

Kingdom of Cambodia
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Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries



Policy and Strategic Framework
on Childhood Development and Protection
in the Agriculture Sector 2016 - 2020

November 2015

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Preface

The Royal Government of Cambodia considers childhood development and protection as a key issue for the future development of the country. Under the leadership of **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen** the Government elaborated a National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development, the Education for All National Plan for 2003-2015 and the National Plan for Child Development 2015-2018. The Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase III provides the frame work promoting welfare and the rights of children as stipulated in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is strongly committed to the effective implementation of these national approaches and has set out its respective strategic framework in the Agriculture Sector Strategic Development Plan (2014-2018). Its strategic goal is to promote the protection and development of children in agriculture especially those of vulnerable children in poor farmer families in line with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

This Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection in the Agriculture Sector (2016 – 2020) is an important step towards achieving the goal.

The Policy and Strategic Framework has been developed in close cooperation and partnership with all line departments, line ministries, development partners as well as other stakeholders at the national and sub-national level.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who commented and revised the Policy and Strategic Framework. Likewise, I would like to thank the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Gender and Children Working Group and the Technical Coordination Committee on Early Childhood Care and Development, management and staff at all levels and concerned stakeholders who actively involved themselves in the formulation process and committed themselves to it. This has contributed to a comprehensive strategy which addresses the challenges of improving the lives of children and youth in the agriculture sector in Cambodia.

On behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, I urge all line departments and institutions at all levels and ask the wide range of stakeholders to participate fully and cooperate in the implementation of this Policy and Strategic Framework with the coordination of the MAFF Technical Coordination Committee on Early Childhood Care and Development. Full and effective implementation of this Policy and Strategic Framework will be an important step towards achieving the best interests of children and youth in the agriculture sector.

Phnom Penh, 10.....November, 2015
Minister of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries



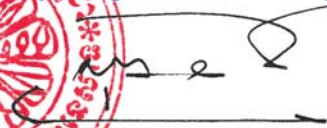

H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun

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1. Introduction

The population of Cambodia is around 14.96 million¹, of whom 33.7%² are under the age of 15. The importance of this generation to the social, cultural, economic and political development of Cambodia cannot be overlooked.

Cambodia is predominantly an agricultural country: 64.6% of the total labour force is employed in agriculture, fisheries and forestry.³ The rural economy remains the cornerstone of national development.⁴

But in small-scale agriculture, fisheries and forestry it is very difficult for people to make a living for themselves and their families. In Cambodia, 90 per cent of all child labourers live in rural areas and the agricultural sector accounts for just over 50 per cent of all economically active children. Over 80 per cent of child labourers are 12 – 18 years of age.⁵

Childhood development in agriculture is about preventing child labour, protecting children from being exposed to harmful chemical and other forms of hazardous labour conditions and to advocate for the improvement in the nutritional status of children and adolescents involved in the agricultural sector. Children and adolescents need to be provided with the requisite skills for working in the sector. A well-nourished, well-educated young generation is an essential condition to transform the agriculture sector into a sector of sustainable change and progress.

This Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection in the Agriculture Sector affirms the commitment of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), to foster better conditions for childhood development and protection, to prevent child labour in the agriculture sector including its different sub-sectors and to protect them from hazards like using agrochemicals.

It is the first Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection elaborated by MAFF. It was developed in consultation with relevant ministries, development partners and civil society organisations.

2. Background

2.1. The legal framework

The Constitution of Cambodia, in Article 48, guarantees child rights in accordance with the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically the rights “*to life, education, protection during wartime, and from economic and (UNCRC) sexual exploitation*”. The State has the obligation to “*protect children from acts that are injurious to their education opportunities, health and welfare*”⁶. The Royal Government of Cambodia ratified the UNCRC

¹ Census of Agriculture, 2013

² According to the last Population Census, 2008

³ According to the Census of Agriculture, 2013

⁴ According to the last Census of Agriculture in 2013 the agriculture sector accounts for 31.6% of GDP.

⁵ Child Labour Survey (2012)

⁶ Article 48, Constitution of Cambodia

the Child in 1992, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) in 1999 and the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2005.

The UNCRC defines children as all persons under the age of 18. The child's age is an important factor for differentiating between age appropriate tasks and child labour and is at the centre of the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).

The Cambodian Labour Law (1997) defines the minimum age for employment at 15; children aged 12-15 years are permitted to do light work.⁷ A Prakas on the Prohibition of Hazardous Child Labour (2004) lists 38 types of hazardous work, including working underground; lifting, carrying or moving heavy loads; deep-sea and offshore fishing; as well as the handling and spraying of pesticides and herbicides. Hazardous work is prohibited under the age of 18.

The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) issued 12 Ministerial Orders (Prakas) on Working Conditions for Children in different working environments including high sea and in-land fishing, salt production, tobacco and cassava.⁸ Child Labour is prohibited by national law in accordance with international conventions.

Definition of Child Labour

Child labour is defined as work that impairs children's well-being or hinders their education, development and future livelihoods. It is work that is damaging to a child's physical, social, mental, psychological or spiritual development (ILO Convention 138).

