



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation-Religion-King



General Population Census of Cambodia 2019

Series Thematic Report
on
POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND URBANIZATION



National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

April 2022

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Foreword

The General Population Census of Cambodia of 2019 (hereafter, “the Census”) provides a crucial opportunity to examine past achievements and to guide future development according to the plans and strategies of the Government of Cambodia. Acknowledging the vital importance of the project, the government allocated substantial national resources to the implementation of the Census. I am gratified that the Census has been a success, and that reliable and timely demographic data are now available to specialized users and the general public.

I am also delighted that the *Thematic Report on Population Distribution and Urbanization* is now completed. This thematic report deals with two important aspects of the changing population distribution in Cambodia, both closely linked to the social and economic development of the country: the changing distribution across provinces and regions and the changing distribution according to the rural or urban status of the localities where people live. This thematic report focuses on the differences between urban and rural areas with regard to some of the variables important to Cambodia’s efforts to achieve key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), most notably: quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

On behalf of the Ministry of Planning, I would like to express our deep gratitude to **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia**. His unwavering support has been integral to the successful completion of the Census. I would also like to extend our sincerest thanks to **Samdech Kralahom Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister, minister of the interior, and chairman of the National Census Committee**; and to the other members of the Committee, for their guidance.

As chair of the Technical Committee and the Publicity Committee for the General Population Census of Cambodia 2019, and on behalf of the Ministry of Planning, I would like to thank all members of the Census Committee who worked in the capital, provinces, municipalities, districts, khans, and communes/sangkats. They did an excellent job and, by working together, we have been able to successfully implement our planned activities and obtain valuable results.

I would also like to thank the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), and German Aerospace Center. Their financial and technical assistance supported the preparation of this thematic report. Special thanks go to **Dr. Ricardo Neupert**, Census chief technical advisor, for providing overall technical assistance, and our **ADB colleagues at the Cambodia Resident Mission and in Manila** for providing much-appreciated help with the preparation and review of this report.

I also would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all the staff of the National Institute of Statistics, especially **H.E. Ms. Hang Lina**, delegate of the Government of Cambodia in-charge of director-general of the National Institute of Statistics, who carefully coordinated all Census operations, with the assistance of Deputy Director-General **H.E. Sok Kosal**, **H.E. Saint Lundy**, and **H.E. They Kheam**. Last, but not least, I would like to express my thanks to all compatriots who supported and participated in the successful completion of the Census operations in the Kingdom of Cambodia in 2019.

We are pleased to present this thematic report to line ministries, international agencies, nongovernment organizations, policy makers, program implementers, development planners, and researchers. We hope to receive feedback and contributions from our readers, so that we can learn from our mistakes and improve the subsequent series of the thematic reports.

**Senior Minister
Minister of Planning**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kitti Settha Pandita Chhay Than

Acknowledgements

The National Institute of Statistics would like to express its sincere gratitude to the individuals, many of whom cannot be named here, and organizations that made the completion of the *Thematic Report on Population Distribution and Urbanization* possible.

First, I would like to thank **Kitti Settha Pandita Chhay Than**, honorable senior minister, minister of planning, whose keen interest in the census and in the thematic report was always a source of great inspiration and encouragement, both to the national and international staff of the project.

Second, I would also like to extend our profound thanks to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for their overall technical guidance, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for its financial and technical assistance, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) for its assistance in the preparation of maps, and the German Aerospace Center for the provision of settlement extent maps for the Phnom Penh municipality. The report was drafted by Emeritus Professor Gavin Jones.

Finally, I wish to thank all staff of the National Institute of Statistics, the provincial census officers, the district census officers, the commune census officers, village chiefs, field supervisors, and enumerators for their dedication and hard work. They have enabled us to produce timely data of good quality. My acknowledgements would be incomplete, however, if I did not mention the general public, which provided the much-needed data without hesitation.

**Delegate of Royal Government of Cambodia
In-charge of Director-General of National Institute
of Statistics**



Ms. Hang Lina

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Abbreviations

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| EMR | – | Extended Metropolitan Region |
| km² | – | Square kilometer |
| Lao PDR | – | Lao People’s Democratic Republic |
| NIS | – | National Institute of Statistics |
| PRC | – | People’s Republic of China |
| SDG | – | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SEZ | – | Special economic zone |
| SMAM | – | Singulate mean age at marriage |
| UNICEF | – | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| UNFPA | – | United Nations Population Fund (formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities) |
| UN-Habitat | – | United Nations Human Settlement Programme |
| USAID | – | United States Agency for International Development |

Glossary

Borehole – a narrow shaft bored in the ground, either vertically or horizontally

Khan – the term used for districts of Phnom Penh

Koyaon – a hand tractor

Krong – municipality

Sangkat – the term used for subdivisions of Khan (in Phnom Penh) or of Krong (in provinces)

Tonle Sap – both one of Cambodia’s four regions, and a large seasonally inundated freshwater lake, linked to the Mekong River.

Tube well – a well from which the water is pumped up, using a tube or pipe

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report deals with two important aspects of the changing population distribution in Cambodia, both closely linked to the country's social and economic development: the changing distribution across provinces and regions and the changing distribution between urban and rural areas. This report highlights the urban–rural differences in terms of important variables affecting Cambodia's achievement of key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially: quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). It does so by using data from the most recent Cambodian census (2019) and from earlier ones, whenever necessary, to investigate (i) the growth of the urban population over time, nationally and in specific provinces; (ii) the differences between urban and rural areas with regard to certain indicators of social and economic development; (iii) the pattern of population redistribution across urban and rural areas; and (iv) the relative increase in urban areas of different sizes.

Data and methods

This study is based on an analysis of data from the three population censuses conducted in Cambodia: in 1998, 2008, and 2019. It considers the changes in the rural or urban statuses of communes over time, noting how increasing urbanization has compared with natural population growth and migration trends. The main emphasis is on the 2019 census because it depicts the current situation, and because no analysis of urbanization or of urban–rural differences has yet been conducted based on these data.

The data analysis is descriptive. More specifically, the findings are discussed based on bivariate tables and charts showing urban–rural differences according to the variables of interest. These variables include age at marriage, educational attainment, types of employment, household facilities and possessions, and sources of water and sanitation, among others. The effects of migration on rural and urban areas are also discussed.

Regional population distribution and redistribution

The Central Plain, dominated by the capital city of Phnom Penh, is by far the most densely populated region of Cambodia, with 305 people per square kilometer (km²) in 2019, far ahead of the second-most densely populated region, Tonle Sap, with 72 people/km². The Central Plain contains 50% of Cambodia's population. The most sparsely settled region is the Plateau and Mountains region, with only 29 people/km². However, this region had the most rapid population growth during 2008–2019, (2.4%/ year), raising its share of Cambodia's population from 11.4% to 12.7%. Within these broad regions, considerable differences could be observed in the population growth rates.

Urbanization patterns and trends

The urban population increased very rapidly from 1998 to 2008, though a large part of this growth was due to the reclassification of many communes from rural to urban status. This raised the proportion of the urban population from 18.2% in 1998 to 27.1% in 2008, and then to 39.1% in 2019. While the urban population rose by 68.8% from 2008 to 2019, the rural population declined by 3.5%.

There were wide variations in the levels of urbanization among the provinces in 2019, and in the urbanization trends between the 2008 and 2019 censuses. The provinces of Kampong Thom, Kampot, Preah Vihear, and Prey Veng had less than 11% of their population living in urban areas in 2019. At the other end of the scale, Phnom Penh is 100% urban, followed by Preah Sihanouk (80%), Kep and Pailin (both above 75%), Kandal (65%), and Kampong Speu (59%). Whereas the level of urbanization of some provinces (e.g., Kampong Chhnang, Kandal, and Svay Rieng) increased rapidly over during 2008–2019, in some provinces the urban population (as well as the urban share of the total population) actually declined (Battambang, Kampong Cham, and Tbong Khmum).

During 2008–2019, Cambodia’s urban population increased by 2.5 million, from 3.6 million to 6.1 million. More than two-thirds of this growth was the result of communes being declared urban. It is important to recognize that most of the urban population growth did not result from migration, but reflected “in situ” urbanization—the change in the “urbanity” of locations, without people necessarily moving there. Phnom Penh’s dominance of the urban scene is demonstrated by the fact that when its own share of Cambodia’s urban growth (28%) is added to the share of growth of newly created urban communes in the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region (EMR) (47%), it comes to three-quarters of Cambodia’s total urban population growth.

This study estimated the proportions of urban population growth from 2008 to 2019 that were due to specific contributory factors: The natural increase of the preexisting urban population was responsible for 19% of the growth, migration for 13%, and the reclassification of communes for 68% (more than two-thirds). During this period, natural increases and migration were boosting the populations of the communes that were newly designated as urban in 2019, but because they were only awarded urban status that year, their addition to the urban population is attributed entirely to reclassification.

One notable finding was the slow population growth in the communes (other than those in Phnom Penh) that had been classified as urban before 2008. The population increase of just 2.7% in these communes was much slower than the increase in the newly designated urban communes (22.6% for those in the Phnom Penh EMR, 17.7% for those in other provinces). Another finding was the considerably slower population growth in communes that were still deemed rural; this was surprising, and the reason for it is not clear.

Which are the largest cities and towns in Cambodia? Strangely, this question is difficult to answer. Phnom Penh, of course, dominates, and Siem Reap is clearly number two, but which city should be considered number three depends on whether entire districts in Kandal, Kampong Speu, and Takeo provinces, which are really extensions of the Phnom Penh metropolitan area, should be considered cities in their own right. There are also issues regarding the real extent of the functional urban areas of cities such as Preah Sihanouk, and of “twin cities” such as Serei

Saophoan and Mongkol Borei, in Banteay Meanchey Province. It is noteworthy that Cambodia lacks any city with a population between 300,000 and 1 million.

Characteristics of Cambodia's urban and rural populations

Age structure. The urban areas of Cambodia are at a considerable advantage in having a lower proportion of both very young and old dependants, compared with rural areas.

Education. From 1998 to 2019, opportunities for schooling expanded from a heavier concentration in the urban areas to a more widespread availability. Data on school attendance shows a considerable narrowing of urban–rural differences among the population aged 6–14. Among the population aged 15–19, gender differences in educational attainment almost disappeared, both in urban and rural areas. The education enrolment trends for the populations aged 6–14 and 15–19 in rural areas were remarkable. In 1998, there were wide urban–rural differences in school attendance rates for these age ranges, but by 2019, rural school attendance rates for these ages had almost caught up with those in urban areas.

Labor force participation. Compared with many other Southeast Asian countries, a notable feature of Cambodia is the very high proportion of both men and women who are in the labor force, particularly in rural areas, where people generally continue working until they are prevented by illness or other age-related issues.

Marital status. The marriage age for both females and males has been rising in Cambodia over time, but relatively high numbers of women still marry at an early age. The urban–rural differences in child marriage rates are quite substantial: For women aged 25–34, the percentage who were married before age 18 in rural areas (9.0%) is almost double that in urban areas (4.8%).

Housing conditions. Housing in urban and rural areas differs in the materials used in home construction, access to water, sanitation, and toilet facilities. Two-thirds of rural households have improved drinking water, but the proportion in urban areas is much higher, at 84%. In urban areas, most of the improved water is piped into the dwelling. This is much rarer in rural areas, where the predominant source of improved water is a tube well or borehole. Compared with urban households, twice as many rural households have to rely on unimproved sanitation facilities (35% vs. 18%). The most common types of toilets used in both urban and rural settings are pour-flush or flush toilets that are either connected to a sewerage system (more common in urban areas) or to a septic tank or pit (common in both urban and rural areas).

Household assets. A useful indicator of trends in the well-being of households in urban and rural areas is the ownership of various amenities and assets. This study compares the rates of asset and amenity ownership in 2008 and 2019. Ownership of most items is greater in urban than in rural areas, not surprising in view of the higher average incomes in urban areas, and the limited access to electricity in some rural areas (though access to electricity has increased remarkably over time). Cellphones are now ubiquitous in both urban and rural areas; cellphone ownership in rural areas rose from one-quarter of households in 2008 to 90% in 2019. Motorcycle possession is greater in urban areas, but even in rural areas three-quarters of households have one. Refrigerators and washing machines are more prevalent in urban areas; but even there, fewer than one-third of households have a refrigerator, and only one in five have a washing machine. Among urban households, 92% own a fan, but only 72% of rural households own one. In urban

areas, 19% of households own a car or van, compared with only 5% of rural households. However, the most striking evidence of increased prosperity in the rural areas is the remarkable increase in the proportion of households owning hand tractors (*koyao*n): from 3.7% in 2008 to 20% in 2019.

The internet is causing revolutionary changes in communications throughout Southeast Asia, including Cambodia. More than half of urban households and more than one-third of rural households can access the internet at home.

Migration flows between provinces and to and from urban areas

Not surprisingly, there is a strong correlation between the rates of population growth of the provinces and the proportion of migrants in the population of each province. Pailin has the highest proportion of lifetime migrants in its population (59%), followed by Preah Sihanouk (48%), and Phnom Penh (43%). Other provinces with lifetime in-migration rates well above the national average are Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, and Otdar Meanchey.

According to the 2008 Census, the predominant movement was rural to rural, followed in second place by rural to urban. The 2019 Census showed a major change: Rural to urban became the predominant stream, and urban-to-urban movement slightly exceeded rural-to-rural movement. This change reflected the rapid process of urbanization that occurred between the two census years.

Migration has contributed considerably more to population growth in urban areas than in rural areas. For Cambodia as a whole, lifetime migrants represent 26% of the urban population, but only 7% of the rural population; similarly, recent migrants comprise 13% of the urban population, but only 2% of the rural population.

Phnom Penh—Cambodia’s primate city

Since the Phnom Penh EMR has been spreading into surrounding provinces, it is necessary to take a broader perspective on the entire metropolitan region. To determine the boundaries of the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019, the census data for the surrounding provinces—Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu—were mapped out according to whether nearby communes were classified as urban or rural. Contiguous clusters of urban communes extending from the Phnom Penh boundary were considered part of the Phnom Penh EMR. The resulting map shows that the northern parts of Kandal Province, the northern parts of Takeo Province, and the eastern parts of Kampong Speu Province (in other words, the parts of these provinces closest to Phnom Penh) qualify as part of Phnom Penh’s EMR.

The population of the functional Phnom Penh metropolitan region was over 3.7 million in 2019, or over half (61%) of Cambodia’s urban population, highlighting just how dominant Phnom Penh is in Cambodia’s urban hierarchy. The Population Division of the United Nations considers a city to be the primate city of a country when it accounts for at least 40% of the urban population. According to this criterion, Phnom Penh is undoubtedly Cambodia’s primate city.

It is inaccurate to see the growth of the Phnom Penh EMR as the result of an overspill of Phnom Penh’s population into the surrounding provinces, supplemented by high levels of in-migration of workers into Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu from other parts of the country. The

population growth in 2008–2019 of the districts in these three provinces that were included in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019 (19.6%) was more rapid than that of Cambodia’s population as a whole (16.1%), and more rapid than that of Cambodia’s population excluding Phnom Penh (10.6%) over the same period. But it was not rapid enough to signify major in-migration.

Conclusions

The author of this report considers careful analysis of comparative data on regional population distribution and urbanization to be necessary in order to fully understand the changing socioeconomic situation and some of the developmental implications.

Cambodia experienced rapid urbanization from 2008 to 2019. The main reason was the change in the classification of many communes from rural to urban in 2019. Cambodia’s urban structure is increasingly dominated by Phnom Penh, but this dominance is not based solely on the geographic spread of the Phnom Penh EMR; it also results from the city’s expanding economic role in the neighboring provinces.

The “missing link” in Cambodia’s urban hierarchy is a city in the half-million to 1 million category. It will likely take more than a decade for any of the next-largest cities to reach that population size. Does that really matter? Perhaps not. In this relatively small country, with Phnom Penh fairly centrally placed, it is not surprising that Phnom Penh dominates the urban hierarchy. Its “economic density” could benefit the whole country if it leads to more rapid economic growth and if the benefits are spread wisely through public policy.

Chapter 1:

Introduction

This report deals with two important aspects of the changing population distribution in Cambodia, both closely linked to the country's social and economic development: the changing distribution across provinces and regions and between urban and rural areas.

Urbanization is universally experienced by countries as they navigate the processes of social and economic development. From one perspective, it can be seen as an inevitable outcome of economic development; and from another, it can be seen as a key driver of the process rather than as an outcome. Both perspectives need to be considered when seeking a comprehensive picture of how urbanization fits into the processes of economic and social development. There is no doubt that urbanization has been an important element in the world's development experience over the past two centuries (Henderson 2002a; Turok and McGranahan 2013). The underlying processes have included changes in consumption patterns, along with labor-saving farming techniques and shifts in the composition of national output away from agriculture, which release labor for use in factories. Industrialization occurs disproportionately in urban areas because of the opportunities to benefit from economies of scale (Henderson 2002a, 90).

People move to cities mainly because they see them as providing the opportunities they need to improve their life situation. Social indicators—the percentage of children in school, mortality rates, poverty rates, percentages of births supervised by trained medical professionals, vaccination rates for children, and the quality of housing and sanitation, among others—are almost always better in urban than in rural areas, notwithstanding the slums and squatter settlements, crime, and pollution besetting many urban areas.

Along with other UN member states, the Government of Cambodia endorsed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN General Assembly in 2015. Following the adaptation of the SDGs to its fully nationalized framework, the government continues to regard the achievement of the Cambodian SDGs as a long-term commitment. This report is intended to contribute to the fulfillment of that commitment by helping to identify urban–rural differences regarding variables that affect key SDGs such as quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). The report does this by utilizing the data from the most recent Cambodian census (2019) and from earlier ones, whenever necessary, to investigate (i) the growth of the urban population over time, nationally and in various provinces; (ii) urban–rural differences concerning the relevant indicators of economic and social development; (iii) the pattern of population redistribution across urban and rural areas; and (iv) the expansion of urban areas of different sizes.

How does the level of urbanization in Cambodia compare with that in neighboring Southeast Asian countries? According to the UN Population Division's estimates, Cambodia had the lowest level of urbanization of all Southeast Asian countries from 1980 to 2018 (Table 1). Indeed, its estimated

level of 23.4% in 2018 was the lowest among all the countries of Asia, except Nepal.¹ Cambodia’s urbanization had grown from a level of almost zero after the evacuation of Phnom Penh and other towns under the Khmer Rouge regime (1975–1979). This is reflected in the very low figure (9.9%) for 1980 in Table 1.

Table 1: Trends in the Levels of Urbanization in Southeast Asian Countries, 1980–2018 (%)

| Country | Year | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2018 |
| Singapore | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Brunei Darussalam | 64.9 | 66.4 | 71.2 | 75.0 | 77.6 |
| Malaysia | 42.0 | 49.8 | 62.0 | 70.9 | 76.0 |
| Indonesia | 22.1 | 30.6 | 42.0 | 49.9 | 55.3 |
| Thailand | 26.8 | 29.4 | 31.4 | 43.9 | 49.9 |
| Philippines | 37.5 | 47.0 | 46.1 | 45.3 | 46.9 |
| Vietnam | 19.2 | 20.3 | 24.4 | 30.4 | 35.9 |
| Lao PDR | 12.4 | 15.4 | 22.0 | 30.1 | 35.0 |
| Myanmar | 24.0 | 25.2 | 27.0 | 28.9 | 30.6 |
| Timor-Leste | 16.5 | 20.8 | 24.3 | 27.7 | 30.6 |
| Cambodia | 9.9 | 15.5 | 18.6 | 20.3 | 23.4 |

Lao PDR = Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

Source: United Nations Population Division. World Urbanization Prospects 2018. <https://population.un.org/wup/>

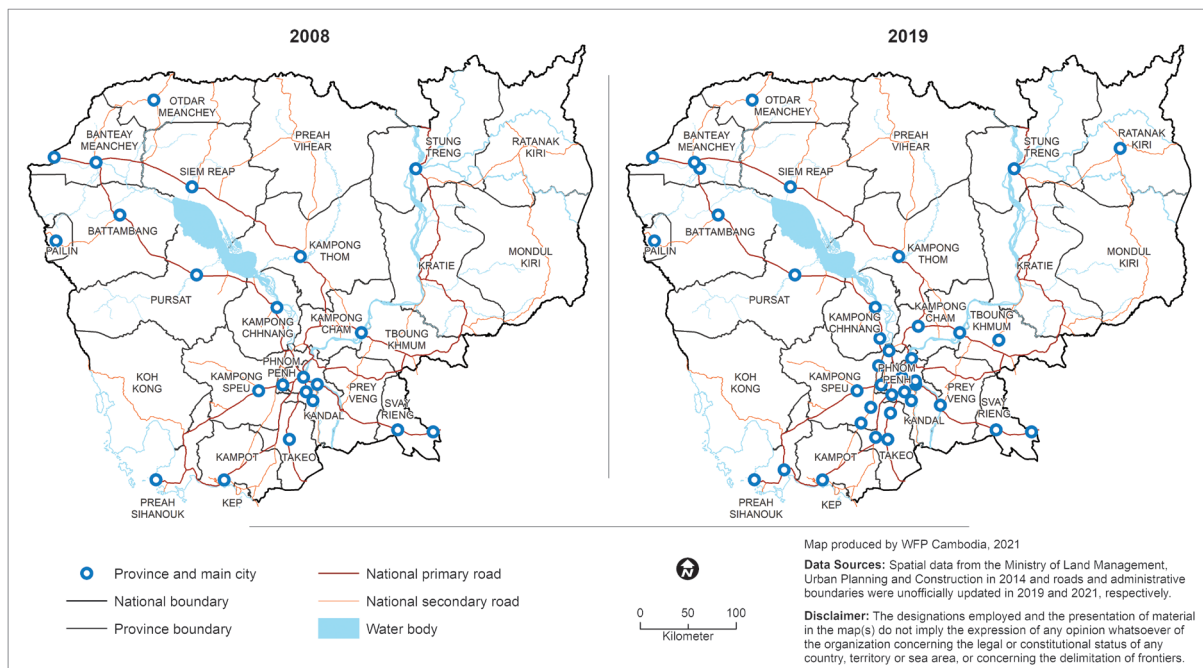
It must be noted, however, that the levels of urbanization for Cambodia according to the UN data (Table 1) have since 2008 been much lower than the official government figures, which showed an urban proportion of 27.1% in 2008 and 39.4% in 2019. For instance, In 1998 the UN figure of 18.4% was very close to the estimate (17.6%) in a mission report to Cambodia’s National Institute of Statistics (NIS) in 2001 (Jones and Rao 2001). However, by 2008, the UN figure of 19.6% was far below the official government figure of 27.1%, primarily due to the reclassification of urban areas by the NIS, which was apparently not taken into account in the UN figures. Readers are cautioned about any changes and/or differences in the definition of “urban areas” when interpreting figures based on estimates from different sources, whether national or international. Different countries adopt different procedures in defining urban areas, and the UN Population Division accepts the national figures, with no attempt to standardize the procedures (Alkema, Jones, and Lai 2013).

Based on the official government data, it can be concluded that, although Cambodia was until recently one of the least urbanized countries in Asia, urbanization has been increasing apace. This is expected to continue, as Cambodia has been posting sustained high rates of economic growth (Government of Cambodia 2019), as well as structural changes in the economy that international evidence has shown is generally accompanied by continually rising levels of urbanization.

What follows is a detailed description of the methodology adopted in conducting this study; but, first, below is a map of Cambodia (Map 1) that shows the provinces and main cities of the country. Readers may wish to use this map to locate the cities and provinces referred to later in the report.

¹ Actually, Sri Lanka’s official percentage for its urban population was also very low (18.5%), but it is based on a definition of urban areas that greatly understates the real level of urbanization (Alkema, Jones, and Lai 2013).

Map 1: Cambodia—Provinces and Main Cities, 2008 and 2019



The structure of the remainder of this report is as follows: Chapter 2 describes the sources of data and the methods employed in the study. Chapter 3 focuses on regional population distribution and redistribution, while Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the patterns and trends in urbanization from 1998 to 2019, covering urban and rural population growth and decline, including provincial differences, the dynamics of urban growth, and trends in the populations of the largest cities and towns. Chapter 5 analyzes the characteristics of Cambodia’s urban and rural populations, particularly those relating to aspects of human well-being that government policy seeks to address. Migration flows are addressed in Chapter 6, with a focus on how they are influencing regional population redistribution and the growth and decline of particular categories of urban areas. Chapter 7 presents a detailed analysis of the growth of Cambodia’s one large EMR: Phnom Penh. Chapter 8 presents the report’s conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2: Data and Methods

This study is based on the analysis of data from three population censuses conducted in Cambodia: those in 1998, 2008, and 2019. The main emphasis is on the 2019 census because it gives a picture of the contemporary situation, and because no analysis of urbanization or of urban–rural differences has yet been done using these data. However, the trends that have existed since 1998 are very important, both in terms of the redistribution of populations across the provinces and of national- and provincial-level trends in urbanization. Considerable attention will be paid to these trends in order to fully understand what may lie in the future for urbanization.

The analysis of urbanization trends presented in this report is based on a careful assessment of how the definition of urban areas has changed over time. This will enable the reader to gain clear insights into the relative importance of definitional changes, natural population increases, and migration in driving overall urbanization trends.

The report also presents an assessment of urban–rural differences regarding key demographic, social, and labor-force characteristics based on data mainly from the 2019 population census. The data analysis is descriptive. More specifically, findings are discussed based on bivariate tables and figures that facilitate analysis of urban–rural differences for the variables of interest. These variables include marriage age, educational attainment, employment structure, household facilities and possessions, and sources of water and sanitation. Migration patterns as they affect rural and urban areas will also be discussed.

A. The Changing Designations of Urban Areas in Cambodia—1998, 2008, and 2019

“The classification of places as urban or rural is not a matter of mere academic interest, but is of great importance for planning purposes” (NIS 2009, 7).²

According to the 1998 population census, the urban population of Cambodia numbered 1,795,575, comprising 15.7% of the population. The following areas were defined as urban (there were no cutoff points in terms of population size):

- (i) all the provincial capitals (which are single districts);
- (ii) four of the seven districts of the Phnom Penh municipality (the other three were considered rural); and
- (iii) what are now Preah Sihanouk, Kep, and Pailin provinces, which at the time were considered *krongs* (municipalities).

The NIS acknowledged the limitations of this urban definition, given that “the designation of places as urban was based only on administrative criteria. This was considered not satisfactory for planning for the needs of actual urban populations” (2009, 7). Decisions on the classification of urban places were made at the provincial or district level. Many of the provinces or districts that were designated as urban encompassed vast areas of agricultural land; wasteland; and uninhabited areas, including mountain terrain. A more fine-grained definition of urban areas

² This discussion draws heavily on Jones and Rao (2001) and National Institute of Statistics (2011).

required that designations be made at a lower administrative level—the commune or, ideally, the village. While there were only 183 districts in Cambodia, there were 1,609 communes and 13,406 villages.

There were a number of problems associated with the urban designations in 1998:

- (i) Districts are quite large in area, and a number of communes in the districts where the provincial capitals were located were very rural in character. By considering these rural communes as urban, the populations of most provincial capitals were somewhat exaggerated.
- (ii) In some cases, adjoining communes in another district were actually part of the built-up area of a provincial capital, but were not included because of the restriction of the town population to the district in which the town was located.
- (iii) Each district within the Phnom Penh municipality had to be declared as either 100% urban or 100% rural, resulting in misconceptions about the nature of the built-up areas of the city. Many of these districts contained both urban and rural areas.
- (iv) While parts of the Phnom Penh municipality were rural, some areas of Kandal province immediately adjoining the Phnom Penh municipality were built-up. For planning purposes, these areas should have been included as part of the Phnom Penh urban agglomeration.
- (v) Large areas of what are now Preah Sihanouk, Kep, and Pailin provinces were rural, so their designation as entirely urban caused the sizes of their urban populations to be exaggerated.
- (vi) A number of small towns that were not provincial capitals were not counted as urban because of the prevailing criteria for urban status. As a result, they were included in the rural population although they had distinctly urban characteristics.

An exercise was therefore conducted focusing on the commune level, which enabled a considerable refinement of the existing urban classifications. The procedure was to define the appropriate cut-off points based on three criteria for designating communes as urban:

- (i) a population density exceeding 200 per square kilometer (km²),
- (ii) a proportion of male employment in agriculture below 50%,³ and
- (iii) the total population of the commune exceeding 2,000.

Population density was a useful criterion for indicating whether there was a sufficient concentration of residents to be consistent with urban status. The percentage of male employment in agriculture was important in distinguishing between densely populated agricultural areas and densely populated areas where the focus of economic activity was nonagricultural—a typical distinguishing feature of urban areas. A minimum population size was used to avoid the designation of small groupings of households as urban areas.

The application of these cutoff points, while appropriate in most areas, created difficulties in four provinces with a small population and/or isolated location.⁴ In these provinces, not a single

³ In Cambodia, where most women participate in the labor force, a case could have been made for focusing on the proportion of the workforce as a whole, rather than on the male workforce only. But in Cambodia, as in most countries, the range of economic activities for males is wider than that for females, so the restriction of the indicator to male workers was considered justifiable as a more sensitive indicator of the importance of nonagricultural activities in a specific locality.

