line to 6% at the national level. The RGC also targets reducing the share of the urban population living below the poverty line to 6% by 2030.

## MIGRATION

People of working age migrate in search for better livelihood opportunities, driven by poverty, landlessness, a rapidly growing job market, wage disparities between rural and urban areas, and environmental degradation in rural areas. 79% of migrants are between 17 and 35 years old. Among internal migrants, 58.4% moved from one rural area to another, 24.5% moved from rural to urban areas, and 12% moved between urban areas.

## INEQUALITY

Although Cambodia's Human Development Index (HDI) remains below the regional average, its score of 0.606 places the country in the medium human development category. However, a 26.7% reduction to an Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI) of 0.444 in 2023 highlights high inequality and disparities in health, education, and income. A Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 0.461 further underscores persistent gaps in reproductive health, women's empowerment, and labour market participation.

## SOLID WASTE

The RGC issued Sub-decree 113 on Solid Waste Management in 2015. It aims to strengthen urban solid waste management by delegating responsibilities from the national level to sub-national and local authorities.

The amount of urban solid waste regularly collected and adequately disposed of increased from 1.2 million tons in 2015 to 2.8 million tons in 2024.

# HOUSING, LAND AND BASIC SERVICES

## HOUSING FOR ALL

Poverty, combined with rapid and unplanned urbanization, has left many households living in inadequate housing that does not meet minimum standards for structural safety, materials, or thermal comfort. Many low-income households face limited livelihood opportunities and chronic indebtedness. Even where households recognise the importance of safer and more resilient housing, the costs of daily necessities often take priority, making housing upgrades financially out of reach.



**HOUSING**



**LAND**



**BASIC SERVICES**

Many live in inadequately built housing that fail to meet minimum standards for structural integrity, materials, and thermal comfort, leaving residents vulnerable to climate hazards.

Recognising the importance of decent housing, the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC) aims to construct 800,000 affordable housing to meet projected demand by 2030.

The country still has land disputes, land grabbing, and forced evictions, driven by tensions between land governance, social policies and investment pressures

The RGC aims to complete the land registration process by 2028.

Specifically, access to basic drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services improved significantly, rising from 71.4% to 78.0%, 53.9% to 76.7%, and 67.9% to 83.4%, respectively from 2015 to 2022.

By 2030, the RGC aims to ensure that 100% of the urban population has access to safe and clean water supply services. The RGC also targets 50% coverage of safely managed sanitation services.



Cambodia is among the most climate-vulnerable countries in Southeast Asia, frequently affected by heatwaves, floods, and droughts. According to the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI), Cambodia ranked 14th among 181 countries in terms of cumulative climate risk from 2000 to 2019. In 2019, it ranked 84, with considerable losses relative to GDP (86<sup>th</sup>) and purchasing power parity (97<sup>th</sup>).

## EXTREME HEAT

Under a high-emissions scenario (Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP8.5)), national temperatures could rise by up to 3.7°C by the 2090s, intensifying the frequency and severity of extreme climate events. The Shared Socioeconomic Pathway (SSP) 3-7.0 scenario projected that the national average number of extremely hot days (with maximum temperatures above 35°C) would rise from the 1995-2014 baseline to 60.17 days per year (ranging from 39.43 to 87.01) during 2020-2039 and further increase to 82.87 days (ranging from 46.73 to 124.53) by mid-century.

## HEAVY RAIN

A report on Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment projected that rainfall from tropical depressions crossing Cambodia, following typhoons that land in Vietnam, will decrease in frequency. Still, each event is expected to bring heavy rain.

A UNDP study projects that the intensity of heavy rainfall during the wet season, from June to October, could increase by up to 14%, whereas the Ministry of Environment's projection mentions a 35% increase in rainfall volume may occur from a 2000 baseline. In September 2022, the heaviest rainfall in three years caused severe flooding in 14 provinces, affecting approximately 85,000 households, and leading to landslides that necessitated the evacuation of 5,000 families.



