

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE LABOR MARKET *in Cambodia*



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in Cambodia



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Contents

List of Tables, Figures, and Boxes	v
Abbreviations	vi
Foreword	vii
Acknowledgments	viii
Executive Summary	ix
I. Introduction	1
Major Themes and Challenges	1
Structure of the Report	2
II. Gendered Employment and Inclusive Growth	3
Review of Key Terms	3
Decent Work and Development in Cambodia	6
Employment Performance	8
Gender Gaps in the Labor Market	9
Labor Force Participation Gap	10
Unpaid Domestic and Care Work Gap	11
Human Capital Gap	11
Gender Gaps in Labor Market Outcomes	12
Employment Gap	12
Decent Work Gap	15
Social Protection Gap	16
Gendered Analysis of Labor Markets: Industrial Sectors	17
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	18
Industry	20
Services	22
Entrepreneurship	23
International Migration	23
Pathways to Gender Equality in the Labor Market and Inclusive Growth	24
III. Review of Policies for Gender Equality in the Labor Market	25
National Development Goals and Macroeconomic Policies	25
High-Level Goals and Commitments to Gender Equality	25
Monetary Policy	25
Fiscal Policy	26
Trade Policy	27
Employment Policy	29
National Women’s Ministries or Commissions and Gender Equality Strategies	29

Key Sector Policies	31
Agriculture	31
Industry and Manufacturing	34
Tourism	35
Government Services	37
Entrepreneurship	37
Labor Support Policies	38
Social Protection	38
Training, Skills Development, and Transition to the Labor Market	41
IV. Review of Legislative Frameworks and Laws for Gender Equality in the Labor Market	45
Legislative Framework	45
Promoting Women’s Access to Work	46
Employment and Recruitment Services	46
Short-Term Contracts	48
Limiting Constraints on Work	48
Family Responsibilities	49
Lack of Access to Property	51
Improving Women’s Working Conditions	51
Equal Pay and Minimum Wages	51
Complaint Mechanisms	52
Labor Inspectorate	53
Social Dialogue and Trade Unions	54
V. Policy and Legislative Recommendations for a Gender-Inclusive Labor Market	56
Promoting Access to Work and Enhancing Employment Opportunities for Women	56
National Plans and Policies	56
Agriculture	57
Industry and Manufacturing	58
Services Sector	59
Entrepreneurship for Rural Women	59
Public and Private Employment Agencies	59
Limiting Constraints on Work for Women	60
Access to Resources	60
Reducing Women’s Domestic Work and Care Burden	60
Improving Women’s Working Conditions	60
Social Protection in the Informal Sector	60
Training Programs and Skills Development	61
Legislation and Decent Work Requirements	61
Antidiscrimination Legislation	61
Legislation on Multiple Short-Term Contracts	61
Decent Work Measures	62
References	64

Tables, Figures, and Boxes

Tables

1	Development and Population Indicators in Cambodia	7
2	Most Recent Employment Indicators in Cambodia	8
3	Education Indicators in Cambodia, 2000 and 2010	12
4	Employment Indicators, Women and Men in Cambodia, Selected Years	13
5	Average Wage and Gender Wage Gap in Cambodia, 2009	16
6	Distribution of Employment by Industry, Women and Men in Cambodia, 2008	18

Figures

1	Labor Force Participation Rates, Women and Men in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Kazakhstan, 2001 and 2012	10
2	Women's Labor Force Participation Rates by Age in Cambodia, 2000 and 2010	11
3	Share of Vulnerable Employment, Women and Men in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Kazakhstan, Selected Years	14
4	Vulnerable Work Gender Gap in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Kazakhstan, 2000, 2004, and 2012	14
5	Employment Share by Economic Sector, Women and Men in Cambodia, 1998 and 2008	17
6	Distribution of Women's Employment by Occupation in Cambodia, 2011	19
7	Distribution of Men's Employment by Occupation in Cambodia, 2011	20

Boxes

1	Women's Employment in the Garment and Footwear Industry, Cambodia	21
2	Gender-Sensitive Employment Targets and Gender Capacity Building in Rural Infrastructure Projects, Cambodia	27
3	Better Factories Cambodia Project	28
4	Women in Farmers' Organizations, Cambodia	33
5	Prevention of Trafficking Strategy, Cambodia	36

Abbreviations

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	–	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BFC	–	Better Factories Cambodia
CEDAW	–	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
FAO	–	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	–	gross domestic product
GMAC	–	Garment Manufacturing Association of Cambodia
GMAP	–	gender mainstreaming action plan
IFC	–	International Finance Corporation
ILO	–	International Labour Organization
LFPR	–	labor force participation rate
MDG	–	Millennium Development Goal
MOLVT	–	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training
MOWA	–	Ministry of Women’s Affairs
MSMEs	–	micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises
NEA	–	National Employment Agency
NGO	–	nongovernment organization
NSDP	–	National Strategic Development Plan
NSPS	–	National Social Protection Strategy
TVET	–	technical and vocational education and training
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
WRTS	–	wholesale and retail trade and services

International Labour Organization Conventions

C2	–	Unemployment Convention
C81	–	Labour Inspection Convention
C88	–	Employment Service Convention
C96	–	Convention Concerning Fee-Charging Employment Agencies (revised)
C100	–	Equal Remuneration Convention
C111	–	Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)
C129	–	Labour Inspection (Agriculture).
C144	–	Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention
C156	–	Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention
C181	–	Private Employment Agencies Convention

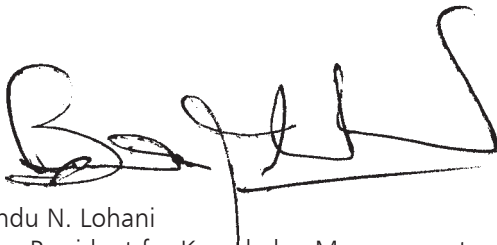
Foreword

Increasing job opportunities and decent work for women are essential for inclusive growth, and they are vital for advancing economic and social development in a country. This approach to attaining economic and social wealth is based on reliable academic and statistical evidence and is increasingly accepted by international and national financial and development organizations across the globe, including in Asia. However, attitudes toward providing decent work to men and women alike, irrespective of their ethnic origin and class, continue to be ambiguous, complex, and controversial, because the issue touches on deeply felt societal values in interpersonal relations, culture, religion, economics, and politics.

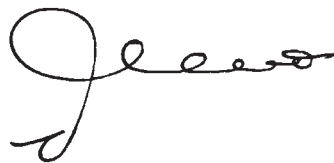
In Asia, as in other parts of the world, it is mostly women who continue to experience the greatest disadvantages resulting from gender inequalities and entrenched discrimination in work and in life. The economic and social contributions made by women in the family, the workplace, and society tend to be devalued. There are, however, many strategies which have been developed to counter gender discrimination and promote equality for working men and women through legislation and social and economic policies to reverse the unequal labor market outcomes for women.

In order to document the nature and extent of gender inequalities in the labor market, as well as to capture and share these promising initiatives, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) initiated studies in three countries—Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and the Philippines—to identify how these countries promote gender equality in their labor markets. In addition, in view of the interest in sharing good practices in developing member countries, ADB, in cooperation with the International Labour Office in Bangkok, supported the production of two global good practice reports—one on legislation and legal practices and the other on economic and social policy practices—as well as updates for Cambodia and the Philippines.

The product of this combined project is five reports. The two global reports, authored by Robyn Layton and Fiona MacPhail, illustrate how the combination of good practices in law and social and economic policies working together can improve equitable employment opportunities, remuneration, and treatment for women and men at work. It is important for social justice and is also smart economics. Another report, also authored by Robyn Layton and Fiona MacPhail, analyzes and makes recommendations for gender equality in the labor market in Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and the Philippines. The series concludes with two reports on gender equality in the labor market, focused on the situation in Cambodia and the Philippines, to support the development of decent work and gender equality good practices in these countries.



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Executive Summary

This report on gender equality in the labor market in Cambodia is drawn from studies by a team of consultants selected by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for a technical assistance project on promoting gender equality in Asian labor markets for inclusive growth, implemented in cooperation with the International Labour Office, Bangkok. The report comprises a gendered analysis of Cambodia's labor market, policies, and legislation and provides recommendations for policies and legislation that have the potential to expand or improve employment and work opportunities for women in specific sectors in Cambodia. The report provides a summary of findings and recommendations that are specifically relevant for Cambodia from an analysis of gender equality and the labor markets in Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and the Philippines, and two global good practice reviews: one on social and economic policy and the other on legislation (ADB 2013a; ADB and ILO 2013a; ADB and ILO 2013b).

Major Themes of Gender Inequality and Constraints on Women in the Market

Attaining inclusive growth requires expanding equitable employment opportunities and decent work outcomes for men and women in labor markets. Economic growth in Cambodia has not translated into sufficient employment growth, and the employment growth has not been inclusive for women. The share of women in wage employment in the nonagriculture sector in Cambodia has increased, indicating improvements in gender equality in the labor market, although women have not reached parity with men. Further, based on other measures such as the gender wage gap, gender inequality has increased.

However, employment growth alone is not sufficient to judge whether there is inclusive growth, especially in low-income countries where there is significant underemployment and a large informal employment sector. Gender inequality in the labor market is ascertained by reference to seven gender gaps (or deficits for women): labor force participation, human capital, the unpaid domestic and care work burden, vulnerable employment, wage employment, decent work, and social protection. Despite several gender-responsive legal and policy initiatives, an assessment of the labor market in Cambodia reveals that although some gender gaps have been reduced, women still suffer from persistent gender deficits.

Labor Force Participation Rate Gap

Some progress has been made in reducing the gender gap between men and women in the labor force participation rate (LFPR), which now stands at 7.5 percentage points. The lower LFPR of women compared to that of men represents an underutilization of women's labor in the paid labor market which arises from inferior employment and decent work opportunities, human capital differences, and unpaid domestic labor and care constraints.

Attaining inclusive growth requires expanding equitable employment opportunities and decent work outcomes for men and women in labor markets.

Human Capital Gap

There are pronounced quantitative differences between men and women in terms of literacy and total years of schooling, which constrain women's participation in the labor market and contribute to the gender gap in decent work.

Unpaid Domestic and Care Work Gap

There is a strong gendered division of domestic labor with women having primary responsibility for household and care work

There is a strong gendered division of domestic labor with women having primary responsibility for household and care work and a higher total work burden relative to men. The unpaid work gap for women is 3.5 hours per day. Gendered social norms contribute to women having greater responsibility for and time commitments to domestic and care work, and this has been slow to change despite women's increased participation in and time allocated to paid work. Relatively high fertility rates continue to raise the demand for women's unpaid labor, especially given the low provision of child care services.

Vulnerable Employment Gap

The share of vulnerable employment is very high for both men and women. However, women are more likely to be in vulnerable employment and also more likely to be in the category of unpaid contributing family worker, which offers the least opportunities for decent work. The gender gap in vulnerable employment (being the sum of own-account and unpaid contributing family workers) is almost 9 percentage points.

Wage Employment Gap

Women have lower employment rates than men, which gives rise to a gender gap in the employment rate. Over the past several years, there has been an increase in this gap to 7.5 percentage points, due to the larger increase in the employment of men relative to women.

Decent Work Gap

"Decent work" includes a number of dimensions, such as rights at work, security of work, working conditions, representation and voice, and patterns of equality. The decent work gender gap exists partly because women have less access than men to wage employment. One major indicator of decent work is the level of remuneration. Low-wage work is generally indicative of a lack of decent work and is more prevalent among women than men in Cambodia. The gender wage gap was 27 percentage points in 2009, which is demonstrative of the high level of gender inequality in the labor market.

Social Protection

A gender gap in social protection, particularly access to social insurance, exists largely because women have less access to formal wage employment.

Addressing Challenges and Reducing Constraints on Women in the Labor Market

Despite a decline in the gender gap in human capital, the gender gap in productive and decent work persists in Cambodia. The gender employment gap has a profound and compounding effect on women in the labor market, not only because they are subject to the deficits of less available work, more vulnerable work, and the unpaid work burden, but also because they are paid at a lower rate than men even when they do find work.

The main constraints on women in the labor market are domestic work and care burdens, and women's more limited access to resources, including education, training, government services, credit, and financial services. Women also face pervasive discrimination and lack of social protection in most aspects of their employment and work.

Cambodia faces the task of generating employment growth, reducing vulnerable employment, and improving decent work opportunities. This will require broad macroeconomic responses to expand employment opportunities, as well as policies and legislation to improve decent work, social protection, and active labor market support for men and women alike.

Policies

Gender equality is not recognized as a normative macroeconomic goal in Cambodia's national development plan. The use of macroeconomic policies to directly expand employment has been limited, and gendered impacts remain underexplored. By contrast, trade policies have been linked with employment, and Cambodia has identified employment targets or indicators.

There is a need for country-specific analysis of the gendered impacts of fiscal and monetary policy, along with gender-sensitive and transformative program design and implementation. Reducing women's unpaid domestic and care work is an important strategy to facilitate the participation of women on more equal terms with men in the labor market. This includes developing a child care services framework policy. Similarly, the promotion of the export of goods and services should be linked with analysis of the gendered employment effects; such a study should be complemented with an employment analysis of import policies (typically tariff reductions).

There are opportunities to build upon some existing positive elements. Cambodia, with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), is discussing a national employment policy to promote the importance of employment and decent work. It is recommended that increased employment be recognized as a macroeconomic goal and that gender equitable targets are set and monitored.

Cambodia faces the task of generating employment, growth, reducing vulnerable employment, and improving decent work opportunities for men and women alike

Active Labor Market Supports

Cambodia should increase the engagement of women in relevant technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs, linking these to the labor market and ensuring that women have access to training in nontraditional fields. This requires increased connection with industry and employer groups and the development of public-private partnerships, including links with public and private employment agencies. Each stage should involve women and should specifically target their needs before they take up TVET programs. Furthermore, young women frequently require specific encouragement to undertake nontraditional curriculum studies that will open up future employment opportunities on an equal basis with men. Such training programs need to be accompanied by specific measures to reduce discrimination against women being hired in nontraditional occupations and industries.

To address the lack of coverage of social security for the informal sector, which has an especially negative effect on women, Cambodia, with the assistance of the ILO, has recently developed the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) for the Poor and Vulnerable (2011–2015). The core vision of that strategy is to provide effective social safety nets, and sustainable, affordable social security for the poor and vulnerable. Two of the five NSPS objectives specifically mention women.

Legislation and Mechanisms

Although guarantees of equality and nondiscrimination are embedded in Cambodia's Constitution and labor legislation, further improvements are required. For example, the definition of discrimination must be clarified, provisions should be made for temporary special measures, and sexual harassment must be specifically prohibited.

Cambodia should also amend its legislation to properly enact the concept of “equal remuneration for work of equal value” which is relevant to reducing the wage gap. It is recommended that steps be taken to develop and implement an independent minimum wage setting process that is transparent, applies objective criteria, and includes the involvement of social partners. Additionally, limiting the use of multiple short-term contracts is good legislative practice to address one important aspect of precarious work.

Cambodia should seek ways to provide effective, simple, and well-publicized mechanisms to encourage women to make complaints and seek redress for discrimination and sexual harassment in their working environments. Women's voices need to be heard on these issues, and women's participation through trade unions and women's collectives and organizations should be encouraged. Cambodia also needs to address structural issues and funding challenges in order to improve the effectiveness and coverage of the labor inspectorate. Initiatives may include developing public–private partnerships to achieve improved labor inspection and using social dialogue.

Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Targets, and Gender Action Plans

Men and women face different constraints to obtaining productive employment, decent work, and/or government services. Because women are the most disadvantaged and suffer the most deficits in comparison to men, strategies to address their specific constraints must be developed. Such strategies include gender mainstreaming and gender-specific programs. The mechanisms include sex-disaggregated data, targets (e.g., quotas for women in services received, employment targets, and targets for beneficiaries of services), gender budgets, and opportunities for women in the civil service, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and the private sector.

The 5-year strategic plans which guide Cambodia's national and subnational policies and programs on gender and development, the gender mainstreaming action plans (GMAPs) established by nearly all line ministries, and the sex-disaggregated target setting in Cambodia are good examples of policy innovation. However, lack of effective implementation is a problem. Continued expansion of target setting in sector policies is recommended since setting explicit targets, and monitoring and assessing outcomes is one of the most important ways to reduce gender inequality.

Expanding and Improving Decent Work Opportunities for Women

It is recommended that Cambodia expand employment and decent work opportunities for women in the agriculture, industrial, manufacturing, and services (tourism and public service) sectors, as well as in entrepreneurship.

The 5-year strategic plans ..., the gender mainstreaming action plans ..., and the sex-disaggregated target setting in Cambodia are good examples of policy innovation

Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the largest sectors of women's employment in Cambodia and is identified as a priority for development and export, with food security being an important goal. Despite ongoing agrarian reform, women own less land in their own name than men and are disadvantaged through inheritance laws, land titling systems, and in their ability to purchase land. Women are more likely than men to be responsible for subsistence crops and to lack access to cash crops and the resulting income. Furthermore, women receive less agricultural extension training and less credit, and have lower levels of participation in farmers' organizations. In addition to reducing gender-specific constraints in agriculture, there also are opportunities to support women's paid work in processing and value-added production.

The overarching agricultural policies and plans in Cambodia do not address the situation of women in the sector, although GMAPs exist in relevant ministries. It is recommended that the government develop an overarching agricultural strategy to reduce constraints on women, increase women's productivity and incomes, and ensure their inclusion in the transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture. Improving the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data is an essential prerequisite that will enable the mapping of where women work, the products they produce, and their roles in production.

Manufacturing and Industry Sectors

Cambodia has an export-oriented development strategy that is designed to promote economic growth through industrial production, manufacturing, and employment, while also taking advantage of resource endowments and creating supportive policies and laws.

Export-led development has occurred primarily in manufacturing, and specifically in the garment, textiles, and footwear subsectors. The manufacturing sector is characterized by low labor productivity and infrastructure deficits. The country's comparative advantage arises from its cheap and abundant workforce of young women who compose the overwhelming majority of the labor force. While there have been improvements in decent work, assisted by the Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) program, some challenges remain. Ensuring the industry's longer-term economic viability requires continued growth and diversification, which must be addressed through policy and in cooperation with private industry. Cambodia needs to move up the value chain in the global garment industry, which will require industry restructuring, skills development, and social protection. This report provides recommendations on ways to achieve such a move through skills training, promotional opportunities, and an extension of the BFC program within the industry.

Services

The services sector is large and heterogeneous in productivity, incomes, and decent work. The wholesale and retail trade and services (WRTS) sector accounts for a large share of women's employment in Cambodia and typically comprises self-employed workers and microenterprises that sell food and household goods, or repair vehicles. Women are overrepresented in the sector, accounting for 63% of all WRTS workers.

Other service subsectors that offer present and future opportunities to expand and advance women's employment include public sector employment and tourism. Public sector employment typically offers better opportunities for decent work and social protection than that of the private sector. There are, however, three main constraints faced by women. First, women have less access to public sector employment in Cambodia, where the female share of employment in public

Constraints on women should be addressed through setting minimum gender-specific employment targets and timelines, implementing specific strategies to encourage women to apply for work, and developing special programs to enable women to access higher-paid work and more senior management positions

administration is only 13%. Second, women have less access to higher-level occupations within the public sector, given the gender wage gap. Addressing such issues will provide opportunities for expanded employment and decent work in the public sector. Constraints on women should be addressed through setting minimum gender-specific employment targets and timelines, implementing specific strategies to encourage women to apply for work, and developing special programs to enable women to access higher-paid work and more senior management positions.

Tourism is already a priority for Cambodia and notably the government has included a GMAP as part of its tourism strategy. Tourism provides employment opportunities for women at a number of different occupational levels, and ecotourism in particular could provide significant opportunities for rural women. Important policy issues to be addressed include the effects of tourism on the physical environment and the social and cultural structure of the country, and risks such as an increase in sex tourism and trafficking of women and girls. These issues require a combination of legislation and policies, and women should be involved at all stages of their development. In addition, policies should incorporate focused action plans that contain targets for the participation of women across all subsectors of the tourism and related sectors.

Entrepreneurship

When setting up a business, women have different motivations and requirements than men due to the different gender roles assigned to them in Cambodian society. Women need access to improved microcredit programs and should have improved access to information, training, and outreach services to build their capacity to start up their businesses and upgrade them over time. Measures to support and facilitate women upgrading their businesses and employment circumstances are necessary to encourage a progressive integration of rural women's businesses into the formal economy. This report makes recommendations in this area, particularly with relation to women in rural areas, and highlights examples of good practice.

Introduction

This report analyzes gender equality in the labor market and related policies and legislation in Cambodia, and concludes with recommendations to promote gender equality. The report draws from a country study, a regional synthesis report on gender equality in the labor markets of Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and the Philippines; other secondary literature; and two global good practice reviews: one on economic and social policy and one on legislation (ADB 2013a; ADB and ILO 2013a; ADB and ILO 2013b).

Cambodia is a country in transition as a result of 3 decades of internal violence encompassing the Khmer Rouge regime (1975–1979), a period of Vietnamese-backed socialist rule (1979–1989), and civil conflict until the arrival of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia in 1992. It is estimated that more than 2 million people died during the Khmer Rouge period, and this has had long-term implications for population demographics such as age, sex, education and literacy, and employment.

Traditional attitudes toward women have a significant effect on the labor market. Women have traditionally been considered to be of lower status to men, and this has led to gender inequality, which perpetuates disparities in employment. Nonetheless, gender relations in Cambodia are undergoing significant change. Although the culturally defined behavior norms for women constrain their opportunities outside of the household, economic, social, and political developments are opening up new opportunities for women. The Constitution of 1999¹ clearly reflects the principle of gender equality, and Cambodia is a signatory to several international agreements, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW)² and all the international labor standards associated with the fundamental principles and rights at work, including the Equal Remuneration Convention (C100) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (C111). The 1997 Labor Law³ prohibits discrimination based on sex and recognizes gender-specific concerns by including provisions for countering human trafficking and affording women rights in employment and inheritance.

Significant progress has also been achieved in women’s representation in elected positions, both in local communities and in the national assembly. Women’s representation in deputy provincial governor and deputy secretary of state positions has exceeded current gender targets, although women’s representation in top decision-making positions, such as provincial governor, secretary of state, or minister, needs to be increased.

Major Themes and Challenges

With respect to enhancing and improving women’s employment and work, Cambodia faces a number of challenges. First, it has an extensive rural population and relies on the agriculture

Although the culturally defined behavior norms for women constrain their opportunities outside of the household, economic, social, and political developments are opening up new opportunities for women

¹ See Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Adopted 21 September 1993, amended 8 March 1999. Available at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_150855.pdf

² General Assembly resolution 34/180, 34 UN GAOR Supp. (No. 46) at 193, UN Doc. A/34/46, entered into force 3 September 1981.

³ Cambodia. Labor Law of 13 March 1997.

sector for employment, economic growth, exports, and food security. The agriculture sector is a significant source of employment for women and is important for poverty reduction in rural areas. Agriculture is the largest sector for women’s employment in Cambodia (75%). Despite the significance of agriculture to the overall economy, few farmers—and in particular few women farmers—have access to high-quality inputs, credit, or information on farming techniques and markets.

Challenges for women in the labor market include the domestic work and care burden; their limited access to resources, including credit and financial services; inadequate education and training programs; lack of government services; disadvantages in social protection coverage; and pervading discrimination

Other challenges for women in the labor market include the domestic work and care burden; their limited access to resources, including credit and financial services; inadequate education and training programs; lack of government services; disadvantages in social protection coverage; and pervading discrimination in most aspects of employment and work. Strategies to promote gender equality for inclusive growth in the labor market will need to reflect Cambodia’s specific conditions, both historical and current.

Structure of the Report

The present report is divided into five sections. Following this brief introduction and background, Section II presents a gendered analysis of employment and inclusive growth in Cambodia. Section III is a gendered analysis of policy in Cambodia, covering macroeconomic policy, employment policy, sector policies, and labor market supports, with reference to global good practices. Section IV discusses legislative frameworks and laws from a gendered perspective. Finally, Section V offers recommendations as to policies and laws to further promote and enhance women’s work in Cambodia, with reference to global good practices.