The International Legal Framework Considering Child Labour

The ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138 (1973) marks out the minimum age for different types of employment:

- age 13 for light work,
- age 15 for ordinary work, and
- age 18 for hazardous work.

The ILO Convention No. 182 (1999) defines the worst forms of child labour.

Worst Forms of Child Labour

The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of the ILO, 1999 (No. 182) defines the worst forms of child labour under Article 3 as:

- work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (hazardous work);

⁷ Prakas No 002/08 (2008) on Light work for Children aged 12 to 15 years: Light works are those types of work that are not hazardous to the health or mental and physical development of children, and are not affect the regular school attendance, the participation in guidance programs or vocational training approved by a competent authority, for example light feeding work in agriculture; Caring for small domestic animals (however, not catching and killing of those animals); Planting work; collecting agro-product, Fruit picking (however, not to climbing), and cleaning. Work duration is not allowed over 4 hours for the school day.

⁸ Derogation against the Prohibition of the Minors from Working at Night, Prohibition of Hazardous Child Labour, Work in Sea Fishing, Working and Living Conditions in Plantations, in Garment and Footwear, Salt Production, Brick Making; Determination of Types of Light Work and Employment for Children 12-15 Years of Age; Working Conditions for Children in Cassava Plantation, in Freshwater Fishery, Agriculture and Tobacco Plantation

- all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; and
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.

The international community has recognized the urgent need to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, with near universal 179 ratifications to date, the Sustainable Development Goal set the target to end child labour in all its forms by 2025.

2.2. National policies on Child Development and Protection

The RGC has declared its commitment to addressing childhood development in national policies and plans, including; the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), adopted in February 2010; the National Strategic Development Plan (2014-2018); the Education for All National Plan for 2003-2015; National Plan for Child Development 2015-2018 by Cambodian National Council for Children (CNCC); and others.

The RGC's Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase III (2014-2018) sets the broad policy directions for improving Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) and identifies priorities for enhancing availability, access, utilization and stability of food specifically in the sub rectangles, focusing on agricultural intensification and diversification, land reform, sustainable natural resources management, enhancing health and nutrition and establishing provision of social safety nets. The long term vision is *"All Cambodians have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food, at all times, to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and optimize the utilization of this food for a healthy and productive life."*

This results in three objectives:

Objective 1: Food-insecure households increase availability and access to food through more productive and diversified agriculture and livestock production, sustainable fisheries and forestry, and from non- agricultural employment and income opportunities.

Objective 2: Cambodians improve use and utilization of their food resulting in reduced child and maternal malnutrition and enhanced human and economic development.

Objective 3: Improved food security related social protection and enhanced capacities of poor and vulnerable households to cope with risks and shocks increase the stability of their food supply.⁹

The Technical Working Group on Social Protection and Food Security, presided over by the chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD), is responsible for the coordination of this strategy. The role of MAFF is essentially to support the achievement

⁹ Kingdom of Cambodia, National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (2014-2018) prepared by CARD in consultation with the Technical Working Group for Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition, 2014

of Objective 1 through enhancing diversification and market integration of smallholder farmers.

The responsible body for promoting and monitoring the implementation of the UNCRC, ratified by the Kingdom of Cambodia, is the CNCC, founded in 1995. CNCC is hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs and it articulates the roles and responsibilities of the different line ministries to ensure that every clause in the UNCRC is looked after.

Furthermore, Cambodia's National Policy on ECCD of 2010 articulates a vision that "*all Cambodian children, from conception to age six, especially disadvantaged, vulnerable and poor children, shall be provided with care and development services...*" (Council of Ministers 2010). The policy also specifies strategies for achieving this vision including, for example, the establishment of legal frameworks and mechanisms for specifying the duties of key stakeholders and for implementing the policy; improvement of monitoring and coordination mechanisms; capacity building for program practitioners and parents; and expansion of access to key health care and education services among pregnant women, infants, and young children. To enable successful implementation of the nine strategic areas of the National Policy on ECCD, a realistic and feasible National Action Plan on ECCD 2014-2018 was endorsed in 2014. The Action Plan contributes to the realization of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals, National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018 and Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018, and other Sector strategy plans. The priorities of this National Action Plan include the formulation of the legal framework and mechanisms, improvement of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, capacity development, expansion of health education and care services to women and young children, especially early provision of basic education to young children with special focus on victimized, vulnerable and poor young children.

The National Committee on ECCD, of which MAFF is a member, coordinates the implementation of the policy and National Action Plan on ECCD 2014 - 2018.

The MoLVT leads the implementation of the *National Action Plan on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour* (2008-2012); since 2012 a new Action Plan has been under finalisation. The Plan of Action is multi-sectoral; where labour, education, social protection, and agriculture sectors intersect to frame a multi-stakeholder response to child labour. This new National Action Plan will require MAFF to elaborate and implement a strategic plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, in agro-industry and in agricultural commercialisation.

2.3. Commitment of MAFF towards Childhood Development and Protection

Agricultural projects and programs have an impact on the situation of children in different ways: by promoting diversified agricultural production they might improve nutrition of children and by introducing new agricultural techniques and technologies might reduce or increase the workload or exposure to hazards for children. Hence, MAFF has a role to play in childhood development and protection. Consequently it is part of the different coordination bodies working on child development and protection.