⁴ These were Mondulkiri, Otdar Meanchey, Kep, and Pailin provinces.

commune could be designated as urban by application of the three criteria. Yet in each of them, the provincial headquarters were officially considered to be a small town. Due to the administrative and political need to ensure that each province contained at least one town, the criteria were relaxed for the four provinces so that their provincial capitals could be considered urban areas.

B. Application of the Criteria in Designating Urban Areas

The application of the three criteria raised the estimated urban population of Cambodia in 1998 from 1,795,575 to 2,025,743, and raised the urban share of the total population from 15.7% to 17.7%. While this was just a small increase in the overall estimated urban proportion, at the provincial level the differences were more noticeable: The exercise resulted in large increases (over 100%) in three provinces; substantial increases (50%–99%) in four other provinces; and declines, some of them quite large, in all 17 other provinces.

The reason why the estimated urban populations in so many provinces dropped when the new criteria were applied was the overestimation of their urban populations by the original criteria, which designated the entire district in which a provincial capital was located as urban (and in three cases designated the entire province as urban). The reason why the urban population increased substantially in some provinces was that towns that were not provincial capitals, though sometimes reasonably large (with up to 20,000 residents), were not considered urban according to the original criteria. The estimated 1998 urban population according to the revised criteria thus provided a more reasonable baseline for studying later trends.

There were further revisions of the urban classifications in 2011, in the wake of the 2008 population census enumeration.⁵ The revised 1998 criteria for urban designations were retained, except that the criterion of **under 50% male employment in agriculture** was changed to **under 50% employment in agriculture for both sexes**. However, two important categories of places were added to the urban population. First, a new Royal Sub-Decree declared 26 places (in 23 provinces) to be *kronics*; and it declared an area in and around Phnom Penh—including 9 *khans* (districts within the city) and 96 *sangkats* (subdivisions of *kronics* or *khans*)—to be one municipality.⁶ Places declared as *kronics* had to be included in the urban population, whether or not they qualified under the agreed criteria. Second, based on field visits and local knowledge (i.e., recommendations from field officers or provincial directors), even more communes were also added to the list of urban areas. The new urban classifications thus included (i) the communes that satisfied the three conditions listed above (as revised in 2011); (ii) the 27 *kronics* declared as urban in the Royal Sub-Decree; and (iii) the places counted as urban on the recommendations of field officers or provincial directors. These classifications are referred to in official documents as RC 2011 SDC.

Based on the three criteria introduced in 1998, Cambodia's urban population in 2008 was 2,614,027, but it increased to 3,635,177 when the 2011 criteria were applied (RC 2011 SDC), a rise from 19.5% of the total population to 27.1%.⁷ This was a major adjustment: There were large increases in the urban populations of nine provinces, substantial increases in nine provinces, and

⁵ By the time of the 2008 population census, the total number of districts, *drongs*, and *khans* (districts within Phnom Penh) had increased to 194, and the number of communes to 1,633.

⁶ Royal Sub-Decree No. 18 ANKR.BK dated 12 January 2009.

⁷ Note that tables 2.2.1 and 2.4.1 in the NIS *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results* use the unadjusted figure for the 2008 urban population (2,614,027), not the adjusted figure of 3,635,177 (RC 2011 SDC). The latter figure, though, is the appropriate figure to use when making comparisons with the 2019 census data.

fairly high increases (10%–49%) in eight provinces, though there was no change or only a marginal change in two provinces (NIS 2011, 6).

Leaving aside Phnom Penh, of the 193 urban communes in Cambodia in 2008, 104 (53.9%) met the RC 2011 SDC urban criteria, 58 were declared urban by the Royal Sub-Decree, and a further 31 were designated as urban based on the recommendations of field officers or provincial directors.

According to the NIS, the urban reclassifications of 2011 did not cause major changes in the overall levels of important indicators for urban and rural areas, such as adult literacy. Thus, the reclassification “could be accepted as a classification based on improved criteria compared to the 2004 reclassification” (NIS 2011, 7).

What of the criteria used to define urban areas in the 2019 population census? They remained essentially the same as those used in 2008, but with the 2011 revisions (RC 2011 SDC). Again, the minimum population, population density, and the percentage of employment in nonagricultural occupations were used to decide on the urban or rural classification of each commune. In addition, as before, towns identified on the basis of statutory administration or recognized by decrees or laws (known as “statutory towns”) were considered urban, regardless of their demographic characteristics. Further, certain communes were classified as urban on the basis of field visits by NIS staff and consultations with subnational authorities and associated chairpersons. The provincial departments of planning; the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction; the Ministry of Interior, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) were all involved in this process.

C. Urban Communes in 2008 and 2019 Compared

Map 2 shows the locations of communes considered urban in 2008 and 2019. The list of communes designated as urban in 2019, compared with that for 2008 (RC 2011 SDC), shows a large increase in the number of such communes. Table 2 shows the changes in urban populations for all provinces, except Phnom Penh, which is not included here because there were some changes in the communes included, making meaningful comparisons difficult.

Map 2: Communes Considered Urban, 2008 and 2019

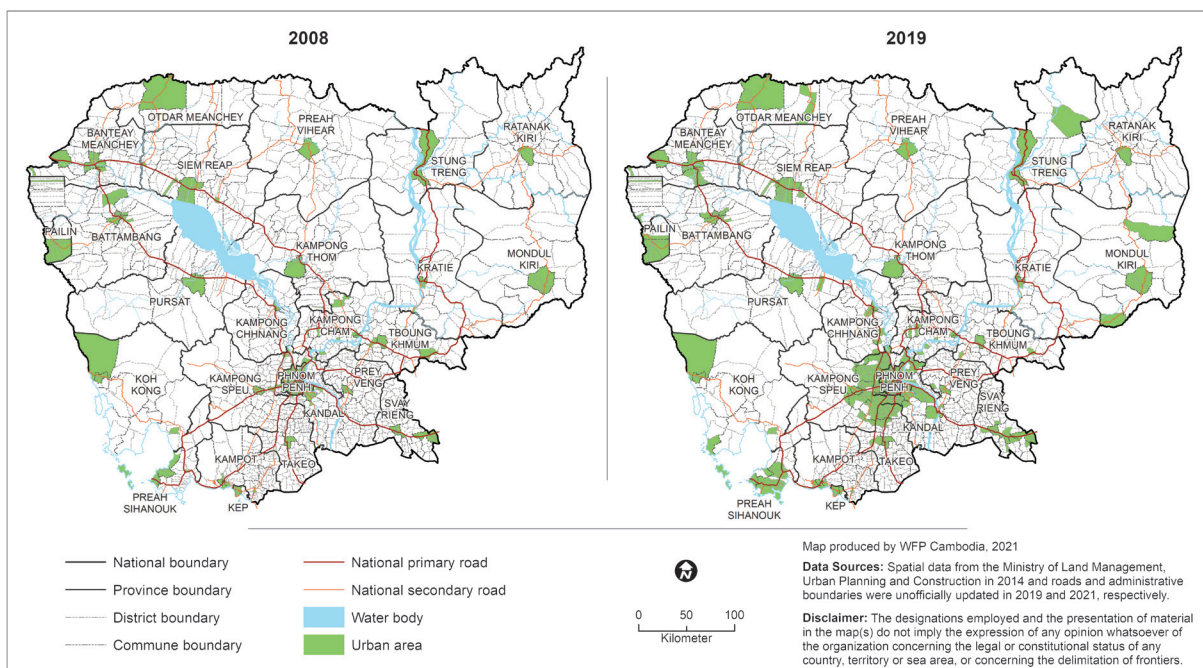


Table 2: Communes Considered Urban, by Province, 2008 and 2019

| Province | Number of Urban Communes | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| | 2008 ^a | 2019 |
| Banteay Meanchey | 12 | 17 |
| Battambang | 17 | 17 |
| Kampong Cham | 12 | 13 |
| Kampong Chhnang | 4 | 11 |
| Kampong Speu | 7 | 47 |
| Kampong Thom | 9 | 10 |
| Kampot | 9 | 10 |
| Kandal | 27 | 78 |
| Kep | 3 | 4 |
| Koh Kong | 5 | 6 |
| Kratie | 6 | 7 |
| Mondul Kiri | 4 | 6 |
| Otdar Meanchey | 5 | 6 |
| Pailin | 4 | 4 |
| Preah Sihanouk | 9 | 17 |
| Preah Vihear | 2 | 2 |
| Prey Veng | 6 | 8 |
| Pursat | 8 | 9 |
| Ratanak Kiri | 4 | 4 |
| Siem Reap | 16 | 19 |
| Stung Treng | 4 | 4 |
| Svay Rieng | 12 | 20 |
| Takeo | 3 | 22 |
| Tboung Khmum | 5 ^b | 4 |
| Cambodia (except Phnom Penh) | 193 | 345 |

^a The urban designations listed in this column (for 2008) are based on the criteria established in 2011.

^b None of these communes were the same as those considered urban in 2019.

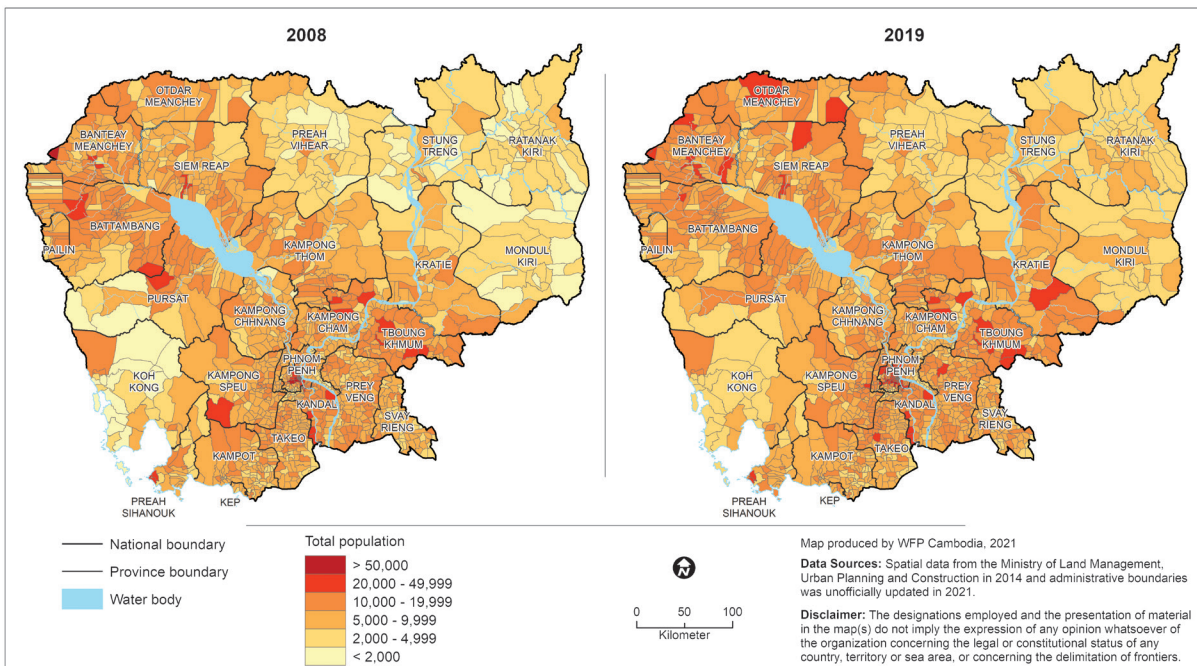
Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2012. *Reclassification of Urban Areas in Cambodia, 2011*. Phnom Penh (Table 4); 2019 data from the NIS.

Table 2 shows that in Cambodia, excluding Phnom Penh, the number of communes designated as urban increased by 79% between 2008 and 2019. In four provinces, the number of communes designated as urban more than doubled. The greatest absolute increases were in Kandal (from 27 to 78), Kampong Speu (from 7 to 47), Takeo (from 3 to 22), and Svay Rieng (from 12 to 20). Notably, the first three of these provinces are close to Phnom Penh, and the growth in the number of their urban communes accounted for almost three-quarters (72.4%) of the total increase between 2008 and 2019 (leaving aside Phnom Penh itself). As will be discussed later, the great majority of the communes accorded urban status in these three provinces had met the three objective criteria for urban status. Indeed, in Cambodia as a whole, when the reasons for communes receiving urban status are compared over time, a much higher proportion was based on meeting the objective criteria during 2008–2019 than was the case during 1998–2008.

Since the three criteria for urban designation in 2019 were the same as for 2008 (as revised in 2011), the rise in the number urban communes must have resulted from the fulfillment of the criteria or from administrative and other decisions not based on the criteria. Relatively few communes had a population under 2,000 in 2008, and not many smaller communes passed that

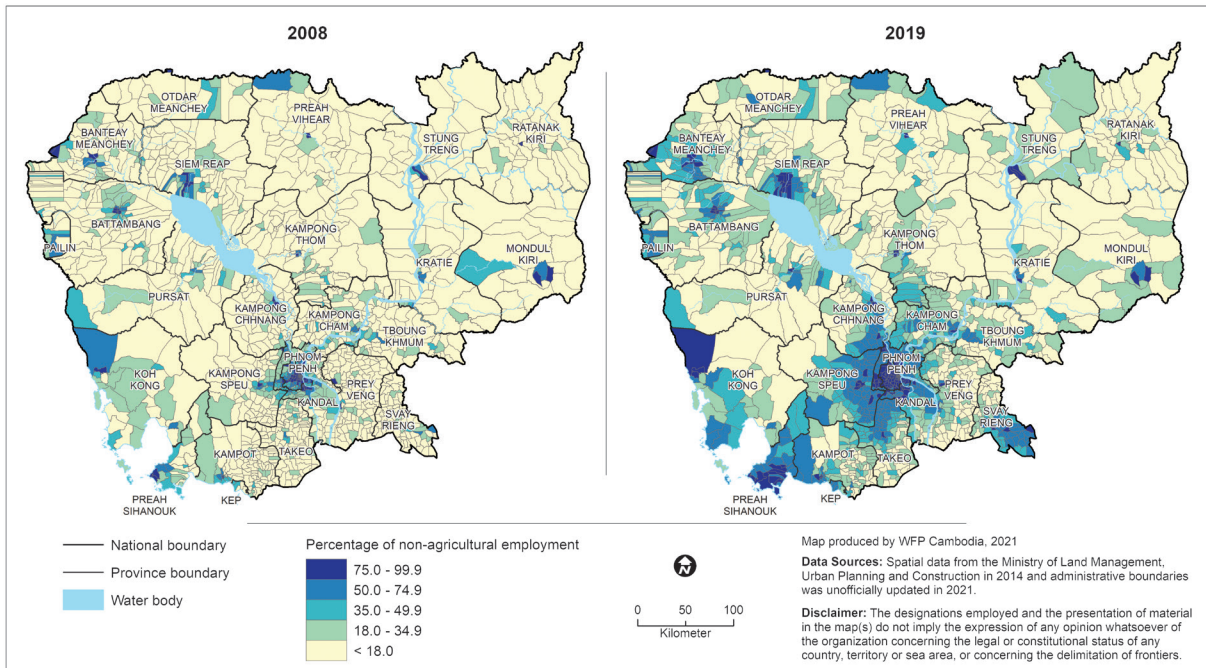
threshold between 2008 and 2019 (see Map 3); of those that did, many did not meet the population-density or nonagricultural-employment criteria for urban status. It is therefore clear that the fulfillment of the population-density and nonagricultural-employment criteria was the main reason for new urban designations in 2019. Of the communes newly accorded urban status that year, the great majority were above the population-density and nonagricultural-employment thresholds. It appears that about 28 had passed the population-density threshold and about 34 had passed the nonagricultural-employment threshold since 2008. A relatively small number of other communes were accorded urban status based on the “administrative” criteria already mentioned: communes identified on the basis of administrative decisions or by decrees or laws. And, as mentioned above, certain communes received their urban classification on the basis of field visits by NIS staff and/or consultations with subnational authorities and associated chairpersons.

Map 3: Sizes of Commune Populations, 2008 and 2019



Map 4 shows the percentage of nonagricultural employment in the communes of Cambodia in 2008 and 2019. The share of agriculture in total employment has declined steadily in Cambodia (World Bank 2017; Figure 14); and during 2008–2019, there were considerable increases in the share of nonagricultural employment in the vicinities of a number of Cambodia’s largest cities. Notable cases were Phnom Penh, Krong Preah Sihanouk (better known internationally as “Sihanoukville”), Siem Reap, and Battambang, as well as Serei Saophoan and Mongkol Borei, both in Banteay Meanchey Province. Svay Rieng Province also saw a considerable increase in nonagricultural employment in many of its communes. The increases enabled a number of these communes to fulfill the 50% nonagricultural-employment requirement for designation as urban areas.

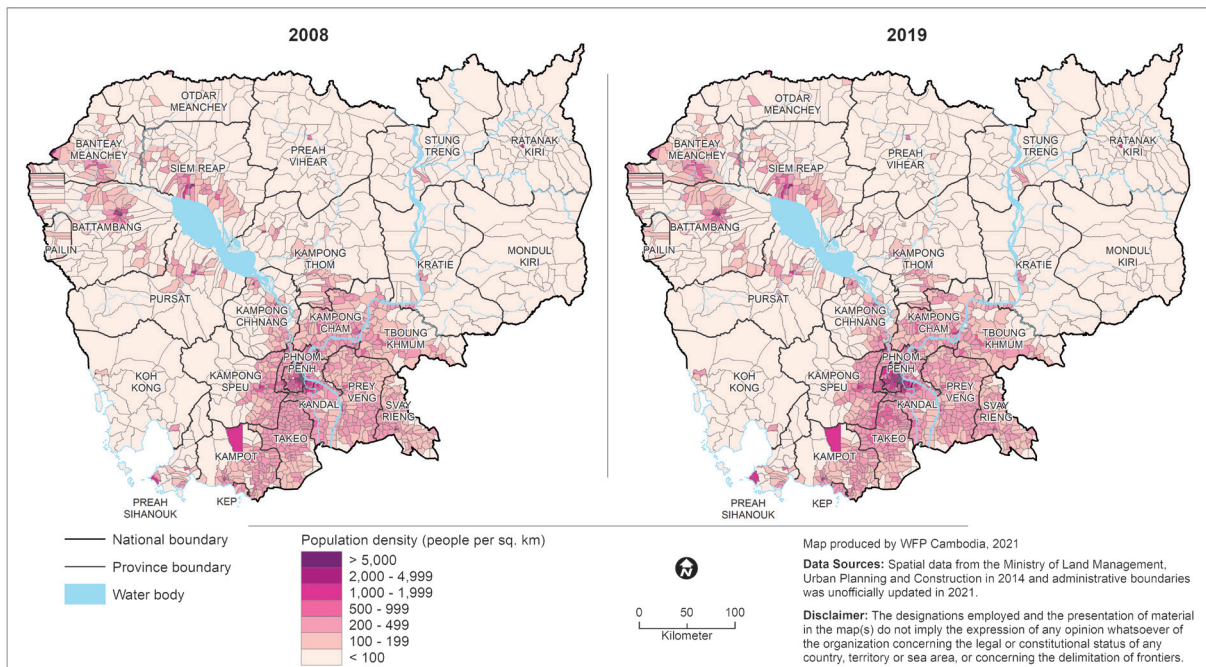
Map 4: Nonagricultural Employment at the Commune Level, 2008 and 2019 (%)



Note: The data in these maps cover the working-age population: those aged 15–64.

Similarly, population density increased considerably in many communes between 2008 and 2019, and those that passed the density threshold of 200 residents per square kilometer met one of the criteria for urban designation (Map 5).

Map 5: Population Densities of Communes, 2008 and 2019



It should be noted that the urban populations recorded during the 1998 census, and included in this report, were based on the revised criteria introduced in 1998. These criteria were also used in the 2008 population census (NIS 2009, 8), but the 2008 data were later recalculated based on the revised criteria introduced in 2011 (RC 2011 SDG).

Chapter 3:

Regional Population Distribution and Redistribution

Cambodia is a bowl-shaped country, with the lowland area stretching from west of Tonle Sap Lake to Phnom Penh and then through the lower Mekong River floodplains. Officially, Cambodia is divided into four regions: the Central Plain, Tonle Sap, Coastal and Sea, and Plateau and Mountains. The Plateau and Mountains region, however, is divided into two distinct areas—one in the northeast of the country, and the other in the southwest. The provinces lying within each of these regions are shown in Map 1 and Table 3.

The Central Plain, dominated by the capital city of Phnom Penh, is by far the most densely populated region of Cambodia, with 305 people per square kilometer (km²) in 2019, far ahead of the second most densely populated region, Tonle Sap, with 72 people/km². The most sparsely settled region is the Plateau and Mountains (only 29 people/km²). Maps 4 and 5 clearly show the dominance of the Central Plain region with regard to Cambodia's population, followed by the Tonle Sap region, with the Coastal and Sea and Plateau and Mountains regions left far behind. In a broader international context, the densely populated Central Plain can be compared with the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, which it adjoins. That Vietnam's Mekong Delta is also densely populated comes as no surprise, as both regions are part of the same ecological zone of the lower Mekong River, which is suitable for wet rice cultivation. This zone supports the largest city in Cambodia, Phnom Penh, and the largest city in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City.

The Central Plain contains 49.2% of Cambodia's population. Between 2008 and 2019, its population grew at a moderate pace, 1.4% per year, the same as the overall Cambodian growth rate. The Tonle Sap region contains 31.2% of Cambodia's population, and its population grew a little more slowly, by 1.0% per year. The one region with more rapid population growth has been Plateau and Mountains, growing by 2.4% per year, and raising its share of Cambodia's population from 11.4% to 12.7%.

Within these broad regions, considerable differences could be observed in their population growth rates (Table 3). Within the Central Plain region, only Phnom Penh showed sustained rapid population growth during both 1998–2008 and 2008–2019. The other provinces showed slow growth during one or both periods, and Kampong Cham's population actually declined slightly between 2008 and 2019. The Tonle Sap region showed much greater variation. The adjoining districts of Banteay Meanchey and Otdar Meanchey showed considerable growth, especially Otdar Meanchey.⁸ Pailin's population grew very rapidly during 1998–2008, though this was at least partly due to the establishment of gambling casinos; the growth there, however, slowed down to almost nothing during 2008–2019. Battambang actually experienced population decline in 2008–2019, probably related to labor migration to nearby Thailand,⁹ and to Phnom Penh. Siem Reap grew more steadily, possibly due to the growth of tourism there. In the Coastal and Sea region, Preah Sihanouk showed steady growth, as did Kep, probably related to tourism and other economic activities that provided increasing numbers of jobs and educational opportunities.

⁸ Banteay Meanchey has a special economic zone (Paoy Paet).

⁹ As of 2015, there were an estimated 900,000 registered Cambodian migrants (or 6% of the total Cambodian population) in Thailand, with evidence suggesting the presence of significant, but unknown additional numbers of undocumented migrants (Emerging Markets Consulting and the United States Agency for International Development [USAID] 2016). Battambang is near the Thai border, and is widely considered to be an important source of such migrants.

Finally, in the Plateau and Mountains region, all the districts showed substantial growth, the most notable of all being Mondul Kiri. The Plateau and Mountains region is the most sparsely settled in Cambodia, and rather isolated from the country's main population centers. The rapid population growth was probably due to the region's relatively high birth rate, along with the movement of farmers from more densely settled regions to seek farming opportunities on land that had not yet been settled.

Table 3: Population Growth by Region and Province, 1998–2019

| Region and Province | Total Population | | | Annual Growth Rate (%) | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | 1998 | 2008 | 2019 | 1998–2008 | 2008–2019 |
| Central Plain | 5,898,305 | 6,547,953 | 7,644,295 | 1.0 | 1.4 |
| Kampong Cham ^a | 1,608,914 | 925,992 | 899,791 | 0.4 | (0.3) |
| Tbong Khmum ^a | ... | 764,000 | 776,841 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| Kandal | 1,075,125 | 1,091,170 | 1,201,581 | 1.6 | 0.8 |
| Phnom Penh | 999,804 | 1,501,725 | 2,281,951 | 2.8 | 3.2 |
| Prey Veng | 946,042 | 947,372 | 1,057,720 | 0.0 | 1.0 |
| Svay Rieng | 478,252 | 482,788 | 525,497 | 0.1 | 0.8 |
| Takeo | 790,168 | 844,906 | 900,914 | 0.7 | 0.6 |
| Tonle Sap | 3,505,448 | 4,356,705 | 4,852,964 | 2.1 | 1.0 |
| Banteay Meanchey | 577,772 | 677,872 | 861,883 | 1.6 | 2.2 |
| Battambang | 793,129 | 1,025,174 | 997,169 | 2.3 | (0.3) |
| Kampong Chhnang | 417,693 | 472,341 | 527,027 | 1.2 | 1.0 |
| Kampong Thom | 569,060 | 631,409 | 681,549 | 1.0 | 0.7 |
| Pursat | 360,445 | 397,161 | 419,952 | 0.7 | 0.5 |
| Siem Reap | 696,164 | 896,443 | 1,014,234 | 2.5 | 1.1 |
| Otdar Meanchey | 68,279 | 185,819 | 276,038 | 8.6 | 3.6 |
| Pailin | 22,906 | 70,486 | 75,112 | 11.2 | 0.6 |
| Coastal and Sea | 816,201 | 960,480 | 1,072,468 | 0.8 | 1.0 |
| Kampot | 528,405 | 585,850 | 593,829 | 1.0 | 0.1 |
| Koh Kong | 132,106 | 117,481 | 125,902 | 0.1 | 0.6 |
| Preah Sihanouk | 155,690 | 221,396 | 310,072 | 2.5 | 3.1 |
| Kep ^b | ... | 35,753 | 42,665 | 2.2 | 1.6 |
| Plateau and Mountains | 1,189,042 | 1,530,544 | 1,982,484 | 2.2 | 2.4 |
| Kampong Speu | 598,882 | 716,944 | 877,523 | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| Kratie | 263,175 | 319,217 | 374,755 | 1.9 | 1.5 |
| Mondul Kiri | 32,407 | 61,107 | 92,213 | 6.3 | 3.7 |
| Preah Vihear | 119,261 | 171,139 | 254,827 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| Ratanak Kiri | 94,243 | 150,466 | 217,453 | 4.7 | 3.3 |
| Stung Treng | 81,074 | 111,671 | 165,713 | 3.2 | 3.6 |
| Cambodia | 11,437,656 | 13,395,682 | 15,552,211 | 1.5 | 1.4 |

... = data not available, () = negative.

^a The province of Tboung Khmum, formerly part of Kampong Cham, was created on 31 December 2013. The growth rates shown for both these provinces 1998–2008 (0.4%) cover the combined Kampong Cham–Tbong Khmum population.

^b Formerly part of Kampot province, Kep separated from Kampot in December 2008.

Sources: National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2019. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: Provisional Population Totals*. Phnom Penh. See tables 2.3 and 2.5; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh. See Table 2.2.1.

Chapter 4:

Urbanization Patterns and Trends, 1998–2019

Urbanization is a universal phenomenon that occurs as countries undergo economic and social development. Cambodia is no exception to this rule. Though it was one of the least urbanized countries in Asia until recently, urbanization has been increasing apace, and this trend is expected to continue, given that Cambodia has been posting sustained high rates of economic growth and a shift in the structure of its economy.

There are three main ways in which urban populations increase. The first is the surplus of births over deaths in urban areas, the second is net migration from rural to urban areas, and the third is reclassification of areas from rural to urban status as the characteristics of these areas change over time. These factors have all been playing an important role in the growth of Cambodia's urban population, and they have been playing that role in most provinces. However, the urban population of Cambodia is dominated by the city of Phnom Penh. This means that specific aspects of Phnom Penh's growth and structure need to be studied carefully, including the patterns of in-migration and the spread of the functional city—the extended metropolitan region (EMR)—beyond the boundaries of the province of Phnom Penh.

A. Urban and Rural Population Growth and Decline

The urban population increased very rapidly from 1998 to 2008, though a large part of this growth was due to definitional changes. According to the old definition, the 2008 urban population was 2,614,027, an increase of 24.7% over the 1998 urban population, compared with a rise of 73.5% according to the revised definition of urbanization. The old definition showed a rise in the urban share of population from 18.2% in 1998 to 19.5% in 2008, much less than the rise to 27.1% according to the new definition.

During 2008–2019, the urban population increased by 64.6%, and the urban share of the total population rose from 27.1% to 39.1% (Table 4). The rural population declined by 4.7%, after increasing by 3.5% between 1998 and 2008.

Table 4: Urban Growth and the Levels of Urbanization in Cambodia, 1998, 2008, and 2019

| Measurement | Census Year | | | Growth per Year (%) | |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| | 1998 | 2008 | 2019 | 1998–2008 | 2008–2019 |
| Urban population | 2,095,074 | 3,635,177 | 6,135,194 | | |
| % of total | 18.2 | 27.1 | 39.4 | 5.8 | 4.8 |
| Rural population | 9,432,582 | 9,760,505 | 9,417,017 | | |
| % of total | 81.8 | 72.9 | 60.6 | 0.4 | (0.3) |
| Urban–rural ratio | 0.215 | 0.372 | 0.652 | | |

() = negative.