Gendered Employment and Inclusive Growth



Review of Key Terms

Gender equitable employment and decent work are necessary for achieving gender equality and inclusive growth. The following is an explanation of the key terms:

Inclusive growth, as defined by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), means “raising the pace of growth and enlarging the size of the economy, while leveling the playing field for investment and increasing productive employment opportunities, as well as ensuring fair access to them. It allows every section of the society to participate in and contribute to the growth process equally, irrespective of their circumstances” (ADB 2011a, 4). ADB’s inclusive growth strategy comprises three elements: sustained growth and productive employment, social inclusion, and equal access to economic opportunity and social safety nets (ADB 2011b). Thus, inclusive growth requires an expansion of productive employment and decent work, and labor markets must be rebalanced to ensure that women gain greater benefits from employment opportunities.

Inclusive growth requires an expansion of productive employment and decent work, and labor markets must be rebalanced to ensure that women gain greater benefits from employment opportunities

Many international agencies and national governments recognize the contribution of gender-equitable employment to inclusive growth (ADB and ILO 2011; ILO 2009; World Bank 2011; World Bank 2012a; UNRISD 2010). Gender-inclusive growth requires that productive employment and decent work increases and that the gender gap declines across a range of employment-related indicators. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), this means promoting gender equality in the labor market toward achieving equality of opportunity and treatment, and equal remuneration for work of equal value.

The International Monetary Fund argues that gender matters for efficiency reasons, because of the “misallocation of women’s labor as a result of discrimination, social norms, of lack of opportunity results in economic losses” (IMF 2013, 52). The importance of productive employment, decent work, and gender equality in the labor market is also reflected in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, was added in 2008 to measure progress toward MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Gender-specific education and employment targets are included to measure MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. Key indicators for MDG 3 are the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary, and tertiary education; the share of women in wage employment in the nonagriculture sector; and the proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament (UNDP 2008c).

Decent work, as defined by the ILO, “involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and

treatment for all women and men” (ILO, Decent Work). Decent work requires consideration not only of levels of remuneration but also of rights at work; security in work; conditions of work; organization, representation, and voice; and patterns of equality and inclusion (Rodgers 2008, 66). Indicators to measure these decent work dimensions have been proposed but data limitations still curtail concrete analysis of decent work patterns.⁴

Gender equality in the labor market requires going beyond the counting of wage employment to an analysis of decent work for men and women.⁵ Women are often subject to vulnerabilities through working in jobs that have “decent work deficits.” Women are likely to be engaged in vulnerable employment (defined as own-account work and unpaid contributing family work) that is characterized by “low productivity (return for labor), drudgery (in terms of working hours and working conditions), lack of access to social protection and basic workers’ rights” (Otope 2011, 9). Gender inequality in the labor market is indicated by not only the higher share of women in vulnerable employment but also the gender wage gaps, and occupational and industrial segregation by sex. Despite increases in women’s labor force participation rates and human capital, women’s share of vulnerable employment has increased indicating that, without good policies and special measures to close gender gaps, gender equality in the labor market will persist. Thus, promoting gender equality in the labor market encompasses the whole decent work spectrum and is geared toward achieving equality in labor market outcomes for men and women.

“Gender equality is not a complicated idea. It’s simple: women must have the same rights as men and discrimination has to stop”

High quality employment is associated with high wages, high employment security, good work-life balance, and high social protection (ADB 2011d, 6). A lack of data precludes direct measurement of employment quality; therefore, ADB uses employment status or class of worker data as a proxy. Wage and salary workers are viewed as having high-quality jobs, whereas own-account and unpaid contributing family workers are considered to have lower-quality jobs. This is only a proxy, because some wage workers, particularly those in small enterprises, will not have benefits, social security, or job security, and some own-account workers will have high and stable incomes. ADB’s measurement of low-quality jobs is consistent with the ILO definition and measurement of *vulnerable employment*, which is defined as the sum of own-account workers and unpaid contributing family workers.

Productive employment is defined by the ILO as “employment yielding sufficient returns to labor to permit the worker and her/his dependents a level of consumption above the poverty line” (ILO 2012g, 3).

Gender equality is recognized as a human right. The Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom notes that “gender equality is not a complicated idea. It’s simple: women must have the same rights as men and discrimination has to stop” (DFID 2007, 2). The World Bank, in its flagship publication *World Development Report 2012*, has recognized that “gender equality matters in its own right.”⁶ Thus, gender equality is viewed as an independent development objective, as well as for instrumental reasons contributing toward efficiency and growth—the idea of gender equality being “smart economics” (World Bank 2011, 3). That is, gender equality is a pragmatic policy goal that enhances growth and development.

⁴ For the 10 indicators, see ILO (2012e).

⁵ As Floro and Meurs (2009, 4) note “ [w]omen’s participation paid labour and access to decent work is particularly affected by the burden of combining reproductive and paid work. This adds stress not accounted for in traditional conceptions of decent work, which focus on paid work and do not examine related changes in reproductive labour.”

⁶ World Bank (2011, 3) states that “gender equality matters intrinsically, because the ability to live the life of one’s own choosing and be spared from absolute deprivation is a basic human right and should be equal for everyone, independent of whether one is male or female.”

ILO Conventions 100 and 111⁷ lay out some important principles for understanding gender equality in the labor market, and achieving equality in labor market outcomes. They cover both equality of opportunity, in terms of access to labor markets and labor market-related enhancements such as training and social protection, and equality of treatment, in terms of nondiscriminatory remuneration and conditions of work.

The ILO enumerates three principles that must be included in the concept of gender equality in the labor market: The first principle is “equal remuneration between men and women for work of equal value.” This accords with ILO’s fundamental principle set out in the Equal Remuneration Convention C100, and requires not only that men and women are equally rewarded when they do the same jobs but also that they are rewarded equally when they do different jobs but which may be of equal value. The convention calls for “equal value” to be assessed by objective appraisal of jobs on a nondiscriminatory basis.⁸ Conceptually, the equal remuneration principle applies to all work in both the formal and informal sectors, although, in practice, this may be difficult to monitor.

ILO Conventions 100 and 111 lay out some important principles for understanding gender equality in the labor market, and achieving equality in labor market outcomes

The second and third principles are laid down in ILO’s fundamental Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention C111 on eliminating discrimination in employment and occupation by promoting equality of opportunity and treatment in the labor markets. The second principle, equality of opportunity “means having an equal chance to apply for a job, to attend education or training, to be eligible to attain certain qualifications and to be considered as a worker or for a promotion in all occupations or positions, including those dominated by one sex or the other.” The third principle is that of equality of treatment, which “refers to equal entitlements in pay, working conditions, security of employment, reconciliation between work and family life, and social protection” (ILO 2008b, 20).

Despite the recognition of gender equality in law, there has been a lack of progress toward gender equality of outcomes in the labor market. The term gender equity is therefore used to emphasize that specific strategies are needed to ensure gender equality and fair and just outcomes for women as well as men. Such strategies are referred to as “special measures of protection and assistance” in C111 and as “temporary special measures” in CEDAW.⁹

The importance of attaining these equalities derives not only from their intrinsic moral value but also, as noted, from their economic and social benefits. Given the positions of disadvantage that many women experience around the world, a movement toward gender equality in the labor market would bring with it significant economic and social benefits. There is, as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) puts it, a “business case” for gender equality (ILO 2008b, 2), or as the World Bank states, “[g]ender equality matters for development—It is smart economics” (World Bank 2011, 3). The economic benefits arise from the productivity increases which come from better education and training of a currently less-than-optimally-educated and -trained segment of the population. Increasing women’s human capital and employment opportunities improves resource allocation and contributes to economic growth.

But increasing women’s income through labor force participation does much more than this. Studies have shown that women who earn cash income attain greater autonomy within the household and this changes the distribution of resources within the household.¹⁰ This reallocation

⁷ See ILO (1951a and 1958a).

⁸ This requires comparing factors such as skill, effort, responsibilities, and working conditions. This would include, for example, comparing female-dominated jobs systematically with male-dominated jobs through job evaluations, taking note of women’s skills that are frequently undervalued (ILO 2007a, para 4). See also Oelz, Olney, and Tomei (2013).

⁹ The author is appreciative of communication with Neliën Haspels on this point.

¹⁰ For a review of the intra-household mechanisms through which such allocations occurs, see Braunstein (2008).

typically favors children and female children in particular. The increase in women’s autonomy (a snapshot) also contributes to an increase in women’s empowerment (a process) defined as the “processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability” (Kabeer 1999, 6). This then links with the wider findings that demonstrate that increases in women’s educational levels and income are associated with lower fertility, lower infant mortality rates, and decreased malnutrition incidence (UNDP 2008b, 1).

Gender mainstreaming requires that gender analysis be incorporated into all existing policy making and decision making, in both the public and private sectors, to ensure that policies and decisions are gender equality-enhancing at best, or gender-neutral at minimum. Gender-specific policies, in contrast, are designed to address and reverse existing disadvantages directly by the introduction of policies targeted for women.¹¹

Gender mainstreaming pays particular attention to institutional decision making and evaluation. It requires policy makers to acquire a “gender reflex”

Gender mainstreaming pays particular attention to institutional decision making and evaluation. It requires policy makers to acquire a “gender reflex,” that is, to ask what effect any policy will have on men and women (Rubery 2005, 1). To include gender analysis of effects in labor market policy formation requires that gender disaggregated statistics be collected for all critical decent work components to inform policy formation. This is one of the first tasks of gender mainstreaming. Other institutional measures can also be taken. Examples of how this has been achieved by European Union (EU) members in the public sector, a sector which is often expected to take the lead in this regard and to provide an example for the private sector, include

- gender mainstreaming in developing national strategies,
- interministerial committees and steering groups tasked with gender mainstreaming,
- departmental task forces for specific monitoring and evaluation of programs,
- gender parity/equality advisors on key committees,
- gender analysis of budgets,
- guidelines for gender mainstreaming of government employment policies,
- gender assessment of all new legislation, and
- funding for NGOs promoting gender equality (Fagan et al. 2005, 574–575).

Affirmative or positive action means special temporary measures or more favorable treatment to members of disadvantaged groups in order to speed up the pace of their recovery from long-standing, entrenched discrimination (e.g., hiring targets or quotas for groups that have been subject to discrimination). Giving effect to the principle of equal opportunity and treatment means more than treating persons in the same way: It calls for initiatives to give all individuals the opportunity to compete on an equal footing for decent work. Consequently, positive action is not discriminatory because it aims at leveling the playing field when long-standing segregation has occurred and simply outlawing discrimination is not enough (ILO, Discrimination in the Workplace).

Decent Work and Development in Cambodia

The ability to provide productive employment and decent work is expected to vary according to a country’s level of development. Countries with low income, low levels of human development, a high percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), and employment remaining in agriculture will find it difficult to provide productive employment and decent work. Countries with higher levels of productivity and incomes will be more able to provide productive employment and

¹¹ Key documents that highlight good practices on gender and employment are ILO (2004); Chen, Vanek, and Carr (2004); EU (2000); ILO (2008b); and UNDP (2008a). For tools on gender and employment mainstreaming, see ILO (2011g). For further resources, see ILO (2007b).

decent work.¹² There is a positive statistical relationship between cross-section GDP per capita and the percentage of wage workers in total employment (ADB 2011c, Figure 10).

Cambodia is a low-income country with a per capita gross national income of \$830, and its Human Development Index value stands at 0.543. Cambodia's Gender Inequality Index score, which measures gender disadvantage across reproductive health, empowerment, and the labor market, is relatively high at 0.473 (see Table 1).¹³

A country's pathway to inclusive growth depends on a variety of factors beyond its current level of development, including economic structure, social norms, institutions, gender relations, and policies. Emerging from 2 decades of violence and civil war, Cambodia adopted a market-based, export-oriented, foreign direct investment development strategy after 1992, with the active engagement of international development partners. Following the 1996 bilateral trade agreement with the United States, the country's export-oriented strategy has emphasized garment production.

Even so, Cambodia remains primarily an agrarian economy with over 80% of the population living in rural areas.¹⁴ Women have restricted access to assets and employment, although export-oriented garment production has raised the demand for women's labor outside of agriculture. The 1993 Constitution recognizes the principle of gender equality, and social norms are changing as a result of the marketization of the economy. Nevertheless, women's full economic participation remains considerably constrained by traditional gender norms and roles, which ascribe greater status and power to men (MOWA 2008).¹⁵

The 1993 Constitution recognizes the principle of gender equality, and social norms are changing as a result of the marketization of the economy

Table 1 Development and Population Indicators in Cambodia

Development and Population Indicator	Cambodia
Per capita gross national income, 2011	\$830
Human Development Index ranking, 2012	0.543
Gender Inequality Index value, 2012	0.473
Gender Inequality Index ranking, 2012	96
Population, 2011	14.5 million
Average per annum population growth, 2000–2011	1.4%
Fertility rate (births per woman), 2010	2.6
Population increase, 2000–2011	2.1 million
Poverty (national threshold)	23% (in 2009)
Poverty (\$1.25 threshold), 2009	19%
Poverty (\$2.00 threshold), 2009	50%
Income inequality (Gini coefficient), 2009	0.36

Note: The Gender Inequality Index reflects gender disadvantage based on five indicators across areas of reproductive health, empowerment, and the labor market; it ranges from 0 (perfect equality between men and women) to 1 (complete inequality).

Sources: Asian Development Bank. 2011. *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2011*. Manila. Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.17, and 2.3; Government of Cambodia, Ministry of Planning. 2013. *Poverty in Cambodia: A New Approach*. Phnom Penh. <http://www.mop.gov.kh/Projects/tabid/148/Default.aspx>; United Nations Development Programme. 2013. *Human Development Report 2013*. http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR2013_EN_Statistics.pdf; World Bank. World Development Indicators. <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>.

¹² This is supported by a positive statistical relationship between cross-section GDP per capita and the percentage of wage workers in total employment (ADB 2011d, Figure 10).

¹³ The source for all tables and figures in this report is ADB (2013a).

¹⁴ See National Institute for Statistics, Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey Tables: Demography.

¹⁵ For changes in gender relations, see Brickell (2011).

Employment Performance

The employment growth rate is an important indicator of the extent to which the benefits of GDP growth are being shared among the population. So-called “jobless growth,” may indicate rising labor productivity, an important development objective that may be beneficial in increasing the incomes of those employed, but it may not lead to inclusive growth if those benefits are not widely shared. If women are to benefit from growth, their employment and earnings are important.

Employment growth is particularly important for achieving inclusive growth in countries experiencing high population growth. Cambodia’s population growth rate was 1.4% per annum in 2000–2011, its population increased 2.1 million over the decade, and total population amounted to 14.5 million in 2011. The country had more boys than girls (up to 14 years of age) in 2008, which may indicate sex selection for boys, although anthropological literature supporting the existence of female infanticide was not found (ILO 2010b, Table 2.3).

Cambodia has had success at translating GDP growth into employment growth and has a high employment rate (see Table 2), which helps to explain why it has done better in reducing poverty than some other developing countries.¹⁶ There has been some progress toward inclusive growth

Table 2 Most Recent Employment Indicators in Cambodia

Employment Indicator	Cambodia	
	Women	Men
Women’s share of wage employment in nonagriculture sector	41.8% (in 2008)	
Estimated gender annual earnings ratio, 2012	71%	
Estimated gender annual earnings gap, 2012	29%	
Average real gross domestic product growth, 2000–2010	8.08	
	Women	Men
Average per annum employment growth, 2000–2010	3.24%	3.60%
Employment elasticity, 2000–2010	0.40	0.45
Employment rate, 2012	77.8%	85.3%
Youth (15–24) unemployment rate		
2008	3.3%	3.5%
2011	---	---
2012	---	---
Total unemployment rate		
2008	1.8%	1.5%
2011	---	---
2012	---	---
Time-related underemployment rate		
2009	41.0%	31.9%
2010	---	---
2011	---	---

Note: Employment rate is the number of people employed divided by the eligible population over the age of 15 years; time-related underemployment is the number of employed people working less than 40 hours per week but willing and available to work additional hours divided by the number of employed people.

Sources: Asian Development Bank. 2011. *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2011*. Manila. Table 2.13; International Labour Organization (ILO). 2012. *Decent Work Country Profile: Cambodia*. Geneva. Table 2.1; ILO. 2011. *Key Indicators of the Labour Market. 7th Edition*. Geneva. Table 2a, Table 9, Table 10; World Bank. World Development Indicators. <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/worlddevelopment-indicators>; World Economic Forum. 2012. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2012*. <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>.

¹⁶ Data on poverty incidence are derived from World Bank. World Development Indicators. <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/worlddevelopment-indicators>.

in Cambodia, as evidenced by the decline in income poverty incidence during the 2000s, with the poverty rate estimated to be 23% in 2009, based on the national income threshold. Nonetheless, despite employment growth, 50% of the population survives on less than \$2.00 per day, indicating that economic growth has not yet generated sufficient productive employment (see Table 1).

Cambodia's employment elasticities¹⁷ are 0.40 for women and 0.45 for men, indicating that economic growth has had a smaller impact on employment growth for women than men. Nonetheless, the employment elasticities for women and men in Cambodia are greater than the averages for Asia at 0.27 and 0.25 for women and men, respectively.¹⁸

However, employment elasticity alone is insufficient to judge inclusive growth, particularly in low-income countries. First, employment rates in low-income countries are generally high, because people must work to survive, even if they work for very low wages or self-employment income. Thus, high employment rates in developing countries may be more indicative of labor supply than of high labor demand and thus need to be interpreted with caution. Likewise, a lack of productive employment and productive hours of work (time underemployment) are hidden by conventional unemployment rate indicators. Extremely low unemployment rates in Cambodia, for example, should not be taken as indicative of a high aggregate demand for labor or a tight labor market: low unemployment rates can occur simultaneously with high poverty rates.

Gendered employment indicators suggest that gender equality in the labor market remains a goal rather than a realized objective

Second, despite the growth in employment, time-related underemployment, defined as the share of employed people working less than 40 hours per week, but willing and available to work additional hours, remains common. In Cambodia, 41.0% of women and 31.9% of men report time underemployment (see Table 2). Third, unemployment rates among youths are greater than the overall unemployment rate, indicating the difficulties young people experience in obtaining employment. Thus, although expanding the quantity of employment is necessary, improvements in the quality of employment, measured in terms of decent work and social protection, are vital.

Gendered employment indicators suggest that gender equality in the labor market remains a goal rather than a realized objective. While some progress toward gender equality in the labor market and inclusive growth has been made, substantial challenges remain. Most notably, despite economic and employment growth, there has been little improvement in gender equality in the labor market even if the share of women in waged employment in the nonagriculture sector has increased.

Cambodia tracks women's share of wage employment in the nonagriculture sector separately from employment in the industry and services sectors. From 1998 to 2008, women's share of wage employment in industry increased from 44% to 56%, and in services it increased from 21% to 30%. Despite these increases, the government recognizes that it is off-track for meeting its commitment to attain gender parity in the wage labor market (Ministry of Planning 2011, 16). Furthermore, women earn an estimated 71% of male annual earnings on average (see Table 2). To achieve inclusive growth, employment-led economic growth must be gender-equitable and reduce these gaps.

Gender Gaps in the Labor Market

Analysis of gender inequality in the labor market must take account of gendered constraints arising from informal and formal norms, beliefs, regulations, and laws.¹⁹ For example, due to

¹⁷ Employment elasticity is calculated as the annual percentage changes in employment and real GDP calculated for each year over the period 2000–2010 and then averaged for the entire period; the average percentage change in employment is divided by the average percentage change in real GDP. See ADB and ILO (2011).

¹⁸ World averages are 0.47 for women and 0.41 for men (ADB and ILO 2011).

¹⁹ For structures of gender constraints, see Kabeer (2008). For empirical support for a negative relationship between inequalities and social institutions and women's labor force participation rate, see Jutting et al. (2008).

social norms, beliefs, and values within family and kinship systems, women have more limited resources in the form of assets, education, time, and social contacts. In addition, women’s greater responsibility for unpaid domestic and care work affects their ability to engage in paid work on the same terms as men.

Social norms and more formal regulations and laws also mean that labor markets and the public sphere generally are not gender-neutral. Specifically, gender stereotyping of jobs creates barriers to women’s entry, resulting in occupational and horizontal segregation by sex; regulations prohibit women from certain jobs; standards relating to childbearing and rearing may create disincentives to hire women; and businesswomen are constrained, relative to men, in terms of access to credit, networking, and interaction with other businesses and government officials.

Finally, access to paid work does not necessarily result in women having control over their earned income. Women’s control over their own earnings is influenced by education, marital status, age, household composition, debt, and social and cultural characteristics.²⁰

Gender inequality in the labor market is examined in the next section in terms of gender gaps (or deficits for women) relating to participation and outcomes in the labor market, including employment and decent work. The industrial sectors in which women work, along with gender-specific constraints on women’s employment, are also discussed.

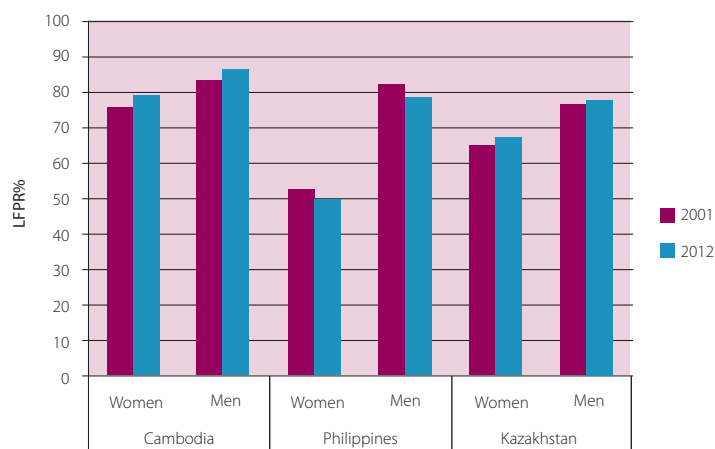
In Cambodia, women’s labor market participation is lower than men’s due to inadequate employment and decent work opportunities, domestic labor and care constraints, and social norms

Labor Force Participation Gap

In Cambodia, women’s labor market participation is lower than men’s due to inadequate employment and decent work opportunities, domestic labor and care constraints, and social norms. Together, these factors give rise to a gender gap in the labor force participation rate (LFPR). Women’s LFPRs also depend on cultural expectations about women’s mobility and the presence or absence of substitutes for women’s domestic work.

In 2012, the gender LFPR gap in Cambodia was 7.5 percentage points (see Figure 1). Between 2001 and 2012, the gender LFPR gap rose in the middle of the decade but ended in 2012 close

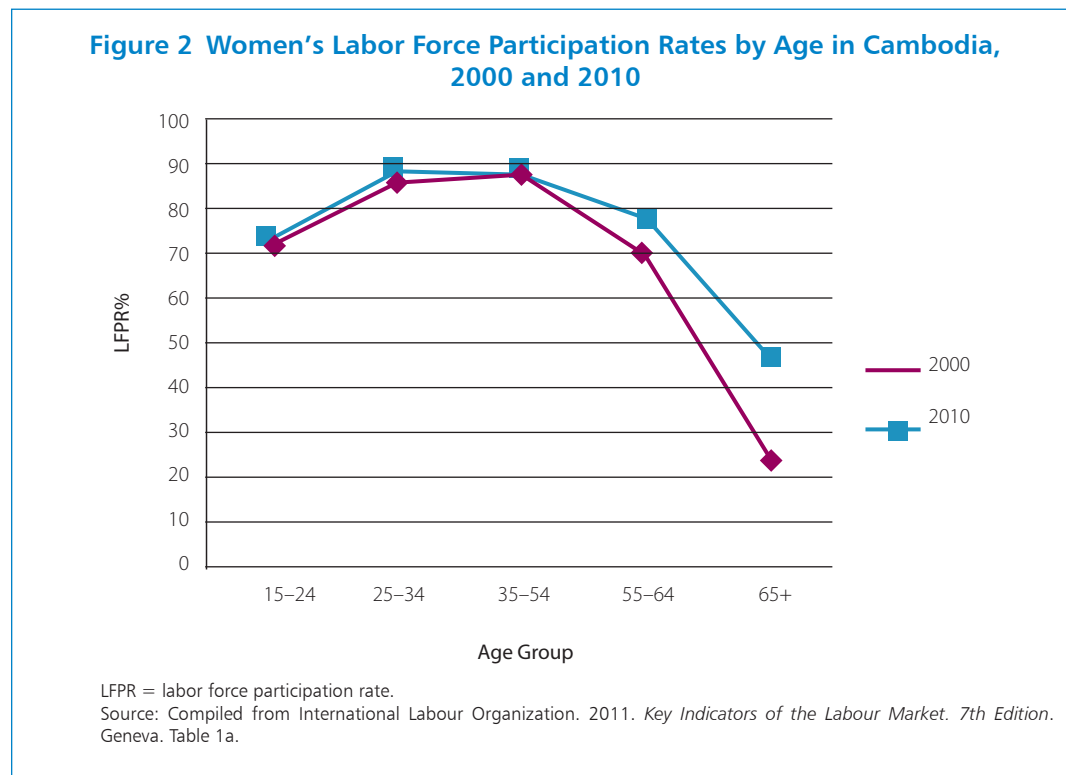
Figure 1 Labor Force Participation Rates, Women and Men in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Kazakhstan, 2001 and 2012



LFPR = labor force participation rate.
 Sources: International Labour Organization (ILO). 2012. *Decent Work Country Profile: Cambodia*. Geneva. Table 3.1; ILO. 2011. *Key Indicators of the Labour Market. 7th Edition*. Geneva. Table 1a; Government of the Philippines, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). Current Labor Statistics. <http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph/PUBLICATIONS/Current%20Labor%20Statistics/index.html>; Government of the Philippines, DOLE. Decent Work Statistics Online Database. <http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph/dews/>.