Accordingly in its Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018, MAFF highlights in the chapter on the *Strategic framework for child development and protection in the agricultural sector* that it "*will create legal framework and supportive mechanism, build*

capacity of relevant officials, promote the understanding of child protection and development to parents and guardians, establish and strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanism and mobilize resources to support the effective promotion of the protection and development of children in agriculture.”

To promote effective childhood development and protection, MAFF is actively involved in different national coordination bodies including CNCC and the National Committee on ECCD which consists of 13 line ministry members. As one of the active National Committee members, MAFF established a Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD on 23 July 2014. The Committee has a significant mandate and plays an active role in promoting childhood care and development in Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries and contributes to the development and implementation of the National Policy and the corresponding National Action Plan on ECCD.

The MAFF Technical Coordination Committee will work in collaboration with the Gender and Children Working Group at central level and Gender and Children Focal Points at line departments and at the provincial level to promote, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection in agriculture.

3. MAFF Vision, Mission and Goal for Child Development and Protection

Vision

The MAFF vision for child development and protection is that:

Children in the agricultural sector are healthy, well-developed and their rights are protected.¹⁰

Mission

The MAFF mission for child development and protection is:

To create the legal and policy framework, develop supportive mechanisms, build capacity of relevant officials, promote the understanding of child protection and development to parents and guardians, establish and strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and mobilize resources to support the effective promotion of the protection and development of children in agriculture.

Goal

The MAFF goal for child development and protection is:

To promote the protection and development of children in agriculture, especially vulnerable children in poor farmer households.

¹⁰ Child development generally refers to cognitive, social, emotional and physical development (psychological development covers social, emotional and cognitive).
Child protection generally refers to the prevention and response to violence, exploitation and abuse against children.

4. Strategic Framework

4.1. Situation of children in rural areas

Although the living conditions of children in rural areas have improved considerably over the last fifteen years, the situation remains alarming: one out of every 29 children does not survive the first five years of its life¹¹ and more than half of the population under 18 in rural areas live in poverty.

Children and nutrition

Overall child and maternal malnutrition has been reduced slightly since 2005 but child and maternal undernourishment differs considerably by regions and social groups. In 2014, 34 % of children under the age of five in rural areas suffered from chronic undernourishment (stunting) compared to 24 % in urban areas.¹² In 13 provinces the prevalence of wasting is greater than 10%, which is considered “serious” on the World Health Organization (WHO) classification of the severity of acute malnutrition.¹³

Under-nourishment and malnutrition during early childhood affects the entire life of an individual, leads to poorer cognitive development and educational outcomes and thus seriously hampers the development of the person. Although it is difficult to put a monetary value on undernourishment, CARD, UNICEF and World Food Program (WFP) estimate that Cambodia is losing an estimated \$400 million in gross domestic product annually due to malnutrition throughout the life cycle; micronutrient deficiencies represent a national burden of more than \$200 million annually.¹⁴

While nutrition is mainly the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, a multi-sector approach needs to be adopted to reduce maternal and child malnutrition. MAFF has the possibility to address farmers and their food production directly. According to the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development MAFF should – inter alia – “*encourage and improve agricultural productivity and diversification for parents, guardians and supervisors through agricultural extension workers at all levels.*”

Children working in agriculture

A survey on child labour conducted by the *National Institute for Statistics (NIS)* of Cambodia and the ILO showed that 19.1% of Cambodian children aged 5 to 17 years (755,245) are economically active. More than half of them (429,380 or 56.9%) are child labourers, many of whom (31.3%) work under hazardous conditions¹⁵. 276,000 of the working children were younger than 15. The majority of the economically active children in Cambodia (86.7%) live in rural areas. Five out of every ten child labourers work more than 48 hours a week. Tasks, hours of work and exposure to hazards are different for boys and girls. For example a higher proportion of boys work in fisheries while girls tend to combine work in agriculture and household chores.

¹¹ NIS, Ministry of Health (2015) Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey, 2014

¹² NIS, Ministry of Health (2015) Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey, 2014

¹³ UNICEF () Imparative of Addressing Child Nutrition and Cash Transfers in Cambodia

¹⁴ National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2014-2018 P.2

¹⁵ NIS/ILO 2013 National Child Labour Survey

Children working in family-based agriculture

Their tasks range from preparing the land and transplanting seedlings through weeding, herding, and taking care of chickens to feeding animals and fishing. Hazardous work is mainly associated with spraying agrochemicals, using sharp tools, carrying heavy loads, insect stings, skin infections, falls or extreme temperatures. But the main problems are that children start working below the legal minimum age and that they work too many hours a day, limiting their opportunities to benefit from education. Cambodian legislation does not address child work in family-based agriculture but has set limits on the number of hours which children aged over twelve years can work.¹⁶

Children working in fisheries

Children start to work in subsistence freshwater fisheries as young as 10 years old. In the Tonle Sap region fishermen have to go out many kilometres to find fishing grounds, so they even have to stay offshore for one or two nights – accompanied by their children. Although many of the children still go to school, they attend only irregularly or drop-out for a period of time making their reintegration to school all the more challenging. The main risks child labourers in fisheries are exposed to are injuries from fish bones and thorns, overexposure to UV radiation because of long hours on the lake or river and long periods of immersion in the water.