# RECENT AND ONGOING INTERVENTIONS

# 1

2021 - 2025

## Climate Change Adaptation through Protective Small-Scale Infrastructure Interventions in Coastal Settlements of Cambodia



5 M USD



Adaptation fund



Ministry of Environment



In collaboration with the National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSD) and Ministry of Environment (MoE), the project strengthened climate resilience and adaptation in Cambodia's most vulnerable coastal settlements, in Kep Province and Prey Nob District of Preah Sihanouk Province. The project directly and indirectly benefited more than 134,000 people in Kep and Prey Nob.

Key achievements included the construction of 27 resilient demo housing units, the rehabilitation of two water gates and canals, and the formulation of 20 knowledge products and four policy recommendations. The project completed all planned activities, and the closing ceremony was held on 28 October 2025.



*A gathering photo of key stakeholders at the project closing workshop.*



*Handover of climate-resilient houses to the selected vulnerable households.*



**Country Programme Overview**



# 2

## National Urban Policy Programme, Phase Two: Scaling Up People-centred Smart Cities through National Urban Policy (NUPP II)

2022 - 2027

The main objective of this programme is to promote a people-centred smart cities approach through National Urban Policies, mainly based on the collaboration with MOLIT (the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport) of the Republic of Korea. Other partners and donors will contribute to the overall project. The project promotes sustainable and inclusive digital transition through high-level policy dialogue and supports the integration of people-centred smart city approaches into national urban policy.



USD 280,000



Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and  
Transport (MoLIT) of South Korea

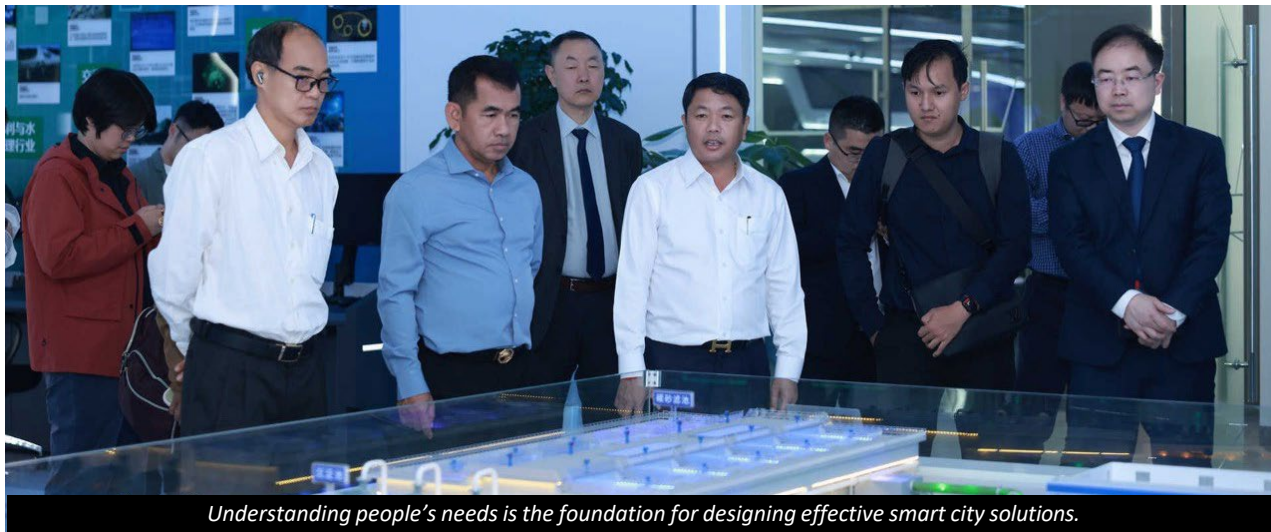


Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia



This programme aims to promote a people-centred smart cities approach with support from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MoLIT) of South Korea and other partners.

As part of a global initiative involving Azerbaijan, Egypt, Mozambique, and Paraguay, the programme assists Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia, in mainstreaming people-centred approaches into its Smart City Action Plan, while building capacity and implementing demonstration projects. These initiatives aim to enhance local expertise and improve the quality of life through technology-driven solutions.



Smart City Action Plan  
from Preah Sihanouk Province

Representatives from the Ministry of Interior and other key stakeholders attended the dissemination workshop.

3

## Increasing Climate Resilience through small-scale infrastructure investments and enhancing adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities in Kampot and Koh Kong Provinces in Cambodia

2024 - 2028

The overall objective of the project is to support climate-resilient and adaptive development and increase capacity for climate variability/ change adaptation of target communities living in Kampot and Koh Kong Provinces.



