

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

The Kingdom of Cambodia (RGC) is a unitary country with three tiers of subnational government. The country is divided into 25 regional governments (24 provinces and the capital city). At the intermediary level, there are 159 districts and 26 municipalities. At the local level, the country counts 1 410 communes and 236 *Sangkats*. Local councils are elected and local executives appointed.¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Review (VNR).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

Following the endorsement of the SDGs at the UN General Assembly in 2015, Cambodia worked to adapt the goals to its national context and has crafted the **Cambodian SDGs (CSDGs) Framework 2016-2030**.³ The SDGs fully align with the RGC's long-term development vision as articulated in Vision 2050, and in its medium-term instruments – the **Rectangular Strategy Phase IV (RS-IV)** and the **National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2019-2023**.

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The **Ministry of Planning** was nominated in 2015 to lead efforts towards the implementation of the CSDGs, and coordinates the **National Council on Sustainable Development**.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The process underpinning Cambodia's first VNR was led by the **Ministry of Planning**. As with the CSDGs Framework, the VNR relies on a wide consultative process. It has adopted a whole of government approach - drawing in ministries and agencies, and local administrations - as well as a whole of society approach open to civil society and business actors.

1.3 MONITORING

In addition to the 17 SDGs, an 18th goal requiring the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordinance was added. The final framework comprises 18 **CSDGs**, 88 nationally relevant targets, and 148 globally and locally defined indicators. Overall responsibility for the national M&E process lies with the **Ministry of Planning**, who is maintaining the **CSDG indicator database** and acting as lead technical focal point. The former task includes compiling data received and providing annual updates and five yearly milestone reports for review by the national government.

Ministries and national agencies' capacity and data systems are urgently being strengthened through the **National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS)**, which is an important complementary initiative to designing and monitoring the CSDGs. The 2019 VNR indicates that given the wide scope of CSDGs, and that their delivery requires the contribution of all Cambodian stakeholders and their partners, the RGC will also seek to build an ecosystem supportive of wider feedback, and engage with the private sector, civil society and international organizations.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

LRGs were involved in the 2019 VNR process, and the **National League of Local Councils (NLC)** states it is always invited by the Ministry of Planning in the events related to the SDGs. Regarding national coordination for SDG implementation, the

1. See: https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOFI_2019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf

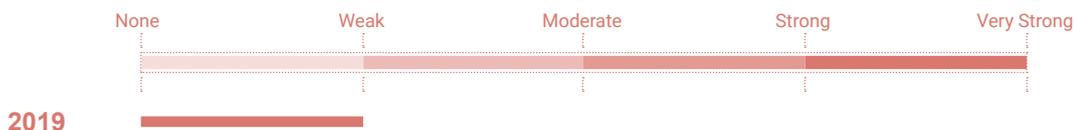
2. See: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23603Cambodia_VNR_PublishingHLPF.pdf (2019)

3. See more details in the VNR, 2019, p. 15-16.

local government association reports a regular participation and indicates that the mechanism coordinated by the Ministry of Planning allows for “good cooperation with local governments”.⁴

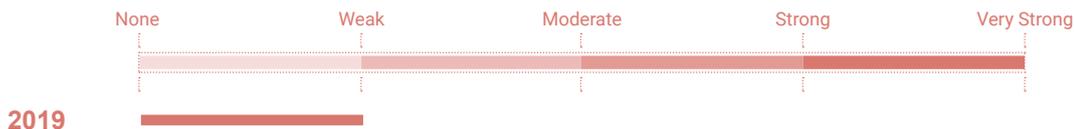
2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: According to the 2019 VNR, LRGs were consulted.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: LRGs are consulted. The NLC participates regularly (no decision-making). LRGs’ responses to the GTF Survey indicate a medium participation. (GTF Survey 2021).