Children working on plantations

Child work is still used in rubber, sugarcane, cassava and tobacco plantations. While there is already a Prakas (No. 306) on child labour in plantations, with a comprehensive list of hazards, child labour persists. In sugarcane a recent rapid assessment, commissioned by the ILO, shed light on the nature of child labour found in sugarcane plantations, including long hours of work, interference with schooling, and exposure to hazards. The number and availability of labour inspectors to address this problem is far too small. A comprehensive framework on how to address child labour in plantations, including tailored sub-sector specific response strategies, is still missing and needs to be developed with cooperation between MoLVT and MAFF and the support of ILO and FAO.

Hazardous working conditions

In plantations, small-scale agriculture, fisheries and forestry, children are prone to hazards. The ILO has classified the agricultural sector as one of the most hazardous working environments, especially for children. They are involved in land preparation, planting, harvesting and post harvest activities. According to the latest NIS / ILO child labour survey and different case studies, children working in hazardous conditions in agriculture face the risk of

- snake, scorpions or insect bites,
- being injured by handling sharp tools,
- being poisoned by handling or spraying of agrochemicals
- being exposed to the sun without protection.

¹⁶ 4 hours on a school day

Some case studies on child labour in agriculture specifically in cassava and tobacco production have been carried out, but systematic surveys on child labour in family-based agriculture, in forestry and livestock and on child labour under hazardous working conditions have not been conducted.

Definition of hazardous work

Hazardous work is one of the worst forms of child labour, and is prohibited to all individuals under the age of 18. The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190) provides guidance on what kind of work should be prohibited:

- work that exposes children to physical, emotional or sexual abuse;
- work underground, underwater, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
- work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or work that involves the manual handling or transporting of heavy loads;
- work in an unhealthy environment, which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
- work under particularly difficult conditions, such as work for long hours or during the night; and
- work that prevents children from returning home each day.

The main cause of child labour is persistent poverty and vulnerability in rural areas. It is the result of the interplay of different factors such as limited access to quality education and training opportunities, weak social protection, insufficient awareness of parents and communities, migration and labour shortage and a deficit of decent work for youth. A number of Cambodian regions have a shortage of labour, especially those bordering Thailand and Vietnam that are suffering from workforce migration. This is partly compensated for by the work of children.

In Cambodia, poor smallholder farmers often rely on the work performed by children in order to meet immediate needs for survival. Therefore, reducing rural poverty is closely related to and a precondition for reducing child labour in agriculture. As agricultural programs and projects aim to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and to reduce rural poverty, they play a crucial role in reducing child labour in agriculture. Furthermore, MAFF may contribute to keeping children out of child labour and to reduce the hazards child labourers are facing in agriculture by awareness raising and training and by improving the livelihoods of the most vulnerable families in agriculture.

Although there have been important developments in improving the legal framework on child labour, there are still some shortcomings as most of child labour takes place in family based agriculture and fisheries where the current labour law does not usually apply. The Fisheries Administration, in consequence, has developed an Action Plan to combat child labour in small-scale fisheries; an example that should be followed by other Departments in MAFF.

The legal framework is important but in addition addressing child labour in small-scale agriculture, forestry and fisheries needs an approach linking poverty alleviation, awareness raising and offering alternatives in order to be able to address the root causes of child labour.

Access to education and professional skills in agriculture

Cambodia's constitution stipulates that every child has the right to basic education. The country has made considerable progress in expanding basic education with 94.5% net enrolment rate in 2013¹⁷, but regular attendance and retention remain major challenges.

The overall dropout for primary grades in school year 2013-14 was 10.5%, one of the highest in the South East Asia (SEA) region. Net enrolment in lower secondary school increased only slightly in the last 10 years to 39% in 2013 owing to significant overage enrolment in primary, poor transition (79 per cent) and high dropout (21 per cent). Poverty and poor instruction are the main causes. The overall quality of education in rural areas remains insufficient. An Early Grade Reading Assessment from 2010 of 24,000 students in grades 1–6 found that 33% of Cambodian children could not read and that 47% of literate children could not comprehend what they had read. Further evaluations found large performance disparities between urban and rural schools.¹⁸

The WFP relates the high dropout rates to food insecurity and poverty as children have to work to contribute to their families' income. While the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS), along with many partners, has expanded scholarship provisions for basic education of children from poor families and are improving the quality of teaching through curriculum revision and capacity development, MAFF could contribute to better education in rural areas by promoting school gardens and fish ponds and helping to introduce more livelihood skills adapted to the needs of children in agriculture into the curriculum for primary and secondary education.

Another challenge faced by young people in rural areas is the lack of access to vocational training specifically in agriculture. Cambodian youth in rural areas is mostly low-skilled and suffers high rates of unemployment. Boys and girls in agriculture are at risk of being trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty.¹⁹ They are prone to unsafe labour migration or unskilled, low-paid work in other sectors. Together with MoEYS and MoLVT, MAFF could contribute to promote professional skills of youth in rural areas to enhance them to become agro-entrepreneurs in the long run.