Note: A blank cell indicates that the column head does not apply.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh. For 1998 and 2008, the urban populations according to the urban reclassifications given in: NIS. 2004. *Reclassification of Urban Areas in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh; and in: NIS. 2012. *Reclassification of Urban Areas in Cambodia, 2011*. Phnom Penh.

The beginning of a decline in the rural population is an important point in any country’s development history. In many other countries in Southeast Asia, that point was reached much earlier than in Cambodia—for example, in Indonesia it was reached around 1990, in Malaysia around 1995, and in Thailand around 2000 (United Nations Population Division 2019). Viet Nam and Bangladesh recently saw a decrease in their rural populations, more or less at the same time as in Cambodia, while in some nearby countries—including the Philippines and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)—the rural populations are still increasing (United Nations Population Division 2019).

Whether Cambodia’s rural population really declined between 2008 and 2019, however, can certainly be debated. One reason for scepticism about the reality of rural population decline is the fact that a nontrivial number of communes accorded urban status between 2008 and 2019 were reclassified for administrative reasons, rather than because they met the objective criteria for urban classification. Whether the characteristics of these areas really changed markedly from rural to urban during this period requires further investigation. Another reason for scepticism is that the population of communes that were rural in both 2008 and 2019 increased by 11% over the period. This is comparable to the overall growth of Cambodia’s population during this period and, as already noted, considerably more rapid than the increase of population in communes (other than those in Phnom Penh) already considered urban in 2008. In summary, when taken as a whole, there is no sign of massive out-migration from rural communes in Cambodia.

On the other hand, even though populations may be continuing to grow in formerly rural areas of the country, in situ urbanization is a real phenomenon. It is indeed possible for the environment in which people are living to change as population density increases and the employment structure shifts from a reliance on agriculture to a more diversified economy. In this sense, the key factor responsible for the decline in the rural population in Cambodia—the reclassification of communes, many of which did indeed cross population-density and employment-structure thresholds—does, at least to some extent, reflect a real “urbanization” of the population.¹⁰

¹⁰ Another issue to be considered is whether the population-size, population-density, and employment criteria utilized in Cambodia for designation of communes as urban are actually appropriate. A case could certainly be made, for

B. Provincial Trends in the Urban Share of the Total Population

Table 5 shows the trends in urban population growth and in the urban shares of the total populations in Cambodia's provinces, and Map 6 compares the urbanization levels of the provinces in 2008 and 2019. The trends between 2008 and 2019 were varied. Some noteworthy increases in urban population took place in provinces surrounding Phnom Penh: Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu. This was due mainly to the reclassification of large numbers of communes. However, other provinces also recorded increases of over 100% in their urban populations between 2008 and 2019, along with a considerable increase in the urban shares of their total populations. These provinces included Kampong Chhnang, Mondul Kiri, Preah Sihanouk, and Svay Rieng.

example, for raising the nonagricultural employment threshold from 50% to 60%, which would lead to a decline in the share of the population considered urban.

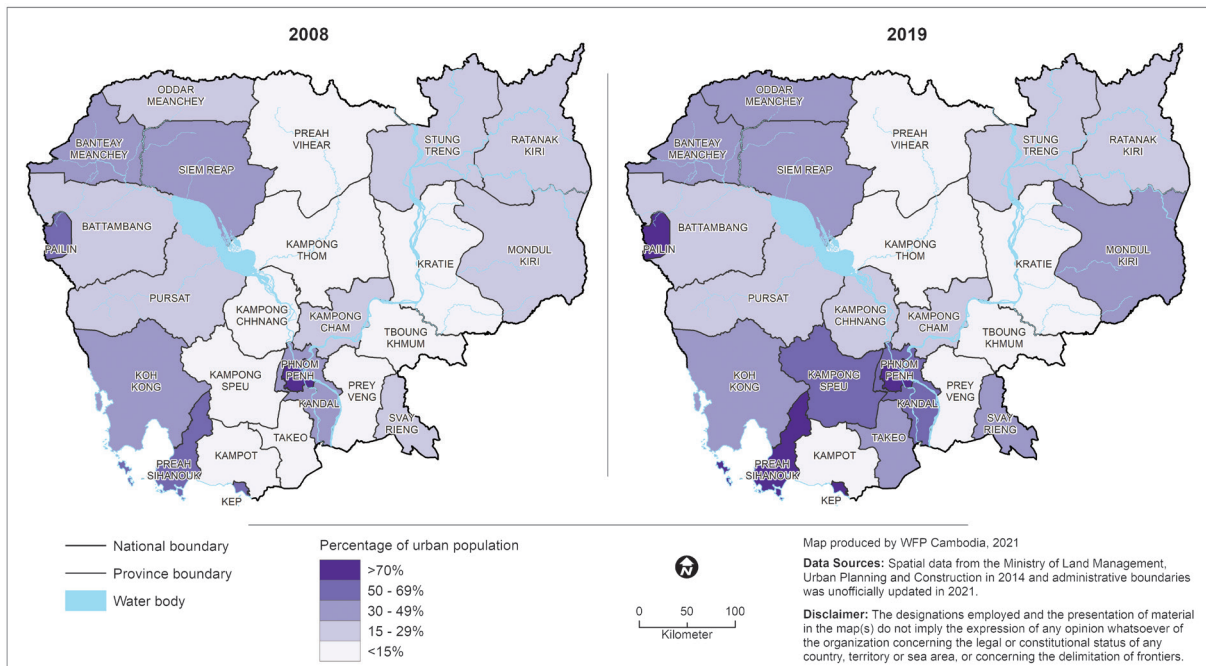
Table 5: Urban Population by Province, 1998, 2008, and 2019

| Province | Urban Population in 1998 | | Urban Population in 2008 | | Urban Population in 2019 | | Urban Population Increase 1998–2008 | | Urban Population Increase 2008–2019 | | Urban Population in 1998 | | Urban Population in 2008 | | Urban Population in 2019 | |
|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| | (’000) | (’000) | (’000) | (’000) | (’000) | (’000) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) |
| Banteay Meanchey | 135,415 | 228,484 | 319,063 | 68.7 | 39.6 | 23.4 | 33.7 | 37.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Battambang | 177,018 | 228,681 | 208,012 | 29.2 | (9.0) | 22.3 | 22.3 | 20.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Kampong Cham | 95,848 | 153,316 | 133,632 | 60.0 | (12.8) | 6.0 | 16.7 | 14.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Kampong Chhnang | 41,703 | 43,130 | 123,286 | 3.4 | 185.8 | 10.0 | 9.1 | 23.4 | | | | | | | | |
| Kampong Speu | 48,034 | 71,861 | 519,203 | 49.6 | 622.5 | 8.0 | 10.4 | 59.2 | | | | | | | | |
| Kampong Thom | 31,382 | 61,348 | 72,057 | 95.5 | 17.5 | 5.5 | 9.7 | 10.6 | | | | | | | | |
| Kampot | 45,250 | 60,851 | 61,597 | 34.5 | 1.2 | 8.6 | 10.4 | 10.4 | | | | | | | | |
| Kandal | 146,047 | 287,067 | 780,977 | 96.6 | 172.1 | 13.6 | 42.3 | 65.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Kep | 4,017 | 19,573 | 33,999 | 387.3 | 73.7 | ... | 54.7 | 79.7 | | | | | | | | |
| Koh Kong | 41,808 | 50,869 | 58,460 | 21.7 | 14.9 | 31.6 | 43.3 | 46.4 | | | | | | | | |
| Kratie | 36,354 | 37,475 | 41,706 | 3.1 | 11.3 | 13.8 | 11.7 | 11.1 | | | | | | | | |
| Mondul Kiri | 2,730 | 12,340 | 33,706 | 352.0 | 173.1 | 8.4 | 20.2 | 36.6 | | | | | | | | |
| Otdar Meanchey | 12,081 | 51,414 | 91,298 | 325.6 | 77.6 | 17.7 | 27.7 | 33.1 | | | | | | | | |
| Pailin | 8,510 | 36,354 | 57,114 | 327.2 | 57.1 | 37.2 | 51.5 | 76.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Phnom Penh | 950,373 | 1,501,725 | 2,281,951 | 58.0 | 52.0 | 95.1 | 100.0 | 100.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Preah Sihanouk | 66,723 | 121,789 | 248,080 | 82.5 | 103.7 | 42.9 | 55.0 | 80.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Preah Vihear | 7,827 | 21,179 | 27,152 | 170.6 | 28.2 | 6.6 | 12.4 | 10.7 | | | | | | | | |
| Prey Veng | 35,304 | 48,913 | 62,563 | 38.5 | 27.9 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 5.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Pursat | 38,436 | 63,628 | 73,661 | 65.5 | 15.8 | 10.7 | 16.0 | 17.5 | | | | | | | | |
| Ratanak Kiri | 11,256 | 28,982 | 32,388 | 157.5 | 11.8 | 11.9 | 19.3 | 14.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Siem Reap | 102,708 | 264,034 | 316,192 | 157.1 | 19.8 | 14.8 | 29.5 | 31.2 | | | | | | | | |
| Stung Treng | 15,141 | 30,959 | 47,599 | 104.5 | 53.7 | 18.7 | 27.7 | 28.7 | | | | | | | | |
| Svay Rieng | 16,991 | 77,659 | 157,012 | 357.1 | 102.2 | 3.6 | 16.1 | 29.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Takeo | 13,659 | 41,383 | 286,540 | 203.0 | 592.4 | 1.7 | 4.9 | 31.8 | | | | | | | | |
| Tbong Khmum | 21,715 | 92,163 | 67,946 | 324.4 | (26.3) | ... | 12.2 | 8.7 | | | | | | | | |
| Cambodia | 2,106,330 | 3,635,177 | 6,135,194 | 72.6 | 68.8 | 18.4 | 27.1 | 39.4 | | | | | | | | |

... = data not available, () = negative.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics.

Map 6: Urban Population by Province, 2008 and 2019 (%)



Three provinces recorded a decline in their urban populations from 2008 to 2019— Battambang, Kampong Cham, and Tbong Khmum. The urban share of the total population in each province also declined: in Battambang, from 22.3% to 20.9%, in Kampong Cham from 16.7% to 14.9% and in Tbong Khmum (a province created by splitting off a section of Kampong Cham province in 2013) even more drastically, from 12.2% to 8.7%. These declines occurred in spite of a slight increase in the number of communes designated as urban (Table 2). It should be noted that, as shown above (Table 3), the total populations of Battambang and Kampong Cham also declined during 2008–2019. The decline in their urban proportions means that their urban populations decreased somewhat more than their rural populations.

There were wide variations in the levels of urbanization in the provinces as of 2019. Some— Kampong Thom, Kampot, Preah Vihear, and Prey Veng—had under 11% of their populations living in urban areas. At the other end of the scale, Phnom Penh was 100% urban, followed by Preah Sihanouk (80%), Kep and Pailin (both just above 75%), Kandal (65%), and Kampong Speu (59%). The reason Kandal and Kampong Speu had such high urban concentrations is that part of each province lies within the Phnom Penh EMR. The high level of urbanization in Preah Sihanouk was due to its importance in containing Cambodia’s only deep-water port, its growing trade, and its manufacturing and tourism industries. While Kep is a tiny province, it is a tourist destination town, with only a tiny hinterland, and Pailin is a province with a town (important as a gambling center) and only a very small rural hinterland. Most other provinces, among them Banteay Meanchey, Mondul Kiri, and Siem Reap, had levels of urbanization in 2019 that approximated the national average (39.4%).

C. Population Growth in Urban Areas and the Designation of New Urban Communes, 2008–2019

As shown in Table 2, between 2008 and 2019, the number of urban communes in Cambodia (leaving aside Phnom Penh Province) increased by almost 80%, from 193 to 345. The greatest increases were in the provinces near or adjoining Phnom Penh (Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu), where the total number of urban communes rose from 37 to 147 (a 400% increase); in the other provinces the total number rose from 156 to 198, a 27% increase. It is important to consider (i) how many of these communes were considered urban because they met the three objective criteria already discussed, and how many were declared urban on administrative grounds; (ii) whether there were marked, systematic differences in certain characteristics between urban and rural communes (e.g., population density and population growth); and (iii) whether there were systematic differences in the population growth rates between the urban communes and the considerably larger number of rural communes.

In order to answer these questions, detailed tabulations of the urban communes were prepared, showing their population sizes in 2008 and 2019; their population densities in 2008 and 2019; and their urban or rural status before 2008. If they had become urban during 2008–2019, was this because they had met the three objective criteria? Or were they declared urban on the basis of administrative criteria? Using this information, it was possible to compare the population growth rates and changes in density of the two categories of communes: urban and rural.

In Cambodia, there are two ways in which the urban population can grow: population increases in existing urban communes or the designation of formerly rural communes as urban. The designation of new urban communes will unequivocally increase the urban **proportion** of the population, but actual population growth in preexisting urban communes will increase the urban proportion only if their population growth rates are higher than those in the communes that remain rural.

Cambodia's urban population in 2019 was just under 6.14 million (NIS 2020; Table 2.4.1). This differs slightly from the 6.01 million derived from adding up the populations of the urban communes in the data provided to the author. The second figure is necessarily used in the following analysis, with a further adjustment to exclude the province of Tbong Khmoum, because of certain problems with the data from that province. As a result, the 2019 urban population being analyzed comes to 5.94 million. The way this urban population was distributed across the country is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Urban Population Distribution in 2019 and Urban Population Growth during 2008–2019, by Commune Category

| Location | Urban Population 2019 | | | Urban Population Growth 2008–2019 | |
|--|------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| | Population (number) | Share of Urban Population (%) | Population Density (per km ²) | Urban Population (number) | Share of Urban Population Growth (%) |
| Phnom Penh | 2,281,951 | 38.4 | 3,361 | 687,735 | 27.8 |
| Communes outside Phnom Penh Already Urban in 2008 | 1,921,777 | 32.4 | 194 | 51,678 | 2.1 |
| Communes outside Phnom Penh Newly Urban in 2019: | | | | | |
| Total | 1,734,888 | 29.2 | 199 | 1,734,888 | 70.1 |
| In the Phnom Penh EMR ^a | 1,172,791 | 19.7 | 371 | 1,172,791 | 47.4 |
| Elsewhere in Cambodia | 562,097 | 9.5 | 114 | 562,097 | 22.7 |
| Based on objective criteria | 1,546,007 | 26.0 | 347 | 1,546,007 | 62.5 |
| Based on administrative criteria | 188,881 | 3.2 | 38 | 188,881 | 7.6 |
| All Urban Communes | 5,938,616 | 100 | 307 | 2,474,301 | 100.0 |

EMR = Extended Metropolitan Region, km² = square kilometer.

Note: This table excludes data from the province of Tbong Khmoum due to problems in comparing the 2008 and 2019 urban communes in that province.

^a The Phnom Penh EMR includes Phnom Penh plus adjoining urban communes in the provinces of Kandal, Kampong Speu, and Takeo.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The dominance of Phnom Penh is clear, not only in its high share of the country's urban population, but also in the Phnom Penh EMR's large share of the newly designated urban communes in 2019. Combining the two, the Phnom Penh EMR is the location of well over half of Cambodia's total urban population.

During 2008–2019, Cambodia's urban population grew by roughly 2.47 million, from 3.46 million to 5.94 million (Table 6). The main components of this total urban population increase are shown in the last two columns of Table 6. About 70% of urban population growth during 2008–2019 was the result of communes being declared urban in 2019. Phnom Penh's dominance of the urban

scene is again demonstrated by the fact that when its own share of growth (28%) is added to the share of growth of newly created urban communes in the EMR (47%), it makes up three-quarters of Cambodia's total urban population growth.

It is important to recognize that most urban population growth does not result from migration, but instead reflects "in situ" urbanization, i.e., locations becoming "urban" without many people necessarily moving in. This is the case not only in Cambodia, but in many other countries, as well (Zhu 2017; Franchette 2017).¹¹ The three criteria for urban status (minimum population size of 2,000; density of more than 200 per square kilometer (km²), and more than 50% of employment nonagricultural) can all be met without net in-migration, though net in-migration will clearly help in satisfying the first and second criteria, and probably in satisfying the third as well, as few rural migrants continue to work in agriculture after moving to an area that is urbanizing.¹²

Among the communes newly declared urban in 2019, only a small proportion (9.4%) did not meet all the objective criteria; and of this small proportion, most were in isolated provinces (notably Mondul Kiri), where the strict application of objective criteria would have resulted in zero new urban communes. The populations of such communes were typically quite small, so their urban categorization did not increase the total urban population very much.

It is also worth noting that, in Banteay Meanchey, Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, Otdar Meanchey, Preah Sihanouk, Pursat, Ratanak Kiri, Siem Reap, Stung Treng, and Svay Rieng, and quite a few communes that were already considered urban in 2008 did not satisfy all the objective criteria; most of these were communes located within a *krong* (municipality). *Krong*s include whole districts, and quite often there are communes within such districts that do not fulfill the objective criteria that would otherwise be used to determine urban status. Most such communes continued to be considered urban in 2019, even when they still failed to satisfy all the objective criteria.

Among newly designated urban communes in 2019, similar factors led to very low population densities overall in the communes accorded urban status for administrative reasons. In Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, Preah Vihear, Preah Sihanouk, Stung Treng, and Otdar Meanchey provinces, some new urban communes had very low population densities—as low as 30 or 50 people/km² in some cases, which was even lower than the average population density in rural Cambodia: 54 people/km²). This does not necessarily mean that the newly urban communes did not have an urban core; but even if they did, the very wide, sparsely settled areas included in these communes greatly lowered their overall population densities.

Comparing the populations of all the communes in 2008 and 2019, how rapidly did the populations increase in both rural and urban communes? It should first be noted that, of the newly urban communes in the EMR, almost all satisfied the objective criteria for urban designation, but of the newly urban communes elsewhere in Cambodia, about 25% failed to satisfy the objective

¹¹ While much of the discussion of in situ urbanization deals with locations away from the direct influence of large cities, such urbanization can also take place on the outskirts of large cities, as in the case of the Phnom Penh EMR.

¹² In fact, very few Cambodian communes that fulfill the second and third criteria fail to satisfy the first one (population exceeding 2,000). So it is the population-density and nonagricultural-employment criteria that have been crucial for gaining urban status.

criteria. However, population growth between 2008 and 2019 did not differ much between these two types of communes: an 18.5% increase for those that satisfied the objective criteria, and a 15.4% increase for those that did not.

Table 7 shows the percentage population increases in the different categories of communes between 2008 and 2019. A noteworthy feature is the slow population growth in communes (outside Phnom Penh) that had been considered urban in 2008. The population growth of 2.7% in these communes was much slower than that of the newly urban communes, and considerably slower than in the communes that remained rural. This is a surprising finding, and the reason for it is not clear.¹³ It was suggested earlier that population growth in communes considered urban in 2008 could have contributed to an increasing urban share of the population if their growth rate had been more rapid than that of the rural communes. Since this was not the case, the substantial rise in the urban proportion of Cambodia’s population during 2008–2019 was entirely due to two factors: the rapid increase in Phnom Penh’s population and the large number of communes accorded urban status during 2008–2019 in the rest of Cambodia.

Table 7: Population Increases in Different Types of Communes, 2008–2019 (%)

| Commune Type | Population Increase |
|---|----------------------------|
| Communes within Phnom Penh | 52.0 |
| Elsewhere in Cambodia: | |
| Newly urban communes in Phnom Penh EMR ^a | 22.6 |
| Newly urban communes in other provinces | 17.7 |
| Communes already urban in 2008 | 2.7 |
| Rural communes | 10.7 |

EMR = Extended Metropolitan Region.

^a These include communes in Kandal, Kampong Speu, and Takeo provinces.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

It is possible to give a rough estimate of the factors responsible for Cambodia’s urban population growth during 2008–2019. Phnom Penh’s population growth was mainly due to in-migration (73%), while 27% was the result of natural increase. The small size of the increase in the population of the communes elsewhere in the country that were already urban in 2008 must have been the result of net out-migration offsetting much of the natural population increase that occurred. Then there was the important element of the reclassification of communes from rural to urban status, especially in the provinces surrounding Phnom Penh, but also in other parts of the country. When all of these elements of Cambodia’s urban population growth during 2008–2019 are combined, it is clear that natural increase was responsible for 19% of the growth, migration for 13%, and

¹³As noted earlier, leaving aside Phnom Penh, of the 193 urban communes in Cambodia in 2008, 104 (53.9%) satisfied the RC 2011 SDC objective criteria, 58 were declared urban based on the Royal Sub-Decree, and a further 31 were deemed urban based on field visits by NIS staff or recommendations from provincial directors. The relatively high proportion of communes that were considered urban without meeting the three objective criteria for urban status is reflected in the relatively low population density of these communes in 2019: 194 per km² (Table 6). But this does not help explain the slow growth of these communes from 2008 to 2019.

reclassification for 68% (Table A.3). Reclassification thus contributed the lion's share (more than two-thirds) of Cambodia's urban population growth. Of course, natural increase and migration led to population changes in the communes that were first designated as urban in 2019, but because they were only awarded urban status in 2019, their addition to the urban population was entirely due to reclassification.

D. Growth of the Largest Cities and Towns

Table 8 shows the population growth of Cambodia's largest cities and towns as measured during the census years of 1998, 2008, and 2019. It should be noted that, in some cases, towns that were quite large in 2008 had not been considered urban areas at all in 1998. This might, indeed, reflect a rapid emergence of more towns in the period leading up to 2008 that satisfied the three criteria for urban classification. However, in some cases it may reflect decisions made, for administrative or other reasons, to recognize certain communes as urban in 2008 that had not been recognized as such in 1998.

Table 8: Growth of Cambodia's Largest Cities and Towns, 1998–2019

| City or District | Province | Population | | | Population Increase (%) | |
|----------------------|------------------|------------|-----------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| | | 1998 | 2008 | 2019 | 1998–2008 | 2008–2019 |
| Phnom Penh | Phnom Penh | 950,373 | 1,501,725 | 2,281,951 | 58.0 | 52.0 |
| Siem Reap | Siem Reap | 97,105 | 230,714 | 262,263 | 137.6 | 13.7 |
| Bati | Takeo | † | † | 143,722 ^a | ... | ... |
| Odong | Kampong Speu | † | 7,655 | 133,365 ^a | ... | 1,642.2 |
| Kong Pisei | Kampong Speu | † | † | 126,258 ^a | ... | ... |
| Bat Dambang | Battambang | 115,272 | 144,323 | 125,106 | 25.2 | (13.3) |
| Angk Snuol | Kandal | 22,456 | 40,463 | 118,280 ^a | 80.2 | 192.3 |
| Mongkol Borei | Banteay Meanchey | 23,900 | 22,124 | 105,863 | (7.4) | 378.5 |
| Kien Svay | Kandal | 50,300 | 34,898 | 104,764 ^a | (30.6) | 200.2 |
| Serei Saophoan | Banteay Meanchey | 61,482 | 90,279 | 102,577 | 46.8 | 13.6 |
| Kandal Stueng | Kandal | † | 9,644 | 101,188 ^a | ... | 949.2 |
| Paoy Paet | Banteay Meanchey | 43,366 | 107,989 | 100,600 | 149.0 | (6.8) |
| Khsach Kandal | Kandal | † | 18,395 | 98,026 ^a | ... | 432.9 |
| Ponhea Lueu | Kandal | 11,945 | 26,979 | 96,727 ^a | 125.9 | 258.5 |
| Krong Ta Khmau | Kandal | 58,264 | 80,141 | 79,281 ^a | 37.5 | (1.1) |
| Prey Nob | Preah Sihanouk | † | 10,228 | 76,541 | ... | 648.3 |
| Krong Preah Sihanouk | Preah Sihanouk | 66,723 | 91,284 | 73,036 | 36.8 | (20.0) |
| Krong Samraong | Otdar Meanchey | 12,081 | 51,414 | 72,803 | 325.6 | 41.6 |
| S'ang | Kandal | † | 53,649 | 72,511 ^a | ... | 35.2 |
| Pursat | Pursat | 21,961 | 58,846 | 59,809 | 168.0 | 1.6 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| Krong Stung Saen | Kampong Thom | 31,382 | 54,033 | 55,188 | 72.2 | 2.1 |
| Chbar Mon | Kampong Speu | 41,478 | 46,850 | 51,795 ^a | 13.0 | 10.6 |
| Krong Bavet | Svay Rieng | † | 37,123 | 45,578 | ... | 22.8 |
| Krong Daun Kaev | Takeo | 13,659 | 41,382 | 45,086 | 203.0 | 9.0 |
| Krong Kampong Cham | Kampong Cham | 45,354 | 35,750 | 43,165 | (21.2) | 20.7 |
| Krong Kampong Chhnang | Kampong Chhnang | 41,703 | 43,130 | 43,306 | 3.4 | 0.4 |
| Svay Rieng | Svay Rieng | 16,991 | 40,536 | 41,955 | 138.6 | 3.5 |
| Krong Stung Treng | Stung Treng | 15,141 | 30,959 | 40,612 | 104.5 | 31.2 |
| Krong Pailin | Pailin | 8,510 | 36,354 | 38,704 | 327.2 | 6.5 |
| Cheung Prey | Kampong Cham | 12,038 | 13,620 | 39,925 | 13.1 | 193.1 |
| Basedth | Kampong Speu | † | † | 39,181 ^a | ... | ... |
| Kampong Tralach | Kampong Chhnang | † | † | 35,761 | ... | ... |
| Dambae | Tboung Khmum | † | † | 35,670 | ... | ... |
| Krong Kampot | Kampot | 28,042 | 36,367 | 33,762 | 29.7 | (7.2) |
| Lvea Aem | Kandal | † | † | 31,049 ^a | ... | ... |
| Peam Ro | Prey Veng | 20,440 | 18,531 | 32,184 | (9.3) | 73.7 |
| Krong Ban Lung | Ratanak Kiri | 11,256 | 28,982 | 32,388 | 157.5 | 11.8 |
| Tram Kak | Takeo | † | † | 31,610 | ... | ... |

... = data not available, () = negative, † = no urban population recorded that year.

Note: The largest cities and towns are those with a population of over 30,000.

^aPart of the extended metropolitan region (EMR) of Phnom Penh—including Angk Snuol, Kien Svay, Krong Ta Khmau, and Chbar Mon—were already substantial towns in 1998, but are now surrounded on most sides (on all sides in the case of Krong Ta Khmau) by other urban communes.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

In the case of some of the large towns in Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu, the sudden emergence of large urban populations in 2019 was in many cases based on entire districts, or the greater parts of districts, becoming urban between 2008 and 2019. This appears to reflect the reality of very rapid changes in localities' characteristics from rural to urban, though the actual population growth in the communes that made up these towns in 2019 was much lower than the growth of population in the officially designated urban areas, as most of this population growth resulted from the addition of whole communes to the urban population. As will be discussed later, the urban populations in these three provinces do not appear to have experienced rapid population growth due to in-migration.

The growth of towns has varied greatly over time, and in some there is a real discontinuity in growth rates between the 1998–2008 and 2008–2019 periods. Many of them had stagnated over time. Between 1998 and 2019, Cambodia's population grew by 33.7%, or just over one third. But the populations of towns such as Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, and Kampot barely changed over that time, and Bat Dambang's population increased only very slowly. Other towns have grown rapidly, including the second largest city, Siem Reap (between 1998 and 2008, but not since 2008), the towns in Banteay Meanchey Province, and the towns and areas on the suburban fringes of Phnom Penh.

There were several towns that, like Siem Reap, saw their populations grow rapidly during 1998–2008, and then slow down dramatically during 2008–2019, including Krong Daun Kaev (Takeo Province), Krong Pailin, Krong Preah Sihanouk, Svay Rieng, Krong Ta Khmau (Kandal Province), Paoy Paet, and Pursat. Krong Preah Sihanouk and Paoy Paet both grew rapidly from 1998 to 2008, but their recorded populations actually declined thereafter. Krong Kampot showed reasonable growth from 1998 to 2008, but its population also declined thereafter. Kampot, Pailin, and Paoy Paet were three of the four main towns bordering on Thailand or Viet Nam where gambling facilities were provided to serve the Thai and Vietnamese cross-border markets.¹⁴ After growing rapidly, this gambling market has become controversial, with anti-Chinese sentiment growing in Krong Preah Sihanouk in the face of the chaotic growth of the casino industry. In August 2019, Prime Minister Hun Sen announced that Cambodia would criminalize online gambling,¹⁵ but any disruption this announcement may have caused the gambling industry, and the towns dependent on it, came too late to affect the population distribution at the time of the 2019 Census.