²⁰ See Kabeer (2012). For empirical examples, see Dasgupta (2002); MacPhail and Dong (2007).

to where it began. However, women's LFPRs vary by age. Between 2000 and 2010, there was an increase of almost 9 percentage points in the LFPRs of women in the 55–64-year age group (see Figure 2).



Unpaid Domestic and Care Work Gap

Time allocation data show a strong gendered division of domestic labor, with women having primary responsibility for household and care tasks and a higher total work burden (the sum of time allocated to paid work and unpaid domestic and care work) (OECD 2012, Figure 1.3). In Cambodia, women undertake more unpaid work than men; the gender unpaid work gap was 3.5 hours per day in 2004 for married people aged 18–64 (Ministry of Planning 2007, Table 12).

Domestic and care work can constrain participation in paid work. Gendered social norms contribute to women's greater responsibility for and time commitments to domestic and care work, and this has been slow to change despite women's increased participation in paid work. Relatively high fertility rates will continue to raise the demand for women's unpaid labor time, unless family responsibility is better shared by women and men, and child care services become more widely available.

Human Capital Gap

Low levels of human capital among women, and/or gender segregation in the types of training and education available to women, constrain women's labor force participation. Quantitative differences between men and women in literacy and years of schooling are pronounced in Cambodia. In 2011 there was a 15-percentage-point gender gap in literacy: 88% of men over the age of 15, compared to 73% of women, were estimated to have basic literacy, and the gender gap was larger in rural areas.

In 2011, the gender gap in completion of at least primary education was 17 percentage points, with 59% of men having completed primary education, compared to 42% of women (National

Gendered social norms contribute to women's greater responsibility for and time commitments to domestic and care work

Table 3 Education Indicators in Cambodia, 2000 and 2010

Education level	Cambodia			
	2000		2010	
	NER ^a	F/M ^b	NER	F/M
Primary	91.4	0.89	95.9	0.99
Secondary	15	0.56	--	--
Tertiary	2.7	0.33	7.8 (2008)	0.53 (2008)

NER = net enrollment rate, F/M = female–male ratio.

Note: ^a Net enrollment rate is the enrollment of the official age group for primary or secondary education as a percentage of primary or secondary school-aged population. The NER for tertiary education is the total enrollment as a percentage of the population, regardless of age, comprising the 5-year age group following secondary school.

^b F/M refers to the ratio of female to male students.

Source: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 2012. *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2012*. Bangkok. Tables I.27 and I.29.

Institute of Statistics, Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey Tables: Education). Now, however, there is no gender gap in enrollment at the primary school level of education. In 2010, the female–male student enrollment rate was 0.99 in Cambodia (see Table 3). The improvement in net enrollment rates and the decreased gender gap in education at the primary school level should reduce constraints on girls and young women entering the labor market.

While net enrollment rates for girls and boys in lower and upper secondary school increased substantially ... they remain low compared to other countries

While net enrollment rates for girls and boys in lower and upper secondary school increased substantially in Cambodia during the 2000s, they remain low compared to other countries. For example, in 2011, the net enrollment rate for girls and boys combined at the lower secondary school level was 32%, at the upper secondary school it was 22%, and for girls and boys combined it was 32% (National Institute of Statistics, Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey Tables: Education).²¹ Norms and poverty prevent some children, particularly girls, from attending school. It appears that girls aged 6–17 are more likely than boys to be kept out of school to help with household chores and contribute to family income, indicative of social norms that place a higher value on education of boys (National Institute of Statistics, Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey Tables: Education).

There is also substantial gender specialization in training and tertiary education. The number of people participating in technical and vocational education programs is very low, and gender disparities exist. Women are more likely than men to participate in training programs of short duration, and the types of training undertaken tend to reinforce gender stereotypes (ILO 2010b, Table 3.12; UNDP 2011).

Gender Gaps in Labor Market Outcomes

Although women’s LFPRs have increased, this has not uniformly translated into reductions in the gender gaps in labor market outcomes, including employment, decent work, and social protection.

Employment Gap

Employment rates, calculated as the number of employed people divided by the number of people in the eligible population (15 years and older), are lower for women than for men in Cambodia. In 2012, there was an increase in the gender gap, due to the larger increase in the employment rate of men relative to the increase among women (see Table 4).

²¹ See also Ministry of Planning (2011, Figure 2.6).

Table 4 Employment Indicators, Women and Men in Cambodia, Selected Years

Employment Indicator	Cambodia		
	Women	Men	Gap
Labor force participation rate			
2001	76.1%; 3.047 million	83.5%; 2.969 million	7.4%
2012	79.2%; 4.125 million	86.7%; 4.186 million	7.5%
Employment rate			
2000	74.5%; 2.879 million	80.7%; 2.750 million	6.2%
2012	77.8%; 4.054 million	85.3%; 4.116 million	7.5%
Vulnerable employment			
2004	79.1%; 2.568 million	71.1%; 2.368 million	8.0%
2011	72.8%; 2.878 million	64.1%; 2.520 million	8.7%
Low wage work			
2004	35.1%	29.9%	5.2%
2009	35.1%	28.6%	6.5%

Notes: Labor force participation rate is the number of employed and unemployed persons over age 15 divided by the eligible population. Employment rate is the number of people employed divided by the number of people in the eligible population. Vulnerable employment is the sum of own-account workers and unpaid contributing family workers divided by the total employed. Vulnerable employment for Cambodia reflects the working-age population 15 to 64 years of age. Low-wage work is defined as earning a wage less than 2/3 of median wage; a monthly wage is used in Cambodia.

Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. Cambodia Socio-Economics Survey Tables: Education: Table 8. <http://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/social-statistics/cses/cses-tables>; International Labour Organization (ILO). 2012. Decent Work Country Profile: Cambodia. Geneva. Table 3.1; ILO. 2011. *Key Indicators of the Labour Market. 7th Edition*. Geneva. Table 3.

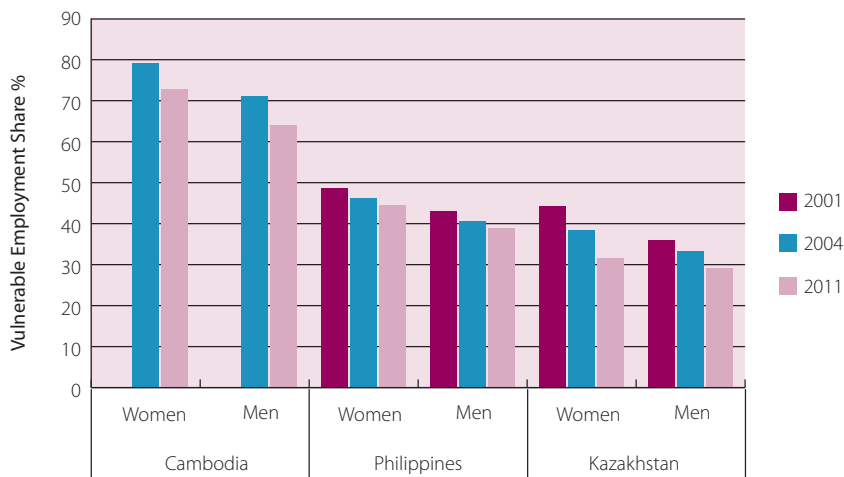
Women are more likely to hold lower-quality employment or vulnerable employment (own-account work and unpaid contributing family member), which typically offers fewer opportunities for decent work and social protection. This has resulted in a vulnerable employment gender gap. Own-account workers are less likely than wage workers to contribute to pension plans and other social insurance programs, and workplaces are less likely to be regulated by health and safety standards or regulation on working conditions. Although some own-account workers may be able to attain high productivity, high and stable incomes, voice through networks, and ability to purchase social security, the majority of own-account workers experience low productivity, low and unstable demand for their products and services, and few opportunities for decent work (Chen, Vanek, and Carr 2004). The agriculture sector and parts of the services sector are particularly prone to vulnerable employment.

In Cambodia, the share of vulnerable employment is 73% for women and 64% for men, representing 2.9 million women and 2.5 million men (see Figure 3).

The vulnerable employment gender gap did not decline during the 2000s (see Figure 4). Women not only are more likely than men to be in vulnerable employment but also are more likely to be an unpaid contributing family worker, which offers the least opportunities for decent work.

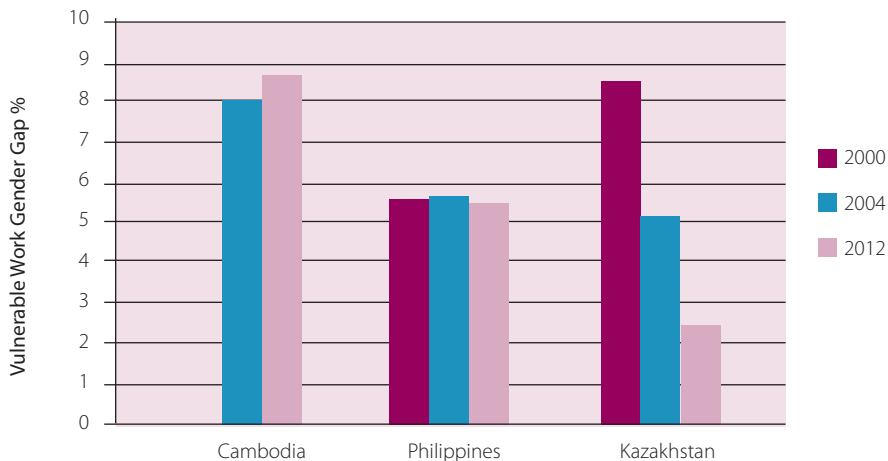
In Cambodia, the share of vulnerable employment is 73% for women and 64% for men, representing 2.9 million women and 2.5 million men

Figure 3 Share of Vulnerable Employment, Women and Men in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Kazakhstan, Selected Years



Sources: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. *Cambodia Socio-Economics Survey Tables: Labor*. Table 7. <http://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/social-statistics/cses/cses-tables>; International Labour Organization. 2011. *Key Indicators of the Labour Market. 7th Edition*. Geneva. Table 3; Government of the Philippines, Department of Labor and Employment. Decent Work Statistics Online Database. <http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph/dews/>.

Figure 4 Vulnerable Work Gender Gap in Cambodia, the Philippines, and Kazakhstan, 2000, 2004, and 2012



Government of Cambodia. National Institute of Statistics. *Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey Tables: Labor*. Table 7. <http://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/social-statistics/cses/cses-tables>; International Labour Organization. 2011. *Key Indicators of the Labour Market. 7th Edition*. Geneva. Table 3; Government of the Philippines, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). Current Labor Statistics; Government of the Philippines, Department of Labor and Employment. Decent Work Statistics Online Database. <http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph/dews/>.

Decent Work Gap

The gender wage gap refers to the difference between the average wage for men and the average wage for women, expressed as a percentage of the average wage for men. In analyzing gender wage gaps, three main issues need to be taken into account. First, wages are reported only for employees and do not include information about income generated from own-account work. Thus, for countries such as Cambodia with a high share of vulnerable employment, the gender wage gap refers only to a small share of all workers. Second, the gender wage gap typically is reported without adjusting for human capital differences between women and men (calculated, by proxy, as formal education and years of labor market experience). Finally, employee wages are reported only for a specific period of time, such as a day, a week, or a month, and therefore generally do not reflect gender differences in work over a longer period of time, such as a year. Women may have lower quantities of time in paid work due to domestic and family care constraints and/or employers' discriminatory hiring decisions and preference to hire men for full-time/full-year jobs. Thus, over a longer time period, the gender annual earnings gap will be larger than the gender hourly wage gap.

Vulnerable or low-quality employment (calculated, by proxy, as own-account and unpaid family work) offers fewer opportunities for decent work and is a problem for both women and men. A few indicators permit direct analysis of decent work for workers who are employees.²² In Cambodia, low-wage work, defined as work that pays a monthly wage of less than two-thirds of the median monthly wage, is more prevalent among women. For example, 35.1% of women and 28.6% of men in Cambodia were employed in low-wage work in 2009 (see Table 4), estimated for monthly wages.

Despite employment growth for women in Cambodia's garment sector, which offers formal employment, the gender wage gap has actually increased

The unadjusted gender wage gap in Cambodia is 27% (see Table 5). This is based on the average wages of men and women for the period of a month. Despite employment growth for women in Cambodia's garment sector, which offers formal employment, the gender wage gap has actually increased. Since the minimum wage applies only to the garment sector and most women's wage work is in the garment sector, the increased gender wage gap indicates that women's wages have not kept up with the average wages of men.²³ Minimum wage standards generally play a greater role in affecting the wages of women rather than those of men, given the likelihood that women will be low-wage workers. In addition, the minimum wage standard is not fully enforced, and almost 24% of women and men in the textile, garment, and footwear sector earn less than the statutory minimum wage. This may be due to lower levels of compliance in factories not monitored by the Better Factories Cambodia program. The gender wage inequality trends, however, indicate the importance of establishing a process for adequately increasing and enforcing the minimum wage.

The gender wage gap for the paid labor market as a whole masks vast differences across occupations and industries. In Cambodia, the gender wage gap in the plant and machine operators and assemblers occupations is particularly large, at 42% (see Table 5).

Another key dimension of decent work is employment security. Although the evidence is limited, it appears that the increase in wage employment has not brought about increased employment security. For example, there is evidence of increased use of short-term, casual, and probationary contracts in the export processing zones in the garment sector in Cambodia during the recent global economic crises of 2008–2009 (ILO 2012i).

²² A very useful data source is ILO (2012i).

²³ Ibid.

Table 5 Average Wage and Gender Wage Gap in Cambodia, 2009

Occupation	Average Monthly Nominal Earnings, Employees Only (riels)		Gender Wage Gap (%)
	Men	Women	
Legislators, senior officials, and managers	329,980	233,910	29
Professionals	553,589	406,659	27
Technicians and associate professionals	767,718	491,017	36
Clerks	610,702	560,862	8
Service workers, shop and market sales workers	356,925	282,616	21
Skilled agriculture and fisheries workers	226,052	213,214	6
Craft and related trade workers	384,987	285,315	26
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	458,427	266,302	42
Elementary occupations	267,932	182,770	32
Armed forces	432,065	432,465	0
All occupations	376,542	274,079	27

Source: International Labour Organization. 2012. *Decent Work Country Profile: Cambodia*. 2011–2015. Phnom Penh. Table 3.1.

Social Protection Gap

ADB defines social protection as “the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labor markets, diminishing people’s exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and the interruption/loss of income” (ADB 2003, 1). The three main components of the social protection strategy are social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs; the two other components are community-based microinsurance and child development. Estimates of social protection typically rely on government expenditures on key programs relating to social assistance, social insurance, and the labor market. Expenditures on social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs were 2.2% of GDP in Cambodia (ADB 2007).

Social security provisions generally have been available only to workers with formal employment, and men have higher rates of formal employment than women

The ADB Social Protection Index is a specific measure defined as the “total social protection expenditures per total reference population divided by a regional poverty line” (ADB 2011e, 3–4). The regional poverty line is taken to be 25% of a country’s per capita GDP. A 2009 estimate of the Social Protection Index for Cambodia was 0.02 (ADB 2013b). A gender gap in social protection exists. The sex-disaggregated ADB Social Protection Index is 0.009 for women and 0.011 for men (ADB 2013b, Table A3.12). Social Protection Index results for Cambodia indicate that the largest share of social protection expenditure is in the social insurance category, which comprises expenditure on health, maternity, disability, unemployment, and pensions (ADB 2013b, Table A3.12).

Social security provisions generally have been available only to workers with formal employment, and men have higher rates of formal employment than women, contributing to the gender gap. In Cambodia, only civil servants are covered by a pension plan and only a small proportion of eligible people have actually received payments. Because women have less access than men to public sector employment, this also compounds the gender gap in pension benefits (ILO 2012i).

Gendered Analysis of Labor Markets: Industrial Sectors

Economic growth typically is associated with structural change in production, away from the primary sector (agriculture) and toward the secondary sector (industry) and the tertiary sector (services). Structural change is associated with shifts in employment among sectors, and the increasing share of industry employment is generally associated with a rise in formal employment, higher wages, and increased opportunities for decent work, given the higher labor productivity of the industry sector.

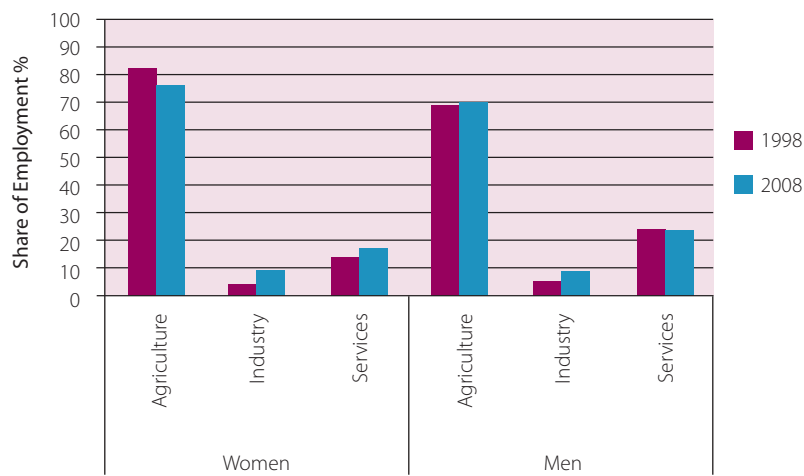
The industry sector examined here accounts for only about 10% of women's employment, indicative of the challenges in promoting productive and decent work for women. Cambodia is an agrarian economy, with 75% of its employment occupying the primary agriculture sector (see Figure 5).

Employment for both women and men has shifted from agriculture into industry and services. From 1998–2008, the share of women's employment in the agriculture sector declined from 81.8% to 75%, in industry rose from 3.5% to 9%, and in services rose from 13.5% to 16% (see Figure 5). Despite economic growth and structural change, the agriculture sector still accounts for the majority of employment, and the share is greater for women than for men.

Paid work exhibits considerable horizontal segregation, with women concentrated into different and fewer industries than men, reflecting discrimination against women in the labor market as well as discrimination and cultural stereotyping in education and training. Industrial segregation by sex reduces opportunities for women, constrains productivity and growth by not attracting the most productive workers, and tends to confine women to low-wage industries. Barriers to women's employment in certain industrial sectors and occupations arise from both social norms and laws. For instance, social norms regarding appropriate roles for women may influence employers' recruitment practices (UNIFEM et al. 2004). The considerable sex segregation in education and training also may arise from social norms about appropriate fields of study, and thus women may not acquire the necessary training and qualifications for certain jobs. Laws that restrict women from working in specific jobs or that prohibit them from working at night can also serve to restrict women's employment.

Paid work exhibits considerable horizontal segregation, with women concentrated into different and fewer industries than men

Figure 5 Employment Share by Economic Sector, Women and Men in Cambodia, 1998 and 2008



Source: International Labour Organization. 2012. *Decent Work Country Profile: Cambodia*. Geneva. Table 1.2.

Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing

Despite structural change, the primary sector (agriculture, forestry, and fishing) remains an important sector of employment for large groups of women and men. In Cambodia, an agrarian economy, the primary sector accounted for 75% of women's employment (about 2.6 million women) in 2008 (see Table 6).

Table 6 Distribution of Employment by Industry, Women and Men in Cambodia, 2008

Industry Sector	Share of Total Employment (%)		Female Share of Industry Employment (%)
	Women	Men	
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	74.97	69.17	53.10
Mining and quarrying	0.05	0.10	35.61
Manufacturing	8.22	4.14	67.50
Electricity, gas steam, and air-conditioning supply	0.03	0.19	13.81
Water supply sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities	0.09	0.14	39.72
Construction	0.62	3.54	15.42
Wholesale and retail trade repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	9.67	5.86	63.31
Transport and storage	0.40	4.21	8.98
Accommodation and food service activities	1.06	0.67	62.33
Information and communications	0.07	0.14	33.33
Financial and insurance activities	0.19	0.31	39.18
Real estate	0.00	0.01	16.67
Professional, scientific, and technical activities	0.14	0.26	35.79
Administrative and support service activities	0.58	1.01	37.58
Public administration, defense, and social security	0.72	4.90	13.26
Education	1.24	2.10	38.18
Human health and social work activities	0.41	0.55	43.72
Art, entertainment, and recreation	0.28	0.34	45.55
Other services	1.06	2.04	35.26
Use activities of household as employers	0.02	0.01	65.74
Activities of extraterritorial organizations	0.18	0.31	37.64
Total	100.00	100.00	51.09
Absolute number (millions)	3.50	3.34	---

Note: ^a Employed people 15 years and older.

Source: International Labour Organization. 2010. *Labour and Social Trends in Cambodia 2010*. Phnom Penh. Table 16.

Women’s economic opportunities as farmers are constrained by their limited access to land and other inputs. Women own less land than men and are disadvantaged through inheritance norms, laws, land titling systems, and in their ability to purchase land (USAID 2006). Access to agricultural land in Cambodia is changing from a system of user rights to a system of private property rights, and this process appears to disadvantage women and poor people generally. Despite gender-aware land laws, it is difficult for women to register land in their names because they tend to lack information, time, documentation, and the necessary levels of literacy. There are also social norms that discourage women from owning land individually (MOWA 2008). Women’s particular disadvantages in land ownership occur within the wider context of farmers losing access to land due to the creation of industrial development zones, road construction, resource concessions, land grabbing, and population growth (Simbolon 2009; Global Witness 2012).

[A]lthough women in Cambodia work in agriculture to the same extent as men, it is estimated that women receive only 10% of agriculture extension services

For instance, Global Witness (2012) reports that since 2003, 400,000 people in Cambodia have been affected by land disputes land grabbing, and violence, and that more than 2.1 million hectares of land have been transferred from subsistence farmers to industrial agriculture firms. By 2004, 20% of rural households in Cambodia were without land for cultivation, up from 13% in 1997, and in some regions landlessness affects much higher percentages of households (World Bank 2006). Although more recent data could not be found, agricultural policy needs to take account of the finding that a substantial percentage of rural dwellers are landless.

Women do not have equal access to extension services, irrigation, or farm equipment. For example, although women in Cambodia work in agriculture to the same extent as men (see Figures 6 and 7), it is estimated that women receive only 10% of agriculture extension services (FAO and Government of Cambodia 2010; Ministry of Environment 2011). In addition, households headed by women represent about 26% of all farming households in Cambodia, but female-headed households have access to smaller amounts of land, have less access to credit extension services, and face different constraints in farmers’ organizations than male-headed households (ADB 2012b).

