

TIMELINE OF WHO'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN CAMBODIA

Updated as of 19 October

LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

- **1 October:** Cambodia begins to experience heavy rainfall across much of the country. Nineteen provinces are affected, with Pursat, Battambang, Phnom Penh and Banteay Meanchey considered the worst hit. Multi-sectorial rapid assessments are performed in heavily affected areas by the Preventive Medicine Department in coordination with DHS, CDC and partners. Preparedness efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of flooding on health care facilities are supported by MOH and WHO and COVID-19 preventative measures are integrated into the provincial responses
- **29-31 July:** Cambodia takes part in the Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases Technical Advisory Group (APSED III TAG) meeting, marking six months of the COVID-19 response
- **15 July:** Ministry of the Interior hosts a high-level meeting between the RGC and the UNCT on the Joint Programme to Support Returning Migrants during COVID-19 Crisis and its Impacts. With more than 100,000 migrant workers having returned from Thailand since the outbreak, WHO continues its support to the MOH with screening at borders, quarantine for those with symptoms, and follow-up of individuals
- **30 April:** The International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee holds their third meeting on the coronavirus outbreak. WHO Cambodia support to the MOH continues to be aligned with the IHR, and the need to scale up the readiness of the entire health system in the event of widespread community transmission, especially at health centres and in the private sector, is recognized as a priority
- **30 April:** The Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat COVID-19 and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) meet to review progress in implementing the Cambodia Master Plan on COVID-19
- **29 April:** State of Emergency legislation promulgated into law
- **24 April:** WHO launches the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a global collaboration to accelerate development, production and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments and vaccines. WHO Cambodia supports the RGC to strengthen its regulatory capacity, draft a COVID-19 National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (NDVP) and assess immunization supply chain management
- **18 March:** A National Committee to Combat COVID-19, led by the Samdech Prime Minister, is established
- **10 March:** The RGC establishes an Inter-ministerial Committee to Combat COVID-19, headed by the Minister of Health. WHO supports the MOH in the development of clinical guidelines (version 1 finalized in March, version 2 in April), including guidance on diagnosis and management of COVID-19, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) (finalized in July)

- **14 February:** After several days at sea, the RGC agrees to allow the Holland America MS Westerdam cruise ship to dock at Sihanoukville port. WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus praises the decision as an act of “international solidarity”
- **3 February:** WHO finalizes its Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP), centred on improving capacity to detect, prepare and respond to the outbreak. To prepare for community transmission, WHO Cambodia works with the MOH and other partners to develop a National Master Plan, covering nine technical areas and budgeting \$62 million for the first year
- **1 January:** WHO activates its Incident Management Support Team (IMST) as part of its emergency response framework, ensuring coordination of activities and response across the three levels of the organization. As technical lead and outbreak coordinator, WHO Cambodia begins to mobilize existing and new coordination mechanisms for the response, both formal and informal, and prepares existing resources from development partners to contribute to plan funding

LAB AND SURVEILLANCE

- **21 September:** The ILI sentinel site expansion begins with set up of five new ILI sites across the country
- **19 September:** Eight clusters of ILI symptoms confirmed as influenza A H3N2 outbreaks, with 575 cases reported among monks, prisoners and community members. All samples test negative for COVID-19, supporting existing evidence that SARS-CoV-2 is not circulating in the community.
- **14 September:** Battambang province conducts the first provincial stage assessment with support from MOH and WHO
- **7 September:** Number of tests performed within the country reaches 100,000, with more than 80,000 individuals tested using real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) at a positivity rate of 0.34%
- **27 August:** Testing at the new laboratory in Siem Reap begins, the first of three provincial sites to establish COVID-19 testing capacity using GeneXpert technology with strong support from WHO
- **4 August:** WHO donates essential supplies to the MOH in an official handover ceremony. To date, WHO has provided 480,000 PPEs, 300 oxygen concentrators, and key laboratory supplies, including 28,900 specimen collection kits, 17,000 Nasopharyngeal swabs, 71,200 RT-PCR reagents which are used to collect specimens and to diagnose cases of COVID-19. WHO has also supported other partners to procure a range of supplies with funding from the World Bank, including 5,000 GeneXpert test cartridges and 53 ventilators
- **28 June:** MOH begins national stage assessment for COVID-19 with support from WHO
- **22 June:** National Training of Trainers (TOT) of Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) takes place. RRTs of 2,910 public health staff at national, provincial, district and health centre levels are

responsible for basic surveillance, contact tracing, specimen collection and manning the toll-free national 115 hotline, which has been scaled up to handle up to 10,000 calls per day

- **21 May:** First new case recorded since 11 April
- **16 May:** The country records 100% recovery rate as the last active case is discharged from hospital
- **01 May:** COVID-19 case definition modified and approved by MOH
- **10 April:** IPC Virology Unit designated as one of 17 WHO Global Reference Laboratories for COVID-19
- **27 March:** National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) is announced as second COVID-19 testing lab after training and capacity building from IP-C
- **22 March:** Largest daily increase in positive cases (31) to date linked to French tour group in Preah Sihanouk, with intensive contact tracing efforts supported by WHO leading to a further eight locally acquired cases among 631 contacts traced
- **January:** The Institute Pasteur in Cambodia (IP-C) Virology Unit is designated by the Cambodian MOH as first line laboratory for diagnosis of COVID-19
- **27 January:** First case of COVID-19 diagnosed in Cambodia

NON-PHARMACEUTICAL INTERVENTIONS

- **15 October:** Public universities allowed to reopen across the country
- **25 August:** the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) issue guidelines for the second phase of school reopenings. Public kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in four low-risk provinces allowed to open in September, while Grades 9 and 12 allowed to reopen across rest of country
- **20 July:** Guidelines for reopening schools are published by the MoEYS, incorporating WHO recommendations. The first phase of the plan allows 20 high safety standard private schools to reopen in August
- **13 August:** Incoming flights from the Philippines are temporarily suspended
- **1 August:** Incoming flights from Malaysia and Indonesia are temporarily suspended after a significant increase in positive cases arriving from these countries
- **12 June:** The RGC announces a cash transfer scheme for ID Poor 1 and 2 Card Holders, children under five, elderly persons, disabled persons, and people living with HIV
- **11 June:** Strict entry requirements for all nondiplomatic foreigners now include negative COVID-19 health certificates, medical insurance, testing upon arrival, 14-day quarantine and further testing on day 13
- **20 May:** Travel restrictions banning nationals from six countries (the United States, France, Italy, Iran, Germany and Spain) are lifted
- **17 April:** The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training issues quarantine measures for any garment workers or other enterprise employees who took leave during Khmer New Year
- **9 April:** Travel restrictions imposed by RGC until 16 April. No movements outside of Phnom Penh, between provinces and between districts are allowed, with some exemptions provided

- **7 April:** Three-day Khmer New Year public holiday is cancelled
- **3 April:** Ministry of Interior limits mass gatherings to ensure the security, public order and social safety during the Khmer New Year celebration
- **27 March:** Travel restrictions for foreigners issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- **22 March:** MOH calls for Cambodian migrants returning from Thailand to put themselves in 14-day self-isolation quarantine
- **16 March:** Public and private education facilities closed nationwide by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS), with distance-learning measures implemented. WHO guidelines on schools and workplaces reopening are incorporated into the national guidelines
- **14 March:** Travellers from the United States, France, Germany, Italy and Spain are temporarily banned