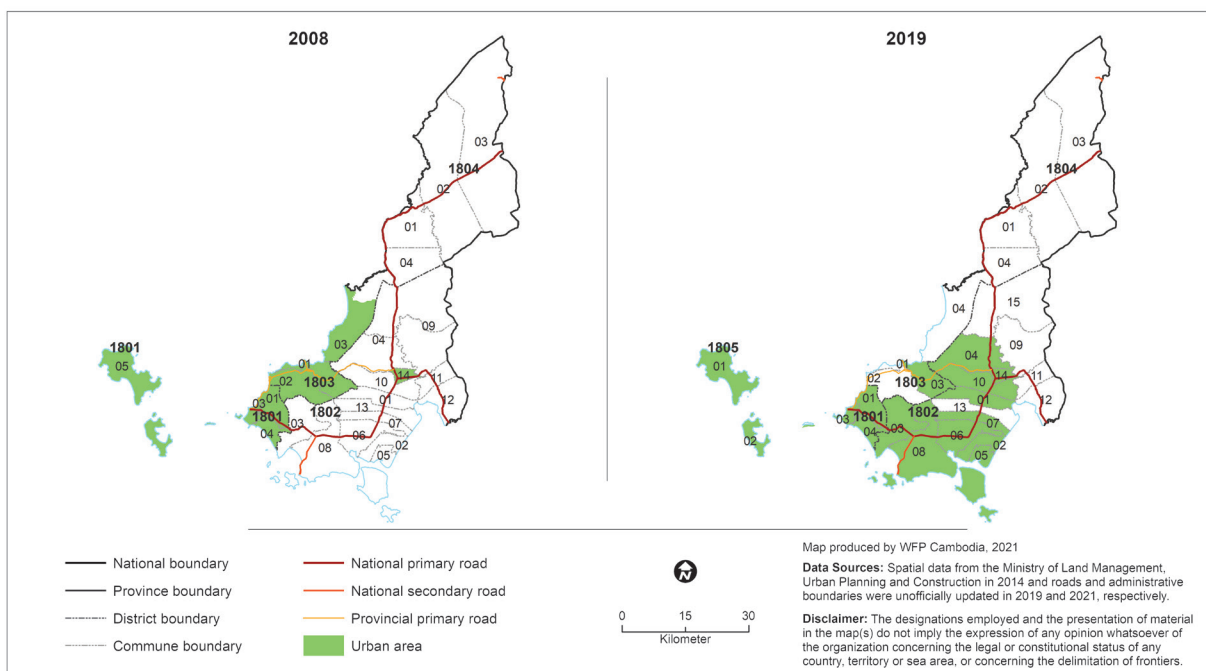
The populations of some towns appear to have increased very rapidly from 2008 to 2019. One example is Prey Nob, in Preah Sihanouk Province, but its very rapid growth was clearly due to reclassification, as the population of the whole district of Prey Nob, of which the town is the major part, grew by only 17% during 2008–2019. Map 7 presents the urban communes in Preah Sihanouk Province in 2008 and 2019. Indeed, the map shows that, from a functional point of view, it would be appropriate to combine all the urban communes in the province into one urban area, with a total population of 150,331 (as of 2019); the resulting urban area would be the third-largest city in Cambodia.

¹⁴ Larger gambling casinos are located in the cities of Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville, where the market is different because the casinos are not located on Cambodia's borders. Given that Cambodians are prohibited from gambling, all the casinos target foreign gamblers.

¹⁵ The law enforcing this criminalization of gambling was passed by the National Assembly on 5 October 2020.

There is no doubt that the growth of this urban area in Preah Sihanouk has been greatly boosted by activities related to the Belt and Road Initiative of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). In May 2019 the Government of Cambodia commissioned the Urban Planning & Design Institute of Shenzhen, in the PRC, to draft a master development plan for Krong Preah Sihanouk. The point was probably to benefit from the lessons of Shenzhen’s own spectacular growth. Massive infrastructure-improvement projects include a four-lane highway from Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville, an expansion of Sihanouk International Airport, an upgrading of existing roadways, and the modernization of the Sihanoukville’s sewerage and drainage systems. The construction of new factories, apartment buildings, offices, and resort facilities are also included, as part of Sihanoukville’s development into an integrated special economic zone.

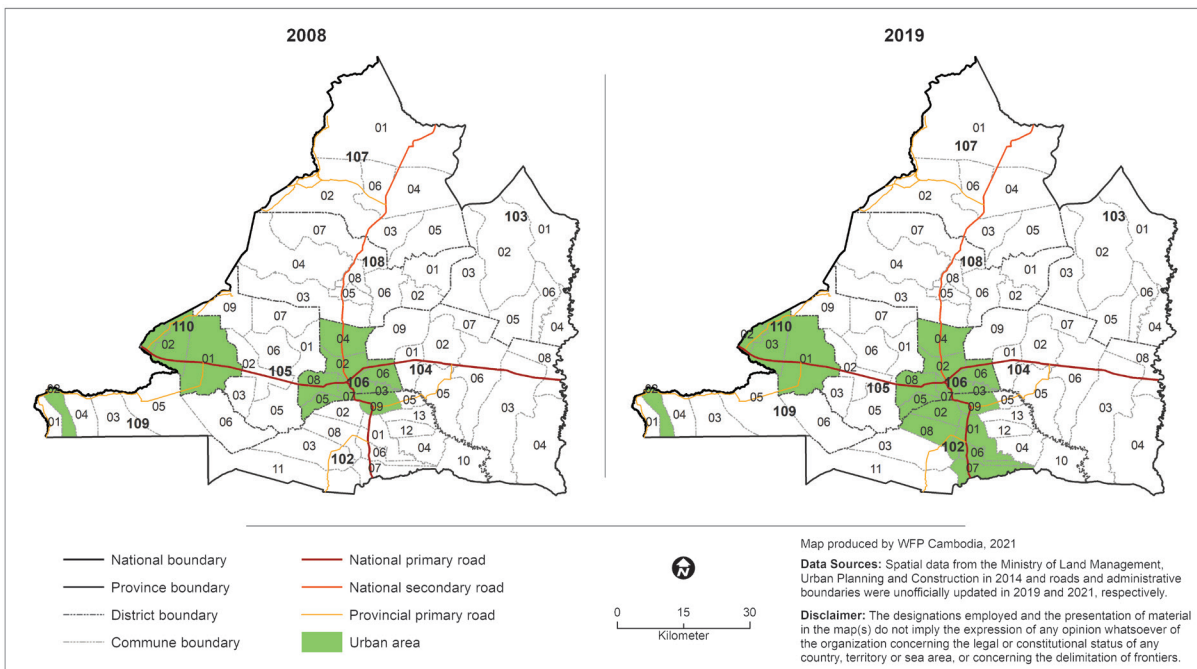
Map 7: Urban Communes in Preah Sihanouk Province, 2008 and 2019



The urban population of Mongkol Borei District, in Banteay Meanchey Province, also increased very rapidly from 2008 to 2019, after having declined from 1998 to 2008 (Map 8). Again, the reclassification of rural communes was the main driver of this growth. While the total urban population of Mongkol Borei increased by a remarkable 378% from 2008 to 2019, the growth in the population of communes that were already designated as urban as of 2008 was just 32.8%.

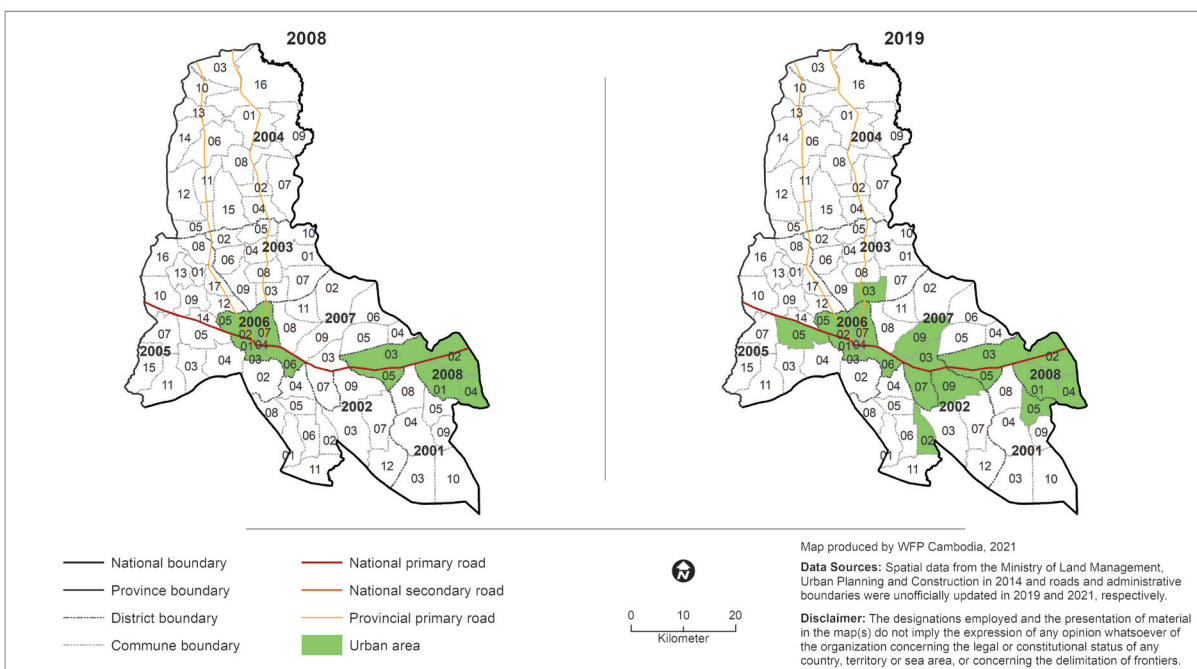
The case of Mongkol Borei illustrates the difficulties of confining urban areas to the districts in which they are located. The urban communes in Mongkol Borei District are adjacent to those in adjoining Krong Serei Saophoan (see Map 8). To some degree, Serei Saophoan and Mongkol Borei can be considered twin cities, and thus part of one urbanized area. If Serei Saophoan’s population of 99,019 and Mongkol Borei’s population of 105,863 were combined (204,882), the “twin cities” would become the third-largest city in Cambodia, after Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Preah Sihanouk, even if adjusted to include all the urban communes in the province as one urban area, would be relegated to the number four ranking.

Map 8: Urban Communes in Banteay Meanchey Province, 2008 and 2019



Svay Rieng is another province with interesting urbanization trends. The two distinct towns of Krong Bavet and Krong Svay Rieng (about 48 kilometers apart) were linked together in 2019 by communes that became urban during 2008–2019 (Map 9). It might be appropriate to consider Krong Bavet and Krong Svay Rieng as linear twin cities, with a total population of almost 90,000 in 2019. Krong Bavet is only 61 kilometers from Ho Chi Minh City, in Viet Nam (though the public bus journey takes 1.5 to 3 hours). There are a number of likely reasons for the area’s increasing urbanization.

Map 9: Urban Communes in Svay Rieng Province, 2008 and 2019



First, Krong Bavet is the location of Cambodia's largest special economic zone (SEZ), the Manhattan SEZ, established in 2006, and of another, Tai Seng Bavet SEZ, established in 2007, with combined employment of 36,000 in 2014 (Warr and Menon 2015; Table 2). Second, the presence of two gambling casinos in Krong Bavet have no doubt also brought increased employment opportunities.¹⁶ Third, its location along a key transportation route between Phnom Penh and Ho Chi Minh City may have further supported its increasing urbanization through commercial and other developments. Bavet's border crossing, often used by travellers in Viet Nam wishing to renew their Viet Nam visa, helps to link its economy with that of Viet Nam. The Vietnamese town of Moc Bai, in Tay Ninh Province, is just over the border, and it is the center of the Moc Bai Border Gate Economic Zone.

One very important point needs to be stressed: Of the 17 largest towns in Cambodia, 1 is Phnom Penh and 9 more are part of Phnom Penh's extended metropolitan area. Therefore, only 7 of these 17 largest towns are located in provinces farther away from Phnom Penh, where the drivers of growth are likely to be different from those in urban areas on the fringes of Phnom Penh.

Many of the urban areas on Phnom Penh's fringes were not even considered urban in 1998 or 2008. They are listed as towns in Table 8 because the entire districts in which they are located, or most parts of their districts, are classified as urban. This means that, although listed as towns, some of them are actually sprawling localities without a distinct urban core; their urban core is the city of Phnom Penh.

E. City and Town Population Sizes

Table 9 shows the categories of cities and towns in Cambodia based on the sizes of their populations in 2008 and 2019. More than one-third of the urban population resided in the capital, Phnom Penh, with around 1.5 million residents in 2008 and 2.3 million in 2019. There were no cities in the 500,000 to 1 million category, and just one (Siem Reap) fell into the 200,000–499,999 category. In 2019, a large number of towns fell into the 100,000–199,999 category, accounting for more than 20% of the country's total urban population. Two categories, 30,000–49,999 and 50,000–99,999, when combined accounted for another 20% in 2019, and over 16% of the urban population lived in urban areas with under 30,000 residents, although the exact number of such cities and towns was not known at the time.

¹⁶ Because of the location of the two casinos between border checkpoints, foreign nationals may cross the border to gamble, then return home without officially passing through the Cambodian checkpoint, thereby eliminating the need for visas.

Table 9: Population Distribution among Cities and Towns, 2008 and 2019

| Category Based on Population Size | 2008 | | | 2019 | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Number of Cities/Towns | Population | Share of Total Urban Population (%) | Number of Cities/Towns | Population | Share of Total Urban Population (%) |
| | | | | | | |
| 1 million+ | 1 | 1,501,725 | 41.3 | 1 | 2,281,951 | 37.2 |
| 500,000–999,999 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 200,000–499,999 | 1 | 230,714 | 6.3 | 1 | 256,995 | 4.2 |
| 100,000–199,999 | 2 | 252,312 | 6.9 | 10 | 1,319,662 | 21.5 |
| 50,000–99,999 | 7 | 479,646 | 13.2 | 9 | 666,360 | 10.9 |
| 30,000–49,999 | 11 | 423,812 | 11.7 | 17 | 609,936 | 9.9 |
| Under 30,000 | ... | 746,968 | 20.5 | ... | 1,000,290 | 16.3 |
| Total | ... | 3,635,177 | 100.0 | ... | 6,135,194 | 100.0 |

... = data not available.

Note: Percentages might not total 100% because of rounding.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

It should be stressed that Table 9 in some ways provides a distorted picture of the urban population distributions in Cambodia. Many of the towns in the 100,000–199,999 category are actually part of the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region (EMR), and if their populations were added to the Phnom Penh population, the share of the urban population in the 1 million+ category would rise considerably, and this would be offset by a decline in the share of the 100,000–199,999 category. Similarly, the populations of some of the towns in the 50,000–99,999 category would be shifted into the 1 million+ category. There will be a discussion of the Phnom Penh EMR in Chapter 7 of this report.

Chapter 5:

Characteristics of Cambodia's Urban and Rural Populations

The urban and rural populations of a country such as Cambodia can be expected to differ widely in a number of respects, many of which reflect the well-being of the population. As noted in the Introduction, Cambodia's efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to issues such as education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), and reduced inequalities (SDG 10) need to be informed by evidence of rural–urban differences in the relevant indicators. It is therefore crucial that these differences be measured as accurately as possible, and that the causal factors behind the reported differences be understood. The census data enable us to measure urban–rural differences with regard to a number of characteristics. This chapter considers age structure, education, labor force participation, marital status, housing conditions, and household assets. Another important aspect—migration flows—is considered in Chapter 6.

A. Age–Sex Structure

In 2019, Cambodia had more females than males. The sex ratio (males per 100 females) was 94.9. Sex ratios below 100, indicating more females than males, characterized most provinces (NIS 2019; Table 2.10). The overall low sex ratio in Cambodia, in addition to reflecting a higher female life expectancy, as exists in most countries, reflects higher male fatalities and the greater number of males escaping abroad during the Khmer Rouge period. In 1998 the sex ratios in urban areas were higher than in rural areas (not shown here), but this was reversed in 2008, mainly due to the very low sex ratios in the urban parts of Phnom Penh (88.8) and Kandal Province (89.6). Possible reasons for the higher number of females in these areas in 2008 are: the large-scale migration of young women workers into Phnom Penh, Ta Khmau, etc., to work in garment factories, especially during 2003–2008, and the sizeable out-migration of male laborers from these areas (NIS 2009, 34).

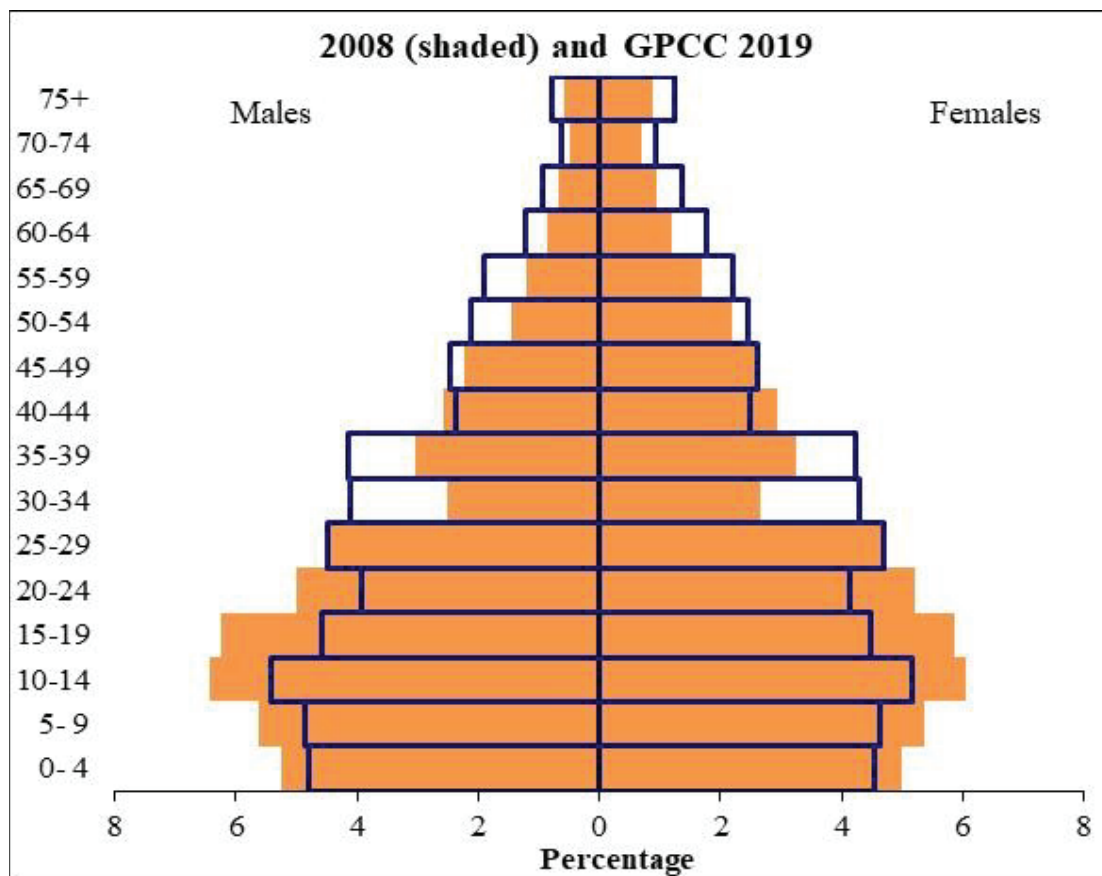
By 2019, sex ratios in urban and rural areas were almost identical—95.2 in urban and 94.6 in rural areas. They were slightly lower in Phnom Penh (94.0) and in the provinces where some areas were part of the Phnom Penh EMR, including Kandal (93.8), Kampong Speu (94.0) and Takeo (91.8). But in contrast to 2008, the sex ratios in 2019 were no longer particularly low in the Phnom Penh EMR; in fact, they were only slightly lower than in Cambodia as a whole. This finding will be examined later for broad age groups.

Before comparing the age pyramids for urban and rural areas, and observing the shifts during 2008–2019, the changes in the overall Cambodian age pyramids need to be noted. This is shown in Figure 1. The high fertility rates in earlier decades is reflected in the large cohorts of the 10–14, 15–19, and 20–24 age groups in 2008, and the decline in fertility over time is reflected in the smaller cohorts in the 0–4 and 5–9 age groups. In the 2019 pyramid, one can see that the movement of the larger cohorts up the pyramid was beginning to fill the gaps in the 30–34 and 35–39 age groups, which had been depleted by the very low birth rates and high infant and child mortality during the Khmer Rouge period. This trend, of course, affected both rural and urban areas, though no doubt to different degrees. The age pyramids would also have been affected by

patterns of migration and differences in fertility and mortality. Frequently, though, migration patterns far outweigh urban–rural differences in fertility and mortality in their effect on age pyramids. Figures 2 and 3 show the changes in urban and rural age pyramids between 2008 and 2019.

The urban age pyramids (Figure 2) show a filling in, from 2008 to 2019, of the markedly reduced cohorts that had been in their 30s in 2008, similar to that observed for Cambodia as a whole. But there is also evidence, in the bulge in the three groups covering ages 15–29 in the 2008 pyramid, of considerable rural–urban migration in the years prior to that year. This bulge was no longer apparent in the 2019 age pyramid, suggesting that there had been a less marked pattern of rural–urban migration of young people in the years leading up to the 2019 census.

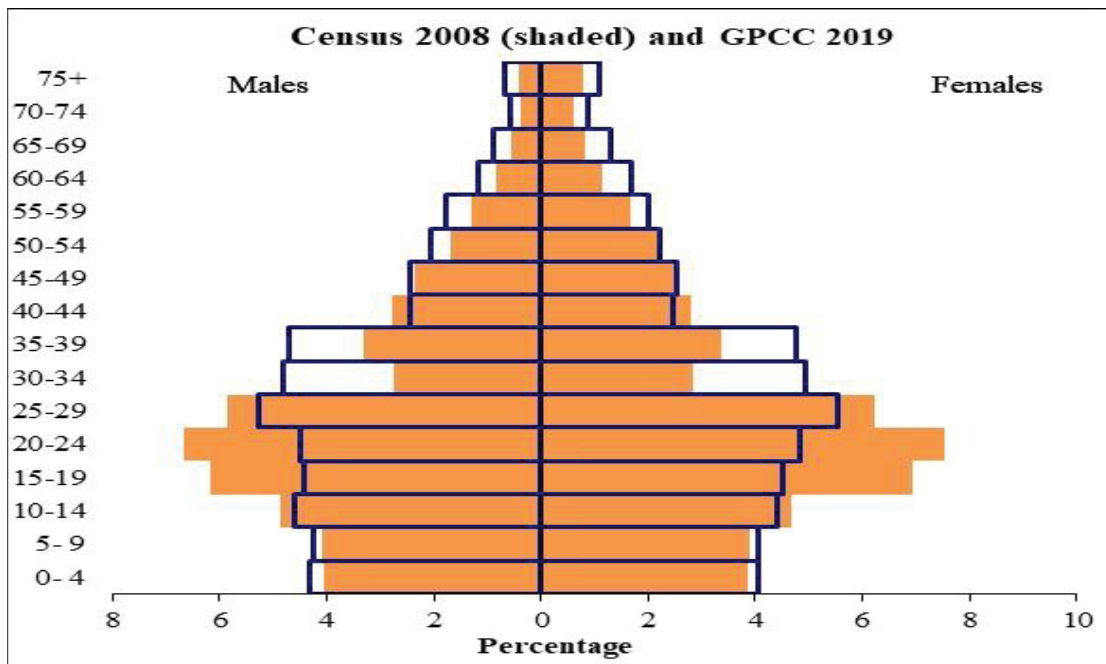
Figure 1: Population Pyramids for Cambodia as a Whole, 2008 and 2019 (%)



GPCC = General Population Census of Cambodia.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

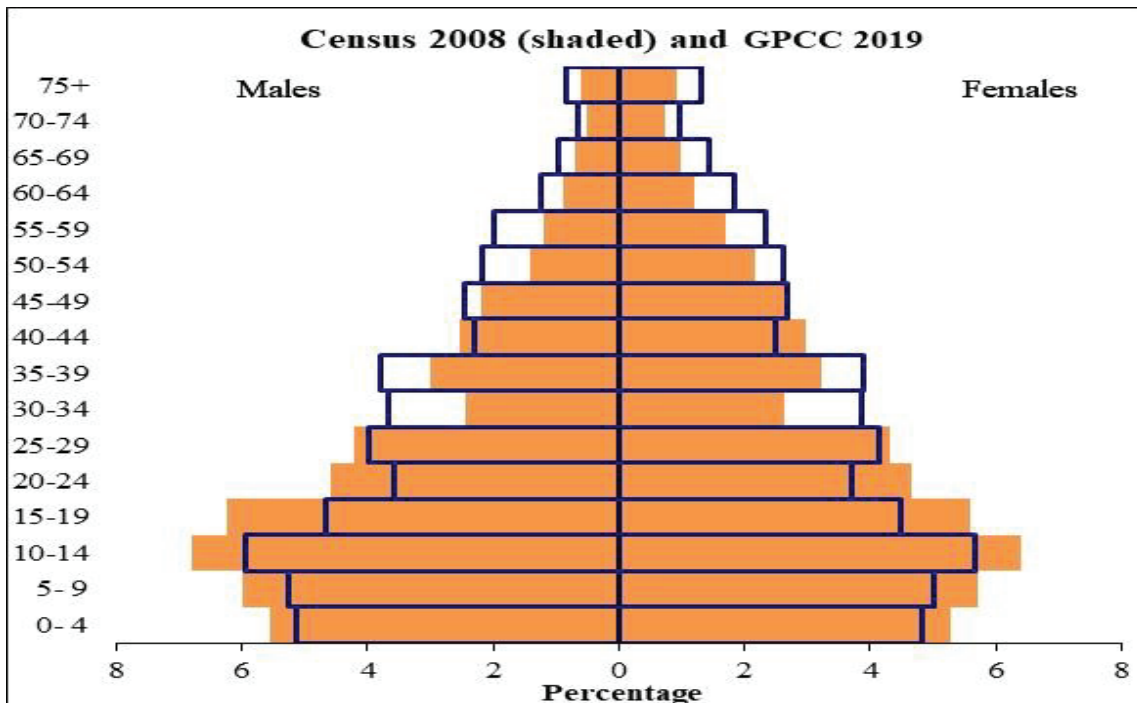
Figure 2: Population Pyramids for Cambodia’s Urban Areas, 2008 and 2019 (%)



GPCC: General Population Census of Cambodia.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Figure 3: Populations Pyramids for Cambodia’s Rural Areas, 2008 and 2019 (%)



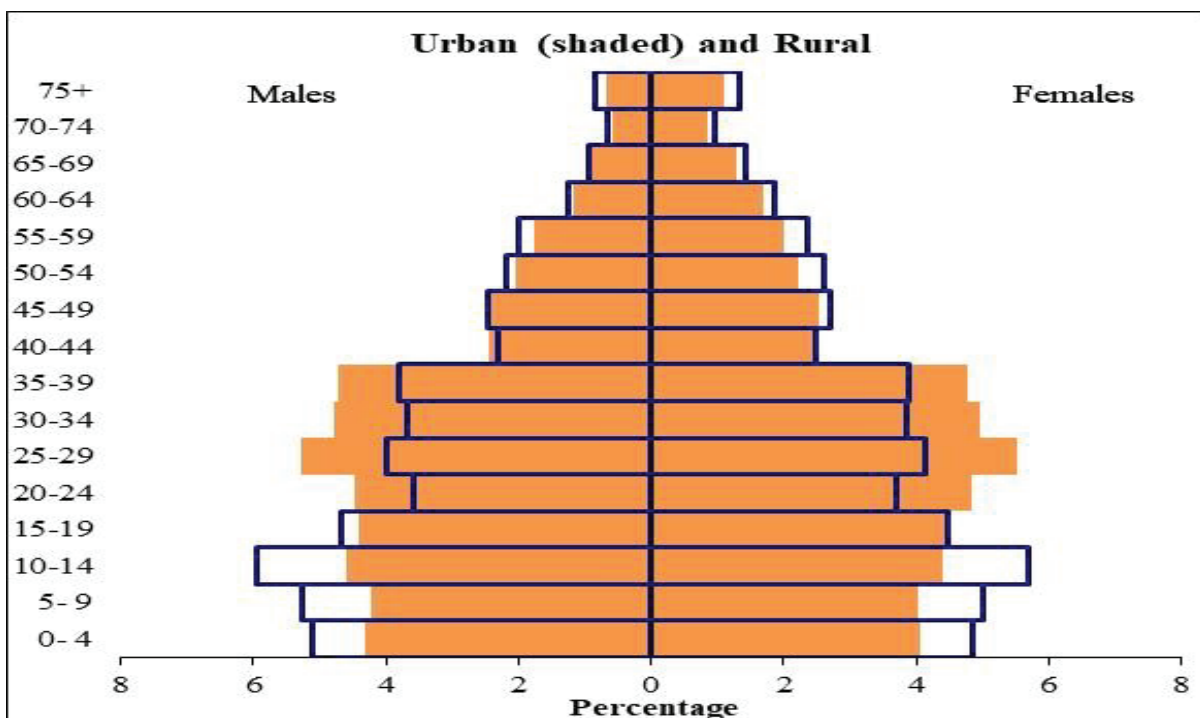
GPCC = General Population Census of Cambodia.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The filling in of the gap in the groups aged 30–39 in 2008, so strongly observed in Cambodia as a whole and in the urban areas, is also apparent in the rural age pyramid (Figure 3). The ageing of the population, apparent in the age pyramids for Cambodia as a whole and the urban areas, is also apparent for the rural areas, to a slightly greater extent, probably reflecting the out-migration of younger working-age people to the urban areas.