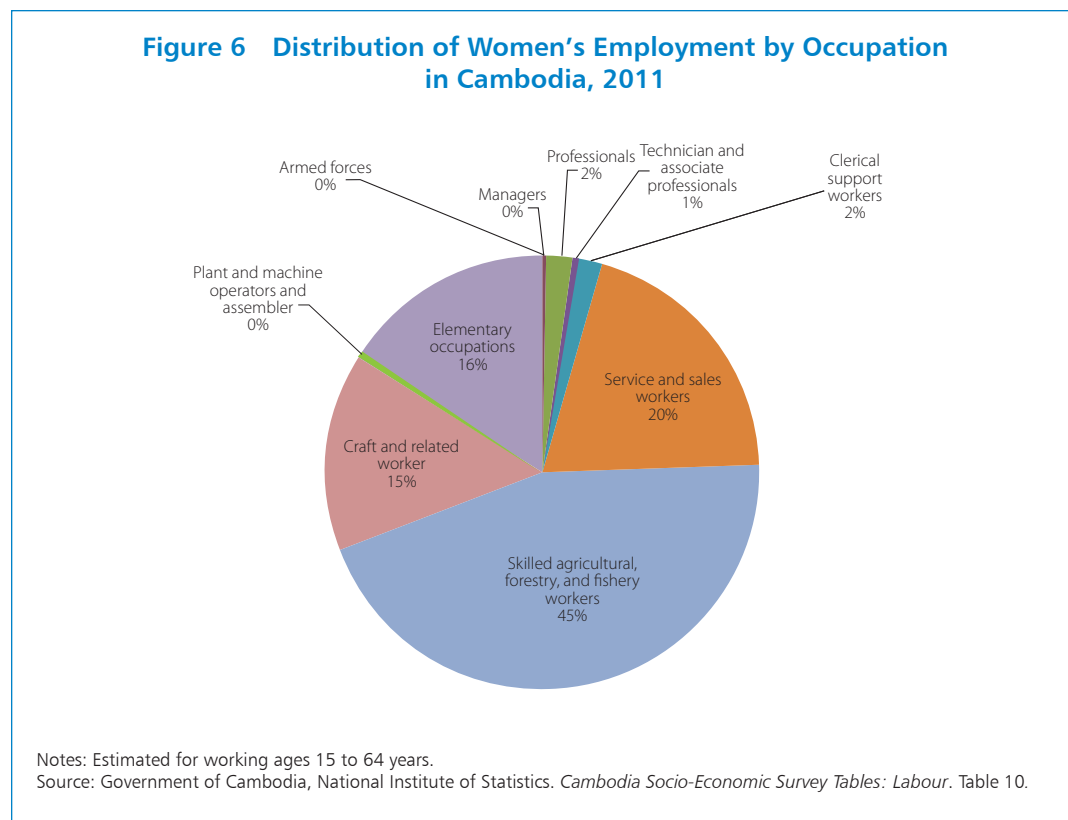
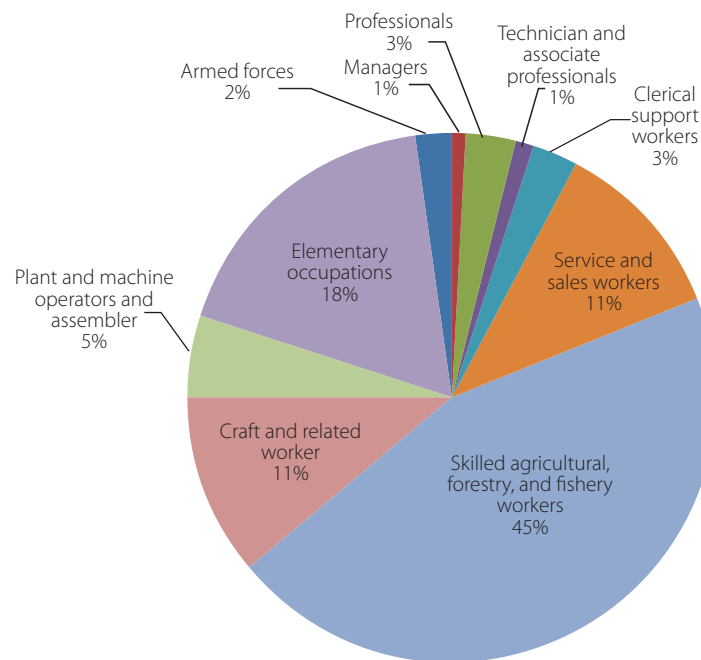


Figure 7 Distribution of Men’s Employment by Occupation in Cambodia, 2011



Note: Estimated for working ages 15 to 64 years.
 Source: Government of Cambodia, National Institute of Statistics. *Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey Tables: Labour*. Table 10.

Women’s economic opportunities for wage employment in agriculture also are limited. There is some evidence from other countries that women become even more marginalized as governments promote more diversified cropping systems and cash crops for export. Women are less likely to be targeted for extension services and thus are unable to participate in the new crops to the same extent as men.

Industry

Cambodia has adopted an export-oriented development strategy to promote economic growth, industrial production, and employment, taking advantage of its resource endowments and supported by specific policies and laws. These development strategies were anticipated to expand not only employment but also decent work because the industry sector, with its higher productivity and opportunities for organization, should facilitate improvements in decent work. Although there has been some progress in improving decent work, there are ongoing challenges and contradictions.

Cambodia’s export-led development has been primarily in manufacturing—specifically the garment, textiles, and footwear sector. Garments and footwear, a sector valued at about \$3 billion, accounts for 80% of merchandise exports, with the majority of exports destined for the United States market (World Trade Organization 2011, Table A1.1). The sector’s initial development was facilitated by the 1996 United States–Cambodia trade agreement, which granted Cambodia greater access to the United States market if certain conditions of work were met. Despite the end of the trade agreement, exports to the United States have continued,

along with exports to Europe and other markets (Dasgupta, Poutiainen, and Williams 2011, Figure 1.2). The sector is characterized by low levels of labor productivity and infrastructure deficits, and thus the comparative advantage arises from its cheap and abundant workforce of young women and its reputation of good labor standards (Dasgupta, Poutiainen, and Williams 2011, Figure 1.2). Garment and footwear production has substantially increased the employment of women (see Box 1).

Box 1 Women's Employment in the Garment and Footwear Industry, Cambodia

The garment and footwear industry is a major sector for women's employment and the largest sector for formal employment in Cambodia. Factories exporting garments and footwear must be registered with the government and be members of the Garment Manufacturing Association of Cambodia (GMAC). From 2000 to 2012, employment in registered factories rose from about 160,000 to 373,000 workers, and the number of factories increased from 190 to 375. The sector has recorded enormous growth, given that there were only 19,000 jobs in the sector in 1995. Employment is highly dependent upon global economic demand, as demonstrated by the dramatic drop in employment for women during the economic recession of 2008.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and GMAC estimate that women represented about 90% of total employment in 2012; thus, there were approximately 335,700 women employed in the garment industry. This represents about 8% of women's total employment and over one-third of all paid employment for women. The number of women employed in the garment sector is even larger when unregistered subcontracting factories are counted. GMAC reported that approximately 200 subcontracting factories accounted for an additional 100,000 workers in 2010. The majority of female workers are young, with 78% younger than 29 years old. Levels of education are very low and 43% have not completed primary education. About 42% of female workers are single, and the majority of women move from rural areas to Phnom Penh to seek jobs in the garment sector.

There is strong occupational sex segregation stemming from employer preferences and gender stereotypes. Most women work in sewing occupations, whereas men are assigned to higher-paying quality control occupations. Employment in the garment sector offers women opportunities for formal work and social protection. Working conditions are independently monitored by the ILO through the Better Factories Cambodia program to improve compliance with national and international labor standards. Nonetheless, challenges to decent work remain and working conditions are still poor. The minimum wage of only \$61 per month (in 2010) makes it difficult for women to meet their basic needs and remit money back to their families. Work hours of up to 10 hours per day, 6 days a week during peak periods, are longer than in other industries. Short-term contracts violate the law, make workers vulnerable to dismissal, and reduce opportunities for promotion. There is a lack of compliance with maternity leave provisions and low levels of social insurance. Finally, women experience sexual harassment from male workers and harsh discipline from non-Cambodian supervisors, in addition to discrimination in recruitment based on age, marital status, and pregnancy.

Sources: International Labour Organization (ILO). 2013. *Twenty Ninth Synthesis Report on Working Conditions in Cambodia's Garment Sector*. ILO and Better Factories Cambodia.; ILO. 2012. *Action-Oriented Research on Gender Equality and the Working and Living Conditions of Garment Factory Workers in Cambodia*. Bangkok; S. Dasgupta, T. Poutiainen, and D. Williams. 2011. *From Downturn to Recovery: Cambodia's Garment Sector in Transition*. Phnom Penh: ILO.

Services

Growth and structural change have brought about a rise in the share of women's employment in the services sector in Cambodia, as discussed. Increased services sector employment can be attributed to a growing demand for services associated with the increased incomes of a domestic middle class, but it also may reflect a lack of decent work opportunities, a growing need for incomes in increasingly marketized economies, or rising landlessness pushing people into work for very low return.

The services sector is large and heterogeneous in productivity, incomes, and amount of decent work. Two key subsectors for women's employment, namely, wholesale and retail trade and services (WRTS) and the public subsector (defined here as the government-related categories public administration, education, health, and social work), are separated out for further discussion.

Wholesale and retail trade and services subsector

The WRTS sector typically includes self-employed workers and microenterprises selling food or household goods or making repairs on vehicles. In Cambodia the WRTS sector is the second largest sector for women's employment after agriculture. Women in general are overrepresented in the WRTS sector, with the female share of employment being 63.3% (see Table 6).

More than 338,000 women worked in the WRTS sector, accounting for almost 10% of women's employment in Cambodia. Thus, the WRTS sector accounts for a larger share of women's employment than the manufacturing sector, which represented 8% of women's employment in 2008. The only other service subsectors accounting for more than 1% of women's employment were accommodation and food services (1.06%), education (1.24%), and other services (1.06%). The accommodation and food services subsector employed about 37,000 women in 2008, an increase from an extremely small number in 1998. The increased employment in the accommodation and food services subsector is likely due to increased tourism in the country; nonetheless, the subsector remains relatively small relative to the WRTS sector as a whole.²⁴

[M]ore than six times as many men as women [are] employed as public civil servants

Although the growth of employment in the WRTS sector may reflect a growing demand for the goods and services, it may also indicate the overall lack of demand for women's labor and the barriers women face in accessing other higher-productivity sectors.

The services sector in Cambodia is likely to continue growing. The heterogeneous nature of the sector means that a variety of policy interventions likely are needed to improve women's employment and opportunities. Because the sector tends to be low productivity and offer limited decent work opportunities, policy interventions should focus on improved productivity and decent work opportunities, reducing gender-specific constraints relating to social biases and lack of education and training, and strategies to facilitate women's access to jobs in other sectors. Policies to enhance women's entrepreneurship also are particularly relevant to the WRTS sector.

Public subsector

Public or government-related employment typically offers more opportunities for decent work and social protection than private sector employment. For example, public sector employees are more likely than employees in the private sector to have access to social insurance, particularly pensions.

Gender inequality in the public subsector manifests itself in three main ways. First, women have less access to public sector employment (which includes public administration, education, and health and social services). Women's more limited access, relative to men, is particularly evident in Cambodia, where women's share of employment in the public administration, defense, and social security category is only 13%, resulting in more than six times as many men as women

²⁴ See Estrada et al. (2013).

being employed as public civil servants (see Table 6). This leads to horizontal segregation. Second, women have limited access to higher-level occupations and tend to be crowded into lower wage sections of the public subsector, leading to vertical segregation. Third, women often experience direct wage discrimination. In Cambodia, occupation segregation or direct wage discrimination is evident given the gender wage gap of 29% in the occupation “legislators, senior officials, and managers” (see Table 5). A similar lack of access to higher-level occupations is present in the private sector as well.

However, there are opportunities for expanded employment and decent work in the public sector. Given the low female share of employment in all three government-related categories in Cambodia, a broad strategy to increase women’s access to employment may be appropriate.

Entrepreneurship

Businesses tend to be small in size in Cambodia, where 97% of all enterprises are microenterprises (which is defined as an enterprise employing fewer than 10 people). (International Finance Corporation [IFC] 2008). Although all owners of micro and small enterprises experience a variety of challenges, women entrepreneurs face additional constraints. In Cambodia, women owned more than 50% of all enterprises in 2007, but were more likely to operate micro and small enterprises. Moreover, women are much less likely than men to operate in the manufacturing and construction sectors and are less likely to be oriented toward the international market (IFC 2008).

Women’s limited education in Cambodia also compounds the challenges of business registration and of obtaining and interpreting business regulations and information. Social norms regarding the appropriateness of women interacting with male business owners and government officials make it difficult for women to obtain business information, and women report more difficulty than men in hiring, managing, and retaining male staff. In addition, women’s domestic and care responsibilities reduce the amount of time they are available to work. Women are also reportedly more likely than men to be charged unofficial fees (bribes) by government inspectors and tax collectors, due to their lack knowledge and assertiveness (IFC 2008).

Strategies to increase the profitability of women’s businesses must take account of the specific constraints women face

Strategies to increase the profitability of women’s businesses must take account of the specific constraints women face as well as the more general constraints faced by all owners of microenterprises and own-account workers.

International Migration

The increased feminization of net emigration patterns out of Cambodia is indicative of the lack of employment and decent work within the country. During the period 2005–2010, the net international migration rate was –3.7 per 1,000 people for Cambodia, and between 2010–2015 is predicted to be at –1.8 per 1,000.²⁵

Data on registered international migration in Cambodia show higher rates of migration among women than among men and a trend toward feminization. There were 11,000 registered female migrants compared to 4,000 male migrants in 2009. The key destinations are the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand, with the majority of women migrating to Malaysia (ILO 2010b, Table 3.10). Estimates of the number of irregular migrants are substantially greater, with one estimate indicating that there are over 180,000 Cambodian migrants in Thailand (UNIFEM 2006).

²⁵ See International Organization for Migration, Cambodia: Facts and Figures.

Women migrants experience numerous problems, including being forced into prostitution, experiencing sexual harassment, having limited or no access to health facilities, and experiencing poor working conditions, confiscation of their documents, and unwarranted deductions from their pay (UNIFEM 2006; Piper 2008).

Pathways to Gender Equality in the Labor Market and Inclusive Growth

Gender inequality in the labor market is evident in Cambodia, with observed gender gaps in participation and employment outcomes. Despite increased LFPRs in 2001–2012 among women, gender gaps in other dimensions did not uniformly decrease over the decade. Progress was made in reducing the gender human capital gap. However, the gender wage gap, one indicator of the decent work gap, has increased, and gaps in all dimensions persist despite employment and economic growth.

The extension of employment regulations ... to include informal and vulnerable work must be explored

Strategies to reduce labor market gender inequality are required, and although differences in the countries' labor market structures and experiences indicate different pathways to gender-equitable employment and inclusive growth, there are some common elements. In general, Cambodia faces the task of continuing to generate employment growth, reducing vulnerable employment, and improving decent work. This requires broad macroeconomic strategy responses to expand employment opportunities, and policies and regulations to improve decent work and social protection.

Active labor market programs are needed to ensure that education and vocational training reach both women and men and that women are supported in nontraditional areas of training. Comprehensive social service provision, including water, sanitation, transport, and various forms of child care, would reduce women's unpaid domestic and care burden, making it feasible for women to participate in paid work. Social protection programs need to be extended to include informal employment, and programs related to formal employment should be revised to improve gender equity. The extension of employment regulations such as formal employment contracts, minimum wages, parental leaves, and safety and health standards to include informal and vulnerable work must be explored.

Additionally, in developing a gender-aware employment strategy, it is important to consider that in Cambodia, women primarily work in the agriculture sector as either paid or unpaid workers. Thus, equal access to assets such as land, education, and extension services and credit, which can raise productivity, are key components of an inclusive growth strategy. Some women workers, especially young women, have found paid work in the garment sector, and although the sector has offered opportunities for these women, a lack of enforcement of minimum wage legislation, low levels of skill development and job progression, and a lack of voice prevent the realization of greater gains for women. Employment opportunities exist in the garment sector and in new areas of manufacturing, in tourism, and in the public sector.

At present, the export sector is a relatively small employer of women. Although agriculture is likely to remain important and, in conformity with global trends, services are likely to expand, export-related employment is harder to predict because it depends on the level of global demand and on shifting comparative advantages among countries. Even so, the export sector provides opportunities for decent work for women if regulations are enforced. Moreover, women must be more fully included in training and upgrading programs, giving them adaptable and transferable skills to adjust to changing patterns of demand.

Review of Policies for Gender Equality in the Labor Market



Cambodia's national strategy to promote gender equality in the labor market for inclusive growth is based on both legislation and policy. Legislation is most often associated with protecting or enforcing fundamental human rights and establishing stable legal relationships in the workplace—aims that are achieved by setting enforceable minimum standards. Policy, on the other hand, is more flexible and may depend on global economic conditions, a country's specific economic and political circumstances, or a country's comparative level of development.

The national development goals in Cambodia recognize equity in general, although no specific mention is made of gender equality.

This section considers three separate areas of policy making: national development goals and macroeconomic policies, national women's ministries and gender equality strategies, and key sector policies to provide real opportunities for women's employment.

National Development Goals and Macroeconomic Policies

High-Level Goals and Commitments to Gender Equality

The national development goals in Cambodia recognize equity in general, although no specific mention is made of gender equality. For example, one of Cambodia's national development goals is to build "peace, political stability, security and social order, and sustainable and equitable development." Reference to gender inequality in MDG reports and indicators reveals support for promoting gender equality. In fact, in several instances, targets have been added to enhance the monitoring of gender equality and/or employment. For example, the government expressed its commitment to achieving gender equity in wage employment in agriculture and industry by 2010 and in services by 2015 (Ministry of Planning 2011). In short, although gender equality is not explicitly expressed in the national goals, Cambodia has indicated its commitment to promoting gender equality in other parts of the national plans and in the sector-specific plans.

Monetary Policy

In Cambodia, as in many other countries, the main objectives of monetary policy are low and stable inflation and management of the exchange rate, in addition to strictly monetary targets. The National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009–2013 indicates that the objectives of monetary policy are to "maintain price stability with an inflation target of under 5% [and] to manage a floating exchange rate regime" (Government of Cambodia 2010, 89).

The central bank has been charged with strengthening the finance sector. The National Bank of Cambodia is required to “expand the scope of the microfinance services that are urgently needed to meet the requirements of small businesses and rural communities, in particular small landholder farmers” (Government of Cambodia. 2010, 90). It is also charged with developing the nonbank financial institutions.

A stable macroeconomic environment clearly is important for economic growth. However, there also may be opportunities for monetary policy to contribute more to inclusive growth. Globally, central bank objectives are undergoing review, and the objectives of monetary policy are expanding beyond inflation targeting to include employment. As a result, central banks in many industrialized countries have introduced so-called unconventional policies, including quantitative easing, designed to place more emphasis on employment and output conditions.²⁶

The strategy of expanding monetary policy objectives to include employment is supported by empirical evidence that deflationary periods are associated with employment declines, especially for women in developing countries (Braunstein and Heintz 2006).²⁷ In addition, some countries, such as the United States, take account of information on employment and output as well as prices in making monetary adjustments (Lim 2006). Such a strategy is consistent with announcing a band on the inflation target. Therefore, incorporating explicit employment targets (rather than leaving employment implicit) could contribute to promoting gender-responsive employment growth, given women’s greater employment vulnerability during economic downturns.

Making monetary policy sensitive to gendered employment outcomes, particularly in economic downturns, could support women’s employment

As central banks work to strengthen the finance sector both in terms of prudential regulation and in the capacity to meet the needs of the real economy, there is an opportunity to do so in a gender-responsive manner, thereby enhancing efficiency and gender equity. In Cambodia, there is an awareness of the gendered constraints faced by entrepreneurs and an understanding that further information is needed to develop gender-responsive financial strategies and services. Cambodia’s overall Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan Ministry of Economy and Finance 2008–2012 recognizes that women entrepreneurs may have different needs than men entrepreneurs and indicates that one of its activities will be to encourage research on the different needs of women and men.

In general, making monetary policy sensitive to gendered employment outcomes, particularly in economic downturns, could support women’s employment. Such monetary policy, combined with strengthening the finance sector to make it responsive to women’s financial constraints, could contribute to promoting women’s employment and inclusive growth.

Fiscal Policy

Fiscal policy related to government expenditures, and taxation across all sectors of the economy (agriculture, industry, and services) as well expenditures relating to human capital development, labor market supports, and social protection is a key macroeconomic policy for facilitating gender-equitable employment. Most government expenditures will have gendered employment impacts, either directly or indirectly. For example, expenditure on infrastructure is likely to increase men’s employment to a greater extent than it increases women’s employment, given the strong occupational and industrial segregation in the fields related to infrastructure development. Expenditures on education and health, on the other hand, may have a greater positive impact on women’s employment. However, in Cambodia, expansion of fiscal policy is limited by low government revenues.

²⁶ See Epstein (2007) and Cobham (2012).

²⁷ See also Epstein and Yeldan (2008).

Good practice related to fiscal expenditures is to set targets for women’s direct employment and to ensure a gender-responsive design that enables women to benefit equally from the investment. Ensuring that women are employed directly by government-funded projects not only provides employment but also can serve to break down gender stereotypes, potentially making it easier for women to be hired in nontraditional areas in the future.

Good practice related to fiscal expenditures is to set targets for women’s direct employment and to ensure a gender-responsive design that enables women to benefit equally from the investment

In Cambodia, elements of these good practices can be found in existing policies, but they could be adopted in additional areas. One example of good practices in this regard is Cambodia’s infrastructure program (see Box 2). In general, however, budget allocations specified in government documents do not include a gender dimension, and a gendered analysis of sector spending priorities and commitments is absent. A high-level gender analysis of government expenditures related to employment should be considered.

Box 2 Gender-Sensitive Employment Targets and Gender Capacity Building in Rural Infrastructure Projects, Cambodia

Ministry of Public Works and Transport, partnering with the Asian Development Bank, intends to rehabilitate about 157 kilometers of provincial roads in 100 districts in the provinces of Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Speu, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng and to construct a cross-border facility between Cambodia and Viet Nam. The road rehabilitation project design demonstrates good practices related to women’s employment and gender capacity building, including explicit gender-sensitive employment and wage targets and key capacity building activities with targets for women facilitators and government staff training. Labor-appropriate technologies are to be used for rehabilitation and ongoing maintenance, and at least 30% of unskilled road rehabilitation laborers and 50% of road maintenance workers are to be women. Men and women will receive equal pay for equal work.

The project will provide training and capacity building on road safety and gender awareness. Specifically, at least 40% of community facilitators are to be women, and all Ministry of Public Works and Transport staff engaged with the road project will be trained on gender awareness/mainstreaming and social and risk mitigation issues, including prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission and human trafficking. Finally, sex-disaggregated baseline socioeconomic data will be collected on beneficiaries.

Source: Asian Development Bank and Kingdom of Cambodia. 2012. Loan Agreement (Special Operations) (Provincial Roads Improvement Project). Manila. Available at <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/projdocs/2012/43309-013-cam-sfj1.pdf>

Trade Policy

In contrast with monetary and fiscal policies, trade policies have been explicitly linked with employment in national plans and Cambodia has identified employment targets or indicators. One trade monitoring indicator is the number of workers in factories registered for export under trade-preferential treatment (Government of Cambodia 2010. Table 20). The Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) Program, for instance, links both the quantity and the quality of jobs with increased trade (see Box 3). Setting employment targets is an important step in raising awareness and accountability and making trade employment oriented.

Trade policies typically identify a set of products and services that will be targeted for support, along with mechanisms to support increased production and export.²⁸

²⁸ See World Trade Organization (2011).

Box 3 Better Factories Cambodia Project

Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) is an International Labour Organization (ILO) program to benefit workers and employers in Cambodia, as well as consumers in North American and European countries, through mandatory monitoring of working conditions in registered Cambodian garment and footwear factories. The BFC was established in 2001 to help the garment sector meet the requirements of the United States–Cambodia trade agreement, which gave Cambodia increased access to the United States market contingent on improved compliance with national and international labor standards.