10 M USD



Adaptation fund



Ministry of Environment

Since the inception workshop and the first Project Management Committee (PMC) meeting in September 2024, the UN-Habitat, in cooperation with the National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSD) and Ministry of Environment (MoE), has implemented several activities.

Following the recruitment of project staff and orientation workshops with sub-national stakeholders, the project undertook site inspections and preparatory work for capacity-building sessions and small-scale infrastructure design. This process also supported the identification of target trainees and the assessment of capacity needs.



**Left:** An orientation workshop at the sub-national levels was organized to have a mutual understanding of the project.



**Right:** Stakeholder Consultations were organized as part of the pre-inspection phase, including training needs assessments.



**Left:** A training session was organized to share the donor's Environmental and Social Policy, and the first Adaptation Fund Project's experiences and insights.



**Right:** Pre-inspections were conducted by stakeholders to confirm demarcations, Environmental and Social risks, and to prepare technical designs.





2024 - 2026

## Accelerating the implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanization Strategy (ASUS) – Phase II

The ASEAN Sustainable Urbanization Strategy (ASUS), as one of the initiatives under the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, was launched in 2018 to help shape and influence urban development pathways across ASEAN Member States.



USD 251,188



Australian Government



Ministry of Interior, ASEAN Smart Cities, Cambodia



The ASUS, launched in 2018 under the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, aims to help shape sustainable urban development pathways across ASEAN Member States.

ASUS Phase II seeks to position ASUS and the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) as a broader, more strategic, inclusive, and transformative platform for advancing sustainable urban development and shared prosperity across the region, while ensuring that no one and no place is left behind.

Participating cities from ASUS Phases I and II have actively engaged in regional dialogue and, together with UN-Habitat, have co-organized training and consultations to address priority urban challenges and accelerate sustainable urbanization.



*Diagnostic Workshop in Siem Reap City*



*Building sustainable cities starts with empowered people*

# IMPACT STORY

Obtaining technical capabilities and alternative livelihood options through targeted training



*"THE PROJECT PROVIDED TRAINING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AND PRACTICE NEW CONSTRUCTION SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE, CREATING A RELIABLE ALTERNATIVE INCOME BEYOND FARMING."*

*Ms. Nat Yum,  
a beneficiary*

Through its resilient housing work, UN-Habitat and its implementing partners are not only improving housing conditions but also strengthening local capacity and expanding livelihood opportunities for community members. The experience of Ms. Nat Yum demonstrates this impact.

As part of the resilient housing initiative, the housing expert trained unskilled and semi-skilled local workers, as well as community members on resilient construction techniques. Ms. Nat Yum, a 40-year-old mother of four, was among the trainees who is currently supporting the resilient housing construction works.

Ms. Nat Yum shared:

*"I used to rely only on farming, with few other livelihood options. Through this project, I gained construction skills and the opportunity to work as a labourer. These new skills will help me access work on other construction sites in the future and provide a more reliable source of income."*



## A Smile of Happiness in a Resilient Home: New Hope and Safety



*"SINCE WE MOVED INTO OUR NEW HOUSING THAT KEEPS US SAFE FROM CLIMATE HAZARDS, OUR FAMILY HAS FELT COMFORTABLE, SECURE, AND HAPPY EVERY DAY."*

*Ms. Sok La,  
a beneficiary*

Ms. Sok La, 50, is a widow living in Kep Province with her elderly mother, sibling, niece, and nephew. For years, her family struggled in a fragile wooden house with a leaking zinc roof. During the rainy season, water dripped through the roof, and storms brought fear and sleepless nights.

Working as a cleaner in the Kep municipality, Ms. Sok La never imagined that one day she would have a housing strong enough to protect her family from climate-related hazards. Thanks to the support of UN-Habitat, the National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSD), and Ministry of Environment (MoE), with the financial support of the Adaptation Fund, Sok La now lives in a beautiful, resilient house that keeps her family safe and comfortable, shielded from heat, rain, wind, and storms all year round.

Today, Ms. Sok La is grateful to have a safe and comfortable home where her family can live with greater security, dignity, and hope for the future.