Climate change and resilience of children in agriculture

Climate Change in Cambodia is real. Based on 1960-2000 data, Cambodian climate has already changed²⁰ and the recent changes in rainfall patterns and temperature will have far-reaching implications for rural livelihoods in Cambodia.

Recent natural phenomena, such as the delayed rains in 2010 and the consequent prolonged drought, demonstrate the extreme dependence of rural people's well-being on the regularity of the rainy seasons, influenced by the climate, and on the availability of natural resources like water. The late onset of the rainy season resulted in record-low water levels

¹⁷ MoEYS (2015) Vision of Education Reform in Cambodia

¹⁸ World Bank (2015) Educating the next generation: Improving teacher quality in Cambodia

¹⁹ ILO (2013) Rural development and employment opportunities in Cambodia: How can a national employment policy contribute towards realization of decent work in rural areas

²⁰ Ministry of Environment (2011) Key finding of Cambodia's second national communication on climate change

on the Tonle Sap and Mekong Rivers. In September 2009 many poor farmers in five provinces lost their crops due to the highly unusual and devastating Typhoon Ketsana.²¹

The Cambodian National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) identified the areas most vulnerable to floods and droughts. Provinces found to suffer from the highest frequency and largest coverage of impacts from floods are on the floodplains of the Tonle Sap River and Great Lake, and along the Mekong River. These areas collectively contribute to over half of the total national rice production.

Because agriculture in Cambodia is predominantly rainfed, these changes in rainfall patterns will have a severe influence on the possibilities of poor rural families to cope with stress and shocks. Although a great reduction in absolute poverty in Cambodia has been achieved, most households in rural areas have risen only just above the poverty line and remain largely near poor. They are still highly vulnerable to the slightest of shocks as, for example, caused by climate change.

While there is emerging research about how the effects of climate change differ for women and men, little evidence is found on how climate change will impact boys and girls specifically in Cambodia. Research dated 2008²² indicated that shocks resulting in crop failure are most likely to increase the work burden on children, in particular on girls, while it doesn't seem to have any impact on school attendance.

In order to be able to address policy interventions to mitigate severe impacts of climate change and to improve the resilience of children, a better understanding of the effects of climate change on children in Cambodia is needed.

4.2. Scope of policy and strategy framework

The needs of the children and young people must define the scope of the strategy and policy of MAFF on childhood development. Based on the situation of children in agriculture described above, the three following areas of intervention in line with the MAFF strategic goal have been identified:

1. The need to improve the nutritional status of children and pregnant women,
2. The need to prevent and to reduce children becoming child labourers and to protect them from hazards like agrochemicals, using sharp tools etc.,
3. The need to improve the ability of youth (aged 15-17) to run a productive agricultural enterprise through improved vocational training in agriculture.

The three areas of intervention are interlinked and overall contribute to poverty reduction as the main cause of child labour and poor childhood development. They relate directly to the goal formulated in the Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan (2014-2018).

As different Ministries have the lead on these areas of intervention (Ministry of Health, MoLVT, MoEYS), MAFF will develop their activities in these three areas of intervention in close cooperation with other line Ministries and partners (UNICEF, FAO, WFP, USAID, etc.). Nevertheless MAFF has a unique role to play as through its agricultural policy it addresses

²¹ UNDP, Ministry of Environment (2011) Building resilience – the future of rural livelihoods in the face of climate change, Human Development Report Cambodia

²² UCW (2008) Child labour as a response to shocks: evidence from Cambodian villages

all three areas directly and through its decentralized structure and through its extension workers it works directly with the farmers.

Hence, to involve, sensitize and train the staff of MAFF and specifically the extension workers is vital for the successful implementation of the Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection.

4.3. Strategic objectives and outcomes

Objective 1

Promote food security and nutrition of vulnerable children through improved and diversified food production.

To address deficits in early childhood nutrition, the National Action Plan on ECCD (2014-2018) requires MAFF to *maximize agricultural productivity including vegetable garden, animal raising and multiple crops in the yard*. MAFF will develop a program and Action Plan to meet these requirements, helping parents and guardians to improve the nutritional ingredients of their child's food. This program can build on the experience of programs like MALIS (FAO) and HARVEST (USAID) including using existing published materials and already trained personnel from these programs and will link it to the work of the National Committee on ECCD. It can also build on the program of the Fisheries Administration in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce to improve the post harvest treatment of fish by fostering better fish preservation methods.

Furthermore, MAFF will – in close cooperation with MoEYS - support teachers and students to establish school gardens, fish ponds and other agricultural skills through capacity building and technical support as well as providing seeds.

Outcomes:

1. Parents / guardians have access to information and capacity building to improve feeding of children under the age of 5,
2. Parents / guardians diversify food production through home gardening and animal raising,
3. Teachers and children understand the importance of good nutrition through school gardening.

Objective 2

Protect and prevent children from child labour, including hazardous work, in the agriculture sector.