The BFC monitors a set of working conditions consistent with the Law on Labor and ILO standards, as agreed to by the government, employers, and unions. The monitoring involves unannounced factory visits, direct observation of factory conditions, review of documents, and interviews with individual workers, union representatives, and management. It publishes a quarterly synthesis report of its findings. The BFC also assists employers in improving working conditions and productivity through human resource management, labor law, and dispute resolution training and resources.

The BFC has contributed to improvements in decent work. One report concluded that “while the industry in Cambodia remains one that is low skilled, low paid and hard work, compliance monitoring by the programme has since promoted a more responsible model of (formal) garment production, one centred on a basic and fundamental set of rights and conditions at work.”^b The mandatory inclusion of all export factories creates a level playing field that contributes to the success of the program. In addition, the process is transparent and credible, and the program’s emphasis is on continuous improvement rather than complete compliance.

Nonetheless, challenges to improving decent work in the registered factories remain, and it will be necessary to bring subcontracting factories into the monitoring program to improve conditions across the sector.

^a Cambodia. Law on Labor of 13 March 1997

^b Dasgupta, Poutiainen, and Williams (2011, 16).

Sources: S. Dasgupta, T. Poutiainen, and D. Williams. 2011. *From Downturn to Recovery: Cambodia’s Garment Sector in Transition*. Phnom Penh: ILO; Asian Development Bank. Gender Equality in the Labor Market in Cambodia. Unpublished; Cambodia. Law on Labor of 13 March 1997.

Cambodia has identified 19 such products and services. Targeted agriculture products include organic rice, rubber, cassava, freshwater fish, fruit, vegetables, soybeans, cashew nuts, corn, beer, and silk. In the industry sector, focus products include wood products, garments, footwear, and assembly in electronics and other manufacturing. The services sector focuses on tourism, transport, business services, and web-based services.

Initiatives to facilitate trade need to take account of and address the gender-specific constraints on entrepreneurs

Given strong horizontal and vertical sex segregation in employment, promoting production in selected products and services will have gendered employment effects, and a gendered analysis of such effects is therefore necessary. It may be necessary, for example, to promote products produced by women along with those produced by men. Further, gendered value-chain analysis may be useful to identify which products and services women provide compared to men, and at what points in the chain.

Initiatives to facilitate trade need to take account of and address the gender-specific constraints on entrepreneurs. An example of good practice is provided by Cambodia’s Ministry of Commerce, which recognizes that women entrepreneurs benefit less than men from public sector–supported

training, promotion, and networking, and the ministry has proposed undertaking women-specific initiatives, including support for women's business associations (Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Women's Affairs 2012).

While the link between trade and employment is generally recognized, employment indicators should be sex-disaggregated to improve the gender equality of employment in exports. Gendered analysis of employment should also be conducted in domestic sectors that compete with imports, examining how changes in tariff structure might affect the employment of both men and women. Strategies to promote exports and employment in goods and services might consider undertaking a gender analysis of the value chain to identify where women are currently employed, develop mechanisms to support their employment, and identify avenues to expand their employment.

Employment Policy

There is growing awareness of the importance of employment and decent work for inclusive growth at the national level. The Government of Cambodia, in conjunction with the ILO, is developing a national employment policy, defined as "an explicit and strategically placed policy framework to expand and ensure access to productive employment opportunities in a nondiscriminatory manner," and held the first tripartite workshop on national employment policy in August 2012 (Matsumoto 2012, slide 5). The national employment policy will provide a mechanism to coordinate employment strategies across sectors. The policy development is a participatory process and mechanisms will be needed to ensure that women are included in planning and implementation and that the policy meets the needs of women.

The Government of Cambodia's Decent Work Country Programme 2011–2015 was developed in consultation with Cambodia's employers' organizations, and workers' organizations and the ILO. The program focuses on improving industrial relations, promoting an enabling environment for decent work, and improving social protection (ILO 2011b). The program will need to ensure that women are fully included. The government's ability to draw upon the resources of the ILO and to work in conjunction with it is an example of "institutional leapfrogging." It also has resulted in the inclusion of gender goals and policies in the private sector development and employment generation component of Cambodia's national plan.

To varying degrees, employment policies under discussion incorporate high-level employment goals and recognize the links between employment and inclusive growth, employment targets, and specific employment creation programs. Opportunities remain to make employment policies more gender-responsive, including more detailed analysis of the constraints and discrimination women face in employment, adoption of strategies to enhance women's employment, and setting of sex-disaggregated targets with accountable monitoring and evaluation.

Cambodia's establishment of a separate ministry raises the status of gender issues

National Women's Ministries or Commissions and Gender Equality Strategies

Rather than creating a structure inside another ministry, Cambodia has created the stand-alone Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA), indicating a relatively strong commitment to gender equality. Cambodia's establishment of a separate ministry raises the status of gender issues, provides a channel through which women's voices can be heard, and enables development of a broad gender mainstreaming program. MOWA has prepared the Five-Year Strategic Plan 2009–2013: Neary Rattanak III to guide Cambodia's national and subnational gender and development plans. The aim has been to inculcate a "gender reflex" across policy areas.

The national gender mainstreaming institutional machinery includes four main elements.²⁹ First, MOWA contributes to the gender-responsive policies and programs of line ministries and subnational units. The ministry is responsible for increasing the number of women in decision making, promoting economic empowerment of women, supporting the Cambodian National Council for Women, enforcing legal protection of women, raising awareness, and combating discriminatory attitudes. Second, the Cambodian National Council for Women includes representatives of national line ministries and is responsible for evaluating policies and laws related to the promotion of women's status. Third, the Women's and Children's Consultative Committees operate subnationally to promote gender equality. Finally, gender mainstreaming action groups within line ministries have primary responsibility for preparing gender mainstreaming plans.

There is awareness of gendered constraints in accessing employment and government services. The Five-Year Strategic Plan recognizes that women's access to employment in the private sector is limited by "traditional attitudes about 'appropriate' occupations for women and men" and that women are constrained by lower levels of education and literacy (MOWA 2009, 5). Moreover, women's public sector participation, both in government and in politics, is constrained by traditional gender stereotypes, domestic and care burdens, and women's lack of leadership and management experience.

The Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategy in Agriculture offers a useful description of the constraints women face in accessing productive resources and hence employment in the private sector as well as women's more limited access to government services. The gender mainstreaming action plan (GMAP) recognizes women-specific constraints related to land, training, and credit and notes that although women provide 74% of the labor in the agriculture sector and 80% of food production, they only receive 10% of extension services (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries 2006). The gender mainstreaming strategy in agriculture notes that both men and women should benefit from ministry programs to address gender inequalities in access to government programs.

Cambodia has undertaken both gender mainstreaming and gender-specific strategies to promote gender equality

Cambodia has undertaken both gender mainstreaming and gender-specific strategies to promote gender equality. Gender mainstreaming action groups were established in 2005, and many ministries have developed GMAPs similar to the ones for agriculture and tourism. Sixteen ministries have completed a GMAP for their sector, and four other ministries are developing GMAPs (Government of Cambodia 2010).

Several ministries offer examples of gender-specific strategies. For instance, the Ministry of Commerce indicates that it will undertake women-specific initiatives such as promoting the participation of businesswomen in domestic and international exhibitions, support businesswomen's associations, and document success stories of women's businesses (Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Women's Affairs 2012). The GMAP for the Ministry of Agriculture indicates that the ministry will implement study tours for women farmers and support the creation of women farmers' groups.

MOWA operates women's development centers, providing an example of how targeted resources for poor women can increase their incomes and decision making within the household (ADB 2010b). The project provides life skills for women (such as nutrition, home safety, and women workers' rights instruction) and an institutional vehicle for advocacy and small enterprise development, including management and financial training as well as technical training on product standards. By focusing on women through a participatory approach, the women's development center project reported that off-farm activities of women increased significantly. Most participants' incomes increased, which consequently reduced women's migration and enabled them to have a say in the use of income.

²⁹ For a description of the aims of each group, see MOWA (2009). See also ADB (2012b).

This type of integrated training program, which included the training of ministry staff, is an example of a good practice and provides lessons that can be valuable for other countries. At the same time, however, there is the opportunity to strengthen the women's development centers, to move beyond gender stereotyping in the types of training offered, and to enable the centers to promote women's income and economic empowerment. In this way, gender constraints are recognized and some strategies to address them are devised, although there is still room for greater strategic action.

Increasing women's participation and control over development strategies is important for promoting gender equality. Awareness of the importance of increasing representation of women in the civil service is an important first step in gender mainstreaming, given women's small share of civil service employment, and it may act as a catalyst for wider social change by validating women's employment in skilled positions.³⁰ There are mechanisms through which women can have input in the gender planning process. For example, the Cambodian National Council for Women, an interministerial committee, and the subnational Women's and Children's Consultative Committees both explicitly promote gender equality. Additional participation of the private sector and civil society may be a way to strengthen women's participation.

The inclusion of targets in national planning documents can assist in orienting expenditures toward women and support gender-sensitive program design. To this end, Cambodia is incorporating gender-sensitive targets into its national plans. For example, the National Strategic Development Plan Update (NSDP) 2009–2013 includes targets for the “number of ministries/institutions that have formulated a [GMAP]” as well as other useful indicators of gender equality in the labor market (Government of Cambodia 2010, 82). Sector-specific plans also identify targets. For instance, the GMAP for agriculture established sex-disaggregated targets that at least 50% of poor, female-headed farming households in target areas would be able to access food security programs by 2010, that the number of women using various credit services would increase by 50%, and that women's participation in community groups also would increase by 50% (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries 2006). This type of explicit target setting is useful for benchmarking and monitoring purposes and can be replicated elsewhere. A similar commitment to monitoring and evaluation is outlined in the Five-Year Strategic Plan 2009–2013: Neary Rattanak III, and a national congress will assess the effect of the plan at the end of the five years.

The inclusion of targets in national planning documents can assist in orienting expenditures toward women and support gender-sensitive program design

Despite training and commitment in Cambodia, problems remain. For example, there remains a lack of understanding about how to undertake gender mainstreaming. GMAPs are not well connected with main planning processes, and a lack of resources has limited GMAP implementation (Chea 2011).

Key Sector Policies

Agriculture

Cambodia has an extensive rural population and relies on the agriculture sector for employment, economic growth, exports, and food security. It is a significant source of employment for women and is important for poverty reduction in rural areas.

Agricultural policy is highly complex, and its overall contribution to inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, particularly in developing countries, cannot be overestimated. Agricultural policy requires consideration at both the macroeconomic and the microeconomic levels. It includes environmental issues such as deforestation, soil degradation, and climate change as well as food security issues. It requires an assessment of country development, trade and

³⁰ See, for example, Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Women's Affairs (2012), which recognizes the underrepresentation of women in the civil service, the existence of a “glass ceiling,” and women's lack of training.

export-import ratios, global market factors, the types of agriculture products best suited to the environment and economy, current and potential agriculture production techniques, the skill level of agricultural workers, and available and potential infrastructure. Agricultural policy requires cohesive, sustainable short-, medium-, and long-term strategies that are regularly monitored, assessed, and updated. It should include appropriate extension services to enable farmers to increase the size of their farm holdings and to move from subsistence farming to sustainable commercial agriculture.

Good practice requires an overall strategy to account for the fact that women generally represent more than half of the workers in the agriculture sector, women often are the poorest people in rural communities, and men and women frequently have different experiences, vulnerabilities, and needs. Gender considerations need to be taken into account at each phase of policy development and in all phases of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of effectiveness. As part of that process, it is necessary to address the constraints that women farmers commonly experience.

The starting point is that women farmers do not have an equal opportunity to acquire land or register it in their own names. They may also have fewer inheritance rights than male farmers. Land ownership is important not only to women's ability to earn income but also as a source of empowerment and autonomy within the household. Their lack of land also affects their ability to gain access to credit facilities. Women are similarly constrained in their access to extension services; skills development, including training in management and marketing skills; and improved farming equipment. They require special assistance to achieve equal access, and this can be achieved through gender-specific action plans that target the needs of women farmers and gender mainstreaming that is monitored for effectiveness to ensure that women share appropriately in the sector's growth.³¹

Cambodia's Policy and Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in the Agricultural Sector recognizes the significant contribution of women to labor and food production

The Government of Cambodia also articulates its agricultural policy within a number of overarching policies and specific pieces of legislation related to specific subsectors, such as fisheries and forestry. The policies include the Rectangular Strategy Phase II and the NSDP Update 2009–2013 (ILO 2010c). The overall strategy of the NSDP is to reduce poverty and to implement the government's Rectangular Strategy Phase II. The first priority is agriculture, which also includes water and irrigation systems, transport infrastructure, electricity, labor-intensive industries, and food processing for export.

The NSDP identifies four focus areas for agricultural development: improving agricultural productivity and diversification, land reform and mine clearance, fisheries reform, and forestry reform. These areas are then developed through specific strategies. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries has formulated the Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan 2006–2010, which outlines seven priority goals and articulates the constraints and actions to be taken with regard to those goals. These include food security, productivity, and diversification; improvement and strengthening of agriculture research and extension systems; market access for agriculture products; creation of an institutional and legislative development framework; land reform, land tenure, and pro-poor land access policies; fisheries reform; and forestry reform.

These overarching policies do not address the situation of women, but Cambodia's Policy and Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in the Agricultural Sector (2006–2010) is particularly important for women. It recognizes the significant contribution of women to labor and food production, identifies specific constraints, and has some sector specific-targets to address such constraints. The GMAP for the agriculture sector is due for evaluation and updating, which could provide an excellent opportunity to further particularize and target the needs of women with respect to training, financial management, marketing, and information strategies to improve agricultural production.

³¹ See ADB and ILO (2013a).

The trade policy, which expresses a diversity objective to increase export in named products, lists 19 products, 12 of which are agricultural. The related GMAP does not indicate whether gender was taken into account in the selection of those products.

Agriculture subsectors of specific importance to women—other than rice production, which is the second-largest contributor to GDP—are vegetable growing and livestock production (National Institute of Statistics 2011). The government's recent Policy on the Promotion of Paddy Rice Production and Export of Milled Rice has set 2015 as the target year to reach a paddy rice surplus of more than 4 million tons and to achieve an export of at least 1 million tons of milled rice. The government also aims to ensure that Cambodian rice is internationally recognized, a strategy that depends on appropriate investment to improve rural infrastructure and irrigation (Chea 2010; Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2008). These targets, together with the additional targets for products identified in the trade policy, have the potential to increase women's employment, though the policy makes no reference to gender.

The Cambodian agriculture sector is characterized by rural households' ownership of small parcels of land. In 2009, almost half of households had agriculture plots of less than 1 hectare, and some had none. In addition, 1% of women were dependent on subsistence crop farming and raising livestock (National Institute of Statistics and Ministry of Planning 2009). Farming at the grassroots level has led to the transformation of farmers' organizations, which were initially established by the government in the 1960s but have now developed into very different organizations.

Farmers' organizations have the potential to provide significant support for women farmers (see Box 4), but the constraints affecting farmers' organizations need to be addressed. The GMAP

Box 4 Women in Farmers' Organizations, Cambodia

A farmers' organization is a collective of farmers in a village, or from nearby villages, who come together with common goals for joint economic benefit related to agricultural activities. In Cambodia, there are three types of farmers' organizations: groups that are small and informal with 5–30 members; associations that have 30–100 members; and agriculture cooperatives, which are larger and more formal, include more than 100 members and are registered with the Ministry of the Interior. In 2005, almost 70% of farmers' organizations were farmers' groups with fewer than 30 members, and only 12% had more than 100 members.

Two linked case studies have analyzed the impact of farmers' organizations in the provinces of Battambang, Kampong Thom, Kampot, and Svay Rieng. Of the three types of farmers' organizations, the agriculture cooperative was found to have a more coherent management structure, and being a member of an agriculture cooperative had a positive effect on both rice and livestock production, with members' revenues and profits being significantly higher than those recorded by nonmembers. The same positive outcomes were not found for other farmers' organizations.

The government, as part of its agricultural development policy, recognizes and prioritizes smallholder farming and farmers' organizations as a key to rural economic development and poverty alleviation. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries recently drafted a law that includes support strategies to protect agriculture cooperatives and give them more advantages. These supports are not available for the other 70% of farmers' organizations. Farmers' associations and agriculture cooperatives have largely evolved from farmers' groups. Thus, although it is important to provide assistance to existing cooperatives, they will only increase in number if other farmers' organizations are also properly supported.

continued on next page

Box 4 *continued*

According to 2008 census data, about 26% of Cambodian households are headed by women; this appears to be roughly similar to the percentage of female-headed households in the region. The inference from the studies is that women are most likely to be members of smaller farmers' organizations. Common constraints on farmers' organizations, which affect households headed by either women or men, include poor group structure, lack of good leadership, improper enforcement of internal regulations, failure to respond to members' needs, and lack of external support such as access to information and services. In addition, there are four important constraints that especially effect female members.

First, members of farmers' groups have limited access to credit. The average loan obtained was only KR310,000 (approximately \$78), which is insufficient to enable members to expand their farming production. The average loan size received by women was KR210,000, only 61% of the size of loans extended to men. Second, farmland is limited, and farm plots are smaller for women than for men. Security of land tenure and land registration also has been a long-standing issue in Cambodia and has adversely affected women. There is a link between the tenure of land and the productivity of land. Third, only 49% of female household heads can read and write, compared to 80% of male household heads. Women have an average of around three years of education, compared to around five years for their male counterparts.

Finally, it is reportedly impractical for members to access knowledge and techniques provided by farmers' organizations, though there are likely to be differences between women and men in this regard because of the different division of labor tasks. Furthermore, around 80% of farmers' organization members (both male and female) do not have collective access to input and output markets, which is a key function of farmers' organizations.*****

Sources: See case studies in V. Theng, S. Keo, and P. Khiev. 2013. *Impact Assessment of Farmer Organization on Food Security for Rural Poor. CRDI Annual Development Review 2012–2013*. Phnom Penh: CRDI. p. 65; Asian Development Bank. *Gender Equality in the Labor Market in Cambodia*. Unpublished.

refers to one good initiative to assist women farmers' organizations, but additional strategies are required to address disparities, to provide encouragement for women to work cooperatively, and to help them obtain the services they need to further improve and expand their agricultural production. This should be included not only in GMAPs but also in broader government policies, strategies, and action plans.

The importance of the agriculture sector to women's employment, inclusive growth, and poverty reduction in Cambodia is vital and warrants an overarching agricultural strategy for women, which incorporates gender good practice features. Furthermore, employment of women in the agriculture sector could be included in an overarching gender-sensitive national employment policy, which the ILO could assist the government in formulating.

Industry and Manufacturing

As mentioned, the Government of Cambodia's trade policy includes garments and footwear as the two main industrial products for promotion, export, and growth. The industry is highly gender-segregated and is likely to remain a major source of exports and employment for the foreseeable future. Ensuring the industry's longer-term economic viability, which includes both continued growth and diversification, will require policies to address a number of key challenges

and cooperation with private industry. This low-skill-oriented, export-reliant sector cannot be sustainable in the long term, unless Cambodia moves up the value chain in the global garment industry. Therefore, issues of industry restructuring, skills development, and social protection are of critical importance.

A recent pilot study reported that skills development in Cambodia has been advanced through specialized training provided by international organizations and NGOs (UNCTAD 2013). Several initiatives have supported these efforts, including at the Garment Manufacturing Association of Cambodia's training center and the Garment Industry Productivity Center. These initiatives are crucial because they facilitate the movement of Cambodia-based manufacturers to operations in higher-value-added niches of the value chain. The study also reported that the industry provides opportunities for entrepreneurship, particularly for women. Of the total number of women entrepreneurs in small-scale manufacturing businesses (with fewer than 50 employees and less than \$250,000 in assets), 30% work in the textiles and garments sector. Women also need to have opportunities for promotion; at present, technical and supervisory/managerial staff are usually expatriates. Specific strategies are required to attract women and encourage them to develop skills and move to more senior or supervisory positions. These initiatives require a comprehensive policy approach and social dialogue between government, employers, and unions.

Government policy should focus more attention on expanding and improving employment opportunities for women

It is estimated that about 2,000–3,000 small garment factories in the capital city supply and act as subcontractors to big companies. Government policy should focus more attention on expanding and improving employment opportunities for women, including extension of the BFC approach to include the many small garment factories not covered by the BFC (UNCTAD 2013).

Tourism

Women are already well represented in both formal and vulnerable employment in the services sector and have a greater share of employment in the sector than men. It is therefore a potentially important source of inclusive growth for women. Specific service subsectors of high relevance to women's current and future employment in Cambodia under discussion are highlighted here. Cambodia places tourism in its list of top priorities for development planning, economic growth, and increased employment.

Tourism helps to provide jobs and diversify local economies. Tourism provides employment opportunities for women at a number of different occupational levels, and ecotourism in particular could provide significant opportunities for rural women. Important issues to be addressed in developing tourism industry policy include the effects of tourism on the physical environment and the social and cultural structure of a country and the need to address risks such as an increase in sex tourism and trafficking of women and girls. These issues require a combination of legislation and policies.

The importance of the tourism industry to the national revenue and employment opportunities of Cambodia is reflected in the government's placement of the sector as one of the six top priorities for social and economic development (ADB 2012c). It is also one of the government's key strategies in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals, and the more recent National Strategic Development Plan.

The Ministry of Tourism has been active in promoting Cambodia as a tourist destination. The director of the Department of International Cooperation and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) within the Ministry of Tourism recently made a presentation that referred to a Strategic Plan for Tourism 2011–2020 (ADB 2012c). This plan includes tourism sector policies such as a National Tourism Policy and a National Ecotourism Policy, regulations, directives, a Law on Tourism, and the development of a new Law on the Governance of Ecotourism, though it appears that these programs are yet to be undertaken. The director noted that cultural tourism is to be a priority, with links to the garment industry, the rice export industry, and a variety of cultural destinations.

Goal 3 of the GMAP in the Tourism Sector 2008–2009 refers to women’s participation in the management of tourism services and in tourism development projects. It advocates the development of programs aimed at gathering gender-disaggregated data and increasing the number of women participating in tourism training sessions, noting that women on the whole had a lower participation rate in training than men. It also refers to the need to conduct gender and tourism development training, including skills training in leadership and management, proposal writing, and budget planning, and information about cultural and environmental impacts. To help women obtain jobs and increase their income in the tourism sector, additional priority was indicated for language training for tourist guides as well as training in handicraft production. The action plan also highlighted the need to assist women in establishing community-based ecotourism committees and programs.

Goal 3 of the Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan in the Tourism Sector 2008–2009 refers to women’s participation in the management of tourism services and in tourism development projects

A UNDP discussion paper titled *Cambodia Country Competitiveness* also made a number of policy recommendations to increase the competitiveness of Cambodia’s tourism industry. It noted that Cambodia’s neighbors were performing better, even with respect to pro-poor benefits, in areas containing major cultural attractions. The paper further noted that the poor bear many of the costs of rapid tourism development, such as land evictions, without sharing significantly in the benefits. It indicated a need for a potential increase in ecotourism and the need to diversify tourism so that the Cambodia tourism sector is not overly reliant on one cultural site—the temples of Angkor. Finally, the paper noted that gender differences in the tourism sector persist and that there is a need to reinforce gender equity legislation, adjust salaries for similar positions, and significantly increase the pro-poor impact of tourism (UNDP 2009).

In addition to these recommendations, there is a need to address barriers to women’s employment in tourism-related occupations so that women are not relegated to poorly paid promotional employment in suboptimal workplaces such as beer halls. Reducing the trafficking risk for women and girls as a result of tourism development also is an important issue (see Box 5).

Finally, an important new regional feature has been the adoption of the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011–2015, which has the potential to encourage increased and connected tourism in Cambodia. However, this will require Cambodia to increase its professional tourism training through the Cambodian National Tourism Professional Training Plan 2012–2020.

Box 5 Prevention of Trafficking Strategy, Cambodia

Collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism and the International Labour Organization’s Mekong Sub-regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, which began in 2005, resulted in the Strategic Plan on the Promotion of Child-Safe Tourism to Prevent Exploitation in the Tourism Industry. This plan is innovative and comprehensive and its monitoring and assessment continues.