# COUNTRY FOCUS



**RESILIENT HOUSING & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**

- Demonstrating leadership through a climate change project (2022-25), delivering 27 resilient houses.
- Advancing implementation of the current climate change project (2024-28), which will construct 60 houses by 2028.
- Assisting the development of a comprehensive Housing Law in response to the Government's request.
- Promoting access to adequate and climate-resilient housing for all, fostering inclusive and evidence-based governance of the housing sector.
- Addressing housing needs in the face of climate and disaster risks.



**CLIMATE-RESILIENT URBAN SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Implementing climate change adaptation under the current climate change project (2024-2028), and two concept notes for climate change and Locally Led Adaptation (2027-2030) to promote livelihood community improvement.
- Ensuring inclusive access to basic services and infrastructure (latrines, drainage, solid waste).
- Building the capacity of local unskilled/semi-skilled workers for resilient housing construction, WASH, drainage systems and small-scale infrastructures.
- Strengthening Heat Resilience and WASH in Climate-Vulnerable Urban Informal Settlements in Coastal Cambodia.
- Facilitating the NGO network on affordable housing, land, and basic services in urban informal settlements.



**INTEGRATED & SMART URBAN GOVERNANCE**

- Ongoing initiatives: ASUS and NUPP-II are modernizing urban governance, planning systems, and a smart city people-centred approach.
- Conducted an informal settlements study in Preah Sihanouk Province, in partnership with the Wuhan Planning and Design Institute, with a follow-up proposal on informal settlements and affordable housing under development.
- Strengthening institutional frameworks and scaling integrated urban planning for inclusive and sustainable development through national smart city strategy and action plan.



## UN-HABITAT'S STEPS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

### THROUGH HOUSING-RELATED PROJECTS

To promote affordable and climate-resilient housing through demonstration, capacity-building, technical design support, and knowledge sharing while helping establish the legal framework for adequate housing for all.

### THROUGH CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROJECTS

To strengthen the resilience of climate-vulnerable settlements through capacity-building, climate-smart livelihood practices, and improvements to small-scale infrastructure and ecosystem assets

### THROUGH SMART CITY INITIATIVES

To support national and sub-national governments in promoting a people-centred smart cities approach, through mainstreaming sustainable and inclusive digital transition into urban policy, planning and demonstration activities.

## TARGETS

**15M** 

FUNDS SECURED  
FOR PROJECTS IN  
THE COUNTRY

**0.5M** 

BENEFICIARIES  
ASSISTED BY THE  
PROJECTS

**60** 

RESILIENT DEMO  
HOUSES WILL BE  
CONSTRUCTED

**3** 

SMART CITY  
PILOTS  
IMPLEMENTED



# PLANNED INTERVENTIONS



## Enhancing Community-Based Adaptation and Ecosystem Resilience in Protected Areas through Green Destination in Kampong Speu, Cambodia

**Project Aim:** To strengthen the long-term climate resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems in target districts by 2030 through inclusive governance systems, nature-based ecosystem restoration, and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods for contributing to biodiversity conservation, climate risk reduction, and sustainable development in protected areas.

**Relevance to regional implementation plan:** harmonized co-existence of cities and nature and preservation of cultural diversity

**Additional Priorities:** Universal access to resilient, risk-informed and climate-sensitive basic services and infrastructures



**TOTAL BUDGET:**  
10M USD



**TIME FRAME:**  
2027 - 2031



**LOCATION:**  
CAMBODIA

### OUTPUT, OUTCOME AND IMPACT:

1. UN-Habitat plans to organize capacity building training targeting sub-national stakeholders to support the integration of climate adaptation into the local investment and development plans, while promoting nature-based infrastructure identified and prioritized by the communities.
2. Local and sub-national institutions demonstrate improved capacity to plan, budget for, and implement inclusive, risk-informed adaptation actions in protected and climate-vulnerable landscapes.
3. Vulnerable households, including women, youth, and indigenous groups, adopt diversified and climate-resilient livelihood strategies linked to sustainable agriculture, forest products, and green tourism value chains.
4. Ecosystems and critical rural infrastructure in protected and eco-tourism zones are restored and made climate-resilient, reducing environmental degradation and enhancing the adaptive capacity of local communities.