Figure 4 combines the 2019 urban and rural age pyramids into one diagram. The rural pyramid has a distinctly higher proportion of children, probably because of the higher fertility in rural areas and the tendency of many adolescents and youth to migrate to urban areas. It also has a somewhat higher proportion of old people. The urban pyramid, by contrast, has a distinctly larger share of working-age adults.

Figure 4: Population Pyramids for Cambodia’s Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)



Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Table 10 shows some indicators of urban–rural differences according to age structure. The indicators shown include the percentages of key functional age groups, the dependency ratio (a rough indicator of the proportion of the dependent-age population to the working-age population), and the support ratio (the ratio of the working-age population to the elderly, i.e., those aged 60+ years). The urban areas of Cambodia are at a considerable advantage in having a lower proportion of both young and old dependents, compared with the rural areas. The main reason is the high proportion of young working-age migrants in urban areas, especially in the main city: Phnom Penh.

Table 10: Indicators of Age Structure, Urban and Rural Areas, 2019

| Indicator | Urban Population | Rural Population | Total Population |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Total population | 6,135,194 | 9,153,295 | 15,288,489 |
| Age 0–14 (%) | 25.6 | 31.8 | 29.4 |
| Age 15–59 (%) | 66.2 | 58.9 | 61.7 |
| Age 60+ (%) | 8.2 | 9.3 | 8.9 |
| Dependency ratio ^a | 0.51 | 0.70 | 0.62 |
| Support ratio ^b | 8.0 | 6.3 | 7.0 |

^a The dependency ratio is calculated by adding the population of children to that of the elderly, and then dividing the sum by the working-age population, as follows: $(0-14)+(60+)/(15-59)$.

^b The support ratio is calculated by dividing the working-age population by the elderly population, as follows: $(15-59)/(60+)$.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

B. Education and Literacy

The 2008 population census report pointed out that both the literacy levels and school attendance rates in rural areas lagged behind those in urban areas, and that there were many villages without a school. The report also mentioned that special attention needed to be paid to reducing the school dropout rates, particularly among girls, and to improving the literacy and educational levels of women (NIS 2009, 56).

Measures of literacy provide only a crude measure of the ability to read and write. However, it is worth noting that the differentials between the urban and rural areas in measured literacy had narrowed during 1998–2019, which was a period of quite rapidly rising literacy overall (Table 11). This suggests that opportunities for schooling had broadened from a heavier concentration in urban areas to a more widespread availability. Figure 5 gives a detailed picture of the rural–urban differentials in literacy in 2019 by showing the literacy rates ranging from the oldest age group (75+) to the youngest (10–14 year olds), separately for males and females, thus giving a clear indication of the trends in literacy. Among the older groups, whose attainment of literacy had occurred more than half a century before, the urban–rural difference in literacy rates was greater than among the younger groups. This was especially true for those under the age of 35, among whom the urban–rural differences had narrowed sharply; and even more for teenagers, among whom urban–rural differences had almost disappeared. In addition, gender differences in both urban and rural areas had largely disappeared for those aged 30 and below.

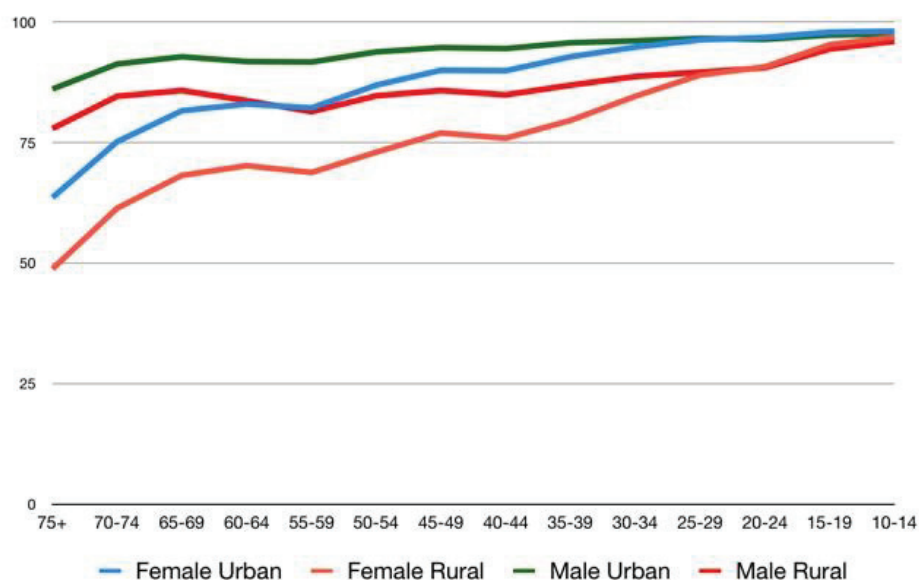
Table 11: Literacy Rates by Sex, in Rural and Urban Areas, 1998, 2008, and 2019 (%)

| Census Year | Sex | Urban | Rural | Urban/Rural Combined |
|-------------|------------|-------|-------|----------------------|
| 1998 | Both sexes | 78.5 | 59.1 | 1.33 |
| | Males | 84.7 | 67.7 | 1.25 |
| | Females | 72.8 | 51.3 | 1.42 |
| 2008 | Both sexes | 90.2 | 75.3 | 1.20 |
| | Males | 93.5 | 81.6 | 1.15 |
| | Females | 87.2 | 69.5 | 1.25 |
| 2019 | Both sexes | 93.3 | 85.4 | 1.09 |
| | Males | 94.9 | 88.5 | 1.07 |
| | Females | 91.7 | 82.5 | 1.11 |

Note: The population covered in this table applies to Cambodians aged seven years and above.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh (Table 4.1); NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Figure 5: Literacy Rates by Age and Sex, for Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)



Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

A comparison of the differences between urban and rural areas in school attendance is presented in Table 12, focusing on the 6–14, 15–19, and 20–24 age groups. The table shows a considerable narrowing of urban–rural differences in school attendance for the population aged 6–14 from 1998 to 2008, no doubt due to the provision of more primary and lower secondary schools in areas serving rural populations over that period. The narrowing of urban–rural differences was marked for both sexes, though slightly greater for females than for males. By 2019, the gender differences had disappeared for the 6–14 age group in both urban and rural areas, as near-universal primary school education was achieved.

Table 12: Share of Population Attending School or Other Educational Institution, by Age Group and Sex, for Urban and Rural Areas, 1998, 2008, and 2019 (%)

| Age Group | Year | Urban | | | Rural | | |
|-------------------|------|------------|-------|---------|------------|-------|---------|
| | | Both Sexes | Males | Females | Both Sexes | Males | Females |
| 6–14 ^a | 1998 | 74.8 | 76.0 | 73.4 | 56.7 | 58.5 | 54.8 |
| | 2008 | 86.6 | 87.0 | 86.1 | 79.1 | 78.8 | 79.4 |
| | 2019 | 91.7 | 91.2 | 92.2 | 90.6 | 89.7 | 91.5 |
| 15–19 | 1998 | 54.9 | 66.5 | 44.5 | 36.8 | 47.6 | 26.0 |
| | 2008 | 59.8 | 67.4 | 53.0 | 49.7 | 53.9 | 45.1 |
| | 2019 | 57.3 | 58.1 | 56.4 | 54.7 | 54.0 | 55.3 |
| 20–24 | 1998 | 15.9 | 22.4 | 9.8 | 6.3 | 8.6 | 4.2 |
| | 2008 | 26.6 | 33.8 | 20.2 | 9.8 | 13.2 | 6.6 |
| | 2019 | 18.0 | 19.8 | 16.3 | 8.5 | 9.6 | 7.4 |

^a For the 1998 census, the values for the youngest group were determined based on the population aged 7–14, not 6–14. Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh (Table 4.11); NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Similarly, for the 6–14 and 15–19 age groups, a considerable narrowing of the school attendance differences between urban and rural areas was evident from 1998 to 2019; though, in contrast to the 6–14 age group, the school attendance rates barely increased for the 20–24 age group, rising up to 2008 and then falling. The same can be said for the overall urban rate for the 15–19 age group, while for urban males, the rate actually ended up lower in 2019 than in 1998. It must be borne in mind that the urban population had increased a great deal through reclassification during 1998–2008, and again during 2008–2019, and this could have affected the measured trends for the urban population.

The enrolment trends for the 6–14 and 15–19 age groups in rural areas were remarkable. Already in 1998, three-quarters of those aged 7–14 were in school in urban areas, with only small differences between males and females.¹⁷ In rural areas, 56.7% of this age group were in school. But by 2019, rural school attendance rates for the 6–14 age group had more or less caught up with those in urban areas. Perhaps even more surprising, by 2019, the school attendance rate for ages 15–19 in rural areas, which in 1998 was only 36.8%, compared with 54.9% in urban areas, had almost caught up with the urban rate.

For people aged 20–24, there was a rather strange decline in recorded school attendance rates from 2008 to 2019, in both urban and rural areas. The decline was much sharper for males than for females; indeed, in rural areas, the rate for females rose between 2008 and 2019.

Table 13 and Figure 6 show the educational attainment of the older teenage and adult population in 2019, by 5-year age group. The rural population is more heavily concentrated in the “no schooling” and lower educational categories (incomplete or completed primary education). Of course, some of the urban residents who have completed secondary and higher education have

¹⁷ The results were given for those 7–14 years old, not for the 6–14 age group, in the 1998 census report.

rural roots, having moved to the city in order to pursue higher levels of education; or they may have moved to the city after achieving higher levels of education back home, in order to find work.

Table 13: Proportions of the Population Achieving Various Levels of Education, by Age, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)

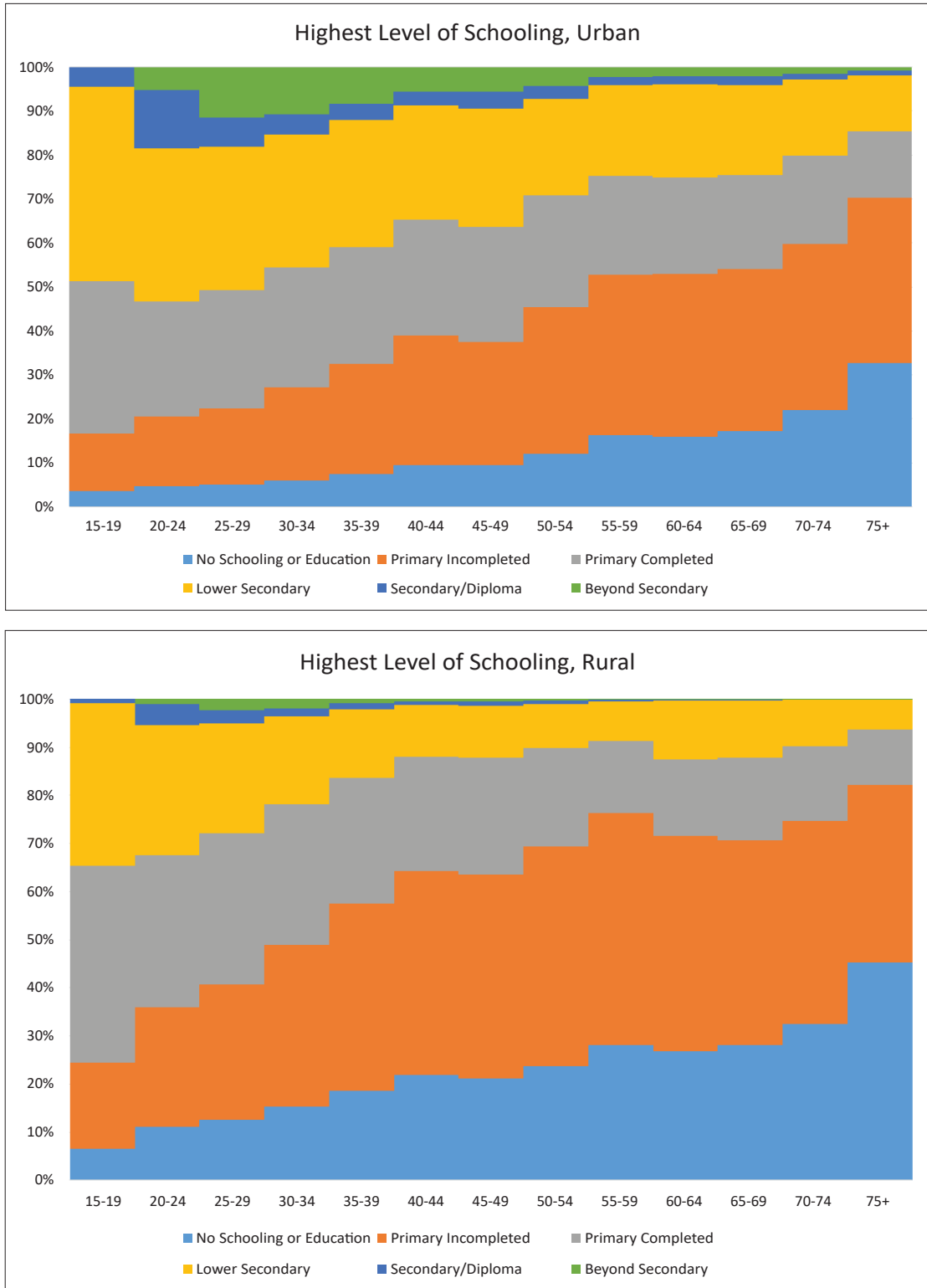
| Age Group | No Schooling | Some Primary | Completed Primary | Lower Secondary | Secondary/Diploma | Beyond Secondary | Other/Not Stated |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Urban | | | | | | | |
| 15–19 | 3.6 | 13.1 | 34.4 | 44.0 | 4.5 | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| 20–24 | 4.7 | 15.7 | 26.0 | 34.6 | 13.2 | 5.3 | 0.5 |
| 25–29 | 5.0 | 17.2 | 26.7 | 32.3 | 6.8 | 11.3 | 0.7 |
| 30–34 | 6.0 | 20.9 | 27.2 | 29.9 | 4.5 | 10.7 | 0.9 |
| 35–39 | 7.4 | 24.9 | 26.3 | 28.6 | 3.5 | 8.3 | 0.9 |
| 40–44 | 9.4 | 29.0 | 26.2 | 25.7 | 3.0 | 5.6 | 1.0 |
| 45–49 | 9.4 | 27.7 | 25.9 | 26.6 | 3.8 | 5.5 | 1.1 |
| 50–54 | 11.9 | 32.9 | 25.2 | 21.5 | 2.9 | 4.3 | 1.2 |
| 55–59 | 16.0 | 36.0 | 22.2 | 20.2 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 1.6 |
| 60–64 | 15.7 | 36.3 | 21.6 | 20.8 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.6 |
| 65–69 | 16.9 | 36.3 | 21.1 | 20.1 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 1.7 |
| 70–74 | 21.5 | 37.2 | 19.6 | 17.0 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 2.0 |
| 75+ | 31.6 | 36.4 | 14.8 | 12.2 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 3.0 |
| Rural | | | | | | | |
| 15–19 | 6.5 | 17.8 | 40.9 | 33.5 | 0.9 | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| 20–24 | 11.1 | 24.7 | 31.4 | 26.9 | 4.4 | 0.9 | 0.6 |
| 25–29 | 12.4 | 28.0 | 31.1 | 22.6 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 0.7 |
| 30–34 | 15.2 | 33.2 | 29.1 | 18.1 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 0.9 |
| 35–39 | 18.4 | 38.6 | 25.9 | 14.1 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| 40–44 | 21.6 | 41.9 | 23.6 | 10.6 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 1.1 |
| 45–49 | 20.9 | 41.9 | 23.9 | 10.7 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 1.2 |
| 50–54 | 23.5 | 45.1 | 20.3 | 8.9 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 1.2 |
| 55–59 | 27.7 | 47.7 | 14.8 | 8.1 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 1.3 |
| 60–64 | 26.5 | 44.1 | 15.6 | 12.1 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 1.3 |
| 65–69 | 27.7 | 41.9 | 17.1 | 11.6 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 1.3 |
| 70–74 | 32.1 | 41.5 | 15.3 | 9.4 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 1.5 |
| 75+ | 44.3 | 36.2 | 11.3 | 6.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 1.9 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The gap between the urban and rural populations narrowed for the younger segments of the population, reflecting the progress that had been made in expanding educational opportunities in the rural areas. This narrowing of the gap is consistent with the narrowed gap in school attendance between urban and rural areas, as seen in Table 12.

The trend toward more widespread educational opportunities is well reflected in Figure 6, based on the 2019 census, which shows the educational attainment of age groups stretching from age 75+ (reflecting the educational situation in the early post-World War II period) down to ages 15–19, reflecting the very recent educational situation. In between, there were many events affecting the educational attainment of the cohorts growing up during different periods, particularly the American war in Viet Nam, then the Khmer Rouge period, and the post-1979 reconstruction.

Figure 6: Educational Attainment by Age, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)



Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Figure 6 shows that the proportion of the population with no schooling remained quite high for the groups aged 55–59 and older, but gradually fell for those below the age of 55. Similarly, the proportion of the urban population that had no education or did not complete primary school remained above half for the groups aged 55–59 and older, while in the rural areas it remained

above half for the groups aged 35–39 and older. The slower educational progress in the rural areas is clearly indicated by this comparison, but so is the educational progress that was made in Cambodia in both urban and rural areas. The remarkable expansion of the educational system over time is reflected in the fact that in the urban areas, more than half of the 20–24 age group had a lower secondary school education or above in 2019; and in the rural areas, more than 31% had a lower secondary school education or above.

There were apparently two periods when educational attainment improved markedly: (i) from the time when those aged 55–59 (in 2019) were at school to the time when those aged 45–49 (in 2019) were at school; and (ii) the period up to 2019, when those aged 40–44 and younger were at school. Historical events, notably the Khmer Rouge period, did not affect the educational attainment of the different cohorts as much as one would expect. But the major historical events in Cambodia—including before and after the Khmer Rouge—would have certainly affected the educational attainment of those cohorts.

What does this discussion of education tell us about Cambodia’s record in moving towards the realization of the SDGs of quality education, gender equality, and reduced inequalities more generally? Cambodia’s record in moving toward universal education has been commendable, and although the rural–urban differences remain, both urban and rural areas have made significant progress. However, the census data do not permit an analysis of the changes in the *quality* of the education over time.

How did the sexes differ in terms of educational attainment? The gaps between males and females in attaining secondary and higher education were not very wide, either among the adult population as a whole or among those aged 15–29. In urban areas, the differences were quite small, and in rural areas they were not very marked among the adult population as a whole. Among the population aged 15–29, gender differences can be said to have almost disappeared, both in the urban and rural areas.

C. Labor Force Participation and Employment

Compared with many other Southeast Asian countries, a notable feature of Cambodia is the very high proportion of both men and women who are in the labor force (Table 14). This is particularly the case in rural areas, where the pattern is for both males and females to be engaged in work, particularly in agricultural activities, and to continue working until they are prevented by illness or other age-related issues. In urban areas, more people delay entry into the workforce due to the time spent acquiring an extended education, and more leave the workforce at a particular retirement age because they are employed in the formal sector.

Table 14: Labor Force Participation among the Population Aged 15–64, by Sex, in Urban and Rural Areas, 1998, 2008, and 2019 (%)

| Sex | Year | Total | Urban | Rural |
|------------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Both sexes | 1998 | 79.0 | 65.9 | 82.4 |
| | 2008 | 80.0 | 67.7 | 83.5 |
| | 2019 | 81.7 | 78.0 | 84.5 |
| Males | 1998 | 82.3 | 76.3 | 83.9 |
| | 2008 | 81.6 | 74.6 | 83.6 |
| | 2019 | 85.8 | 83.8 | 87.2 |
| Females | 1998 | 76.2 | 56.5 | 81.1 |
| | 2008 | 78.5 | 61.4 | 83.4 |
| | 2019 | 77.9 | 72.4 | 81.9 |

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

From 2008 to 2019, there was very little change in the proportion of the employed population (among those aged 15–64) in rural areas, but this was not the case for the urban population. In urban areas, there was a sharp increase for both males (9.2%) and females (11.0%). However, a more in-depth analysis of the reasons for this change is beyond the scope of this report.

Among those who were working as of 2019, the majority in urban areas were paid employees, while in rural areas a very high proportion (about 82%) were either own-account workers or unpaid family workers (Table 15).

Table 15: Population Aged 15 Years and Over That Worked During the Reference Week, by Employment Status, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)

| Employment Status | Urban | Rural | Total |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Employer | 0.8 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| Paid employee | 53.1 | 17.8 | 31.6 |
| Own-account worker | 33.7 | 48.5 | 42.7 |
| Unpaid family worker | 12.2 | 33.1 | 24.9 |
| Other | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Table 16 shows a breakdown of employment according to sector, in rural and urban areas. In rural areas, the great majority of workers are in “Cambodian private enterprises” (85.9%, mostly farmers), followed distantly by foreign private enterprises (6.4%). In urban areas, 65% work in Cambodian private enterprises, but substantial proportions work in foreign private enterprises (22.6%) and for the government (7.6%). One important difference between males and females is the higher proportion of females who work in foreign private enterprises, both in urban and rural areas. In urban areas, 29.8% of working females are employed in foreign private enterprises, compared with 22.6% of working males. In rural areas, the corresponding proportions are 8.6% (females) and 6.4% (males). These differences reflect the high proportion of females working in the garment manufacturing industry.

Table 16: Population Aged 15 Years and Over That Worked during the Reference Week, by Sector and Sex, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019

| Sector | Males | | Females | | Both Sexes | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|------------|-------|
| | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Number of workers ('000) | 1,762 | 2,598 | 1,585 | 2,623 | 3,346 | 5,221 |
| Government (%) | 10.1 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 1.9 | 7.6 | 3.2 |
| State-owned enterprises (%) | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 0.4 |
| Cambodian private enterprises (%) | 69.1 | 86.5 | 61.0 | 85.3 | 65.2 | 85.9 |
| Foreign private enterprises (%) | 16.1 | 4.2 | 29.8 | 8.6 | 22.6 | 6.4 |
| Nonprofit institutions (%) | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.4 |
| Household sector (%) | 1.7 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 1.8 | 2.9 |
| Embassies, foreign aid agencies (%) | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Other, not stated (%) | 1.3 | 0.8 | 1.8 | 0.9 | 1.6 | 0.9 |

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

What occupational groups predominated in the urban and rural areas? Table 17 shows that, in the urban areas, there were three large occupational categories, each employing more than 20% of the working population: services and sales; skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishing work; and crafts and related areas. By contrast, in the rural areas, the “skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishing” category was by far the largest (74%), while “crafts and related areas” accounted for 9.4%, and “services and sales” for 6.1%. These differences were clearly the result of the different productive structures of urban and rural areas. The relatively high proportion (20.5%) of urban workers in “skilled agriculture, forestry, and fishing” jobs may appear surprising, but could reflect the continuing importance of primary industries in some communes designated as urban areas, and/or the possibility that some people living in urban areas were working in nearby communes where agriculture, forestry, or fishing were important components of the local economy.

There are some male–female differences in their distribution across broad occupational groups, with females being somewhat more concentrated in the “services and sales” and “crafts and related areas” categories, and much less concentrated in the armed forces, “plant and machine operation and assembly,” and in elementary occupations. However, the pattern of urban–rural differences does not differ very much between males and females, the main differences being a wider urban–rural difference for females than for males in the “services and sales” and “crafts and related areas” categories. The reasons for these gender differences with regard to rural–urban differentials require further investigation.

Table 17: Population Aged 15 Years and Over That Worked during the Reference Week, by Major Occupational Group and Sex, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019

| Job Category | Both Sexes | | Males | | Females | |
|---|------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Number of workers ('000) | 3,346 | 5,221 | 1,761 | 2,598 | 1,585 | 2,623 |
| Armed forces (%) | 1.6 | 0.7 | 2.7 | 1.2 | 0.3 | 0.1 |
| Management (%) | 1.5 | 0.5 | 1.7 | 0.7 | 1.3 | 0.2 |
| Professions (%) | 5.2 | 2.4 | 5.6 | 3.0 | 4.6 | 1.9 |
| Technicians and associated fields (%) | 2.4 | 0.7 | 3.1 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 0.3 |
| Clerical support (%) | 7.2 | 0.7 | 8.1 | 0.9 | 6.2 | 0.5 |
| Services and sales (%) | 22.5 | 6.1 | 17.8 | 4.7 | 27.6 | 7.5 |
| Skilled jobs in agricultural, forestry, and fishing (%) | 20.5 | 73.6 | 20.4 | 71.9 | 20.6 | 75.2 |
| Crafts and related areas (%) | 27.7 | 9.3 | 24.1 | 8.7 | 31.7 | 10.0 |
| Plant and machine operations and assembly (%) | 4.1 | 1.1 | 7.1 | 1.8 | 0.8 | 0.3 |
| Elementary occupations (%) | 7.3 | 5.0 | 9.3 | 6.2 | 5.1 | 3.9 |
| Not stated or adequately described (%) | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 |

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

D. Marital Status

The average marriage age for both females and males has been gradually rising in Cambodia. Table 18 shows the trends in the singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) for Cambodia as a whole, and for the urban and rural areas.¹⁸ How does Cambodia's SMAM (as a whole) compare with the SMAMs of other Asian countries? Cambodia's 2008 figure was roughly the same as that for the Philippines; much lower than those for the East Asian countries and for Malaysia, Myanmar, and Singapore; but higher than the SMAMs of India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, and much higher than the figure for Bangladesh (United Nations 2017).

The SMAM was considerably higher in urban than in rural areas, for both females and males. In 2008, it was higher for females in urban than in rural areas by 3.0 years; and for males, it was higher in urban than in rural areas by 3.2 years. In 2019, it was higher for females in urban than in rural areas by 2.3 years. From 2008 to 2019, the SMAM for females rose slightly in Cambodia as a whole, but this was because more women were living in urban areas, where the marriage age was higher. Not all of the rural–urban differences were attributable to the lower SMAM in rural areas; part of the difference may have resulted from migration patterns, with young single people migrating from rural to urban areas.

For Cambodia as a whole, the difference between the male and female mean ages at marriage had widened to 3.0 years by 2019. However, this was attributable to a markedly increasing gap in

¹⁸ The singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) is the average length of single life expressed in years among those who marry before age 50. It is calculated based on the marital status of men and women aged 15–54 at the date of the census.

the rural areas, while in the urban areas there was no clear trend. In both 2008 and 2019, the gaps between the male and female SMAMs in urban and rural areas were almost the same.

Cambodia has relatively high numbers of women marrying at an early age. In 2008, the proportion of women who were married by ages 15–19 was 8.7%, but data for 2011 showed that proportion to be 10.9%, and data for 2014 showed an even higher proportion, 16.6% (United Nations 2017). How did this compare with other countries in the region? The proportions in Cambodia were much higher than in East Asian countries and some other Southeast Asian countries, but were roughly comparable to those in India, Indonesia, and Thailand. They were well below the figures for Bangladesh and Nepal, where roughly 30% of females age 15–19 were married (Jones 2018; Table 19.4).

Table 18: Singulate Mean Age at Marriage by Sex, in Urban and Rural Areas, 1998, 2008, and 2019

| Residence | Year | Mean Age at Marriage | | Difference |
|-----------|------|----------------------|---------|------------|
| | | Males | Females | |
| Total | 1998 | 24.2 | 22.5 | 1.7 |
| | 2008 | 25.6 | 23.3 | 2.3 |
| | 2019 | 27.0 | 24.0 | 3.0 |
| Urban | 1998 | 26.8 | 23.8 | 3.0 |
| | 2008 | 28.0 | 25.5 | 2.5 |
| | 2019 | 28.1 | 25.0 | 3.1 |
| Rural | 1998 | 23.5 | 22.1 | 1.4 |
| | 2008 | 24.8 | 22.5 | 2.3 |
| | 2019 | 26.0 | 22.7 | 3.3 |

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The United Nations considers marriage before the age of 18 to be child marriage (UNFPA and UNICEF 2020). As shown in Table 19, according to the 2019 census, fewer urban than rural women had been married before age 18. Particularly in urban areas, there was a sharp decline in the percentage of women married before age 18 from the cohort aged 35–49 in 2019 to the cohort aged 25–34 in the same year. This indicates that the incidence of child marriage was declining over time in Cambodia. In rural areas, the decline was less marked, but it did occur. The urban–rural differences in child marriage were quite substantial: For women aged 25–34, the percentage married before age 18 in rural areas (8.9%) was almost double that in urban areas (4.7%). Such urban–rural differences in child marriage are common across Asia.

The percentages of women marrying before the ages of 20 and 24 were also lower for those aged 25–34 than for those aged 35–49 in 2019, in both urban and rural areas. These findings show that, not only was child marriage decreasing, but the ages at marriage in general were rising. Again, such increases over time have been characteristic of most Asian countries (Jones 2018).