The strategic plan included research on trafficking, policy and institutional development for safe tourism, review and strengthening of legislation, prevention efforts, protection for young women and children already working in tourism, and the establishment of relevant services. Operational guidelines were later developed to supplement the strategic plan in three areas: labor protection, which involves promoting and monitoring adherence to labor law in workplaces; tourism regulation, which involves promoting and monitoring adherence to tourism regulations; and social protection, which involves providing services. This included coordinated work among the Ministry of Tourism; the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training; the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth; and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, and included training of both staff and employers’ associations, trade unions, and nongovernment organizations.

Source: International Labour Organization. 2007. *Meeting the Challenge: Proven Practices for Human Trafficking Prevention in the Greater Mekong Subregion*. Bangkok.

Government Services

Public sector employment is an important source of jobs with better pay and conditions for women than many other industrial sectors, but women are constrained by being predominately employed in traditional, gender-stereotyped care sector government occupations such as health and education, and they are underrepresented in the higher-paying subsectors. Cambodian women, for example, have a much lower share of civil service employment, at all levels and in all categories, than men, even in “traditional” women’s areas such as in health and education. Various ministries already are focusing on increasing the number of women in the civil service and on utilizing GMAPs to achieve the increase, but this requires more energetic and focused action. There are increasing opportunities for employment within this sector, and women should be given the training, skills, and opportunities to enable them to obtain equitable access to all subsectors.

Public sector employment is an important source of jobs with better pay and conditions for women than many other industrial sectors

Entrepreneurship

There has been a rapid surge in the number and proportion of female entrepreneurs in developing countries (Minniti and Naude 2010, 280). Studies indicate that female-led micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) increase employment opportunities for women and contribute to wider development goals (ADB and ILO 2013a). One survey indicated that women entrepreneurs are more likely than men to be motivated by necessity; these are livelihood-oriented entrepreneurs attempting to escape unemployment (ILO and VWEC 2007). Men, on the other hand, are more likely to be purpose-motivated or growth-oriented entrepreneurs, starting a business due to a good grasp on business and entrepreneurial skills. The study concluded that the main reason for this difference in motivation is that women shoulder greater household responsibilities. An additional component is female entrepreneurs’ perceived weakness in establishing social relations and communication. One feature of livelihood-oriented entrepreneurs is that their businesses often stay informal, semi-informal, or small scale, whereas growth-oriented entrepreneurs have the potential and intention to grow into larger businesses because they have a clear direction for both financial investment and human resources.

In 2012, the ILO reported on the first 10 years of its Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Programs (ILO 2012h). The report identified common constraints faced by women entrepreneurs, including a lack of access to and control over financial and productive resources; a lack of access to collateral, land, training, and information; greater household responsibilities and reduced mobility; and cultural norms and attitudes toward women entrepreneurs. These are similar to the constraints identified in Cambodia. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor’s 2010 Women’s Report identified the importance of creating environments in which women are enlightened about entrepreneurship and can envision how this can be a viable and attractive path for their employment and livelihood (Kelley et al. 2010). The report also noted that women are less likely—or are less likely to be able to—maintain a business into its mature phase. Thus, there is a need to assist women not only in running a start-up business but also in sustaining and growing an established business. The good practices review of policy sets out a number of policy strategies to assist women in the informal economy (ADB and ILO 2013a).

Measures to support and facilitate women upgrading their businesses and employment circumstances can particularly encourage a progressive integration of rural women’s businesses into the formal economy.³² Women’s cooperatives are often a good practice solution.

The government recognizes that most of its people work in the rural or informal economy and that the vast majority of enterprises can be considered micro in size. Entrepreneurship policies are set out in the Small to Medium Enterprise Development Framework 2005 (and that of 2007) as

³² See also ILO (2010d).

well as the overarching National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009–2013, which prioritizes improvement of the business climate for MSME development. The four focus areas include the legal and regulatory framework, financing, supportive actions for MSMEs, and integrating MSMEs into a global value chain, including prevention of smuggling.³³ The NSDP advocates the formation of MSME producer groups; networks of women entrepreneurs; and linkages with financial service providers, including microfinance institutions, the private sector, and local authorities. This specific reference to women in both the NSDP and the framework provides a sound basis for improving women entrepreneurs' access to information about microfinance institutions and microcredit.

Although women run more than half of the country's enterprises, they face many more disadvantages than their male counterparts

The gender perspective on entrepreneurship in Cambodia is further taken up as part of the Five-Year Strategic Plan 2009–2013: Neary Rattanak III. The implementation of programs and services to promote women's entrepreneurship is largely achieved through the women's development centers, which have evolved from supply-driven vocational training centers into demand-driven enterprise development centers with integrated training programs. The government's promotion of the One Village, One Product movement, particularly in rural areas, also can assist women entrepreneurs.

Although women run more than half of the country's enterprises, they face many more disadvantages than their male counterparts. The United Nations and the ILO are assisting with the implementation of national MSME policies and strategies aimed at reducing the barriers to the formal economy, barriers to entry for creation of MSMEs, and access to microfinance, the latter being a significant impediment for women entrepreneurs. Opportunities for job creation for women through entrepreneurship hopefully will be significantly improved through a gendered approach on the part of development partners. A complete support package is required to reach rural poor women.

Labor Support Policies

Social Protection

The term *social protection* has changed and broadened, moving away from the notion of social security nets to encompass social insurance as well as specific social services that protect against specific risks. ADB defines social protection as a "set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labor markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption/loss of income" (ADB, Social Protection). The components of social protection programs include contributory social insurance programs, social assistance in the form of transfers to vulnerable groups, and labor market programs to help people secure employment. Social protection includes services and the payment of benefits triggered by specific social risks (such as old age or disability) or life events (such as the birth of a child). It is often difficult to draw a line between social protection and other development policies related to the creation of public works, education, and health care.

The ILO definition of social protection also includes "universal access to essential affordable social services in the areas of health, water and sanitation, education, food security, housing, and others defined according to national priorities" (ILO 2011f, 23). A recent comprehensive social security platform developed and promoted by the ILO recommends the adoption of minimum essential noncontributory benefits guaranteed by the government as well as a "social security staircase."³⁴ The reference to a "social security staircase" is meant to encapsulate the combination

³³ See ADB (2013a, Section III, Part C.6).

³⁴ A comprehensive discussion is set out in ILO (2011e).

of a horizontal dimension, comprising a set of four essential noncontributory benefits guaranteed to every person, with a vertical dimension which guides countries that have established the social floor to gradually reach the level of ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) (ILO 2011e, 257).³⁵ This platform currently forms the basis for development of social protection policy and programs and their implementation in Cambodia.

It is good practice in social protection policies to recognize that women and men may experience different vulnerabilities. Some programs need to specifically address risks such as childbearing that only women experience. Even when women and men face the same risks, their experiences of that risk may differ. The way in which men and women access and benefit from social protection programs also will differ (ADB and ILO 2013a).

It is good practice in social protection policies to recognize that women and men may experience different vulnerabilities

Good practice calls for strong links between social protection and labor systems through coherent and coordinated programs that communicate with one another, work together, and sometimes share administrative subsystems (World Bank 2012b).³⁶ Programs that lend themselves to coordination include conditional cash transfers, skills training, labor market access opportunities through public works, and encouragement of small and medium-sized enterprises for the working-age poor and vulnerable (ADB and ILO 2013a). In addition to a comprehensive gendered social insurance system, other good practice social assistance strategies to assist women include group targeting of assistance, using indicators such as female-headed households, pregnant women, disadvantaged women, and women in the informal sector, and public employment creation programs with targets for women (ADB and ILO 2013a).³⁷

Public employment creation programs are also increasingly viewed as a critical part of social protection, although like cash transfers are still only a small part of a much larger, and more comprehensive social protection strategy. The design of the employment creation schemes, as in other social protection programs, determines who participates and who benefits. The following are some key features of a gender-responsive public employment program (ADB and ILO 2013a):

- Work should be provided close to where women live to increase the social acceptability and feasibility of participating.
- Programs should offer wage parity with men, as well as regular and predictable work hours.
- Contractors should not be permitted—in order to reduce the likelihood of exploitation and discrimination and improve dignity and self-esteem.
- If gender inequalities are pronounced and women are not tolerated in the public sphere, then women-only projects should be considered to overcome restrictions on women’s mobility.
- Child care should be provided.
- Quotas should be introduced to increase women’s access to the program.
- Skills training should be integrated into the employment creation program.

Informal sector workers and/or workers in rural areas of developing countries frequently lack social protection coverage. The majority of these workers are women and should be given the highest priority. Funding of social protection strategies and programs is always challenging, though benefits may be provided through a mix of private and public funding, employer or employee contributions, or conditional government transfers, usually underpinned by legislation (ADB and ILO 2013a, 31–33). Good practice indicates that gender-targeted employment guarantees and public work schemes are an innovative means of raising women’s wages in the informal sector and provide a form of insurance against unemployment, especially in poor rural areas (see Box 2).

³⁵ Ibid, p. 257.

³⁶ See also ADB (2010a, 2012a, 2011f, 2012e) and UNDP, Global South-South Development Academy and ILO (2011).

³⁷ See, in particular, Good Practices Example 9: The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, India, 2005.

Cambodia's social policy is largely contained within the Rectangular Strategy and in the National Strategic Development Plan Update, which identifies a number of policies and action plans. Parallel to the NSDP Update, a number of government institutions are delivering social protection through individual policy frameworks and action plans. The Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) is the interministerial coordination mechanism to implement social protection interventions.

The major social protection programs have been social insurance schemes such as the National Social Security Fund, which commenced in 2007; the National Social Security Fund for Civil Servants, which commenced in 2008; the National Fund for Veterans, which commenced in 2010; the Health Equity Fund; community-based health insurance; and many other programs related to education, health, and general social assistance (Sothorn 2011). In addition, the country has both formal and informal safety nets. The informal safety nets are provided through kinship, reciprocal activities, community cohesion, and religious institutions, which still play a valuable part in assisting individuals and communities.

The National Social Security Fund is limited to private sector workers. The legal basis for coverage is the Law on Social Security Schemes, which is limited to workers defined by the Law on Labor. Coverage is limited to workers in enterprises with at least eight employees and provides only employment injury benefits (ILO 2012c). Therefore, one major problem has been the lack of protection for informal workers, who cannot rely on the legislation for benefits and protection (MOWA 2008). In addition, social protection has been ad hoc, geographically limited, and heavily reliant on unsustainable donor funding.³⁸ Overall social protection coverage has been weak and has been further hampered both by poor coordination among implementing parties (mostly government ministries and related national bodies) and by weak overall implementation capacity (a product of both human capacity weaknesses and a lack of physical and financial resources).

Concerns about coverage led to the recent development of an overarching policy framework for social protection, the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable (2011–2015) (NSPS). The core vision of the strategy is that all Cambodians, especially the poor and vulnerable, will benefit from effective social safety nets and social security as an integral part of a sustainable, affordable, and effective national social protection system. The main goal of the NSPS is to provide the most disadvantaged citizens with increasing protection against risks.³⁹ The NSPS identifies five objectives (UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 148–150). Among these, Objective 3 is that “working-age poor and vulnerable citizens [will] benefit from work opportunities to secure income, food, and livelihoods, while contributing to the creation of sustainable physical and social infrastructure assets” (UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 50). The responsibility for coordination lies with the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, which is mandated to ensure that effective interministerial coordination mechanisms are in place involving government ministries and agencies responsible for delivering social safety-net programs to the poor and vulnerable (UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 153). The implementation is the responsibility of line ministries and decentralized government institutions (UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 152).

Two of the five NSPS objectives specifically refer to women. Objective 2 states, “Poor and vulnerable children and mothers benefit from social safety nets to reduce poverty and food insecurity and enhance the development of human capital by improving nutrition, maternal and child health, promoting education and eliminating child labor, especially its worst forms”

³⁸ See ILO (2012i).

³⁹ See general description and overview of the scheme in described in UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO (2011, 136).

Concerns about coverage led to the recent development of an overarching policy framework for social protection, the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable (2011–2015)

(UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 148–150). Objective 5 states, “Special vulnerable groups, including orphans, the elderly, single women with children, people living with disabilities, people living with HIV, patients of [tuberculosis] and other chronic illness, and the like, receive income, in-kind and psycho-social support, and adequate social care” (UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 148–150). Except for the specific reference to women within these two objectives, however, the overall strategic framework is gender-neutral. One of the involved ministries involved is MOWA, but it is not clear what role this ministry will play in relation to the other seven involved ministries, which have been allocated particular tasks (UNDP, Global South–South Development Academy, and ILO 2011, 148–150). The specific role of MOWA must be outlined to ensure that the overall policy is gender-sensitive and gender is mainstreamed in its implementation.

The NSPS is still in the process of policy development, but each of the present objectives has identified specific priority strategic objectives and interventions. Objective 3, for instance, addresses seasonal unemployment and underemployment and the proposed strategies include national, labor-intensive public works programs and food-for-work and cash-for-work schemes (ILO 2012b). Objectives 1 and 3 have specifically identified women and children for priority interventions, including conditional cash transfers, outreach services, and second-chance programs for out-of-school youth. Policy options with costings have been developed but await further discussion and decisions.

In addition to the measures outlined in the NSPS, the government aims to expand and improve the quality of community-based health insurance for low-income members of society, to include policies and programs to promote better occupational safety and health, and to ensure complementary health and social welfare services for those living with HIV/AIDS (ILO 2012i).

The ILO’s *Decent Work Country Profile: Cambodia* (2012) indicates that the ILO’s contribution to the social protection strategy will be fourfold. First, a national and decentralized coordination mechanism must be established to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the NSPS. Second, the financial sustainability of social protection investment must be demonstrated. Third, the benefit of social protection investment must be demonstrated and the progressive graduation from poverty to decent work must be supported. Fourth, further implementation of social protection schemes must be continued and supported.

The ILO will provide technical assistance in the development or scaling up of basic social protection schemes (such as health equity funds, school feeding programs, and cash transfer schemes) and public works programs during the pilot testing phase of the NSPS implementation (2011–2015). In particular, the ILO will support the government in further developing social security through a proposed new health insurance scheme and through the drafting of a social security law that will cover civil servants and all workers not covered under present labor law.

In conclusion, an overarching NSPS with a focus on the poor and the vulnerable, coupled with a conditional cash transfer scheme and labor market links (if appropriately gender mainstreamed, coordinated, implemented, monitored, and assessed), could represent a good practice that can significantly improve the circumstances of women. It will assist with services and will provide long-term protections to enable women to access work opportunities, increase their own human capacity, and improve their families’ general economic position.

Training, Skills Development, and Transition to the Labor Market

Education and training improves labor market opportunities and outcomes for women, with positive implications for wider outcomes such as poverty reduction. Studies have shown that education and training of women has a direct effect not only on women’s increased labor market participation, but also on their health, fertility, mortality, and their overall economic

An overarching national social protection strategy with a focus on the poor and the vulnerable coupled with a conditional cash transfer scheme and labor market links ... could represent a good practice

opportunities. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs are a vital means of giving women access to work and employment. Targeted and well-delivered TVET programs significantly increase women's incomes and improve rural livelihoods (FAO, IFAD, and ILO 2010).

Prior to taking up TVET programs, young women frequently require specific encouragement to undertake nontraditional curriculum studies at school that will open up future employment opportunities on an equal basis with men. Unfortunately, the curriculum offered to young women is often limited by reason of socially prescribed roles. In addition, young women may require targeted programs to improve their transition from school into the labor market in order to gain better-paying employment, on an equal basis with young men, in traditionally male jobs. TVET programs should ensure that learning environments enhance women's self-confidence and leadership abilities. Programs should also include information about entrepreneurship and the potential for future work opportunities. Even without an overall framework, however, training and scholarships to encourage young women to take up nontraditional employment can be included in the design of specific employment projects (ADB and ILO 2013a).

TVET programs vary by sector, particularly whether the program is service-based, industrial, or rural, and the level at which the training is directed. Good practice policies include an overall TVET framework to deliver coordinated, effective, and efficient programs. Furthermore, it is increasingly recognized that TVET programs should be directly linked to current and future government priorities in trade and investment (Chun and Watanabe 2011). Programs also need to be linked to industry needs and have a combination of both public and private training that is driven by demand rather than by supply. Substantial advancement in this regard can be made through public-private TVET partnerships. The framework should include monitoring and assessment of the quality of the TVET to ensure that standards are controlled and appropriately recognized through quality assurance certification.

A TVET framework should be gender-responsive ... and avoid historical or systemic stereotyping of women

A TVET framework should be gender-responsive in order to overcome direct discrimination against women and avoid historical or systemic stereotyping of women with regard to the training offered, access to training, and the content and manner of training delivery (FAO, IFAD, and ILO 2010; ADB 2012d; Chun and Watanabe 2011). In 2009, ADB (2009a) published a report on good practice in TVET, which refers to the unequal access of women to TVET revealed by statistics, which typically show enrollment by gender. Beyond overall numbers, further inequity may occur in channeling female trainees into traditional female occupations, e.g., office work, sewing, and catering. The report noted that there is little that TVET alone can do to change these stereotypes, but an effective way to channel more female students into these nontraditional occupations is to train and recruit more female teachers in them. Typically, TVET institutions suffer from strong gender disparity in the training force (ADB 2009a, 23).

Three recent studies (FAO, IFAD, and ILO 2010; ADB 2012d; Chun and Watanabe 2011) highlight some of women's specific TVET needs, particularly in poor rural areas where poverty is greatest. First, women need to be involved in the planning, decision making, content, and delivery of training courses. Second, the courses must encourage women's participation in a broader range of training programs and must recognize the deeply ingrained social and cultural norms to be addressed. Third, special measures are frequently needed to attract women to higher-paying jobs and to help them develop the skills necessary for these positions. Finally, targets and quotas for women should be used to increase women's participation rates.

To attract women and promote their training in nontraditional fields, women may need specific training programs, which should include personal development, life skills, and literacy training. Women may not start with the same skill base as men and may require bridging skills. It is good practice to combine income skills training with the provision of technical training skills, credit, and supplies for rural women. In rural areas, it is particularly useful to maximize locally available techniques and local practices where possible. Farmers' field schools have been found to be a useful source of skills training in rural areas, and this includes identifying opportunities

for off-farm income, particularly during the seasonal downturn (Hartl 2009). There should be a close relationship between regional employers and the potential pool of people who can meet employment demands. Participation of the rural poor and young women can be increased through the innovative use of additional assistance such as hostels, stipends, transport facilities, and child care centers.

Finally, it is important to collect quantitative and qualitative sex-disaggregated data on training programs to ascertain uptake, completion, reasons why women attend or fail to attend, and whether women were able to use their skills to obtain work.

TVET is only recently emerging in Cambodia. It began in 2005, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport, and was later taken over by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MOLVT). The National Training Board is the country's main body for TVET policy formation, coordination, and implementation strategies.

Training is provided through short- and long-term courses in vocational training centers. There are 316 such centers: 181 are managed by private institutions, 76 by NGOs or other associations, 38 by the MOLVT, and 21 by other public institutions (Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training 2010). The informal training system has been regarded as more successful than the formal training system, with informal training seen as delivering more relevant and better-taught programs.

The vocational training program is supported by two types of funding. The Special Training Fund provides training for workers who have lost a job due to the global economic crisis, and the National Training Fund offers skills training for the unemployed poor in the provinces (MOLVT 2010).⁴⁰ This formal and informal training is accompanied by policies and training programs to improve employment in industry throughout Cambodia. The MOLVT seeks to enhance the quality and demand-side relevance of TVET by establishing stronger linkages between training providers, students, and the private sector and by strengthening entrepreneurial skills for small business growth (ILO 2011b).

In 2006, the National Training Board endorsed a national TVET development plan as part of a larger development plan through 2020. This formal TVET system produced just under 2,000 graduates in 2008—1,500 in technical trades and the remainder in management, business studies, and communication technology—while the total labor force was roughly 7.5 million. These small figures demonstrate the current limited capacity of TVET to fully contribute to the country's economic development. Furthermore, these programs are supply-driven rather than demand-driven.

The traditional labor division between men and women continues to have a strong influence on TVET available for women, a process that begins when young girls are still in school and are considering their future options. This inhibits women from taking up TVET in nontraditional occupations. Poverty, which forces young women to help at home, also prevents them from pursuing TVET. Furthermore, curricula and institutions are not gender-responsive, making them less friendly to female students. There are few women trainers and men tend to dominate in class (Government of Cambodia et al. 2008).

Each of these matters must be addressed if women are to increase their participation rates in TVET. Rural women's TVET needs are best addressed at the community level to help break down women's barriers to entry, which predominantly come from family and culture. Consideration must also be given to child care facilities, which enable women with children to attend TVET.

In 2009, ADB noted that there was no national qualifications framework to approve skills standards, that there has been a poor fit between the skills of teaching staff and the needs

The traditional labor division between men and women continues to have a strong influence on the technical and vocational education and training available for women

⁴⁰ See also Sothorn (2011).

of enterprises, and that industry links are the single most important factor for TVET success. A number of other issues and constraints were also identified. For instance, due to Cambodia's large rural population, TVET has a dual role—it must help improve agriculture productivity while also assisting with livelihood skills for self-employment.

TVET must respond to the need for diversification in the economy, attract investment in new competitive industries, and provide a pool of skilled workers to contribute to productivity in existing industries. Finally, greater funding is required to increase participation rates in formal training by lifting training standards, and the skills taught must match demand (ADB 2009b).

The national technical and vocational education and training (TVET) development plan must be gender-responsive if TVET benefits are to reach men and women equally

The ILO has indicated that it will provide technical support in the implementation of the national TVET development plan and the GMAP of the MOLVT and the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Energy. The ILO also will promote the linkage of training with industry and employers' needs and will work toward improved skills policies and systems through a progressive skills certification process adapted to Cambodia's needs and situation (ILO 2011b).

The ILO is already assisting Cambodia in implementing a comprehensive human capital development strategy for increased investment in workforce skills, seeking to enhance the employability of men and women through improved skills development and public employment services. This will involve strengthening the current TVET system through a revision and upgrading of skills standards, which currently lack occupational and sector coverage and are poorly aligned with industry needs. Sectors earmarked for skills standards development include tourism, garment manufacture, and construction, which are all important for Cambodia's future growth. The ILO has suggested improvements including, setting up public–private partnerships and creating post-training monitoring systems (ILO 2012d). The development of public–private partnerships in TVET will be aimed at

- improving human capacity, such as teachers' skills;
- improving physical infrastructure, such as facilities and equipment, in the TVET system; and
- strengthening the National Training Board.

All of these initiatives must be gender-responsive if TVET benefits are to reach men and women equally.

Review of Legislative Frameworks and Laws for Gender Equality in the Labor Market

This section focuses on the general legislative framework in Cambodia, the laws that promote women’s access to work, the laws that ease constraints on women’s ability to work, and the laws that improve women’s working conditions. The topics selected for discussion are those that have or could have the greatest impact on women’s work.

Promoting and supporting women’s work requires a strong overall legislative framework that guarantees equality and nondiscrimination

Legislative Framework

Promoting and supporting women’s work requires a strong overall legislative framework that guarantees equality and nondiscrimination and that expressly provides for temporary special measures to redress historical and continuing disadvantage due to discrimination. Good practice indicates that these fundamental norms, which are derived from international instruments such as the CEDAW, ILO Conventions 100 and 111, and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights 1966,⁴¹ should be contained within a country’s constitution. Legislative provisions that enable temporary special measures also provide the legal basis for affirmative action plans and gender mainstreaming.⁴² Good practice includes legislative definitions that specifically cover direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, and “exceptions” to discrimination—an exclusion or preference that is an inherent job requirement. Finally, it is essential that legislation on equality and nondiscrimination can be effectively implemented.