As many children in family-based agriculture, forestry and fisheries are obliged to help their parents to improve the family's income, it is necessary to combat poverty as a root cause of child labour. This is very much in the centre of the daily work of MAFF. **Child labour is a crosscutting issue for all departments in MAFF.** In line with the Sub-degree on Child Protection and Code of Ethics of Child Protection by CNCC and MoSAVY, the UNCRC and the ILO Conventions No. 138 and No.182, MAFF will elaborate safeguards for child protection and prevention from hazardous work in agriculture.

MAFF will ensure that its programs and projects, as well as those of partner organisations working in the agricultural sector, will have positive effects on children's working situation. The possible impacts on children from agricultural projects will be assessed in MAFF's planning, monitoring and evaluation procedures. Projects and programs will be designed in such a manner that they do not boost child labour. Where children are helping their parents in their daily work, MAFF will ensure that it is in a child-friendly way, not interfering with school attendance, that children are not exposed to hazardous working conditions and that children aged 12 to 15 only do light work.

Furthermore, MAFF will undertake specific measures to prevent children from risk of becoming child labourers, through awareness raising of parents about the negative impacts of child labour on their children and they will help parents by providing alternatives to hazardous working conditions.

MAFF will address relevant business people in the agriculture sector and set up mechanisms to ensure those stakeholders comply with the child protection guidelines of MAFF.

The Fisheries Administration of MAFF has already developed an action plan on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in the fisheries sector. Similarly, the General Directorate of Agriculture (GDA), General Directorate of Rubber (GDR), the Departments of the Agro-industry, Animal Health and Production and Forestry Administration should develop action plans.

Currently, there is only limited information available on the situation of children in the livestock and forestry sector. In order to address child labour in these sectors, the first step should be to gather further information on their working and living conditions. The information might be gathered through a rapid assessment or survey.

Outcomes:

1. Hazardous forms of child labour in agriculture have been eliminated,
2. Child labour in agriculture has been reduced according to national target of reducing child labour.

Objective 3

Improve vocational skills of youth in agricultural production.

In order to be able to offer young people (aged 15-17) a viable future in agriculture, they must be better trained and enabled to become skilled farmers so that they can run successful farmer's enterprises. This training must also be gender-sensitive, taking into account the different possibilities and constraints faced by girls and boys. Hence, as members of the poor households, youth aged 15-17, especially those who have dropped out of school, should be provided with training and input support for agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods and the diversification of income sources.

MAFF has longstanding experience in working with farmer field schools, including a wide network of master trainers (coordinated by the national Integrated Pest Management Programme of GDA). This experience could be used to design a farmer field school-model

adapted to youth, providing lessons of work and livelihood skills, including economic literacy and understanding of value chain mechanisms.

To adapt the training to the needs of the youth, it is very important that the young people are empowered to participate in the design of the training.

Outcomes:

1. Young people (aged 15-17) are equipped with necessary skills and knowledge to become skilled farmers and agro-entrepreneurs,
2. Young people (aged 15-17) know about links between agriculture and climate change, disaster preparedness, and emergency response.

Objective 4

Strengthen institutional capacity, resources and commitment within MAFF to ensure effective mainstreaming of childhood development and child safety in agriculture.

In order to be able to implement the strategic framework and develop a corresponding action plan, the staff of MAFF must be aware of and trained on childhood development and the prevention of child labour. The staff must be aware of possible hazards affecting children in agricultural work and must be able to provide alternatives which are not harmful. This is a cross-cutting issue. There is a specific need to raise awareness among extension workers and to train them as they work directly with the communities and farmers.

There is also a need to build further capacity and competence of the Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD in MAFF in assessing and mainstreaming childhood development and protection in agriculture policies, programs and projects as well as in the daily practices of each subsector.

The mainstreaming of childhood development and protection, and gender should be designed simultaneously to be able to generate synergies and to reduce costs and time requirements.

Outcomes:

1. Child Development and Protection is mainstreamed in all MAFF departments,
2. The members of the Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD in MAFF have sufficient expertise, skills and resources to fulfil its task on advocacy, awareness raising, planning, building partnerships for children in agriculture,
3. MAFF leaders and staff know and implement policy and strategy on childhood development and protection.

4.4. Strategies

MAFF will adopt two main approaches to achieve childhood development and child protection. First, it will build capacity internally in MAFF to effectively mainstream childhood development and protection throughout all programs and projects and to develop corresponding safe guards.

Second, it will design programs which address some of the most urgent problems faced by vulnerable children in rural areas as outlined in the previous chapter. MAFF will work in partnership with line ministries, development partners and non-governmental organisations.