Table 19: Age at First Marriage, by Sex, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)

| Residence and Sex | Age Group | Married before Age 18 | Married before Age 20 | Married before Age 24 |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Urban females | 25–34 | 4.7 | 18.5 | 49.4 |
| | 35–49 | 7.4 | 25.4 | 58.9 |
| Rural females | 25–34 | 8.9 | 31.0 | 66.6 |
| | 35–49 | 10.4 | 34.9 | 70.3 |
| Urban males | 25–34 | 1.1 | 5.9 | 29.7 |
| | 35–49 | 1.6 | 7.6 | 36.3 |
| Rural males | 25–34 | 2.1 | 10.6 | 44.5 |
| | 35–49 | 2.6 | 13.4 | 53.5 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The percentages of males marrying before age 18 was much lower than those for females—for the 25–34 age group, 2.1% in rural areas and 1.1% in urban areas. Even by age 24, fewer than one-third of males in the 25–34 age group were married in urban areas as of 2019, though the proportion was considerably higher (45%) in rural areas.

E. Housing Conditions

Housing in urban and rural areas differs in the materials used in construction, access to water, sanitation, and toilet facilities. In this report, the focus is on the types of toilet used and access to drinking water, both of which have a strong bearing on the well-being of those living in the households. The evidence provided will be relevant for assessing Cambodia’s progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and reduced inequalities (SDG 10).

There have been important changes in the sources of drinking water over time, in both urban and rural areas (Table 20). The proportion of households with access to the most convenient water-delivery arrangement—water piped into the dwelling or compound—has increased considerably in both urban and rural areas. Almost half of urban households now have such access. Piped water was rare in rural households in the earlier censuses, but increased to 13% in 2019, from a low 1.5% in 1998. The proportion of urban households using a tube well or borehole increased from 1998 to 2008, but fell back to the 1998 level in 2019. In rural areas, however, the use of tube wells or boreholes increased steadily over the same period, largely replacing the use of unprotected wells or surface water (rivers, streams, dams, or lakes).

Table 20: Main Sources of Drinking Water in Urban and Rural Households, 1998, 2008, and 2019

| Household Water-Supply System | 1998 | | 2008 ^a | | 2019 | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Number of households ('000) | 322 | 1,866 | 507 | 2,311 | 1,329 | 2,225 |
| Piped into dwelling (%) | 26.8 | 1.5 | 56.8 | 4.4 | 46.7 | 12.8 |
| Piped into compound/yard (%) | ... | ... | - | - | 4.9 | 2.9 |
| Public tap/standpipe (%) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5.7 | 2.8 |
| Tube well, borehole (%) | 12.5 | 15.5 | 14.7 | 29.5 | 12.9 | 32.6 |
| Protected well (%) | 16.7 ^b | 45.1 ^b | 3.8 | 5.5 | 2.2 | 5.9 |
| Unprotected well (%) | | | 4.5 | 24.2 | 1.4 | 8.6 |
| Protected spring (%) | ... ^c | ... ^c | - | - | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Unprotected spring (%) | | | - | - | 0.1 | 0.5 |
| Rainwater collection (%) | | | 0.5 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 3.5 |
| Tanker truck (%) | ... | ... | - | - | 4.8 | 5.0 |
| Cart with small tank/drum (%) | ... | ... | - | - | 4.0 | 5.3 |
| Surface water (rivers, etc.) (%) | 13.3 ^c | 31.2 ^c | 6.2 | 26.8 | 5.4 | 13.7 |
| Bottled water (%) | 29.1 | 4.1 | 13.0 | 7.1 | 9.8 | 5.4 |
| Other (%) | ... | ... | 0.5 | 1.4 | 0.6 | 0.7 |

... = data not available.

Note: The percentages of the columns with complete data do not add up to 100% because of rounding.

^a The 2008 data are based on the definitions of urban vs. rural communes as established by revisions of the criteria in 2011 (RC 2011 SDC).

^b In 1998, the information collected related only to dug wells, with no distinction made between “protected” and “unprotected” wells.

^c In 1998, “Spring, river, stream, lake/pond and rain” was one category.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Table 21 shows the situation in 2019 with respect to household access to improved and unimproved water sources and sanitation facilities. The “improved” and “unimproved” categories take into account the particular circumstances in Cambodia. For example, in some countries, “cart with small tank/drum” and “tanker truck” would qualify as improved water sources, but in Cambodia they are categorized as unimproved water sources because the water they supply is typically pumped from surface water, and thus likely contaminated.

The comparison of water and sanitation sources for urban and rural households shows many important differences. Two-thirds of rural households have improved water sources, but the proportion in urban areas is much higher, at 84%. In urban areas, the predominant source of improved water is piped water into the dwelling. This is much rarer in rural areas, where the predominant source of improved water is a tube well or borehole. The share of rural households that rely on unimproved water sources is more than double the share of urban households (33% of rural households, compared with 16% of urban households). In rural areas, surface water and unprotected wells are the main unimproved sources.

Table 21: Households with Improved or Unimproved Water Sources and Sanitation Facilities, 2019

| Water Sources and Sanitation Facilities | Urban | Rural | Total |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number of households ('000) | 1,329 | 2,224,710 | 3,553,020 |
| Total improved water sources (%) | 84.0 | 66.5 | 73.0 |
| Piped water into dwelling (%) | 46.9 | 12.9 | 25.6 |
| Piped water to yard/plot (%) | 5.0 | 2.8 | 3.6 |
| Public tap/standpipe (%) | 5.7 | 2.8 | 3.9 |
| Tube well, borehole (%) | 12.8 | 32.6 | 25.2 |
| Protected well (%) | 2.2 | 6.0 | 4.6 |
| Protected spring (%) | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| Rainwater collection (%) | 1.5 | 3.5 | 2.8 |
| Bottled water (%) | 9.8 | 5.5 | 7.1 |
| Unimproved water sources (%) | 15.5 | 33.0 | 26.5 |
| Unprotected well (%) | 1.3 | 8.6 | 5.9 |
| Unprotected spring (%) | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.3 |
| Cart with small tank/drum (%) | 4.0 | 5.2 | 4.8 |
| Tanker truck (%) | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.9 |
| Surface water (rivers, etc.) (%) | 5.3 | 13.7 | 10.6 |
| Improved sanitation facilities (%) | 81.9 | 64.6 | 71.1 |
| Pour flush (or flush) connected to sewerage (%) | 44.8 | 19.5 | 28.9 |
| Pour flush (or flush) to septic tank or pit (%) | 34.7 | 39.7 | 37.9 |
| Pit latrine with slab (%) | 2.4 | 5.4 | 4.3 |
| Unimproved sanitation facilities (%) | 17.8 | 34.5 | 28.3 |
| None, not using a toilet (%) | 9.7 | 21.6 | 17.2 |
| Pour flush or flush to elsewhere (not to sewer or pit) (%) | 7.1 | 9.5 | 8.6 |
| Pit latrine without slab or open pit (%) | 0.6 | 2.3 | 1.7 |
| Latrine overhanging field or water (%) | 0.5 | 1.1 | 0.8 |

Note: The percentages for water sources and for sanitation facilities do not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Turning to sanitation, 36% of rural households have to rely on unimproved sanitation facilities, compared with 18% of urban households. In 2019, the most common form of unimproved sanitation in both urban and rural areas was open defecation in bush or field, resorted to by almost 10% of urban households and 22% of rural households. The two most common forms of improved toilet facilities, in both urban and rural settings, were pour flush or flush toilets, connected to sewerage (more common in urban areas) or to a septic tank or pit (common in both urban and rural areas). Clearly, much remains to be done in both urban and rural areas to provide more households with improved water sources and sanitation facilities, but the situation in rural areas is more problematic.

F. Household Assets

A useful indicator of the well-being of households in urban and rural areas is their ownership of various amenities and assets. Table 22 compares such ownership in 2008 and 2019. It is important to note the differences between the urban and rural areas, specifically in 2008 and 2019, but also in terms of the trends over time. Focusing on the differences first, ownership of most items was greater in urban than in rural areas, not surprising in view of the higher average income levels in

urban areas and the limited access to electricity in some rural areas. Access to electricity has increased remarkably in Cambodia; and almost all households, even in rural areas, can access at least one source of electricity. However, one-third of rural households have to rely on off-grid sources, particularly solar home systems and rechargeable batteries. Issues also remain concerning unreliability and high costs (Marabona 2019, 1).

Table 22: Urban and Rural Household Ownership of Amenities and Assets, 2008 and 2019

| Asset/Amenity | 2008 | | 2019 | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Households (number) | 506,579 | 2,311,058 | 1,328,501 | 2,224,520 |
| Radio (%) | 49.1 | 38.7 | 14.2 | 17.5 |
| Television (%) | 78.7 | 53.3 | 77.4 | 61.7 |
| Landline telephone (%) | 3.4 | 0.6 | 2.1 | 1.3 |
| Cellphone (%) | 74.1 | 28.7 | 94.8 | 90.2 |
| Laptop/desktop computer (%) | 15.2 | 1.0 | 15.1 | 3.6 |
| Bicycle (%) | 49.3 | 66.5 | 49.0 | 58.9 |
| Motorcycle (%) | 65.5 | 38.9 | 85.0 | 77.1 |
| Refrigerator (%) | ... | ... | 32.0 | 7.0 |
| Washing machines (%) | ... | ... | 20.4 | 3.1 |
| Fan (%) | ... | ... | 91.4 | 72.0 |
| Air conditioner (%) | ... | ... | 16.7 | 1.5 |
| Car or van (%) | 15.7 | 2.3 | 18.5 | 5.2 |
| Boat (%) | 1.8 | 6.0 | 1.3 | 4.4 |
| Big tractor (%) | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 1.4 |
| <i>Koyaoon</i> (hand tractor) (%) | 1.0 | 3.7 | 4.2 | 19.9 |

... = data not available.

Note: In the 2008 census, certain items (including refrigerators, washing machines, fans, and air conditioners) were not listed as categories, so no data were collected on them.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Television ownership is somewhat higher in urban areas, and this is to some extent balanced by greater radio ownership in rural areas. Cellphones are ubiquitous in both urban and rural areas, but computers are much more prevalent in urban areas, although only 15% of urban households have a computer. Motorcycle possession is greater in urban areas, but even in rural areas three-quarters of households have a motorcycle. The higher motorcycle ownership in urban areas is to some extent offset by greater ownership of bicycles in rural areas. Refrigerators and washing machines are far more prevalent in urban areas; but, even there, fewer than one-third of households have a refrigerator and only one in five have a washing machine. Limited income is no doubt responsible for the low proportion of households with an air conditioner in both urban (17%) and rural (2%) areas. Fans—a much cheaper alternative—are owned by 92% of urban households and 72% of rural households. Among urban households, 19% own a car or van, compared with only 5% of rural households. Three possessions are more prevalent in rural households because they are important for rural livelihoods: a boat, a large tractor, and a *koyaoon* (hand tractor). Almost 20% of rural households owned a *koyaoon* in 2019, a marked increase from 2008, when just 3.7% of rural households owned one.

Trends over time are very interesting. For instance, radio ownership dropped off sharply in both urban and rural areas. In rural areas, it had been replaced to some extent by television, but in urban areas television ownership remained at around three-quarters of households. It appears that radio is losing the appeal it once had. Perhaps the most striking trend shown in Table 22 is the sharp increase in cellphone ownership—in rural areas, rising from just under 28.7% of households in 2008 to 90.2% in 2019. This reflects the situation throughout Asia, where cellphone ownership has increased rapidly, but Cambodia appears to be ahead of countries such as India (55% in 2018), Indonesia (64% in 2017), and the Philippines (64% in 2018) (Elliott 2020), probably due to the existence of landline phones in some of these countries.

Greater prosperity in 2019 compared with 2008 is no doubt a major reason why motorcycle and car ownership increased in both rural and urban areas. The increase in motorcycle ownership is particularly striking in rural areas, rising from 38.9% in 2008 to 77.1% in 2019. The percentage of households owning cars more than doubled in rural areas, although it remained low.

The internet is causing revolutionary changes in communications throughout Southeast Asia, including Cambodia. Table 23 shows that more than half of urban households and more than one-third of rural households can access the internet at home. Smaller percentages can access it outside the home, and smaller percentages still can access it in both places. In 2019, the percentage of urban households that could access the internet in both places was double that for rural households.

There is a degree of uncertainty about the correct interpretation of the data in Table 23. Since ownership of laptop and desktop computers is low (Table 22), we can probably assume that the households that can access internet at home are doing so on a mobile phone or other mobile device. In this case, they would also be able to access the internet outside the home. However, Table 23 shows a considerable difference in the percentage of both urban and rural households that can access the internet outside the home, compared with the percentage that can access it at home.

Table 23: Households Accessing the Internet, Urban and Rural Areas, 2019

| Places of Access | Urban | Rural |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Households (number) | 1,328,501 | 2,224,520 |
| At home (%) | 56.4 | 38.8 |
| Outside home (%) | 39.9 | 21.2 |
| Both (%) | 33.7 | 17.6 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Chapter 6:

Migration Flows between Provinces and between Urban and Rural Areas

In the 2019 population census, individuals answered questions about their place of birth and place of previous residence. From the answers to these questions, it is possible to study lifetime migration and recent migration. In this study, recent migration is defined according to the place of residence 5 years before the census: If migration to the current place of residence occurred within 5 years before the census, it is deemed “recent,” as opposed to “lifetime.”

The migration patterns among the provinces of Cambodia during 2008–2019 reflected important aspects of the development trends in the country (Table 24). The first thing to note is the strong correlation between the rates of population growth of different provinces and the proportion of recent migrants in the provincial populations. This is to be expected: If natural increase is ruled out, in-migration and out-migration become the major factors influencing population growth. In any case, very large interprovincial differences in the rates of natural increase cannot be expected,¹⁹ so migration patterns are likely to be a major factor in population trends at the provincial level.

Which provinces have the highest proportions of lifetime and recent in-migrants? Pailin has the highest proportion of lifetime migrants in its population (59%), followed by Preah Sihanouk (48%), and Phnom Penh (43%). The reasons for the rapid growth of these provinces have already been discussed (Chapter 3), and it is not surprising that lifetime in-migration is an important part of the explanation. Other provinces with lifetime in-migration rates well above the national average are Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, and Otdar Meanchey. Koh Kong’s population has not grown very rapidly since 1998, so the relatively high figures for lifetime and recent migration are rather surprising. It is possible that Koh Kong’s rapid growth occurred before 1998, which could still be consistent with a high figure for lifetime migration. Reasons for the rapid growth of Mondul Kiri were discussed in Chapter 3. Otdar Meanchey’s population has grown rapidly since 1998, so the strong inward migration flows are no surprise.

¹⁹ Since fertility in Cambodia has now reached relatively low levels, there is less scope than before for wide interprovincial differences; moreover, provinces with higher fertility also tend to have higher mortality, thus narrowing interprovincial differences in rates of natural increase.

Table 24: Lifetime and Recent Interprovincial Migrants as a Share of the Urban, Rural, and Total Populations of Each Province, 2019 (%)

| Province | Share of the Total Population | | Share of the Urban Population | | Share of the Rural Population | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Lifetime Migrants | Recent Migrants | Lifetime Migrants | Recent Migrants | Lifetime Migrants | Recent Migrants |
| Banteay Meanchey | 12.6 | 2.7 | 20.7 | 4.5 | 7.9 | 1.6 |
| Battambang | 12.3 | 2.3 | 14.9 | 3.8 | 11.6 | 2.0 |
| Kampong Cham | 3.7 | 1.5 | 8.5 | 4.3 | 2.9 | 1.0 |
| Kampong Chhnang | 5.5 | 2.4 | 8.5 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 1.9 |
| Kampong Speu | 5.1 | 2.1 | 5.4 | 2.1 | 5.4 | 2.2 |
| Kampong Thom | 4.1 | 1.8 | 5.5 | 2.3 | 3.9 | 1.7 |
| Kampot | 4.1 | 1.6 | 9.3 | 4.3 | 3.5 | 1.3 |
| Kandal | 8.8 | 4.1 | 11.6 | 5.7 | 3.5 | 1.2 |
| Kep | 18.8 | 8.0 | 21.6 | 9.3 | 7.6 | 3.1 |
| Koh Kong | 29.5 | 9.0 | 42.6 | 14.0 | 18.1 | 4.8 |
| Kratie | 16.9 | 6.8 | 11.7 | 4.6 | 17.5 | 7.1 |
| Mondul Kiri | 29.6 | 12.5 | 37.6 | 12.6 | 24.9 | 12.4 |
| Otdar Meanchey | 34.7 | 8.7 | 36.3 | 9.8 | 33.9 | 8.1 |
| Pailin | 58.6 | 17.3 | 59.7 | 18.6 | 55.1 | 13.0 |
| Phnom Penh | 42.9 | 21.6 | 42.9 | 21.6 | ... | ... |
| Preah Sihanouk | 48.1 | 34.5 | 53.1 | 40.4 | 28.2 | 10.8 |
| Preah Vihear | 20.1 | 7.8 | 42.1 | 16.1 | 17.5 | 6.8 |
| Prey Veng | 2.1 | 0.8 | 5.5 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 0.8 |
| Pursat | 6.5 | 1.9 | 8.0 | 2.2 | 6.2 | 1.8 |
| Ratanak Kiri | 20.6 | 7.5 | 47.6 | 15.7 | 15.9 | 6.1 |
| Siem Reap | 8.2 | 3.6 | 17.8 | 8.1 | 3.9 | 1.5 |
| Stung Treng | 22.1 | 11.3 | 27.1 | 12.8 | 20.1 | 10.8 |
| Svay Rieng | 3.6 | 1.7 | 6.2 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 1.2 |
| Takeo | 3.8 | 1.5 | 4.5 | 2.1 | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Tboung Khmum | 5.5 | 3.0 | 8.6 | 3.1 | 5.2 | 1.8 |
| Cambodia | 14.5 | 6.4 | 26.2 | 12.7 | 6.9 | 2.3 |

... = data not available.

Note: Recent migration is defined here as migration that has taken place within 5 years of the 2019 census.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The provinces with the smallest proportion of lifetime migrants in their populations are Kampong Cham, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, and Takeo, while Kampong Thom and Kampot have a slightly larger proportion of migrants in their populations. The small contribution of migration to their populations is consistent with the overall very slow population growth in these provinces (Table 3). It appears that there were simply no factors attracting migrants to these provinces, although, in the case of Takeo, the proximity of its northern communes to Phnom Penh might have been expected to draw migrants to them.

Provinces with very high proportions of in-migrants—Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, Otdar Meanchey, Pailin, Phnom Penh, and Preah Sihanouk—have good reasons for their in-migration. The high proportion of in-migrants in Pailin, Phnom Penh, and Preah Sihanouk is consistent with their rapidly growing employment opportunities. Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, and Otdar Meanchey have

offered some “frontier-style” opportunities for land settlement, while the economic appeal of Koh Kong is boosted by its transportation and port development.

Another way of considering the data on the rural–urban redistribution of the population through migration is to examine the breakdown of all moves into four categories: rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural, and urban to urban. The 2019 population census report has a table showing these streams in 2008 and in 2019, and it is reproduced here as Table 25. According to the 2008 census, the predominant movement was rural to rural, followed by rural to urban. The 2019 census showed a major change: Rural-to-urban moves became the predominant stream, and urban-to-urban movement also exceeded rural-to-rural movement, albeit slightly. This change reflects the rapid process of urbanization that occurred between the two census years.

Migration has contributed considerably more to population growth in urban areas than in rural areas. For Cambodia as a whole, lifetime migrants represent 26% of the urban population, but only 7% of the rural population; similarly, recent migrants are 13% of the urban population, but only 2.3% of the rural population. The only province where lifetime migrants are a larger proportion of the rural than of the urban population is Kratie; in Kamong Speu, the proportions of lifetime migrants in urban and rural areas are the same; and in Otdar Meanchey, it is only slightly higher in urban areas. As for recent migrants, there are only two provinces where the proportion of recent migrants is higher in rural than in urban areas: Kampong Speu and Kratie; in Mondul Kiri, the proportions are almost equal.

Table 25: Directions of Internal Migration Streams between Urban and Rural Areas, by Sex, 2008 and 2019

| Internal Migration Streams | Both Sexes | | Males | | Females | |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2008 | 2019 | 2008 | 2019 | 2008 | 2019 |
| Internal migrants (number) | 3,457,228 | 3,182,615 | 1,744,044 | 1,665,175 | 1,713,184 | 1,517,440 |
| Rural to rural (%) | 50.9 | 29.0 | 53.3 | 30.7 | 48.5 | 27.1 |
| Rural to urban (%) | 27.5 | 34.0 | 25.6 | 32.4 | 29.5 | 35.7 |
| Urban to rural (%) | 6.5 | 7.0 | 6.8 | 7.6 | 6.2 | 6.3 |
| Urban to urban (%) | 15.1 | 30.0 | 14.4 | 29.3 | 15.9 | 30.8 |

Notes:

1. In this table, “%” refers to the percentage of total migrants for the relevant sex and year.

2. Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Given the rapid urbanization of the provinces of Kampong Speu, Kandal, and Takeo, the relatively low rates of lifetime and recent migration recorded in these provinces initially appears surprising. However, it is less surprising when compared with their overall population growth. As can be calculated from Table 3, the combined population of Kampong Speu, Kandal, and Takeo actually grew quite slowly from 1998 to 2019, by 20.4%, compared with Cambodia’s growth of 33.7% and Phnom Penh’s growth of 113%. Yet over this period, the urban population of these three provinces increased enormously. It appears that there was a great deal of “in situ” urbanization, stemming from the rapid change in the characteristics of particular localities, and the consequent reclassification of these localities as urban, but without any great changes in their populations.

This indicates that the idea of large numbers of migrants flocking to these provinces for work is mistaken. Large numbers have indeed flocked to Phnom Penh, but the growing employment opportunities in the surrounding provinces appear to have been largely taken up by the local population.

How did lifetime migration patterns differ by broad age groups? As Table 26 shows, the proportion of migrants among the population of children (aged 5–14) is substantially less than among older age groups. This is found almost universally across countries, and is not surprising, as this age group normally migrates along with older family members, has not had much time to experience migration, and has not yet entered institutions of higher education. Moreover, it is working-age groups that have the most incentive to migrate.

There is a fairly strong correlation between the provinces with higher rates of child in-migration and those with higher rates of in-migration of working-age adults (aged 15–59): Pailin, Phnom Penh, Preah Sihanouk, and Otdar Meanchey are prominent in both groups. But the correlations are not perfect: For example, Stung Treng has higher child in-migration than adult in-migration, while the reverse is true for Koh Kong. The pattern for those aged 60 and over fairly closely resembles the pattern for ages 15–59, but there are again some outstanding differences. The proportion of older Pailin residents who are lifetime migrants (95%) is far higher than in the next three provinces—Koh Kong, Phnom Penh, and Otdar Meanchey—for which the proportion is under 60%.

Table 26: Lifetime Migrants as a Share of the Total Population, for Three Broad Age Groups, by Province, 2019 (%)

| Province | Interprovincial Migrants | | | Interdistrict Migrants | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|------------|------------|
| | Age Group | | | Age Group | | |
| | 5–14 | 15–59 | 60+ | 5–14 | 15–59 | 60+ |
| Banteay Meanchey | 3.09 | 16.6 | 18.6 | 1.4 | 15.9 | 5.8 |
| Battambang | 2.8 | 16.1 | 21.3 | 2.0 | 9.6 | 9.6 |
| Kampong Cham | 1.0 | 5.2 | 3.8 | 0.6 | 4.2 | 4.5 |
| Kampong Chhnang | 1.2 | 7.4 | 7.6 | 0.8 | 5.6 | 10.6 |
| Kampong Speu | 1.1 | 7.0 | 5.3 | 0.5 | 3.8 | 4.5 |
| Kampong Thom | 1.8 | 5.6 | 3.7 | 0.9 | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| Kampot | 1.2 | 5.4 | 4.4 | 0.6 | 5.3 | 5.1 |
| Kandal | 2.7 | 11.7 | 8.2 | 0.6 | 3.4 | 3.8 |
| Kep | 5.0 | 24.8 | 24.3 | 0.3 | 1.6 | 2.0 |
| Koh Kong | 6.6 | 38.5 | 46.7 | 1.6 | 4.9 | 4.3 |
| Kratie | 9.1 | 21.9 | 17.9 | 1.5 | 5.6 | 5.3 |
| Mondul Kiri | 13.3 | 39.1 | 43.6 | 0.8 | 2.7 | 2.5 |
| Otdar Meanchey | 15.0 | 45.8 | 52.7 | 1.6 | 2.3 | 1.7 |
| Pailin | 21.1 | 75.7 | 95.4 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 0.3 |
| Phnom Penh | 16.1 | 50.4 | 58.0 | 10.2 | 11.6 | 11.3 |
| Preah Sihanouk | 20.4 | 57.4 | 45.2 | 0.8 | 1.7 | 3.8 |
| Preah Vihear | 11.6 | 25.8 | 23.3 | 1.6 | 5.3 | 5.5 |
| Prey Veng | 0.3 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 0.2 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| Pursat | 2.0 | 8.4 | 12.6 | 0.9 | 4.2 | 6.6 |
| Ratanak Kiri | 9.5 | 27.6 | 24.9 | 1.1 | 3.2 | 3.5 |
| Siem Reap | 2.9 | 10.9 | 11.3 | 1.9 | 7.3 | 6.1 |
| Stung Treng | 13.8 | 27.9 | 24.6 | 1.1 | 4.0 | 3.5 |
| Svay Rieng | 0.7 | 5.0 | 4.4 | 0.4 | 5.4 | 5.9 |
| Takeo | 0.9 | 5.1 | 3.6 | 0.4 | 3.3 | 3.6 |
| Tboung Khmum | 1.3 | 7.5 | 6.9 | 0.9 | 5.0 | 4.1 |
| Total | 4.7 | 19.2 | 16.9 | 2.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2019. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: Provisional Population Totals*. Phnom Penh.

There were some differences among provinces in the extent to which migration patterns differed by age group. For example, Pailin had a particularly high proportion of migrants among its over-60s (90%), whereas for Preah Sihanouk, although almost half of the over-60s were lifetime migrants, this proportion was even higher (57%) among its working-age population (those aged 15–59). Phnom Penh had a very high proportion of migrants in all age groups; along with Pailin and Preah Sihanouk, it had the highest proportion of migrants in its working-age population.

The migration percentages shown in Table 26 are not only for interprovincial migrants, but also for interdistrict migrants within the same province. In most cases, the volume of interdistrict migration within a province was much smaller than the volume of migration into the province from outside. At the national level, 19% of the 15–59 age group were interprovincial migrants, and a further 6% were interdistrict migrants within provinces. The provinces varied considerably in the balance of migration flows between interprovincial and intra-provincial migrants. For example, interprovincial migration predominated very strongly in the following provinces: Kep, Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, Otdar Meanchey, Pailin, Phnom Penh, Preah Sihanouk, Preah Vihear,

Ratanak Kiri, and Stung Treng. These are all provinces with considerable proportions of in-migrants. It appears, then, that intra-provincial migration plays more of a role in those provinces with little attraction for interprovincial migrants.

Another important aspect is the difference between the urban and rural areas of each province regarding the relative importance of interprovincial migration and interdistrict migration within the province (or “intra-provincial” migration). This is shown in Table 27. In general, interprovincial migration was not only much more important in the urban areas than in the rural areas, within the urban areas its rate was higher than that for intra-provincial migration. There were a few exceptions: In two provinces—Prey Veng and Svay Rieng—interprovincial migration was lower than intra-provincial migration in the urban areas; and there was one province—Siem Reap—in which interprovincial migration was higher in the rural areas. For most provinces, the smaller volume of in-migration to rural areas was associated with a more even balance between interprovincial and intra-provincial migration than was the case in urban areas.

Table 27: Lifetime Migrants—Interprovincial and Interdistrict within Provinces—as Proportions of Provincial Populations Aged 5+, in Urban and Rural Areas, 2019 (%)

| Province | Share of Total Population | | Share of Urban Population | | Share of Rural Population | |
|------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| | Inter-provincial Migration | Interdistrict Migration within a Province | Inter-provincial migration | Interdistrict Migration within a Province | Inter-provincial migration | Interdistrict Migration within a Province |
| | | | | | | |
| Banteay Meanchey | 12.6 | 4.5 | 20.7 | 5.5 | 7.9 | 3.9 |
| Battambang | 12.3 | 7.1 | 14.9 | 9.7 | 11.6 | 6.4 |
| Kampong Cham | 3.7 | 3.1 | 8.5 | 8.2 | 2.9 | 2.2 |
| Kampong Chhnang | 5.5 | 4.5 | 8.5 | 8.9 | 4.5 | 3.2 |
| Kampong Speu | 5.1 | 2.9 | 5.4 | 2.8 | 5.4 | 3.1 |
| Kampong Thom | 4.1 | 3.3 | 5.5 | 9.0 | 3.9 | 2.6 |
| Kampot | 4.1 | 3.9 | 9.3 | 9.5 | 3.5 | 3.2 |
| Kandal | 8.8 | 2.7 | 11.6 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 1.6 |
| Kep | 18.8 | 1.2 | 21.6 | 1.4 | 7.6 | 0.7 |
| Koh Kong | 29.5 | 3.8 | 42.6 | 4.2 | 18.1 | 3.5 |
| Kratie | 16.9 | 4.1 | 11.7 | 9.7 | 17.5 | 3.5 |
| Mondul Kiri | 29.6 | 2.0 | 37.6 | 2.3 | 24.9 | 1.8 |
| Otdar Meanchey | 34.7 | 1.8 | 36.3 | 2.5 | 33.9 | 1.4 |
| Pailin | 58.6 | 1.3 | 59.7 | 1.3 | 55.1 | 1.3 |
| Phnom Penh | 42.9 | 11.0 | 42.9 | 11.0 | - | - |
| Preah Sihanouk | 48.1 | 1.6 | 53.1 | 1.2 | 28.2 | 3.0 |
| Preah Vihear | 20.1 | 4.0 | 42.1 | 14.0 | 17.5 | 2.8 |
| Prey Veng | 2.1 | 2.4 | 5.5 | 10.5 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Pursat | 6.5 | 3.3 | 8.0 | 8.2 | 6.2 | 2.2 |
| Ratanak Kiri | 20.6 | 2.5 | 47.6 | 4.8 | 15.9 | 2.1 |
| Siem Reap | 8.2 | 5.4 | 17.8 | 8.2 | 3.9 | 4.1 |
| Stung Treng | 22.1 | 2.9 | 27.1 | 6.0 | 20.1 | 1.7 |
| Svay Rieng | 3.6 | 4.0 | 6.2 | 8.7 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| Takeo | 3.8 | 2.5 | 4.5 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 2.2 |
| Tboung Khmum | 5.5 | 3.6 | 8.6 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 3.4 |
| Cambodia | 14.5 | 4.7 | 26.2 | 7.3 | 6.9 | 3.0 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

It was noted earlier that the sex ratios (males per 100 females) in the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region (EMR) were quite low in 2008, probably reflecting the considerable female migration into the area. But by 2019, they differed little from the ratios in Cambodia as a whole, suggesting that the migration of females into the EMR had slackened off or reversed.