Cambodia has ratified 13 ILO conventions and is party to the fundamental United Nations human rights covenants and conventions. The country’s Constitution enshrines fundamental human rights in articles 30, 36, 45, and 46, which include antidiscrimination provisions. These constitutional provisions are an example of good practice; they not only are expressed in gender-neutral language but also specifically reinforce women’s fundamental rights. This is important because Cambodian women continue to suffer the effects of long-term discrimination in work and employment, largely due to cultural and systemic stereotyping. Article 36 of the Constitution

⁴¹ UN General Assembly, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 16 December 1966, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 993, p. 3. Available at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b36c0.html> (accessed 18 November 2013)

⁴² See, for example, sections 1 and 2 of Italy’s Providing for Affirmative Action to Achieve Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment Act, No. 125, 1991; and Section 17 of Namibia’s Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, No. 29, 1998.

is particularly illuminating; it states that “work by housewives in the home shall have the same value as what they receive when working outside the home.” However, it is not apparent that this provision has been used to achieve better outcomes for women.

Articles 12 and 279 of the Law on Labor provide for nondiscrimination in employment. Article 12, which is an example of good legislative practice, states that employers should disregard a person’s sex in hiring, defining, or assigning work, vocational training, advancement, promotion, remuneration, granting of social benefits, discipline, or termination of employment. However, the Law on Labor has limitations. For instance, it does not define an act of discrimination, does not explicitly describe whether it refers to both direct and indirect discrimination, and does not provide for exemptions from discrimination on the basis of the inherent requirements of the job. There is also uncertainty about the definition of sexual harassment. For example, under the current definition, use of sexualized or abusive language may not constitute sexual harassment.⁴³ Finally, the law does not provide for special measures to be taken in circumstances where it is necessary to assist women to obtain substantive equality, as provided in ILO Convention 111, Article 5, and CEDAW Article 4. Furthermore, these constitutional and labor law rights are confined to Khmer citizens; other citizens living or working in the country do not enjoy these fundamental legislative protections. Compliance with international standards and good practice require that these matters be addressed.⁴⁴

Promoting Women’s Access to Work

Good legislative practice ... combines special measures protected by law with legislation that regulates public and private employment agencies

Good legislative practice to promote women’s access to work combines special measures protected by law with legislation that regulates public and private employment agencies and addresses precarious and uncertain work, outsourcing, and short-term contracts. In addition, good practice legislation refers to phases of the employment process other than just the hiring and termination stages, including recruitment, shortlisting, interviewing, selection, and conditions of employment.⁴⁵ Good practice also includes legislation, rules, codes of practice, or self-regulation by employers with regard to gender discrimination to enable a better understanding of the stereotyping of women and to promote women’s access to employment.⁴⁶

Employment and Recruitment Services

A pivotal tool to promote women’s access to work is a strong and effective employment agency framework, comprising a blend of efficient public employment agencies and regulated, private, fee-charging employment agencies. All such agencies should be required to operate without discrimination on the basis of sex.⁴⁷ Agencies should have access to information about a country’s overall employment strategy, including its trade and investment priorities. Employment agencies

⁴³ See Cambodia Labour Law of 13 March 1997, Article 172 states “All employers and managers of establishments in which child laborers or apprentices less than eighteen years of age or women work, must watch over their good behaviour and maintain their decency before the public. All forms of sexual violation (harassment) is strictly forbidden.” Article 246 of the Criminal Code refers to sexual harassment in the criminal context as touching sexual parts.

⁴⁴ See ILO (1985; 1991); C100, R 90, C111, and R111 (ILO 1951a; 1951b; 1958a; 1958b); and CEDAW (1992). See examples of good practice in ADB and ILO (2013b, Section II, parts A and B). See ILO (2012f) for training materials on equality and nondiscrimination in Cambodia.

⁴⁵ See ADB and ILO (2013b, Section III part B3) for a good example of a specific reference to both advancement and promotion, as set out in Section 4 of Côte d’Ivoire’s labor code. (Good Practices Example 14).

⁴⁶ See ADB and ILO (2013b, Section III part B2) for an example of a good legislative approach taken by Hong Kong, China, in its Sex Discrimination Ordinance of 1995, Section 69, which enables the Equal Opportunities Commission to publish codes of conduct.

⁴⁷ See C2, C88, C96, C181, and R188 (ILO 1919; 1948; 1949; 1997a; 1997b) and European Union (EU) Directive on Temporary Agency Work. 2008/104/EC. See also ADB and ILO (2013b, Section III, Part B1).

can also be linked to information and counseling for workers on vocational training opportunities and can specifically target women.

Article 258 of Cambodia's Law on Labor provides that any person looking for employment can register with the MOLVT placement office or with the employment office in his or her province or municipality. All employers are required to notify the placement office or municipal employment office of any vacancies, with some qualifications. In practice, however, it appears that, at present, employment placement is predominantly undertaken by the National Employment Agency (NEA), under the jurisdiction of the National Training Board. Created through government Sub-decree 67, dated 27 April 2009, the NEA describes itself as a "one-window" office. The purpose of the NEA is to improve the quality and effective delivery of labor market information services by providing job seekers, employees, employers, and skills training providers with opportunities to exchange information. This is to be achieved through the establishment of job centers in main cities and strategic provinces. At present, there are five functioning job centers, located in Battambang, Kampot, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and Svay Rieng, all of which were established with ILO assistance.

This network of job centers provides improved labor market information, job search assistance, placement services, and administration of a variety of labor market programs. These job centers will continue to provide improved services to job seekers and employers through new and updated tools and labor market information. The job centers also assist specific target groups, such as disadvantaged job seekers, unemployed women, youths, and migrant workers who would otherwise be unable to access these services in provincial and district communities due to cost, poor outreach, and a general lack of awareness of such services.

In a recent statement, the head of the NEA reported that 80,000 job opportunities had been disseminated through the NEA since 2010 and that job centers had registered 19,033 job seekers, but only 10,824 had been referred to employers as of August 2012 (Heimkhemra 2012). These figures reveal that the NEA is not yet adequately and effectively fulfilling its role. In the same statement, the government indicated that 7.7 million people are employed "in one way or another" (Heimkhemra 2012). This is most likely due to the fact that most workers in the private sector are recruited either by public advertisement in local media or, more frequently, by private agents or recruitment agencies. For example, most factory recruitment is undertaken through agents or direct management.

There needs to be more attention and resources focused on the issue of improving the process of creating more job centers

The limited number of job centers, together with the shortfall in the referrals of job seekers to employers through the NEA and the relatively small numbers of job opportunities that the NEA disseminates suggests that the NEA needs to expand in order to effectively fulfill its role.

The NEA does not appear to consider gender in its current operations. The CEDAW committee previously drew the attention of the government to the need to take measures to address discriminatory recruitment practices, including discriminatory job advertisements calling for only men or only women to apply. In addition, the NEA should ensure sex-disaggregated data collection on job seekers and take specific measures to promote equitable access to employment services.

The government is working to improve the public employment service agencies, but apart from private employment agencies operating in relation to overseas migration, little is presently being done about private employment agencies.

In summary, while the government is working to improve the public employment service agencies, there needs to be more attention and resources focused on the issue of improving the process of creating more job centers, to improve connections between job seekers and employers and to address the issues related to discriminatory recruitment practices against women in the public and private employment agencies as well as among individual employers.

Short-Term Contracts

In all countries, women's access to work and their conditions of employment are being increasingly affected by precarious and uncertain employment. Good legislative practice should clarify ambiguous outsourced employment relationships and should address the use of short-term contracts when work is ongoing rather than seasonal or genuinely intermittent.⁴⁸

Short-term contracts are commonly used to avoid or reduce an employer's obligations to provide benefits and protections that apply to permanent employees, such as rights to seniority entitlements, attendance bonuses, annual leave, special leave, social security benefits, and termination rights. Short-term or fixed duration contracts can also be used as a means to discriminate against women who marry and/or become pregnant. Short-term contracts serve a need to cope with fluctuations in demand, such as completing large amounts of orders during gift-giving seasons, or in supply, such as maternity leave replacements.

The effects of the use of fixed duration contracts in Cambodia should be scrutinized and monitored to ensure that they do not have the effect of discriminating against women

In the last 5–6 years, short-term contracts or fixed duration contracts (FDCs) of 3–6 months are increasingly used in Cambodia to fill positions previously occupied by employees with indefinite contracts. This issue has become a major source of disagreement between employers and workers as the labor law is interpreted in different ways. In the view of the Arbitration Council, the independent body mandated under Cambodia's Law on Labor to solve collective labor disputes, the law states that workers should be granted a contract of undetermined duration after 2 years of short-term contracts. However, others read the law to say that the total duration of short-term contracts can be unlimited as long as no single contract is longer than 2 years. This new interpretation has given rise to criticism by many international labor rights specialists and the unions (Lowenstein 2011a, 24).

Women on FDC contracts who become pregnant face the risk of dismissal as soon as the pregnancy becomes visible. Workers on FDCs are entitled to maternity benefits as long as the total length of their *uninterrupted* service is at least 1 year. The Arbitration Council has ruled that two separate contracts that are interrupted by even a short break will not be totaled for purposes of counting days of service. At the same time, the council has warned employers, however, not to reemploy workers after a short break in order to maliciously evade their legal obligations (Arbitration Council 2011, 160–169).

The challenge in addressing precarious work is to balance employers' legitimate need for flexibility with workers' equally legitimate demands for stability and protection. The effects of the use of FDCs in Cambodia should be scrutinized and monitored to ensure that they do not have the effect of discriminating against women and that they do not lead to undue hardship for either workers or employers.

Limiting Constraints on Work

A number of constraints, including reproductive issues and disability, can limit women's capacity to undertake work. However, the present section focuses on two major constraints related to legislation and policy. First, women can be constrained by family responsibilities, lack of access to reproductive health services, lack of access to parental leave, and poor availability of quality, affordable child care services near their homes or workplaces. Second, self-employed women can be constrained by a lack of access to land, inheritance rights, credit, and financial services (ILO 1996).

⁴⁸ ADB and ILO (2013b, Section V part B.2) for discussion of good practices in the EU, including Council Directive concerning the Framework Agreement on Fixed-Term Work, 1999/70/EC, which aims to prevent abuse arising from the use of successive fixed-term employment contracts.

Family Responsibilities

Women's labor market participation is constrained by time-consuming domestic and care responsibilities. Women often face a triple burden of caring for family, attending to domestic chores, and bearing and rearing children. These constraints begin during childhood and continue throughout the life cycle. Women often lack access to fertility control information and services that would enable them to plan if, and when, to have children. They are also constrained by the time spent on repetitive, tedious domestic work. This is often linked to inadequate public infrastructure for potable water, electricity, fuel, and roads as well as the availability of quality, affordable, and convenient child care services.

These issues can be addressed through a combination of policy and legislation.⁴⁹ Good legislative practice includes legislative guarantees to promote and protect women's reproductive health and rights and to ensure that they have access to reproductive health services. This should include access to information and services for younger women to reduce unwanted teenage pregnancies.

In addition, legislative measures are required to enable both men and women to reconcile work responsibilities with family obligations (ADB and ILO 2013b). Such measures may also help shift the burden of care, which presently falls largely on women, so that it is shared more equally with men. Granting of paternity leave, for example, can assist with the redistribution of care responsibilities. Systems of parental leave differ significantly among countries in terms of eligibility, payment, duration, transferability, and the age of the child to be cared for. In some countries, long parental leave may be seen as a way of providing care for young children while reducing the need for child care services, which can be relatively expensive.

Provision of child care facilities is also an important measure to help parents who wish to access work or continue to work, and can help prevent discrimination against women, on whom child care responsibilities tend to fall. Availability of child care facilities enables both parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life.

The prime responsibility to ensure the development of child care services should lie with the government, though this does not necessarily mean that the government itself must provide these services.⁵⁰ There is a wide variation in government approaches to child care (ILO 2010e). One good practice example is the Netherlands Child Care Act 2005, amended in 2007, which requires child care costs to be split equally among employers, working parents, and the government. This benefit is not limited to working mothers, but applies whenever there are two working parents. Other governments must work to integrate workers' needs into child care policies and programs (ADB and ILO 2013b). However, transposing standards from developed countries may be unrealistic for many developing countries. Nevertheless, the provision of basic child care may improve the situation for children at risk, and low-cost community-based initiatives can have a positive effect on child development indicators. Establishing and strictly enforcing minimum standards, combined with government financial support, is a good approach for developing countries.

Cambodia has prioritized maternal and child health in its Health Strategic Plan 2008–2015, and there is a focus on sexual and reproductive health in the National Strategic Development Plan 2006–2010. The National Reproductive Health Program, led by the Ministry of Health, includes service delivery by bilateral agencies and international and local NGOs (Shah 2010). In addition, specific interventions proposed in the Cambodian Global Health Initiative Strategy 2011 have been supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID 2011). In Cambodia, private sector health services deliver nearly 80% of all health care sought, and the fragmentation of service quality and availability must be addressed. The Cambodian

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⁴⁹ For policy development in Latin America, see ILO and UNDP (2009).

⁵⁰ See C156, R165 (ILO 1981a; 1981b).

Demographic and Health Survey 2010 found that 17% of married women had an unmet need for family planning and that this need was especially high among women in the lowest wealth quintile and among women who had only completed primary education or had no schooling.

Although there is no legislation that specifically guarantees women's rights to reproductive health, abortion was legalized in Cambodia by the Abortion Law of 1997. Abortions can only be conducted by medical doctors, medical practitioners, or midwives authorized by the Ministry of Health and can be carried out only in a hospital, health center, health clinic, or maternity ward. The Demographic and Health Survey 2010 revealed improvements in women's awareness of fertility control methods and contraception, but unsafe abortion remains common and more must be done to improve related maternal mortality ratios, which remain persistently high at 472 deaths per 100,000 live births (Shah 2010, 4).

A recent innovative public-private partnership project, which is being implemented by the international NGO Marie Stopes International Cambodia, aims to increase the uptake of sexual and reproductive services by piloting a voucher scheme for poor rural communities. The subsidized vouchers enable poor clients to access providers of key health services. The scheme also acts as an incentive for providers to improve their standards and offer affordable services. It is hoped that this scheme will be monitored and assessed for its effect and potential expansion (Center for Health Market Innovations website, Vouchers for Reproductive Health Services).

[C]hild care arrangements are highly variable, and women spend a significant amount of time and earnings on providing such care

With regard to leave from work, Cambodia's good practice legislation enables male and female employees to take up to 7 days of special leave for personal reasons, such as the employee's own marriage, the birth or marriage of the employee's child, or the illness or death of a husband, wife, child, father, or mother.⁵¹ This leave is fully paid, with some qualifications, and is not available to employees under FDCs. Another piece of legislative good practice is Article 184 of the Law on Labor, which entitles working mothers to 1 hour per day of breast-feeding time, divided into two periods of 30 minutes each.

The burden of child care affects women's employment, and Cambodia has some relevant legislation. For example, enterprises and agriculture plantations employing more than 100 women are required to set up child care facilities within their establishments or nearby, or they may offer payments in lieu of the service.⁵² However, no evaluation has been undertaken to assess whether these provisions are implemented in practice and it is suspected that they are not enforced (ADB 2012b). Apart from these specific legislative provisions, child care arrangements are highly variable, and women spend a significant amount of time and earnings on providing such care (ADB 2012b).

The need and demand for child care is growing in both urban and rural areas, but the quality of formal and informal child care services is questionable and the cost varies with the type of care and the age of the children (Netra and Sovann 2007). There are five main approaches to child care. First, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport, through its Department of Early Childhood Education, has programs for children from birth to age 6. The objective is to expand services and improve the quality and accessibility of community and home-based preschools, targeting, in particular, children from poor families, ethnic minorities, and those with disabilities (Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport 2011). Second, there are school-based programs offered through formal institutions, including day care centers for children from birth to age 3 and kindergartens or preschools for children between 3 and 6. Third, there are informal day care or child care arrangements in which preschool children are left with relatives or hired help and stay in their own home or in a nearby home (Netra and Sovann 2007). Fourth, women may pay to place their children in private child care centers. Finally, children less than 6 years old are often brought to the workplace or are cared for by mothers and relatives.

⁵¹ See Cambodia Prakas No. 267 on Special Leave of 11 October 2001.

⁵² Ibid.

There are several constraints on the access and use of formal child care centers. For instance, outlying regions or rural areas either have no day care centers or have a limited number of kindergartens; such services mainly exist in large towns and cities. Moreover, in many cases the available kindergartens are located a long distance from workers' homes or working areas, and almost all kindergartens are open for only half a workday (ADB 2012b). These issues need to be addressed.

Lack of Access to Property

Women's lack of access to credit and financial services has already been referred to in the context of the agriculture sector and entrepreneurship. The present section refers to women's access to land.

Cambodia has a long and complicated history of agrarian reform, and land grabbing is an ongoing issue (MOWA 2008). Although women have rights to land, these rights may be denied in practice due to gender-biased cultural and social factors. One study found that even though land is jointly registered and both parties must sign to transfer land titles, in practice this is not enforced and women are vulnerable to losing control over such decisions and/or deferring to their husbands. This requires monitoring, and women must be better informed about their rights and be provided with legal assistance. In addition, there is a practice whereby a man may register property in his name without including his wife's name, thereby depriving his wife of any rights with respect to the property (ADB 2012b). This practice requires investigation.

Improving Women's Working Conditions

Four legislative good practice measures can significantly improve women's working conditions. The first is to ensure that the international labor standard of equal remuneration for work of equal value, ILO Convention 100, is applied both in legislation and in practice, and that there are institutional frameworks for the objective evaluation of job tasks to ensure that women are paid in accordance with their skill levels (ADB and ILO 2013b). This standard also describes the mechanism by which a country sets wages, which should be an independent and transparent process that takes specific account of women's needs. An example of good practice in this regard is Australia's Expert Panel for Annual Wage Review.⁵³

Four legislative good practice measures can significantly improve women's working conditions

The second good practice is to ensure that women have effective complaint mechanisms to address discrimination in the workplace, including sexual harassment. Such mechanisms should be simple, economic, and accessible. Complaints should be resolved through independent mediation or adjudication, using procedures that address the problems of proving discrimination.

The third good practice is a strong and efficient labor inspectorate, which effectively monitors and enforces legislative measures to ensure that nondiscrimination and decent work standards are applied in practice (ILO 2006).

Finally, a strong and effective social dialogue mechanism is required to ensure women's participation, support women in trade unions, and improve collective bargaining to improve the conditions of women's employment and work.

Equal Pay and Minimum Wages

Many international standards enshrine the notion of equal remuneration for work of equal value. Because men and women often perform different jobs, under different conditions, and

⁵³ See ADB and ILO (2013b, Good Practices Example 22).

even in different establishments, the concept of “work of equal value” is essential to enabling a broad scope of comparison, encompassing work that is of an entirely different nature but which nevertheless has equal value. Good practice requires legislation that expresses this norm correctly, and the failure to appropriately address this requirement has an important effect on the gender pay gap (ADB and ILO 2013b).

The interrelationship among equal remuneration, wage setting and application of national minimum wages, and reduction of employment inequality between the sexes is increasingly recognized. A minimum wage sets a wage floor and can also be extended to particular categories of work. This has an important influence on wages for women, who tend to be at the bottom end of free income distribution. Good practice indicates that there should be an independent wage-setting process, which is transparent, applies objective criteria, and includes the involvement of social partners.

The interrelationship among equal remuneration, wage setting and application of national minimum wages, and reduction of employment inequality between the sexes is increasingly recognized

Neither Cambodia’s Constitution nor its Law on Labor provide for equal remuneration for work of equal value.⁵⁴ Moreover, the country’s wage-setting process is linked to the gender wage disparity in Cambodia (ADB and ILO 2013a). Thus, there is a need to bring the legislation into conformity with CEDAW and with ILO Convention 100.

Minimum wages are set by the MOLVT based on recommendations from the Labor Advisory Committee, which is composed of 14 government officials, 7 members from employers’ federations, and 7 members from labor unions.⁵⁵ Article 104 of the Law on Labor provides that wages “must be at least equal to the guaranteed minimum wage; that is, it must ensure every worker of a decent standard of living compatible with human dignity.” In addition, the MOLVT uses Prakas 86 to set the daily base wage rates for a laborer (presently about \$2), but this wage rate is set only for the purpose of determining penalties under the Law on Labor, not to establish minimum wages.

The MOLVT has set minimum wages only for the garment, textile, and shoe industries. Employers and enterprises outside those subsectors are free to set wages and minimum rates of pay as long as the rate is not below the base wage for a laborer. There also is no process that permits the Labor Advisory Committee or the courts to enact wage increases, and the committee has not set wages for other important sectors that particularly affect women, such as domestic work, plantation work, or tourism and related services (ADB and ILO 2013a).

On the whole, the process for setting daily and sector wages in Cambodia appears to be insufficiently independent and transparent. Furthermore, it does not require the application of objective criteria or evaluation. Sector wage setting in particular appears to involve limited input from social partners and no requirement to consider gender. These issues need to be addressed.

Complaint Mechanisms

Good practice indicates that complaint mechanisms to address discrimination in employment and work should be clear, simple, efficient, and low-cost. However, setting up a complaint mechanism includes several complexities. First, discrimination in the workplace often involves particularly sensitive issues such as sexual harassment or assault, which may amount to a criminal offence. There also are cultural issues, including women’s reluctance to complain. Finally, there may be difficulty in determining the body or agency with jurisdiction over a given issue, depending on whether the alleged discrimination is best characterized as a crime, which would be a police and justice system process; a human rights violation, which would be covered by a human rights or equal opportunity body; or, for example, a discriminatory underpayment of wages or dismissal, which may be best handled by a labor inspectorate, a labor office, or labor arbitration.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ See ADB (2013a, Section IV part D.1).

⁵⁵ See ADB (2013a, Section IV part D.1).

⁵⁶ For a fuller discussion on this subject, see ADB and ILO (2013b, Section IV), Part E of Section IV is particularly relevant.

In Cambodia, the complaint mechanisms for women who allege discrimination are limited. If discrimination involves sexual harassment, it is a crime and requires a complaint to the police, which can be a very intimidating process. Labor inspectors are required to ensure that enterprises and workplaces comply with various laws, including laws relating to discrimination. They have the power to order immediate measures and to issue fines for breaches of the Law on Labor. The labor inspector may also mediate an individual dispute.⁵⁷ However, the labor inspectorate is not a well-resourced or effective mechanism and requires strengthening. Women can also complain to their union, if they are members, and the union may then raise this issue with the arbitration council as a grievance or individual complaint. However, a woman is not able to take her complaint to the arbitration council unless she is in a trade union and the union undertakes a collective dispute. The current industrial system does not allow for arbitration of an individual dispute before the arbitration council.

None of these processes at the present time can sufficiently address women's concerns about discrimination with respect to work or, in particular, sexual harassment. Women working in the services sector, such as in restaurants and bars, have particularly serious issues with regard to sexual harassment. There is a lack of clarity about what constitutes sexual harassment, and women do not know that inappropriate conduct can amount to sexual harassment. It is only the worst cases of sexual harassment that become the subject of police complaints. Instead, women prefer to keep silent, fearing the loss of a job or reputation. Women may also be forced into socializing with clients who are subjecting them to sexual harassment, for fear of losing their jobs.⁵⁸

The Government of Cambodia should consider establishing a more appropriate process for dealing with sensitive issues such as sexual harassment or discrimination against women at work. At present, women are highly unlikely to complain and prefer to remain silent. In addition to an improved complaint mechanism, there also must be an effective and sensitive means of addressing complaints and providing remedies.

The Government of Cambodia should consider establishing a more appropriate process for dealing with sensitive issues such as sexual harassment or discrimination against women at work.

Labor Inspectorate

Good practice with regard to labor inspectors and their role is generally guided by the relevant ILO conventions.⁵⁹ Several ILO publications stress the importance of a coherent, efficient framework and provide guidance on good practices, seeking to establish the basis for a labor inspection system that is flexible enough to take account of different national circumstances.⁶⁰ Labor inspection is an essential part of the labor administration system, carrying out the fundamental function of labor law enforcement and effective compliance. Laws and labor standards that are not effectively enforced are rendered useless.

Given increased demand and changes in the labor market, labor administrations must consider ways of working more closely with the private sector. The ILO notes that public-private partnerships can yield several benefits, such as improved access to and delivery of high-quality expertise and new technology. Regular monitoring and strict evaluation of the work of labor inspectors is required to assess their effectiveness and cost. Employers' and workers' organizations can make significant contributions to improved workplace compliance, particularly through advocacy and raising awareness among their members. Social partners can also contribute to shaping the strategic priorities and activities of the labor inspectorates.