The following strategic steps are vital for the effective implementation of the policy and strategic framework on childhood development and protection:

1. **Designing a communication and capacity building strategy in MAFF:** The basis for implementing the policy and strategic framework on childhood development and protection in agriculture is to raise awareness and build the necessary capacity in MAFF. The staff needs to be aware of the relevance of childhood development and protection in their daily work. Hence the Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD will have to design a clear strategy to communicate the key messages of this policy and strategic framework within the Ministry and to elaborate (together with line ministries and partner organisations) a corresponding capacity building plan. As extension workers, District Offices of Agriculture (DOAs) and Provincial Departments of Agriculture (PDAs) are crucial for the implementation of programs and projects promoting childhood development and protection, and as they will have to integrate childhood development and protection into their daily work, specific attention should be given to building their capacity..
2. **Designing a communication strategy with farmers, parents, farmer organisations, communities and the private sector on the importance of childhood development and the negative impacts of child labour on their children:** Given that child labour in agriculture occurs almost exclusively in very poor households which are already very prone to stress, the communication must be very sensitive, trying not to increase the pressure on them. This requires a communication strategy based on explanations and the promotion of alternatives and solutions and less on condemnation. A set of materials and guidelines based on existing materials of partner organisations like FAO and ILO should be developed.
3. **Building alliances and co-operation with line ministries and partner organisations:** MAFF will actively participate in existing RGC coordination bodies on childhood development and care for example, CNCC and the National Committee on ECCD. This will facilitate the creation of synergies, identification of best practice as well as to sharing information and knowledge.
4. **Design projects and programs according to the three areas of intervention:** Together with line ministries and partner organisations, MAFF will design specific projects and programs for the three areas of intervention defined in this Policy and Strategic Framework. In order to avoid “re-inventing the wheel”, the first step will be to do a comprehensive mapping of existing projects and programs, materials and publications, and to assess which approaches exist and which work best in the Cambodian context.
5. **Promote participation of children and young people in the design and implementation of the policy, projects and programs:** MAFF will explore the possibilities to cooperate with existing organisations of children and/or youth in rural areas in the design of the project or develop other mechanisms to promote the participation of children and youth.

4.5. Implementation

The responsibility for the implementation of the Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection rests at the highest level within MAFF. The Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD is the responsible entity **to oversee and guide** the implementation of the Policy and Strategic Framework on Child Development and Protection in MAFF. The Committee is responsible for coordination with line ministries, development partners and civil society organisations as well as for fostering policy dialogue on childhood development and protection. Furthermore, the Committee will be responsible for overseeing the elaboration of the corresponding Action Plan. This will include a plan for capacity building and training. Furthermore, it is responsible for coordinating the mainstreaming of childhood development and protection throughout the different line departments in MAFF. The Committee will report back to the Minister on an annual basis. The role of the Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD ²³ is ensuring the effectiveness of child development and protection in the agriculture sector. The Committee is responsible for coordinating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects and activities **while the different line Departments in MAFF are responsible for the implementation.**

In cooperation with the Technical Coordination Committee, the different line Departments are responsible for elaborating a working plan for implementation of childhood development and protection in their sphere of influence. The integration of childhood development and protection into the existing planning and M&E framework is the responsibility of the Department of Planning and Statistics of MAFF, in cooperation with the Technical Coordination Committee.

4.6. Financial Resources

The Policy and Strategic Framework outlines the areas of intervention. These will be further articulated in a subsequent detailed planning phase which will follow. Cost and timescale will be included in the planning exercise. Many proposed activities of the Policy and Strategic Framework will be developed in close cooperation with other Ministries, corresponding coordination bodies (CNCC, National Committee on ECCD), Development Partners and other NGOs. The budget needed depends on the scale and scope of the activities defined in the Action Plan.

For successful implementation as well as to fully achieve the goal and objectives of the policy and strategic framework, technical and financial inputs as well as other necessary means from different sources including Government, Development Partners, NGOs, private sectors etc. will be required.

4.7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The question of Monitoring and Evaluation is two-fold:

1. Agricultural programs and projects have direct and indirect implications on childhood development and child labour even if they not address this issue directly. Given the challenges of tracing the impacts, a standard set of indicators should be developed and integrated into the existing MAFF Monitoring and Evaluation procedures. In accordance with the Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategic Framework of

²³ As defined by the Agricultural Sector Strategic Development Plan ,2014-2018

MAFF, a gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation system is required. The design of this M&E system should consider gender and child sensitivities. The existing FAO Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture could form the basis for the M&E system. The Handbook could be adapted to the existing MAFF's planning, monitoring and evaluation procedures.

2. The implementation of the Policy and Strategic Framework on Childhood Development and Protection itself will be monitored through regular meetings of members of the Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD and the provincial focal points, as well as through an annual review of the activities and results achieved. The results, advances and challenges will be made public.

5. Action Plan

Outcome	Priority Actions	Indicators	Means of Verification	Timeframe	Responsible	Possible Partner Agencies
Strategic Objective 1: Promote food security and nutrition of vulnerable children through improved and diversified food production						
Outcome Indicator: Stunting among children under age 5 has been reduced in the provinces by 10% by 2020 (Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey)						
Parents / guardians have access to information and capacity building to improve feeding of children under the age of 5	Organize disseminations sessions on children and nutrition for communities	Number of dissemination session conducted. 50 people/session, 5 Provinces/yr (25 total)	Session report Participant list	2016-20	Technical Co-ordination Committee on Early Childhood Care & Development (TCCECCD) Provincial Department of Agriculture (PDA)	FAO, (EU), World Food Program, UNICEF, USAID, Plan International, Save the Children, MoRD, MoWA, MoYES, MoH
	Build capacity of parents / guardians in pilot regions on children and nutrition	Number of parents/guardians trained.	Session report Participant list	2016-20	TCCECCD PDA	FAO, (EU), World Food Program, UNICEF,