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNR and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments’ annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

The 2019 VNR specifies that “geographical consistency” is necessary to ensure that “national, subnational and local plans are reconciled and work together for maximum impact” (see VNR, 2019, p. 88). However, there are only a few direct references to LRGs. As part of the review of SDG 11, there is a case study (a two page-long box) dedicated to the presentation of initiatives taken in the city of **Battambang** (see VNR, 2019, p. 72-73).

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► The **National League of Communes (NLC)** has included the SDGs in its five-year strategic plan (2018-2022) and is committed to organizing capacity-building workshops on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, such as the international workshop it organized in 2019, in Siem Reap.⁵

► With the support of UN agencies, cities like **Battambang** are currently undertaking action to improve urban integrated management, particularly in such fields as waste management and participatory planning. Indeed, Battambang was selected as one of five pilot cities under the joint United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UN-Habitat project, “Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into local action in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific” (2018-2021). The project focuses on advocacy and capacity development for local government and other urban stakeholders in Battambang as related to the principles, goals, and means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and is being implemented in Battambang with local partners from different stakeholder groups. Battambang has selected solid waste management, livelihoods and local economic development, waste water, and affordable housing as the city’s SURM priorities. The 2019 VNR indicates that “the process operationalizing the localization of the SDGs is integral, and the SURM approach thus translates for the local level the systemic issues in SDG 17, the call to strengthen institutions and multi-stakeholder involvement from SDG 16, and takes cues from other “means of implementation” targets across the SDGs. The aim is to strengthen the capacities of local governments and other key urban stakeholders to achieve effective partnerships at the city-level” (see VNR, 2019, p. 71-72).

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

Not applicable.

4. Answer of the National League of Local Councils (NLC) to the GTF Survey in 2020 and 2021. However, the NLC reported not having been invited to the preparation of the 2019 VNR.

5. UCLG, 2019, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/Localization2019_EN.pdf

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The national government has acknowledged that the SDGs should still be matrixed to the subnational level in 2019, including subnational budgets.⁶

A **Subnational Investment Fund** will provide grants (but not initially loans) to fund public infrastructure and services. This fund prioritizes providing support for decentralized sectors and services and promoting the ongoing reform process. It receives support from the Asian Development Bank and will provide different types of support to each level of government, according to its context, on a competitive basis.⁷

The 2019 VNR states that “on-going reforms, especially in Public Financial Management and public administration reform, have provided momentum for the [SDGs] with their respective focus on results-based budgeting and improved public service delivery”. It also draws attention to Cambodia’s specific resourcing constraints versus the level of ambition represented by the CSDGs, alongside Vision 2050 objectives. Delivering these will require major investments and a matching expansion in resource flows.

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: Cambodia is part of the Asian countries where local government reforms are still at an early stage or where local administration is deconcentrated rather than decentralized.⁸ Yet, since the local elections in 2009, some LRGs note that they have seen positive changes, for instance in the district administration. They mention the implementation of decentralization and deconcentration processes at sub-national level, which result in the augmentation of the speed of administrative service delivery and in faster development of public services. The district administration has therefore been able to manage its resources more effectively and in the ownership way.⁹

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

There has been a significant increase regarding the participation of women in the political leadership over the past decade. The 2019 VNR acknowledges that there is a higher proportion of women in politics at the subnational level (from 40% in 2014 to 43% in 2017) than at the national level (from 27% in 2014 to 31% in 2017). The proportion of women in commune/*Sangkat* councils reached 16.75%.

3.2 COVID 19

Not applicable.

4. SDG INDICATORS¹⁰

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		16.9 (2019)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	57 (2020)
	Rural	18 (2020)
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		45.1 (2018)
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		-
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		25 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		-

6. UCLG, 2019, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/Localization2019_EN.pdf

7. UCLG, 2019, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/Localization2019_EN.pdf

8. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>

9. Answer of the Monkul Borey District to the GTF Survey in 2021.

10. The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>.

More information on the country’s progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/khm>