The rights, powers, and duties of Cambodia's labor inspectors are set out in articles 347 and 356 of the Law on Labor. Labor inspectors are authorized to enter any enterprise or workplace without prior notice in order to conduct examinations, inspections, and investigations considered

⁵⁷ See Cambodia Prakas No. 318 on the Procedures for Solving Individual Dispute of 29 November 2001.

⁵⁸ See ADB (2013a, Section IV part D.2)

⁵⁹ Notably, C81, R81, C129, and R133 (ILO 1947a; 1947b; 1969a; 1969b).

⁶⁰ For example, ILO (2006; 2010a; 2011d).

necessary to ensure that an employer is complying with the working conditions stipulated in the Law on Labor. Labor inspectors also have the authority to order immediate measures and issue fines to any enterprise that breaches the Law on Labor.

Although labor inspectors have these powers, however, they have been unable or have failed to carry out their rights and duties to full effect. This is especially true in relation to inspections to determine whether enterprises or workplaces of more than eight workers have undertaken the required registration with the MOLVT, whether they are complying with health and safety laws, and whether they discriminate against unions and union members. In addition, labor inspectors have failed to carry out their duties to notify or fine employers who have breached the Law on Labor, and, in certain cases, inspectors reportedly work in complicity with employers (ILO 2012i).

There were 18 qualified inspectors in Cambodia from 2004 to 2010—a minute number to cover more than 375,000 enterprises in the country and a rapidly growing labor force (ILO 2012i). However, the ILO noted that those figures covered only inspectors based in Phnom Penh and excluded inspectors in other provinces and municipalities. In 2011, the MOLVT reported 91 labor inspectors throughout Cambodia. Although this is still far too few, relative to the number of enterprises, the increase is a positive development.

The labor inspectors' functions should encompass issues of gender discrimination in the workplace

The ILO recommends a continued increase in recruitment of labor inspectors as a means to improve law enforcement among enterprises. There is also a need for a number of measures to extend occupational safety and health protections to informal workplaces, reaching out to microenterprises in particular. Finally, the labor inspectors' functions should encompass issues of gender discrimination in the workplace.

Social Dialogue and Trade Unions

The term social dialogue covers more than consultations between workers and employers about working conditions. It extends to negotiations, consultations, or exchanges of information between workers' representatives, employers, and governments about economic and social policy issues of broader common interest (ILO 2005). The ILO specifically promotes social dialogue as a means of achieving decent working conditions and providing flexibility for inclusive economic growth (ADB and ILO 2013b). The ILO standards on social dialogue are outlined in Tripartite Consultation (International Labor Standards) Convention (No. 144), and Recommendation No. 152.⁶¹

A 2010 study of unions in Cambodia (Nuon and Serrano 2010) identified characteristic features of the country's trade union movement. For instance, the study noted an entrenchment of union leadership, the relatively young union movement, concentrated in the garments industry, and that employers intensely avoid unionization. In addition, there is a multiplicity of unions and the number has dramatically expanded, from 87 unions in 2001 to 1,758 unions in 2010, represented by 41 union federations. At the same time, membership in Cambodia's main employers' organization, the Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations, also has risen sharply. Finally, the study found that the public is generally unsympathetic toward unions.

Most organized workers are found in the garments sector, and more than half of union members in the enterprises covered were women. However, men still dominated union leadership; on average, only one in three union officers was a woman. This trend was particularly apparent when looking at the composition of the bargaining teams, where 30.5% of participants were women. Thus, the study found that the labor movement could be said to be "essentially a women's movement under male leadership" (Nuon and Serrano 2010, 142).

The survey also affirmed the difficulty of integrating gender-related issues into collective bargaining. The study recommended that unions adopt policies and strategies to enhance

⁶¹ See ILO (1976a; 1976b).

women's participation in leadership, including an affirmative union policy allocating a high proportion of leadership positions to women. The study noted that these measures would encourage women's participation and improve their ability to influence collective bargaining (Nuon and Serrano 2010, 142–143).

Recent observations indicate improvement by some unions. For example, some leading women union leaders are very vocal in defending the rights of their members.⁶² In addition, major union federations such as the Free Trade Union, the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union, and the Confederation of Unions for Tourism and Services of Cambodia have trained local union leaders, some of whom are women, in labor law, negotiation, and dispute resolution.⁶³ However, some large sectors, such as agriculture, the informal economy, construction, and services, still have small or ineffective unions. Questions have also been raised about the independence of some unions in the garment sector.

Collective bargaining remains a relatively new practice in Cambodia and there has been limited sector penetration to date. Again, collective bargaining is most widespread in the garment sector, but even that sector has low levels of genuine bargaining and agreement, due in part to a weak understanding of the bargaining process and as a consequence of union multiplicity (ILO 2012i). The ILO notes that it is impossible to determine the actual quality of collective bargaining agreements from official data and that renewed efforts are required to ensure that collective bargaining is better understood.

Much can be done to assist women's movement into leadership roles within the union movement. The government can also encourage active social dialogue with and between employers' and workers' organizations within Cambodia, with the assistance of the ILO.

⁶² See Arbitration Council (2011b, 1; 2011c, 1).

⁶³ See ADB (2013a, Section IV, part D.4)

V

Policy and Legislative Recommendations for a Gender-Inclusive Labor Market

This section brings together the common themes and challenges of enhancing and improving women's employment and work in Cambodia. Policy and legislation recommendations are grouped under three themes: promoting access to work and enhancing employment opportunities for women, limiting constraints on work for women, and improving women's working conditions. There are specific recommendations for the expansion of women's employment and decent working conditions in the agriculture, industry, manufacturing, and services sectors (including tourism and public service) as well as in entrepreneurship.

In making these recommendations, Cambodia's historical, economic, and socio-cultural conditions, gender relations, and economic development path has been taken into account.

Promoting Access to Work and Enhancing Employment Opportunities for Women

Promoting access to work and enhancing employment opportunities for women also requires balancing the functions of social protection and gender equity with economic efficiency considerations.

Legislation and policies that guarantee gender equality and eliminate gender discrimination are fundamental to ensuring that women are not disadvantaged in employment and occupation. Law and policy need to work together in a balanced way to provide adequate protection for decent work standards while also ensuring sufficient flexibility to promote employment opportunities. Promoting access to work and enhancing employment opportunities for women also requires balancing the functions of social protection and gender equity with economic efficiency considerations. Policies and legislation based on social dialogue are best able to accommodate the interests of both employers and workers in a dynamic global market.

Furthermore, employment equity means more than treating people in the same way; it also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences. For instance, good employment equity practice requires measures to enable both men and women to reconcile work responsibilities with family obligations.

National Plans and Policies

National policies are central to ensuring that economic growth brings with it increased employment. Economic growth in Cambodia generally has not brought about sufficient growth

in employment and decent work to substantially reduce poverty and inequality. Thus, the major strategy is to increase the demand for labor in a gender-equitable manner.

Macroeconomic and Employment Policies

To enhance employment opportunities and decent work, and thereby promote gender equality and inclusive growth, it is necessary to

- make gender equality an explicit objective of national plans;
- recognize increased employment as a macroeconomic goal to be promoted through all macroeconomic policies;
- set and monitor gender-equitable employment targets to ensure that all women benefit; and
- analyze the gendered employment impacts of fiscal policy (taxation and expenditures), trade patterns and policy (exports and imports), and monetary policy.

The proposed National Employment Policy for Cambodia is an important step toward gender equality. Adding greater gender sensitivity to this initiative is important for promoting women's employment.

Gender Mainstreaming and Target Setting

There are a number of good strategies and projects under way in Cambodia, but more can be done to strengthen gender mainstreaming and gender-specific projects and to include gender targets more broadly in government policies and programs. Opportunities for women to work within government and the labor market need to be identified, and this requires working with civil society generally and women's groups specifically. Sex-disaggregated data, monitoring, and evaluation need to be continued and enhanced.

The gender mainstreaming plans and sex-disaggregated target setting in some ministries in Cambodia provide good examples of policy innovations that could be expanded and monitored more closely.

The continued and expanded use of targets in formulating sector policies is recommended for Cambodia. This tool for gender mainstreaming can be applied across ministries both to institutionalize a gender reflex and to achieve and monitor specified gender goals. There is wide scope for this approach and it is recommended that Cambodia examine how to move forward on this.

Finally, although gender-aware practices are apparent in Cambodia, they must be effectively implemented in order to reduce gender inequality.

Agriculture

Due to the importance of the agriculture sector to the overall economy and to poverty reduction for women and their families, Cambodia would benefit from developing an overarching agricultural strategy for women, thus reducing the current constraints that women face when deriving income and employment from agricultural production. It is also important to increase women's productivity and incomes from agriculture, rather than simply facilitating their movement into other sectors, where opportunities for economic security and decent work are equally limited.

Efforts to increase cash-cropping for domestic sale and export need to include women, but women's production of subsistence crops for food security must also be supported. In Cambodia, women should be included in the transition to commercial agriculture to ensure that they are not relegated to subsistence agriculture. The transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture cannot be achieved overnight, however, and the immediate needs of poor women farmers must be addressed.

Cambodia would benefit from developing an overarching agricultural strategy for women, thus reducing the current constraints that women face when deriving income and employment from agricultural production

The development of an overarching agriculture strategy to enable women to participate more productively in the agriculture sector and to control their own resources should include the following features:

- collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and mapping of where women work, the products they produce, and their roles in the production process;
- analysis of the specific constraints on women’s access to land reform and rights to inheritance, and specific strategies, programs, and targets to redress disadvantages;
- analysis of the specific constraints on women’s access to appropriate credit and finance, and specific strategies, programs, and targets to enable women to develop or increase agriculture income opportunities through entrepreneurship;
- targeted government agricultural extension programs structured to fit women’s needs so that they are represented in the sector;
- development of gender-specific programs to encourage and support women working in the sector and subsectors;
- gender-disaggregated targets for training, including microenterprise training and credit programs, to encourage women to undertake processing and value-added production;
- development and promotion of women in farmers’ organizations, or separate women’s organizations, to increase women’s voice and empowerment in employment;
- organized and cohesive combination of national and local programs; and
- monitored and assessed goals and targets to ensure that women are properly considered at all levels of planning, from design and content through implementation and outcomes.

Industry and Manufacturing

[It] will be important to improve opportunities for extended and improved decent work for women

There is significant potential to promote and enhance employment opportunities for women in the industry and manufacturing sectors of Cambodia. In general, it is important that women have access to new employment opportunities in manufacturing and that, as production processes change, for example through technological improvements, women are not displaced from manufacturing employment. Barriers to employment—such as those arising from a lack of training or from gender norms and discrimination that prevent women from working in higher-level occupations and certain types of manufacturing—need to be reduced.

In order to enable Cambodia to successfully compete in the global apparel market in the longer term, it will be important to improve opportunities for extended and improved decent work for women.⁶⁴ The Government of Cambodia can improve and expand benefits to women who work in the garment industry by

- adopting a more radical approach to garment industry growth and upgrading, such as by finding new export markets beyond the United States and the European Union;
- initiating a number of value-adding activities in Cambodia, such as special finishing, printing, or embroidery;
- developing technological advancements, improving skills, and providing appropriate training for the use of upgraded equipment;
- improving the overall working conditions of women through social dialogue involving employer groups, workers’ unions and the government, and women’s representation therein;
- including better management of factory floor processes and capacity utilization rates, combined with more efficient pay incentives;
- encouraging greater local industry ownership, particularly ownership by micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, by facilitating local investment in garment factories and improving access to credit;
- investigating the potential to locate garment factories in areas close to rural communities in which women reside; and
- extending the Better Factories Cambodia approach to small domestic factories.

⁶⁴ See ADB (2013a, Section V, Part A.3).

Services Sector

The services sector in Cambodia provides expanded opportunities for women's employment. In Cambodia, development is particularly recommended in government services.

The extent of men and women's differential employment rates and the clustering of women in the low wage services in Cambodia warrant a targeted approach. It is recommended that MOWA in Cambodia work with individual ministries to assess the constraints on women's employment and to develop a comprehensive strategy. This should include gender mainstreaming and gender-specific targets to increase the number of women employed across all categories of the civil service. This could include identifying and addressing constraints such as gender stereotyping, setting minimum targets and timelines, implementing specific strategies to encourage women to apply for work, and developing special programs to enable women to access higher-paid work and more senior management positions. The low female-to-male wage ratio needs to be analyzed and addressed.

Women could benefit from improved access to information, training, and outreach services to build their capacity to start businesses and upgrade them over time

Entrepreneurship for Rural Women

Female entrepreneurship as a source of work and employment has rapidly increased in a variety of sectors and subsectors in Cambodia. Supporting women's increased access to credit facilities and training and supporting female-led micro and small enterprises increases employment opportunities for all women (ADB and ILO 2013a). This recommendation is specifically relevant for rural women, and it is linked to earlier recommendations made with respect to the agriculture sector. Additionally, a complete support package is recommended to reach rural poor women. The support may include start-up capital, post-training technical support, and market linkages (ADB 2012c).

Moreover, women could benefit from improved access to information, training, and outreach services to build their capacity to start businesses and upgrade them over time. Women can also benefit from support of women-specific and mixed business associations and other business support organizations, such as export promotion boards for networking and marketing of their products and services.

Public and Private Employment Agencies

Cambodia could benefit from the development of an effective and coordinated employment agency framework, which includes both public and regulated private employment agencies. This could be developed through social dialogue among employers, workers, and the government to improve the linkage, quality, and coverage of such agencies' employment services. Good practice indicates that employment agencies need to be more than just a job referral and exchange agency. Agencies also can be an important source of information about a country's overall employment strategy, including its trade and investment priorities, and can provide workers with information and counsel on technical and vocational education and training opportunities.⁶⁵

Cambodia is working toward improved public employment services and could benefit from giving more attention to private employment agencies and the services they provide. The government can develop and enhance its employment agency strategy, which should include women at all stages of development, implementation, and monitoring. Both public and private employment agencies should address gender issues, particularly direct discrimination against women and indirect discrimination in the form of stereotyping. An additional part of the strategy might include developing rules and codes of conduct and training staff to apply nondiscriminatory practices. The ILO can be a useful resource to strengthen this area.

⁶⁵ See ADB and ILO (2013b, Section III, Part B and Good Practices Example 12).

Limiting Constraints on Work for Women

Access to Resources

It is important to identify the particular constraints that women face in accessing resources such as land and finances, and to note that collective/community and private ownership/market-based solutions are necessary to overcome such constraints. Increasing women's access to such resources will help improve their productivity and incomes. A legislative framework in conjunction with appropriate employment policies, codes, and guidelines may best redress the multiple levels of disadvantage suffered by women in Cambodia. Additionally, the government should monitor the effectiveness of its policy implementation, which would include collection of sex-disaggregated data.

To work toward providing women with equal access to land and credit, Cambodia must

- identify women's needs for a resource;
- identify the particular constraints women face in accessing that resource and the reasons women are not achieving equitable access to that resource;
- address such constraints through a legislative framework in conjunction with appropriate policies, codes, and guidelines, including gender mainstreaming;
- develop specific targets with practical strategies to address the constraints;
- deploy collective/community or private ownership/market-based solutions, depending on the situation; and
- monitor and assess the effectiveness of implementation, which would include collection of sex-disaggregated data.

Reducing Women's Domestic Work and Care Burden

Quality, affordable, and convenient child care services can alleviate this restraint on women's ability to work

Women's labor market participation is constrained by time-consuming domestic and care responsibilities, including child care. Quality, affordable, and convenient child care services can alleviate this restraint on women's ability to work.

Cambodia's child care infrastructure, staff, and facilities are all under-developed. Thus, a Cambodian framework could encompass a mix of legal and policy measures, a variety of child care services, and enforceable minimum standards. The cost of child care could be met through employer-funded centers at the workplace, employer payment of child care expenses, or contributions from employers, workers, and/or government. The strategy could be developed through social dialogue and phased in over a number of years. In the short term, Cambodia also could assist cooperatives of women in employing locally trained child care workers, either in the village or near the workplace. It is recommended that Cambodia learn from others, including the Philippines, who have successfully developed a comprehensive approach to early childhood care and development system.⁶⁶

Improving Women's Working Conditions

Social Protection in the Informal Sector

Gender-responsive social protection will necessarily take different forms depending on specific context and will be adapted to enable participants to move up the social protection ladder as conditions permit. However, a major concern for Cambodia is the lack of social protection coverage for informal sector and domestic workers, the majority of whom are women.

⁶⁶ See ADB (2013a, Section IV, Part C.1).

Cambodia has a national social protection strategy. However, it is recommended that the government ensure that NSPS implementation considers gender issues and that monitoring of its effectiveness includes sex-disaggregated data and information. The government also expects to launch a conditional cash transfer scheme linking financial benefits to educational and nutritional outcomes for children of poor families. Cambodia could potentially benefit from undertaking a modified version of a conditional cash transfer program being piloted in the Philippines called the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, which has shown to be effective.⁶⁷

More generally, Cambodia should explore mechanisms to support women's employment through cash transfers. It is also recommended that the government consider implementing legislation and policies that provide for employment guarantees. Such employment guarantees, if adopted, would need to be monitored and assessed to enhance their effect on gender-equitable employment.

It is recommended that the government ensure that National Social Protection Strategy implementation considers gender issues

Training Programs and Skills Development

Technical and vocational education and training programs are a vital means of giving women access to work and employment, but to be effective they must be targeted and well delivered. Cambodia must address gender stereotyping and gender inequality in program availability and service delivery.

The national TVET plan must align industry needs in all sectors with government employment priorities and local market demand so that relevant training courses can be designed and delivered to meet those needs. The local availability and supply of raw materials, the presence of basic market infrastructure and microcredit services, and the feasibility and sustainability of the occupation for which trainees are being trained also should be considered. This requires cooperation between government and industry, which could be achieved through a partnership approach. Importantly, gender needs to be considered at all stages, from the development of the strategy through to implementation, monitoring, and assessment, to ensure a gender-sensitive approach. Programs that address the transition of young women from school to work and enable women to access nontraditional occupations should also be considered.

The ILO is already involved in Cambodia and can assist it in realizing improved and enhanced TVET programs.

Legislation and Decent Work Requirements

Antidiscrimination Legislation

The Constitution and labor legislation of Cambodia includes guarantees of equality and nondiscrimination. However, further clarification of the meaning and scope of discrimination within that legislation is required. For instance, Cambodia's Law on Labor does not explicitly state that the act of discrimination includes both direct and indirect discrimination. The legislation does not provide exemptions from discrimination on the basis of inherent job requirements, nor does it provide for temporary special measures. In addition, the current definition of sexual harassment needs to be clarified and made explicit.

Legislation on Multiple Short-Term Contracts

Cambodia needs to address the problem of multiple short-term contracts, and the ambiguous interpretation of the Law on Labor. It is recommended to better monitor the use of fixed duration contracts with a view to identifying discriminatory practices, for example on the grounds of sex and maternity and participation in trade union activity, and ensure workers' right to job security without unduly impeding flexible working arrangements.

⁶⁷ See ADB (2013a, Section III, Part D.1).

Decent Work Measures

Legislative good practices and decent work measures that can significantly improve women's working conditions in Cambodia include

- ensuring that the international standard of equal remuneration for work of equal value is applied both in legislation and in practice, and that there are institutional frameworks for objective wage setting;
- providing women and men workers with effective complaint mechanisms to redress discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace, and strengthening labor inspectorates to enforce nondiscrimination; and
- creating strong, effective social dialogue mechanisms that support the participation of female trade union members.

Equal Remuneration and Minimum Wage Setting

The legislation in Cambodia does not accord with the ILO conventions enshrining equal remuneration for work of equal value. Furthermore, the wage-setting process is insufficiently independent or transparent, does not require the application of objective criteria, and does not fully involve social partners. In particular, there is no specific requirement to consider gender equity issues. This is the case for both general (minimum) wage setting and sector wage setting. In setting (minimum) wages, the criteria and its application should be aimed at providing a decent wage floor and should include consideration of women's needs, which may differ from the needs of men. Sector or subsector wage setting should adhere to the concept of equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Sector or subsector wage setting should adhere to the concept of equal remuneration for work of equal value

It is recommended that Cambodia amend its legislation to specifically require equal remuneration for work of equal value. Steps should also be taken to develop and implement an independent wage-setting process that is transparent, applies objective criteria, and involves social partners.⁶⁸

Complaint Mechanisms and Labor Inspectorate

Cambodia faces challenges in providing effective, simple, and well-publicized mechanisms to encourage women to make complaints and seek redress for discrimination and sexual harassment in their working environments. Furthermore, it needs to significantly improve the effectiveness and coverage of its labor inspectorate. Funding labor inspectorates is also a challenge; thus, developing public-private partnerships and social dialogue should be explored to achieve improvement.

Cambodia should review its complaints process in relation to good practice, which indicates that the best approach is to have a single mechanism to refer complaints to the relevant authority. Such a complaint mechanism could be a preexisting body. The first point of contact should be especially simple and sensitive to women's needs. Women also should be provided with information and education about the complaints process and should be given access to legal assistance if necessary.

In addition, it is recommended that Cambodia continue to work closely with the ILO to improve the labor inspectorate, and develop an improved and better-resourced public labor inspection system. Such a system should include a risk assessment of establishments so that, for example, employer self-assessment programs can be applied to low risk establishments. Other strategies may be adopted to monitor and assess compliance with standards, depending on the nature and level of risk in different establishments. This can be achieved through dialogue involving employer and worker organizations. The expressed mandate of labor inspectorates and the requirements for any employer self-assessment strategies should include consideration of gender issues, with special attention given to gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and women's working conditions.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Social Dialogue and Trade Unions

It is recommended that Cambodia take measures to increase social dialogue. The inclusion and representation of women at all levels is likely to require a targeted approach by both government and unions. It is important that networks of informal workers and entrepreneurs contribute to raising awareness and assist in linking women with larger organizations and government institutions to ensure that women's interests in employment and work issues are taken into account. Finally, unions themselves need to adopt policies and strategies that enhance women's participation in leadership positions and create an affirmative union policy that allocates a high proportion of leadership positions to women. Such measures would encourage women's participation and their ability to influence collective bargaining.

Broad macroeconomic strategies need to include women and there is a need for a gender-aware employment strategy

In conclusion, this report identifies pathways with recommendations to improve gender equality in the labor market in Cambodia. The report also highlights examples of good progress and good practice that can be an example for other countries. The overall message is that broad macroeconomic strategies need to include women and there is a need for a gender-aware employment strategy and a facilitating legal, economic, and social policy environment with active labor market programs. In addition, special temporary measures are required to address constraints of women and promote equal opportunities, remuneration and treatment for working women and men. Implementation using indicators and targets that can be monitored to assess effectiveness is a key to achieving real difference for employment of women in the labor market. The two global reports which form part of this project, namely *Good Global Economic and Social Practices to Promote Gender Equality in the Labor Market* (ADB and ILO 2013a) and *Good Global Legal Practices to Promote Gender Equality in the Labor Market* (ADB and ILO 2013b), are an important resource to assist future progress.

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Gender Equality in the Labor Market in Cambodia

Based on an analysis of gender inequalities, strategies and promising initiatives to counter gender discrimination and promote equality between men and women in Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and the Philippines, as well as an inventory of global good legal, economic, and social practices, this report summarizes the findings and recommendations for Cambodia. It shows how to improve equitable employment opportunities, remuneration and treatment for women and men at work to support the development of decent work and gender equality good practices in the country. The report is part of a series consisting of:

- Good Global Economic and Social Practices to Promote Gender Equality in the Labor Market
- Good Global Legal Practices to Promote Gender Equality in the Labor Market
- Gender Equality and the Labor Market: Cambodia, Kazakhstan, and the Philippines
- Gender Equality in the Labor Market in Cambodia
- Gender Equality in the Labor Market in the Philippines.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.7 billion people live on less than \$2 a day, with 828 million on less than \$1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

About The International Labour Organization

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations agency specialized in work and workplace issues, and related rights and labor standards. Founded in 1919, the ILO brings governments, employers and workers together to achieve decent work for all men and women in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity. The main aims of the ILO are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues. The ILO has 185 member countries. The ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific supports work in 34 countries in the region towards equitable and sustainable social and economic progress.

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