## 2

### Enhancing Livelihood and Climate Adaptation through Nature-based Solutions in Heritage Protected Areas in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia

**Project Aim:** To enhance sustainable livelihoods and strengthen climate resilience among communities living in heritage-protected areas in Siem Reap Province by promoting community-led nature-based solutions (NbS).

**Relevance to regional implementation plan:** harmonized co-existence of cities and nature and preservation of cultural diversity

**Additional Priorities:** Universal access to resilient, risk-informed and climate-sensitive basic services and infrastructures



**TOTAL BUDGET:**  
5M USD



**TIME FRAME:**  
2027 - 2031



**LOCATION:**  
CAMBODIA

#### OUTPUT, OUTCOME AND IMPACT:

1. UN-Habitat plans to organize capacity building training targeting sub-national stakeholders, including forest community committees, to integrate climate adaptation into the local plans, promote climate-smart livelihoods, and promote nature-based infrastructure based on the local prioritization.
2. Sub-national development and investment planning processes (Commune/Sangkat and District levels) are climate-informed and demonstrate enhanced institutional capacity to integrate nature-based solutions and green tourism into adaptive governance frameworks.
3. Vulnerable households and communities benefit from improved livelihoods and enhanced resilience through the implementation of nature-based, small-scale infrastructure and adaptive land-use practices aligned with sustainable tourism and agriculture.
4. Proven models for nature-based, community-led adaptation and sustainable green tourism are documented, disseminated, and adopted for replication and policy integration at sub-national and national levels.



# 3

## Towards a Housing Law for Cambodia: Establishing the Legal Framework for Adequate Housing for All

**Project Aim:** To support the Royal Government of Cambodia in the development of a comprehensive housing law that provides a coherent legal framework for housing, defines clear institutional mandates across sectors, and promotes access to adequate and climate-resilient housing for all, fostering inclusive and evidence-based governance of the housing sector.

**Relevance to regional implementation plan:** Resilient, risk-informed and climate-sensitive housing and community for all

**Additional Priorities:** Universal access to resilient, risk-informed and climate-sensitive basic services and infrastructures



**TOTAL BUDGET:**  
0.9M USD



**TIME FRAME:**  
TBD



**LOCATION:**  
CAMBODIA

### OUTPUT, OUTCOME AND IMPACT:

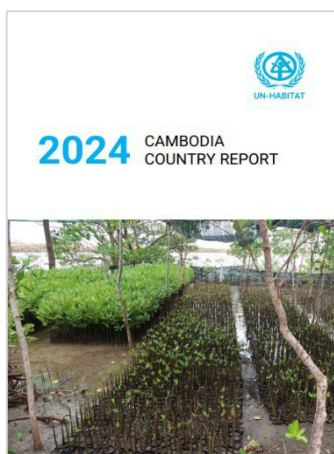
1. In collaboration with the Policy and Legislation Section and the Land, Housing and Informal Settlements Section of UN-Habitat HQ, UN-Habitat Cambodia plans to develop a comprehensive housing law for adequate housing.
2. UN-Habitat plans to organize consultation workshops with relevant national and sub-national government officials, NGOs, and development partners.
3. Strengthened national and local capacity to develop and draft a comprehensive, evidence-based Housing Law for Cambodia, informed by robust legal analysis and inclusive, participatory engagement of all relevant stakeholders.
4. Enhanced knowledge of national and local authorities to operationalise and prepare for the effective implementation of the Housing Law once adopted.





## II

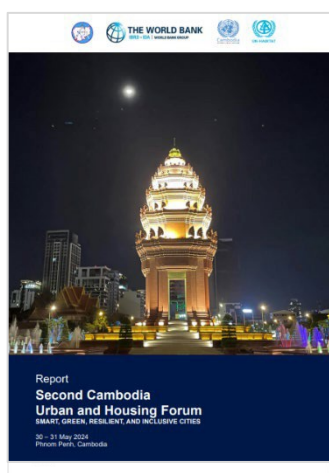
# PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH



## Cambodia Annual Report 2024 (2024)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

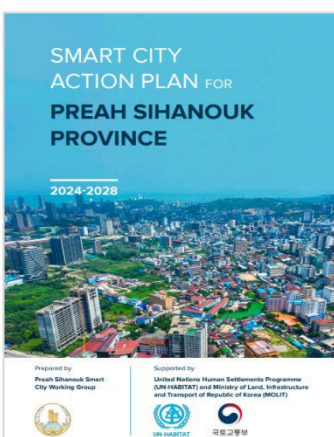
- Over the past two decades, Cambodia has made strong economic and social gains alongside rapid urban transformation, but urbanization has also created challenges.
- UN-Habitat Cambodia has implemented projects on climate adaptation and smart city initiatives across several provinces.
- Accomplishments in 2024 were made possible by the steadfast support of our global partners, including Governments, international organizations, and regional stakeholders.



## Report of the Second Cambodia Urban and Housing Forum (2023)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

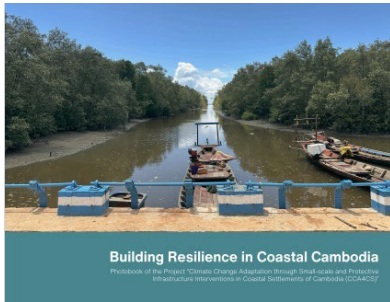
- The second Cambodia Urban and Housing Forum (CUHF 2) took place in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from 30 to 31 May 2024.
- It was co-organized by the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC), the World Bank, and UN-Habitat.
- More than 300 national and international stakeholders participated in the event and discussed the theme “Smart, Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Cities”



## Smart City Action Plan for Preah Sihanouk Province 2024-2028 (2024)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Smart City Action Plan for Preah Sihanouk Province (2024-2028) follows the People-Centred Smart City Approach to ensure that the priorities set for smart city development incorporate technological modernization, public security, protection of interests, and responsiveness to the needs of all citizens.
- It identifies six priority areas, including Digital Governance, Digital Economy, Smart Living (Community & Social Infrastructure), Smart Mobility, Smart Waste Management, and Smart Environmental Management.



## Photobook: Building Resilience in Coastal Cambodia (2025)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

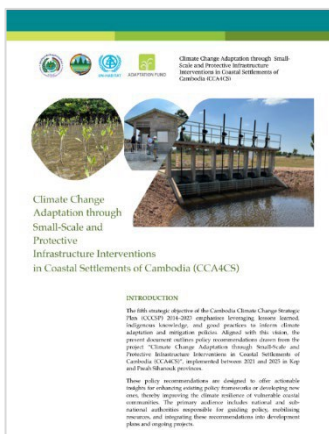
- Photobook of the Project “Climate Change Adaptation through Small-scale and Protective Infrastructure Intervention in Coastal Settlements of Cambodia (CCA4CS)”
- It documents key achievements and impacts of the project. Through its photographs, it captures meaningful moments, activities, and outcomes that reflect the project’s contribution to strengthening community resilience and advancing sustainable development.



## Manual in Resilient Housing Design and Techniques (Khmer) (2025)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- The manual was developed as one of the knowledge products as part of UN-Habitat’s project, “Climate Change Adaptation through Small-Scale and Protective Infrastructure Interventions in Coastal Settlements of Cambodia,” funded by the Adaptation Fund.
- It includes detailed designs, resilient construction techniques, and technical guidance to construct affordable climate-resilient houses.



## Four Policy Recommendations (2025)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Recommendation 1: Scale-Up and Strengthen Coastal Pollution Prevention and Wastewater Treatment.
- Recommendation 2: Accelerate the Implementation of Green and Grey Infrastructure, Emphasising Nature-based Solutions (NbS).
- Recommendation 3: Scale-Up Implementation of Affordable Housing, Integrating Sanitation and Renewable Energy.
- Recommendation 4: Ensure the Integration of Climate Adaptation and Infrastructure into Commune/Sangkat Investment and Development Plans.

## 7 video clips related to Climate Adaptation Projects in Kep and Prey Nob (2025)

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- These seven videos were produced to showcase the project’s interventions in the coastal areas of Kep Province and Prey Nob District, Preah Sihanouk Province. These videos were developed as part of UN-Habitat’s project, “Climate Change Adaptation through Small-Scale and Protective Infrastructure Interventions in Coastal Settlements of Cambodia,” funded by the Adaptation Fund.







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