Given the importance of the labor market in Phnom Penh, and its prominence among the provinces in terms of its large numbers of in-migrants, it is useful to examine its migration patterns according to age and length of residence. This information is presented in Table 28. Roughly half the population of both males and females listed Phnom Penh as their province of birth. Of those

not born in Phnom Penh, the average length of residence, not surprisingly, was shorter for persons aged 15–29 than for those aged 30–49, and shorter for persons aged 30–49 than for those aged 50+. The shorter length of residence of younger people is not surprising, since the older people who migrated when young had a longer time to continue living in Phnom Penh.

The bottom half of Table 28 shows the same information for employed males and females. In most age groups, migrant males and females were overrepresented among the employed, but only to a meaningful extent for those aged 15–29, where the differences were quite pronounced. For example, while 44% of all males aged 15–29 were migrants, just over 51% of all *working* males aged 15–29 were migrants. For the other age groups, there was very little difference between the migrants’ percentages of the total population and their percentages of the working population. This highlights the point that, for adolescents and young adults, the desire for employment is a key motivation for migrating to Phnom Penh.

Table 28: Employment among Migrants and Locals in Phnom Penh, by Length of Residence, Sex, and Age Group, 2019

| Sex and Age Group | Born in Phnom Penh (%) | Length of Residence for Migrants | | | Number |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| | | Under 2 Years (%) | 2–9 Years (%) | 10+ Years (%) | |
| Males | | | | | |
| 15–29 | 56.0 | 16.6 | 20.9 | 6.5 | 337,212 |
| 30–49 | 44.4 | 10.7 | 23.7 | 21.2 | 350,557 |
| 50+ | 39.5 | 5.5 | 13.9 | 41.1 | 157,562 |
| All ages 15+ | 48.1 | 12.1 | 20.8 | 19.0 | 845,331 |
| Females | | | | | |
| 15–29 | 53.4 | 16.4 | 23.2 | 7.0 | 369,484 |
| 30–49 | 47.4 | 9.0 | 21.4 | 22.2 | 361,523 |
| 50+ | 45.8 | 5.6 | 13.1 | 35.6 | 196,282 |
| All ages 15+ | 49.5 | 11.2 | 20.4 | 19.0 | 927,289 |
| Employed | | | | | |
| Males | | | | | |
| 15–29 | 48.8 | 20.2 | 24.3 | 6.7 | 220,969 |
| 30–49 | 43.7 | 10.6 | 24.2 | 21.6 | 272,668 |
| 50+ | 39.8 | 5.6 | 13.9 | 40.8 | 111,006 |
| All ages 15+ | 44.8 | 13.0 | 22.5 | 19.7 | 665,393 |
| Employed Females | | | | | |
| 15–29 | 46.2 | 19.7 | 27.0 | 7.1 | 235,443 |
| 30–49 | 47.2 | 9.5 | 21.9 | 21.4 | 272,668 |
| 50+ | 47.9 | 5.3 | 11.8 | 35.0 | 73,830 |
| All ages 15+ | 46.9 | 13.0 | 22.7 | 17.3 | 581,941 |

Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

Chapter 7:

Phnom Penh—Cambodia’s Primate City

Even without any adjustment in the urban populations from the 2019 population census, Phnom Penh clearly dominates the urban structure in Cambodia, with its population of over 2 million. Siem Reap, the second city, has a quarter of a million residents; and whichever city is considered the third—whether one of the newly urban districts in the Phnom Penh EMR, or the established city of Bat Dambang, or Mongkol Borei-Serei Saophoan, or Preah Sihanouk-Prey Nob—it will have a population of 200,000 at most. But even these figures understate the real degree of dominance of Phnom Penh, as the urban agglomeration of Phnom Penh includes substantial urban populations in the neighboring or nearby provinces of Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu, reflecting the expansion of the urban activities of Phnom Penh beyond its boundaries into these neighboring provinces. When these populations are added to those of the Phnom Penh municipality (which was classified in 2019 as 100% urban), the total population of the Phnom Penh EMR amounts to almost 3.8 million.

The background of this remarkable growth needs to be discussed. After the Khmer Rouge emptied Phnom Penh of its people in 1975, subsequent growth had to begin from ground zero. Yet by the turn of the 21st century, Phnom Penh’s population had already increased to more than one million, and the addition of a further one million within the official Phnom Penh boundary has since taken less than two decades. Phnom Penh’s municipal boundary does not extend very far into the countryside, so as the population grew, many activities, notable among which was the garment industry, tended to locate outside the Phnom Penh municipality. Here land was cheaper, and a workforce could be found from both local residents and migrant labor attracted by the burgeoning employment opportunities.

To date, Cambodia’s industrial base has focused on low-cost, labor-intensive manufacturing, especially in the garment, footwear, and food-products sectors. The garment industry dominates. It began to grow rapidly after 1997, when it was accorded favorable access to the European Union and the United States markets (Bargawi 2005); the industry currently employs about 700,000 people, most of them female,²⁰ and accounts for about 74% of Cambodia’s total goods exports and 20% of its gross domestic product (GDP). The garment industry in Cambodia operates predominantly at the downstream, mass-market end of the supply chain, focusing on cutting and making yarn and fabrics into finished garment products (Bargawi 2005, 5).

Employment in the garment industry is concentrated mainly in Phnom Penh and in the three neighboring provinces of Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu, which together form the EMR, though there are also some garment factories in other provinces, such as Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, and Svay Rieng (Rastogi 2018).

²⁰ A study in 2006 noted that over 90% of workers in the industry are women who have migrated from rural areas, and have little education (Makin 2006, 3).

As already discussed, population growth in the municipality of Phnom Penh (considered totally urban in 2019, though only 88% urban in 2008) has been quite rapid. While Cambodia’s population grew at an annual rate of 1.2% during 2008–2019, Phnom Penh’s population grew at an annual rate of 3.2%. This was the third-fastest rate of growth of any province, and although it is not outstandingly rapid compared with burgeoning cities in some other developing countries, one should bear in mind that this rate, if continued, would double the population in just 22 years.

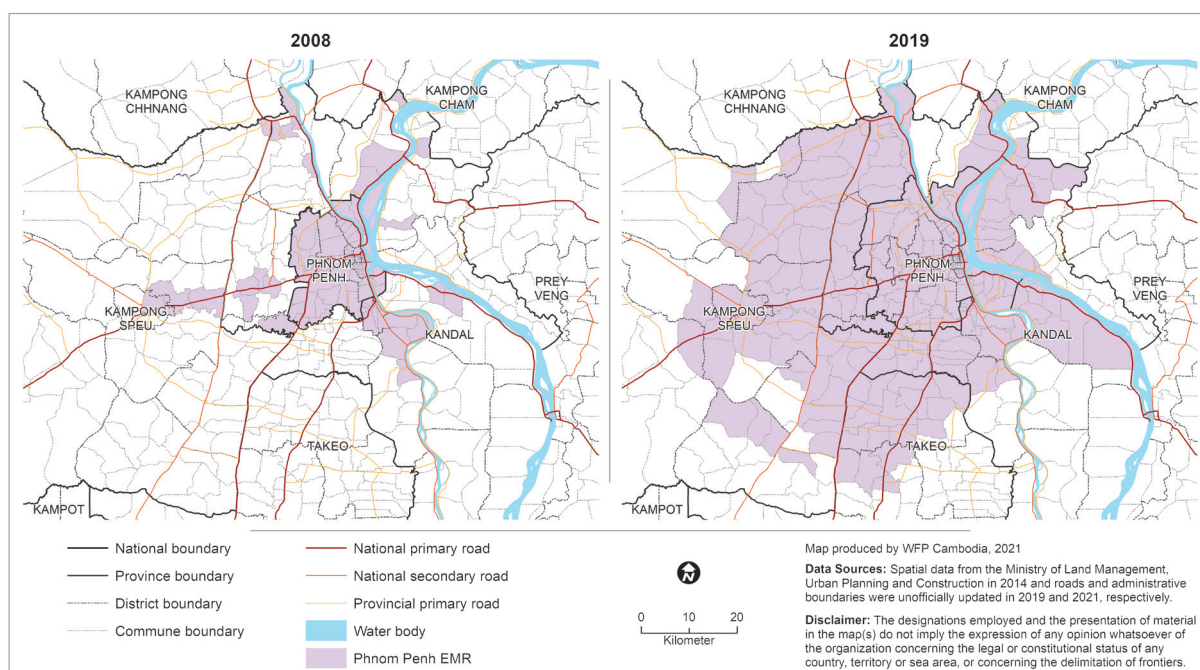
Since the urbanized area of Phnom Penh has been spreading into surrounding provinces, it is necessary to take a broader perspective on the metropolitan area of Phnom Penh. To study the Phnom Penh EMR in 2008 and 2019, the census data for the surrounding provinces— Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu—were mapped according to whether or not communes were classified as urban or rural. Contiguous clusters of urban communes extending from the Phnom Penh boundary were considered part of the Phnom Penh EMR.²¹ Annex A lists the communes added to Phnom Penh’s population in 2019 to define the Phnom Penh EMR.

Map 10 shows the dramatic expansion that occurred in the Phnom Penh EMR during 2008–2019. It reflects the major changes in the characteristics of many communes in Kandal, Kampong Speu, and Takeo provinces over the intervening period. Very few communes directly adjoining the municipality were classified as urban in 2008. While many communes met the density criterion at that time, very few met the 50% nonagricultural employment criterion. From 2008 to 2019, a great many passed this benchmark and thereby qualified as urban in 2019. The high proportion of communes passing the 50% nonagricultural employment criterion is consistent with the sharp rise in the employment share of nonagricultural activities in Cambodia as a whole during this period (World Bank 2017; Figure 14), and their particular concentration in the areas surrounding Phnom Penh.

In 2019, the extension of the metropolitan population into the three neighboring provinces (Map 10) followed clear patterns that were informed by the proximity of Phnom Penh; the existence of transport routes (or the possibility that such routes could be developed); and the availability of land suitable for housing, factories, and other urban facilities. Only the northern parts of Kandal Province, the northern parts of Takeo Province, and the eastern parts of the Province of Kampong Speu (in other words, the parts of these provinces closest to Phnom Penh) qualified to be considered part of Phnom Penh’s EMR.

²¹ For 2019, in the case of three communes that were classified as rural, but were in the EMR and were completely surrounded by other urban communes linked to Phnom Penh through a contiguous grouping of communes, the decision was made to include them in the EMR because it seemed unjustifiable to treat them as small rural “islands” in a metropolitan sea. These communes were Trach Tong and Trapeang Kong, both in Kampong Speu Province, and Pak Ruessei, in Kandal province.

Map 10: Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region, 2008 and 2019

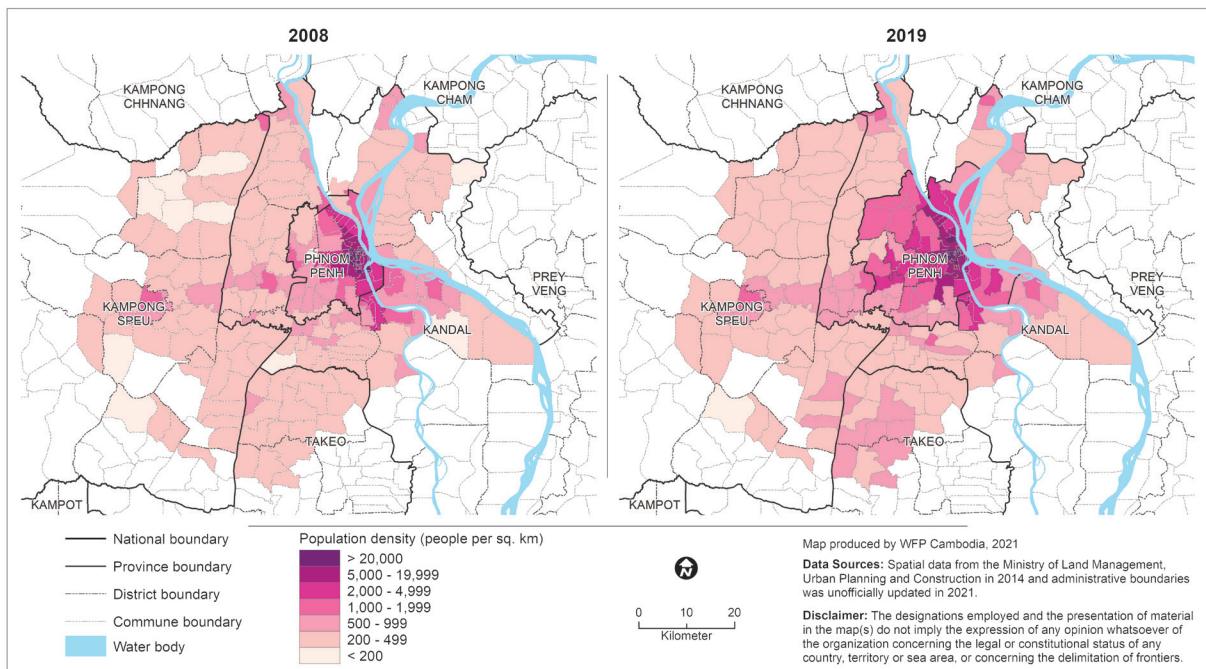


It was mentioned above that many communes that met the criteria for inclusion in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019 had already met the population-density criterion in 2008, but not the nonagricultural-employment criterion. Map 11 drives this point home. It shows the population density in both 2008 and 2019 of all the communes included in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019. It is clear that, if a population density exceeding 200 residents per square kilometer (km^2) had been the only criterion for inclusion in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2008, many more communes would have been included than are shown in Map 10. It was the strong trend towards an employment structure more heavily weighted towards nonagricultural employment in the areas surrounding Phnom Penh that accounted for the inclusion of so many more communes in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019. The same point can be made based on the settlement patterns shown for 2008 and 2019 in Map 12.

Another important point to note from the comparison between maps 10 and 11 concerns the consistency between the extent of the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019, according to the urban or rural status of communes in surrounding provinces, and the population densities of the included communes. Of course, population density falls off considerably the farther away a commune is from the Phnom Penh metropolitan area, but the densities of the communes included in the EMR are all at least $200/\text{km}^2$, and almost half of them are in the $500/\text{km}^2$ to $1,000/\text{km}^2$ range in the outer zone of the EMR,²² signifying a distinctly urbanized population.

²² Indeed, in Kandal Province, 15% of the urban communes have population densities exceeding $1,000/\text{km}^2$.

Map 11: Population Densities of Communes in the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region, 2008 and 2019

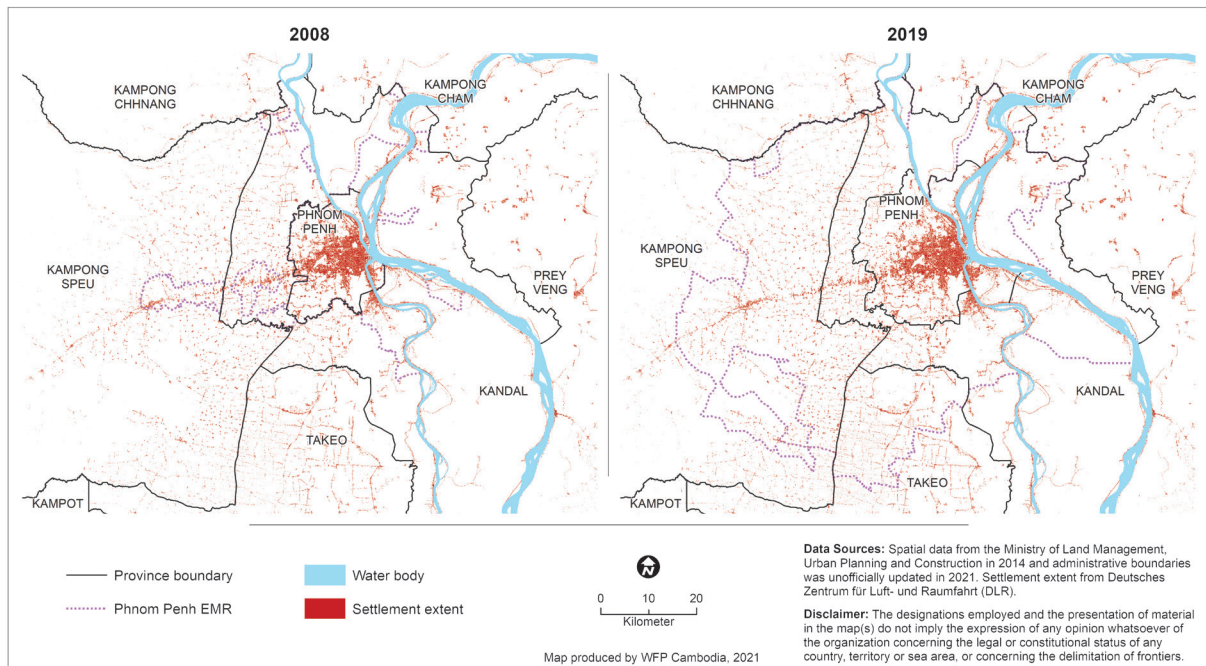


It is highly desirable to utilize other sources of information to cross-check the degree to which Phnom Penh’s built-up area has really spread into neighboring provinces. Different sources of data could be used for this purpose. One could be the trends in land values in communes in neighboring provinces; another could be the locations of registered businesses in these communes. A powerful tool for analyzing the extent of metropolitan areas is the nighttime-lights data from satellite imagery (Goldblatt et al. 2018; Ch, Martin, and Vargas 2018; Zhao et al. 2019; Asian Development Bank [ADB] 2019, 9–10).

Another powerful tool for studying cities, emerging from studies utilizing the remote sensing database referred to as the “World Satellite Footprint,” relies on the percentage of impervious surfaces rather than on nighttime lighting, although the two sources can be combined. Relevant data are available from the German Aerospace Center.²³ For details of the methodology employed, see Marconcini et al. (2020). A map based on this approach is presented here as Map 12. Like Map 11, it shows less change in the extent of the Phnom Penh EMR between 2008 and 2019 than does Map 10.

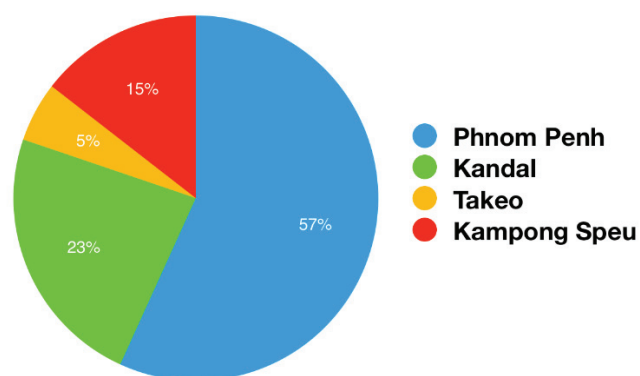
²³ Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt (DLR). See: https://www.dlr.de/EN/Home/home_node.html.

Map 12: Pattern of Settlement in the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region, 2008 and 2019



How much of the total population of the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019 was located in each of the three surrounding provinces? This is shown in Figure 7. The Phnom Penh municipality contained 57% of the population of the EMR. This was followed, not surprisingly, by Kandal province, which completely envelops Phnom Penh, and housed 24% of the EMR’s population. Kampong Speu’s contribution is also considerable—half a million residents, or 14% of the EMR’s population.

Figure 7: Shares of the Population of the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region—Phnom Penh and Nearby Provinces, 2019 (%)



Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The fact that the population of the functional Phnom Penh metropolitan region was over 3.7 million in 2019 serves to highlight just how dominant Phnom Penh is in Cambodia’s urban hierarchy. Cambodia’s total urban population was 6.14 million in 2019. The Phnom Penh EMR accounted for well over half (61%) of this population.

Some issues in interpreting the growth of the Phnom Penh EMR need to be discussed. Based on the analysis in this report, it would be inaccurate to see this growth as the result of an overspill of Phnom Penh’s population into the surrounding provinces, supplemented by high levels of in-migration of workers into Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu from other parts of the country. If that were true, the populations of these three provinces would have been growing more rapidly than those of most other Cambodian provinces. In fact, population growth in Kandal and Takeo provinces (though not in Kampong Speu) has been **slower** than elsewhere (Table 3). More detailed analysis is provided in Table 29, which compares the population growth rates of the districts in the three provinces that were included in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019 and those that were not. Note that Table A.2 provides a more in-depth analysis of this issue. As might be expected, population growth was faster in the areas included in the Phnom Penh EMR (19.6%) than in the other parts of these provinces. Indeed, in Kandal and Takeo provinces, growth in the other (predominantly rural) districts was almost nonexistent. Population growth in the districts of the three provinces that lay within the Phnom Penh EMR (19.6% during 2008–2019) was considerably more rapid than that of Cambodia’s population as a whole (16.1%), and more than the growth of Cambodia’s population excluding Phnom Penh (10.6%) over the same period.

Table 29: Population Growth in Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu Provinces, Two Groups of Districts, 2008–2019 (%)

| Province | Districts in the Phnom Penh EMR^a | Other Districts (Predominantly Rural) | Province(s) as a Whole |
|--------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Kandal | 16.2 | 1.7 | 9.6 |
| Takeo | 18.4 | 0.8 | 6.5 |
| Kampong Speu | 25.3 | 18.2 | 21.7 |
| Total^b | 19.6 | 5.0 | 11.8 |

EMR = Extended Metropolitan Region.

^a In these districts, either all or most of the communes were considered urban as of 2019.

^b The total refers to the percentages of population growth in the three provinces combined.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

The migration analysis reveals that Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Speu have had **lower** rates of lifetime in-migration than most provinces in the country. The designation of so many communes in these provinces as urban in 2019 was mainly based on: (1) the criterion of changing employment structure, with agricultural employment falling below 50% in many communes over the 2008–2019 period; and (2) increasing population density resulting from fairly rapid natural population growth.²⁴ Another factor could have played an important role, and that was the designations of

²⁴ Very few communes passed the cut-off figure of 2,000 population, which was another criterion for acceptance as an urban area.

communes as urban based on field visits by NIS staff and on local knowledge (i.e., on the part of provincial directors). This approach was used both in the 2011 revisions of the 2008 urban designations (NIS 2011, 5) and in the 2019 population census. However, the input from NIS staff and provincial directors does not appear to have been the reason for any of the new urban designations in the Phnom Penh EMR in 2019.

Table 30 provides a more detailed account of the dynamics of growth in the Phnom Penh EMR. It focuses on the urban communes in the provinces that form a ring around Phnom Penh: Kandal, Kampong Speu, and Takeo, showing the population trends in the communes that were already considered urban in 2008 and in those that were newly declared urban in 2019 (nearly all the urban communes in these provinces lie within the EMR). Population trends in the rural communes in these provinces are also shown; these lie outside the EMR.

As was found to be the case for Cambodia as a whole (Table 6), population growth in the EMR communes designated as urban in 2019 was considerably faster than in the communes already considered urban in 2008. It was also much faster than in the rural communes in the three provinces. Population densities were also markedly different, as would be expected. The average density in the rural areas of these provinces was only 137/km², compared with 419/km² in the urban communes. The communes in Phnom Penh EMR that were already considered urban in 2008 had a considerably higher average population density (748/km²) than the communes first designated as urban in 2019 (365/km²).

Table 30: Population Growth and Density in the Provincial Districts within the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region, 2008–2019

| Province/Commune Type | Population | | | Population Density in 2019 (per km ²) |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------------|---|
| | 2008 | 2019 | Increase 2008–2019 (%) | |
| Kandal | | | | |
| Communes urban since 2019 | 391,816 | 446,821 | 14.0 | 348 |
| Communes urban as of 2008 | 287,047 | 298,273 | 3.9 | 853 |
| Rural communes | 412,307 | 417,997 | 1.4 | 270 |
| Kampong Speu | | | | |
| Communes urban since 2019 | 367,961 | 464,516 | 26.2 | 346 |
| Communes urban as of 2008 | 46,850 | 50,359 | 7.5 | 622 |
| Rural communes | 302,133 | 353,326 | 16.9 | 63 |
| Takeo | | | | |
| Communes urban since 2019 | 196,410 | 241,454 | 22.9 | 449 |
| Communes urban as of 2008 | 41,383 | 45,086 | 8.9 | 470 |
| Rural communes | 607,113 | 610,405 | 0.5 | 208 |
| All Three Provinces Combined | | | | |
| Communes urban since 2019 | 956,187 | 1,152,791 | 20.6 | 365 |
| Communes urban as of 2008 | 375,280 | 393,718 | 4.9 | 748 |
| Rural communes | 1,321,553 | 1,381,728 | 4.6 | 137 |

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

It is important to note that the urban communes in the three provinces surrounding Phnom Penh are not at the same level of urbanization as Phnom Penh itself. Population densities are vastly different: Phnom Penh has 3,136 people/km², compared with 419/km² in the urban communes in the EMR.

Finally, it is worth asking where Phnom Penh fits as a primate city when considered at an international scale. The United Nations Population Division (2019, 68) considers a city to be the primate city of its country when it accounts for at least 40% of the urban population. According to this criterion, Phnom Penh is undoubtedly a primate city. How does this figure compare with that of other countries? There is a wide range in the degree of primacy for different countries, depending on many factors, including the size of the country, its geographical features, its system of government, and the degree of regional autonomy. Very large countries such as Brazil, India, the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the United States tend to have relatively low levels of primacy (i.e., with few or no cities that stand out, as they have many large cities). Cambodia's primacy index is high by world standards, placing it in the same category as Montevideo in Uruguay, Cairo in Egypt, Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia, and Bangkok in Thailand (United Nations Population Division 2019).

Another indicator of the degree to which one city dominates a country's urban structure is the four-city primacy index, a simple measure showing the ratio of the population of the largest city divided by the total population of the next three largest cities. Table 31 shows the results for Cambodia. Using the unadjusted figures for the urban populations, the index comes to 3.4.

However, if the Phnom Penh population used is that of the EMR, the index rises to 7.0.²⁵ This is a very high figure by international standards, much higher than, say, Indonesia or Viet Nam, though in neighbouring Thailand, Bangkok’s primacy index is also very high.

Table 31: Four-City Primacy Index, 1998, 2008, and 2019

| Year | Index | |
|------|------------|---------------------------------|
| | Unadjusted | Adjusted for the Phnom Penh EMR |
| 1998 | 3.41 | ... |
| 2008 | 3.11 | ... |
| 2019 | 3.85 | 7.04 |

... = data not available, EMR = Extended Metropolitan Region.

Notes:

1. In addition to Phnom Penh, the cities used to calculate the index values in this table include, in descending order of size: Siem Reap, Mongkol-Krong Serei Saophoan, and Sihanoukville.

2. The calculations for this index involve dividing the population of largest city by the combined population of next three largest cities

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics (NIS). 2009. *General Population Census of Cambodia 2008: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh; NIS. 2020. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: National Report on Final Census Results*. Phnom Penh.

²⁵ Even if the adjusted larger populations for Mongkol Borei-Krong Serei Saophoan and for Sihanoukville are used in this calculation, making them the third- and fourth-largest cities, the adjusted primacy index in Table 31 would not drop by much—only to 6.14.

Chapter 8:

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Cambodia experienced rapid urbanization from 2008 to 2019. The main reason was that many communes previously considered rural qualified as urban in 2019 due to the application of new definitions and procedures. It is important to note that, while many communes were declared urban in 2011 according to the RC 2011 SDC criteria (based on 2008 census data), only a quarter of them actually met the objective criteria for urban areas; the others were declared urban by the Royal Sub-Decree or were recommended for urban status by NIS field officers or provincial directors. While some (perhaps many) of the communes declared urban on the basis of the Royal Sub-Decree would have met the objective criteria, anyway, many had a low population density and/or a low proportion of nonagricultural employment. Almost all of these communes continued to be considered urban in 2019. By contrast, the great majority (89%) of the communes classified as urban in 2019 met the three objective criteria. This must have resulted in a weighting of Cambodia's total urban communes in 2019 towards more strongly urban characteristics (in terms of population density and nonagricultural employment) than was the case in 2008 or 2011 (under RC 2011 SDC). This justifies the conclusion that the substantial increase (from 27% to 39%) in the proportion of Cambodia's population living in areas designated as urban during 2008–2019 was driven by real changes rather than by purely administrative acts.

In Cambodia, certain towns and localities have shown little growth, and even a decline, in population from 2008 to 2019. As the Asian Development Bank (ADB) notes, government support for lagging areas should follow certain principles. “The first step is to identify why a city or locality is lagging. ... [If] a locality lags for multiple reasons that reinforce one another—bad infrastructure, a lack of skilled workers, insufficient local input suppliers, and long distances to major markets, for example—it is unlikely that a simple incentive package of, say, tax breaks to attract private companies will have the intended effect” (ADB 2019, 73). Cambodian planners will need to investigate carefully the reasons for the decline of towns such as Bat Dambang, Kampot, and Paoy Paet over this period, with a view to formulating appropriate policies.

Cambodia's urban hierarchy is increasingly dominated by Phnom Penh. However, this dominance is not evident if one focuses just on the Phnom Penh municipality; it results from the city's expanding economic role in neighboring and nearby provinces. The Phnom Penh municipality increased its share of Cambodia's total population from 13.2% in 2008 to 14.7% in 2019, but its share of the urban population actually declined from 41.3% to 37.2%, due to the rapid increase in the urban populations of many other provinces. However, when Phnom Penh is viewed more broadly as the Phnom Penh EMR, its dominance of Cambodia's urban structure increases: The Phnom Penh EMR's share of Cambodia's urban population was 61.6% in 2019. To calculate the EMR's population increase from 2008 to 2019 would require an estimate of the “real” EMR population in 2008, which is beyond the scope of this report.

The implications of Phnom Penh's dominance of Cambodia's urban structure are being studied by Cambodia's planners and development partners. ADB recognizes that large cities tend to be more productive. “Agglomeration economies arise as workers and firms interact in close physical proximity. Theory suggests that productivity is higher in larger, denser cities because workers are

more likely to find jobs that are a good fit, ideas and knowledge are exchanged among individuals and organizations, and resources are more easily shared” (ADB 2019, xi). The World Bank (2009) has strongly promoted the benefits of large urban agglomerations, where “economic density” (GDP and employment) is far higher than elsewhere in a country. But it recognizes that the portfolio of urban places is also important. Below the primary city is a spectrum of settlements—secondary cities, small urban centers, towns, and villages. They all have their roles. For instance, towns “act as market centers for agricultural and rural output, as stimulators of rural nonfarm activity, as places for seasonal job opportunities for farmers, and as facilitators of economies of scale in postsecondary education and health care services. Towns draw sustenance from the agricultural activity of rural areas, but their prosperity also spills over to villages by providing non-farm employment opportunities” (World Bank 2009, 53).

When urbanization is viewed from an international perspective, a striking feature is that the number of people living in urban areas around the world is now very high: above 80% in the high-income countries in 2020, and above 80% even in Latin America (United Nations Population Division 2019). Therefore, to classify social and economic characteristics of populations according to a simple urban–rural dichotomy is no longer very useful, particularly if the goal is to identify practical ways to identify disadvantaged target populations requiring various kinds of policy interventions. That is why there have been attempts to view settlement patterns in ways that go beyond a simple urban–rural dichotomy (Champion and Hugo 2004). Nevertheless, Asia as a whole was only 51% urban in 2020, and Cambodia remains in the group of countries where urbanization levels remain relatively low, so a simple urban–rural distinction can still serve to differentiate its population fairly effectively in terms of a number of important socioeconomic indicators, as this study has demonstrated. Nevertheless, this study has also demonstrated that there are broad differences between particular urban and rural areas, and that a much more nuanced approach is needed for identifying localities with particular characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages.

Cambodia is marked by a very high degree of urban primacy. The international literature on the advantages and disadvantages of urban primacy recognizes that the clustering of enterprises in a dominant city facilitates trade and economies of scale, which are linked to the exchange of ideas and reduced infrastructure costs. This results in higher productivity than elsewhere in the country, the benefits of which can be shared more widely, given appropriate policies (Henderson 2002b). But the effect of rapid city growth on public well-being through the diseconomies of urban congestion, the growth of slums and shantytowns, crime, and environmental deterioration through air and water pollution can also be understated in poorer countries with a weak planning infrastructure (Jones, Mahbub, and Haq 2016, 78). The formulation of appropriate policies to address the growth of cities of different size requires an understanding of these offsetting aspects of agglomeration.

In Cambodia, the “missing link” in the urban hierarchy is a city in the half million to 1 million category. It is likely to take more than a decade for any of the next-largest cities to reach that size. Does that really matter? Perhaps not. As Phnom Penh is fairly centrally located within a relatively small country, it is not surprising that the city so dominates Cambodia’s urban hierarchy. Its “economic density” could benefit the whole country if it leads to more rapid economic growth, and if the benefits are spread wisely through public policy. Once the road network in Cambodia is developed and upgraded, most parts of the country will lie within a 4-hour drive of Phnom Penh.

Access to the city's facilities will then be possible for most Cambodians (though, of course, "real access" is affected by poverty, inequality, and social exclusion). At the same time, a range of policies could be put in place to enable "intermediate cities" (Rondinelli 1983) and smaller towns (Sietchiping et al. 2014) to play a greater role in Cambodia's development. As a recent ADB report states, "Urban economic growth and prosperity depend not just on the fortunes of one or two large cities. Well-functioning market towns that specialize in, for example, marketing and distributing agricultural produce are needed, as are other larger cities all the way to the metropolises that foster innovation" (ADB 2019, 60).

This report has emphasized that a careful analysis of comparative data on regional population distribution and urbanization is necessary to fully understand the changing socioeconomic situation and its implications for development. This situation includes both the evolving demographic structure in Cambodia, viewed in terms of both regional and urban-rural differences, and the effects of demographic differentials and changes (including urbanization) on the well-being of the Cambodian population. Thus, urban-rural differences in such areas as water supply and sanitation, access to education, employment structure, and migration patterns need to be understood if socioeconomic development planning is to find an appropriate focus. All these areas are relevant when it comes to assessing Cambodia's efforts to meet the SDGs, particularly SDG 10: reduced inequalities. Population censuses will continue to be necessary for providing comprehensive data sets, which will serve as the bases for such analysis. Indeed, it can be argued that Cambodia should plan to hold a major survey 5 years after each census, as the 10-year census intervals are too long in a context of rapid change.

This study has clearly indicated that census data based on the urban-rural categorization of the population can be very useful in identifying planning issues where there are strong urban-rural differentials. But the utilization of census data for planning should go well beyond the simple urban-rural division; it should also include careful analyses of the relevant issues facing *individual* provinces, districts, and rural and urban areas. The dramatic differences in the trajectories of population growth and decline in the provinces and towns in Cambodia during 1998-2019 (tables 3 and 8) highlight how important it is to understand these trajectories, and what their differences reveal about the conditions of the populations living in these localities. The census contains valuable information for localized planning, and this information could be linked with data from other sources. To enable this, the human resources of the NIS need to be effectively linked with those of the other major component of the Ministry of Planning, the General Directorate of Planning, and with those of many other government agencies that are utilizing the available data for planning purposes.

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Annex

Table A.1. Communes outside Phnom Penh Province Included in the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region, 2019

| Kandal province | | Takeo province | | Kampong Speu province | |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|---|------------------|
| Number | Name | Number | Name | Number | Name |
| Kandal Steung district - 0801 | | Bati district – 2102 | | Basedth district – 501 | |
| Every commune included | | 210201 | Chambak | 50105 | Pheari Mean Chey |
| Kien Svay district – 0802 | | 210202 | Champey | 50111 | Svay Chacheb |
| Every commune included except Kokir Thum (80207) | | 210204 | Kandoeng | 50112 | Tuol Sala |
| Khsach Kandal district - 0803 | | 210205 | Komar Reachea | 50114 | Svay Rumpea |
| 80302 | Chey Thum | 210206 | Krang Leav | Krong Chbar Mon district - 0502 | |
| 80305 | Kaoh Oknha Tei | 210207 | Krang Thnong | Every commune included | |
| 80306 | Preaek Prasab | 210208 | Lumpong | Kong Pisei district - 0503 | |
| 80307 | Preaek Ampil | 210209 | Pea Ream | 50301 | Angk Popel |
| 80308 | Preaek Luong | 210210 | Pot Sar | 50302 | Chongruk |
| 80309 | Preaek Ta Kov | 210211 | Souphi | 50303 | Moha Ruessei |
| 80310 | Preaek Ta Maek | 210212 | Tang Doung | 50304 | Pechr Muni |
| 80311 | Puk Ruessei | 210214 | Trapeang Krasang | 50305 | Preah Nipean |
| 80312 | Roka Chonlueng | 210215 | Trapeang Sab | 50306 | Prey Nheat |
| 80313 | Sanlung | Samraong district - 2107 | | 50307 | Prey Vihear |
| 80315 | Svay Chrum | 210704 | Chumreah Pen | 50308 | Roka Kaoh |
| 80318 | Vihear Suork | 210705 | Khvav | 50310 | Snam Krapeu |
| Lvea Aem district – 0806 | | 210707 | Rovieng | 50312 | Tuek L’ak |
| 80601 | Akreiy Ksatv | 210708 | Samraong | 50313 | Veal |
| 80605 | Kaoh Reah | | | Odongk district - 0505 | |
| 80607 | Peam Oknha Ong | | | Every commune included except Chumpu Proeks (50503) | |
| 80613 | Sarikakaev | | | Phnum Sruoch district - 0506 | |
| Mukh Kampul district - 0807 | | | | 50606 | Moha Sang |
| 80703 | Preaek Anhchanh | | | Samraong Tong district - 0507 | |
| 80704 | Preaek Dambang | | | 50701 | Roleang Chak |
| 80707 | Roka Kaong Ti Muoy | | | 50702 | Kahaeng |
| 80708 | Roka Kaong Ti Pir | | | 50705 | Pneay |
| 80709 | Ruessei Chrouy | | | 50706 | Roleang Kreul |
| Angk Snuol district - 0808 | | | | 50707 | Samraong Tong |
| Every commune included | | | | 50708 | Sambour |
| Popnhea Lueu district - 0809 | | | | 50709 | Saen Dei |
| Every commune included except Kampong Os (80904) | | | | 50710 | Skuh |
| S’ang district – 810 | | | | 50711 | Tang Krouch |
| 81008 | Preaek Koy | | | 50712 | Thummoda Ar |
| 81009 | Roka Khpos | | | 50713 | Trapeang Kong |
| 81010 | S’ang Phnum | | | 50715 | Voa Sa |
| 81011 | Setbou | | | Thpong district - 0508 | |
| 81013 | Svay Rolum | | | 50805 | Rung Roeang |
| Krong Ta Khmau - 0811 | | | | 50807 | Veal Pon |
| Every commune included | | | | | |

Table A.2. Population Changes during 2008–2019 in Districts of Surrounding Provinces Where Most or All of the Communes Were in the Phnom Penh Extended Metropolitan Region, 2019.

| Province and district | District population | | Percent change 2008-2019 |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 2008 | 2019 | |
| KANDAL | | | |
| Kandal Steung - 801 | 82,625 | 101,188 | 22.5 |
| Kien Svay – 802 | 112,014 | 117,222 | 4.7 |
| Khsach Kandal - 803 | 117,322 | 141,862 | 20.9 |
| Mukh Kampul – 807 | 69,359 | 72,904 | 5.1 |
| Angk Snuol – 808 | 83,203 | 118,280 | 42.2 |
| Popnhea Lueu – 809 | 88,607 | 105,255 | 18.8 |
| Krong Ta Khmau - 811 | 80,141 | 79,281 | -1.1 |
| TOTAL KANDAL | 633,271 | 735,992 | 16.2 |
| TAKEO | | | |
| Bati – 2102 | 131,031 | 159,407 | 21.7 |
| Samraong – 2107 | 107,807 | 127,295 | 18.1 |
| Krong Daun Kaev – 2108 | 41,383 | 45,086 | 8.9 |
| TOTAL TAKEO | 280,221 | 331,788 | 18.4 |
| KAMPONG SPEU | | | |
| Krong Chbar Mon – 502 | 46,850 | 51,795 | 10.6 |
| Kong Pisei – 503 | 112,921 | 146,424 | 29.7 |
| Odongk – 505 | 119,213 | 146,137 | 22.6 |
| Samraong Tong – 507 | 142,545 | 183,968 | 29.1 |
| TOTAL KAMPONG SPEU | 421,529 | 528,324 | 25.3 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 1,335,021 | 1,596,104 | 19.6 |

Table 3. Rough estimate of components of urban population growth 2008-2019

| Region | Urban Pop 2008 | Urban Pop 2019 | Urban Pop increase | Percent of increase | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------------|
| | | | | Natural increase | Migration | Reclassification |
| Phnom Penh municipality | 1,501,725 | 2,281,951 | 780,226 | 26.9 | 73.1 | 0 |
| Elsewhere in Cambodia: | | | | | | |
| Already urban in 2008 | 1,870,099 | 1,921,777 | 51,678 | 443 | -342 | 0 |
| Newly urban in 2019: | | | | | | |
| In Phnom Penh EMR | 0 | 1,172,791 | 1,172,791 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Rest of Cambodia | 0 | 562,097 | 562,097 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| TOTAL CAMBODIA | 3,371,824 | 5,938,616 | 2,566,792 | 19.1 | 13.3 | 67.6 |

Note: The table excludes the province of Tbong Khmum.

Assumptions:

Natural increase of urban population 2008-2019: Phnom Penh 14%, Phnom Penh EMR outside municipality 14%, rest of Cambodia 15% (all assumed a bit lower than for rural areas)

Note: The communes newly classified as urban in 2019 were of course experiencing natural increase and migration over the 2008-2019 period. However, as they were not considered urban until 2019, their contribution to the urban population is attributed entirely to reclassification.

Royal Government of Cambodia
General Population Census of Cambodia, March 2019



FORM A HOUSELIST

Page Number:
Total number of pages for EA:

Identification Particulars

| | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------|------|----------------------|
| Name | Province/Municipality | District/Khand/Krong | Khum/Sangkat | Phum | Enumeration Area No. |
| Code | | | | | |

Building/Structure and Household Particulars

| Line No. | Building/Structure Number | Dominant Construction Material of Building/Structure | | Purpose of Building/Structure | Household No. | Particulars of Head of Household | | | Number of persons usually living in the HH | | | Remarks | | |
|----------|---------------------------|--|-------|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|-----|------|--|-------|----|---------|----|----|
| | | Wall | Floor | | | Name of Head of Household | Sex | Male | Female | Total | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*List of codes

Col. 3. Wall Material

- Bamboo/Thatch / Grass / Reeds
- Earth
- Wood / Plywood
- Concrete / Brick / Stone
- Galvanised Iron/Aluminium/Other metal sheets
- Asbestos cement sheets
- Salvaged/Improvised materials
- Other (specify)

Col. 4. Roof Material

- Bamboo / Thatch / Grass/ Reeds
- Tile
- Wood / Plywood
- Concrete / Brick / Stone
- Galvanised Iron / Aluminium / Other metal sheets
- Asbestos cement sheets
- Plastic/ Synthetic material sheets
- Other (specify)

Col. 5. Floor Material

- Earth / Clay
- Wood / Bamboo planks
- Concrete / Brick / Stone
- Polished stone
- Parquet / Polished wood
- Mosaic / Ceramic tiles
- Other (specify)

Name of Enumerator

Signature

Name of Supervisor

Signature



Royal Government of Cambodia

General Population Census of Cambodia, March 2019



STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

FORM B HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE PART 1

Identification

Particulars

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------|------|--------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Name | Province/Municipality | District/Khand/Krong | Khum/Sangkat | Phum | EA No. | Building No. | Household No. | Name of Head of Household |
| Code | | | | | | | | |

Population Particulars

Statement 1.1 : Usual Members Present on Census Night

| Sl. No. | Name of the person | Relationship to Head of Household | Sex |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 0 | | | |

Statement 1.2 : Visitors Present on Census Night

| Sl. No. | Name of the person | Relationship to Head of Household | Sex | Usual Residence | |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------|------------------|
| | | | | Within Cambodia | Outside Cambodia |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (a) | 6 (a) |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | |

Statement 1.3 : Usual Members Absent on Census Night

| Sl. No. | Name of the person | Relationship to Head of Household | Sex | Age | Location on Census Night | | | How long absent (in completed months) | |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | Within Cambodia | Outside Cambodia | Reason for shifting | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 (a) | 7 (a) | 7 (b) | 7 (c) | 8 |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | |

Column 5 Age
 000. Less than 1 year 001 1 year 002 2 years
 097-99 years 099 99 years 100-120 years

Statement 1.3: Col. 6(c) and Col. 7 (c)
 1. Employment 2. Business 3. Tourism
 4. Education 5. Marriage 6. Medical 7. Other

Enumerator: Signature: DD
 Supervisor: Name: MM YYYY

Total No. of Persons in Statement 1.1

Total No. of Persons in Statement 1.2

Total No. of Persons in Statement 1.1&1.2

Number of Form B used for the household

81

FORM B HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE PART 2: INDIVIDUAL PARTICULARS

| Sl. No. | For all persons | | | For children aged 0-14 years | | For all persons | Mother Tongue | Religion | Birth Place | | Where has the person been living before | | Duration of Stay | Reason for Migration | |
|---------|--------------------|--------------|-----|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------|----------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Name of the person | Relationship | Sex | Age | Whether living with own mother? | | | | Marital Status | For other than never married | Age at first marriage in completed years | Code from list below | | | Code from list below |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11(a) | 11(b) | 12(a) | 12(b) | 13 | 14 |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| Codes for Column 3 Relationship to Head of Household 1. Head 2. Wife / Husband 3. Son / Daughter 4. Father / Mother 5. Grand child 6. Other Relative 7. Non-Relative including boarder | Codes for Column 6 Age 000: less than 1 year 001: 1 year 002: 2 years : : : :20 years :20 years | Codes for Column 7 1. Never Married 2. Married (i.e. currently married) 3. Widowed 4. Divorced 5. Separated | Codes for Column 9 Mother Tongue 01. Khmer 02. Vietnamese 03. Chinese 04. Lao 05. Thai 06. French 07. English 08. Korean 09. Japanese 10. Chharaay 11. Chaam 12. Kaaveat 13. Klueg 14. Kuoay 15. Krueng 16. Lon 17. Phong 18. P'rao 19. Tumpoon 20. Stleng 21. Ro Ong 22. Kraol 23. Raadear 24. Thmoon 25. Mel 26. Khogn 27. Por 28. Suoy 29. Other | Codes for Column 10 1. Buddhism 2. Islam 3. Christianity 4. Other | Codes for Column 13 Duration of Stay 00. less than 1 year 01. 1 to less than 2 years 02. 2 to less than 3 years 10. 10 to less than 11 years 20. 20 to less than 21 years 20. 20 to less than 21 years | Codes for Column 14: Reason for Migration 01. Transfer of work place 02. In search of employment 03. Education 04. Marriage 05. Family moved 06. Lost land / lost home 07. Natural calamities 08. Dislocated due to Dam construction 09. Dislocated due to other major or small projects 10. Insecurity 11. Repatriation or return after displacement 12. Orphaned 13. Visiting only 14. Other (specify) |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|

For all persons **For persons aged 5 years and more**

| Sl. No. | Literacy | | | Full Time Education | | | Functional Difficulty 17 | Main Activity 18 | Occupation 19 | Employment Status 20 | Agriculture, Industry, Trade or Service 21 | Sector of Employment 22 |
|---------|---|---|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| | 15 (a) Can the person read and write with understanding in Khmer language? 1. Yes 2. No (Enter code from list below) Code) | 15 (b) Can this person read and write with understanding in any other language? (Enter code from list below) Code) | 16 (a) Has the person attended School/ Education institution? (Enter code from list below) Code) | 16 (b) Currently attending grade for code 2 of col. 16(a)? (Enter code from list below) Code) | 16 (c) What is the highest grade completed? (Enter code from list below) Code) | 16 (d) Main subject of study for codes 15 to 20 in col. 16(b) or 16(c). For other codes in col. 16(b), (c) skip to col. 17. Description | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Codes for column 15(b) | Codes for column 16(a) | Codes for column 16(b); Currently Attending Grade | Codes for column 16(c) What is the highest grade completed? | Codes for column 17: Functional Difficulties | Codes for column 18 | Codes for column 20: Employment Status/Class | Codes for column 22 |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|---------------------|
| 1. No other language 2. Vietnamese 3. Chinese 4. Lao 5. Thai 6. French 7. English 8. Chham 9. Other | For code 1 and 3 in column 16 (a), put dash (-) in 16(b) For code 2 in column 16 (a), enter code from list below. For code 1 in column 16 (a), put dash (-) in column 16 (b) For code 2 and 3 in column 16 (a), enter code from the list below. Common Codes for column 16 (b) and 16 (c) 00. Pre-school/Kindergarten 01. Class 1 02. Class 2 : : 11. Class 11 12. Class 12 Separate Codes for column 16 (b) 15. Technical/vocational pre-secondary diploma/certificate course 16. Technical/vocational post-secondary diploma/certificate course | 13. Lower Secondary/ Diploma/ Certificate 14. Upper Secondary/ Diploma/ Certificate/ Baccalaureate 15. Technical/vocational pre-secondary diploma/certificate 16. Technical/vocational post-secondary diploma/certificate 17. Graduate Degree 18. Master's Degree 19. Ph.D Degree 20. Any Other Diploma/Degree completed 88. No grade completed | Do you have difficulty 17.1 seeing, even if wearing glasses? 17.2 hearing, even if using a hearing aid? 17.3 walking or climbing step? 17.4 remembering or concentrating? 17.5 with self-care (such as washing all over or dressing)? 17.6 using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty speaking, for example understanding or being understood? Codes for column 17 1. No - no difficulty 2. Yes - some difficulty 3. Yes - a lot of difficulty 4. Cannot do at all | Main activity during last year 1. Employed (fill in cols. 19 to 22) 2. Unemployed (Employed any time before) (Fill in col. 19 to 22 for last employment). 3. Unemployed (Never employed any time before) 4. Home maker 5. Student 6. Dependent 7. Rent-receiver, Retired or other income recipient 8. Other (For codes 3 to 8 put dash (-) in cols. 19 to 22) | 1. Government 2. State owned enterprise 3. Cambodian private enterprise 4. Foreign private enterprise 5. Non-profit institution 6. Household sector 7. Embassies, international institutions, and foreign aid, and development agencies 8. Other (specify...) | 1. Employer 2. Paid employee 3. Own-account worker 4. Unpaid family worker 5. Other (specify...) | |

FORM B HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE PART 3: FERTILITY INFORMATION OF FEMALES AGED 15 AND OVER LISTED IN COLUMN 2 OF PART 2

| Sl. No. | Name of the woman (for woman aged 15 and over) | Sl. No. in column 1, Part 2 | FERTILITY INFORMATION FOR WOMAN AGED 15 AND OVER | | | | | | Particulars of Birth in the last 12 months to woman aged 15-49 years | | | | | |
|---------|---|-----------------------------|--|------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|------------|--|------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | Number of Children Born (Give number in two digits like 01, 02,10, 11. If None, write '00') | | | Particulars of Birth in the last 12 months to woman aged 15-49 years | | Particulars of Birth in the last 12 months to woman aged 15-49 years | | | | | | |
| | | | How many Children have been born alive to the woman ? | | How many of them are living ? | | How many of them have died? | | Any child born alive to the woman during the last 12 months? (Give actual number like 1, 2 under the appropriate column. If none write 0) (If no child was born to the woman in the last 12 months, skip to part 4) | | State who assisted her during the delivery. (Enter code from list below) | | Did the person register the birth of this baby with the Civil Authority? (Enter code from list below) | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 5 | | 6 | | 7 | | 8 | | 9 | |
| | | | (a) Male | (b) Female | (a) Male | (b) Female | (a) Male | (b) Female | (a) Male | (b) Female | (Enter code from list below) | (Enter code from list below) | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Codes for column 8
 1: Doctor 4: Traditional Birth Attendant
 2: Nurse 5: Other (specify)
 3: Midwife 6: None

Codes for column 9
 Yes = 1
 No = 2

FORM B HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE PART 4 : HOUSING CONDITIONS, AMENITIES AND ASSETS POSSESSED BY HOUSEHOLD

(Enter code in the boxes below)

| On what basis does this household occupy this dwelling? | Main Source of light | Main Cooking Fuel | Type of toilet facility household usually uses | Share facility with other household | Main Source of drinking water supply | Time take to go there, get water, and come back | No. of rooms occupied by household (exclude kitchen, bathroom, toilet and storeroom) | Availability of separate kitchen within premises |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 1. Owner occupied | 1. City Power | 1. Firewood | 1. None, not using toilet | 1. Yes | 1. Piped into dwelling | 1. Water on premises | 1. One room | 1. Yes |
| 2. Rent | 2. Generator | 2. Charcoal | 2. Pour flush (or flush) connected to sewerage | 2. No | 2. Piped into compound, yard or plot | 2. Less than 30 minutes | 2. Two rooms | 2. No |
| 3. Not owner but rent free | 3. Both city power and generator | 3. Kerosene | 3. Pour flush (or flush) to septic tank or pit | | 3. Public tap / standpipe | 3. More than 30 minutes | 3. Three rooms | |
| 4. Other (Please specify) | 4. Kerosene | 4. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) | 4. Pour flush (or flush) to elsewhere (i.e. not a sewer or pit/tank) | | 4. Tube Well, Borehole | 4. Don't Know | 4. Four rooms | |
| | 5. Candle | 5. Electricity | 5. Pit latrine with slab | | 5. Protected well | | 5. Five rooms | |
| | 6. Battery | 6. None | 6. Pit latrine without slab or open pit | | 6. Unprotected well | | 6. Six rooms | |
| | 7. Other (Please specify) | 7. Other (Please specify) | 7. Latrine overhanging field or water (drop in the field, pond, lake, river, sea) | | 7. Protected spring | | 7. Seven rooms | |
| | | | 8. Other, specify | | 8. Unprotected spring | | 8. Eight rooms and more | |
| | | | | | 9. Rainwater collection | | | |
| | | | | | 10. Tanker-truck | | | |
| | | | | | 11. Cart with small tank / drum | | | |
| | | | | | 12. Surface water (river, stream, dam, lake) | | | |
| | | | | | 13. Bottled water | | | |
| | | | | | 14. Other (specify) | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

PARTICULARS OF AMENITIES AND ASSETS POSSESSED BY HOUSEHOLD (Give number for each, write "00" if not owned)

| Radio/ Transistor | Television | Telephone (Fixed) | Cell phone | Laptop and Desktop Computer | Bicycle | Motorcycle | Refrigerator | Washer | Fan | Air-Conditioner | Car/Van |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---------|------------|--------------|--------|-----|-----------------|---------|
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Boat | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Tractor (See note below) | |
| (a). Big tractor | (b). Hand tractor (Koyaon) |
| 22 | 23 |
| | |

| State whether the household accesses internet | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| At home | Outside home |
| 24 | 25 |
| 1. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. No <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. No <input type="checkbox"/> |

FORM B HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE PART 5: DEATH IN HOUSEHOLD

Deaths in Household in the last 12 months : Total Number of Deaths

| Death Particulars | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|-------|
| Sl. No. | Name of Deceased | Sex 1. Male 2. Female Enter code | Relationship to Head of Household Enter code from list below | Age at Death See note below Enter code from list below | What was the cause of the death? Death caused by illness? (Enter code from list below) | Registration of death Has this death been registered with the civil authority? 1. Yes 2. No | Did the woman die while pregnant, during delivery or within 42 days after giving birth? 1: Yes 2: No | If "Yes" in Column 8(a) State where the Death took place? (Enter code from list below) State who attended on her before death? (Enter code from list below) | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 (a) | 8 (b) | 8 (c) |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | | | | | |

| Codes for column 4 | Codes for column 5 | Code for Column 6 Cause of Death | | Codes for column 8 (b) | Codes for column 8 (c) |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| 1. Head 2. Wife / Husband 3. Son / Daughter 4. Father / Mother 5. Grand child 6. Other Relative 7. Non-Relative including boarder | Write the age in total years completed at the time of Death 000: Less than 1 year 001: 1 year to less than 2 years 002: 2 years to less than 3 years : : : : | Illness 01. Fever 02. Diarrhoea 03. Tuberculosis 04. Heart disease 05. Dengue fever 06. Malaria 07. Tetanus 08. HIV/AIDS | Accident 13. Land mine 14. Road accident 15. Drowning 16: Other accident | Place of Death 1. Hospital 2. Health Center 3. Home 4. Other (specify...) | 1: Doctor 2: Nurse 3: Midwife 4: Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) 5: Other (specify) 6: None |