							USAID, Plan International, Save the Children, MoRD, MoWA, MoYES, MoH
	Promote and sustain behaviour change related to dietary and child nutrition practices through radio and television and other communication channels.	Number of TV and radio programs/spots or spiels developed and broadcast.	Broadcasting schedules.	2016-20	TCCECCD		MoH, MoYES, MoInformation, Save the Children, Development Partners
Parents / guardians diversify food production through home gardening and animal raising	Conduct training to agricultural extension workers on integrating nutrition in integrated home food production system (crop production, small animal raising, agriculture and small scale food processing) to improve child nutrition	Number of extension workers trained 30 people/session, 5 Provinces/yr	Session report Participant list	2016	TCCECCD		FAO, USAID, (EU), WHO IFAD/SPIRE, MoRD
	Train parents and guardians on using home gardening, animal raising and fish production to improve child nutrition	Number of people/guardians trained % of trained parents/guardians who have used the techniques to improve child nutrition	Pre- and post-testing	2016-20	PDA		FAO, USAID, (EU), WHO IFAD/ASPIRE, MoRD, Save the Children

	Provide seeds, fingerlings, young animals and other necessary means to parents/guardians in pilot areas	% of trained parents/guardians who received this assistance who have improved child nutrition Target 80%	Pre- and post-testing	2016-20	PDA	FAO, USAID, (EU), WHO IFAD/ASPIRE, MoRD
Teachers and children understand the importance of good nutrition through school gardening	Coordinate with MoEYS to establish a pilot school gardening programme	- Agreed action plan with MoEYS for pilot	Plan	2016-17	TCCECCD MoEYS	World Food Program, Plan International, USAID, FAO, UNICEF
	Prepare training material for the pilot (that can be used later for training curriculum for primary school teachers)	- Training materials	Copy of training materials	2017	TCCECCD MoEYS	World Food Program, Plan International, USAID, FAO, UNICEF
	Train teachers on how to maintain school gardens	10 schools	Session report Participant list	2017-18	TCCECCD MoEYS	World Food Program, Plan International, USAID, FAO, UNICEF
	Encourage target schools to set up school gardens	No of school gardens set up Target – all 10	Reports from schools	2017-19	TCCECCD MoEYS	World Food Program, Plan International, USAID, FAO, UNICEF

Objective 2: Protect and prevent children from child labour and hazardous work in the agriculture sector						
Outcome Indicators: - Hazardous child labour rate (Child Labour Survey) - Number of reported incidents with children caused by agrochemicals reduced. - Child labour rate in sub-sectors (Child Labour Survey)						
Hazardous forms of child labour in agriculture have been eliminated	Define and identify children's engagement in hazardous work in each sub-sector, accounting for gender differences (study, rapid/ risk assessment)	A comprehensive list of hazards and hazardous work for each sub-sector exists	MAFF list for each sub-sector	2016-17	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Identify the types of work that are hazardous for children in each sub-sector	List of hazardous types of work for children in each sub-sector	Copy of list	2017-18	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Develop Guidelines on elimination of most hazardous forms of child labour in each sub-sector	Guidelines on elimination of most hazardous forms of child labour in each sub-sector	Copies of Guidelines	2017-18	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Build capacity of extension workers on hazardous child labour	Number of extension workers trained 300 trained	Session report Participant list	2016-20	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT

	Disseminate the impact of hazardous work for children to the target groups	Number of dissemination sessions held 200 sessions	Session report	2017-20	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
Child labour in agriculture has been reduced according to national target of reducing child labour	Conduct survey/assessment on situation of children in all sub-sectors	Number of surveys conducted Target 4: Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Rubber..	Copy of report	2016-18	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Develop Guidelines to combat child labour in sub-sectors	Guidelines to combat child labour in different subsectors of MAFF issued	Copies of Guidelines	2017-18	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Training of Trainers in Guidelines	Number of trainers trained (initial and refresher) Target 30	Training report	2018-19	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Train focal points and extension workers and other MAFF officials in Guidelines	Number of staff trained 400	Training report Participant list	2018-20	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT

	Organise dissemination sessions for farmers on impact of child labour in family-based agriculture and how to reduce it	Number of dissemination sessions held Target 200 sessions	Report	2018-20	Administrations and Line Departments	ILO, FAO, World Vision, MoLVT
	Develop joint approach between MAFF, MoLVT and MoC on child labour in plantations	Joint statement	Copy of Joint statement	2016	TCCECCD	MoLVT, MoC
Objective 3: Improve vocational skills of youth and their empowerment in agriculture production						
Outcome Indicator:						
- No. Of young people who become skilled farmers and agro-entrepreneurs.						
Young people (aged 15-17) are equipped with necessary skills and knowledge to become skilled farmers and agro-entrepreneurs	Conduct needs assessment for vocational training of young people (15-17)	Needs assessment carried out	Assessment report	2016	TCCECCD / GCWG	FAO, EU, ILO, SDP-SDC

	Adapt farmer field school according to the needs of adolescents including providing some small funding/materials and access to the market information system	A farmer field school model adapted to youth has been developed	Training programme/ materials	2017	TCCECCD / GCWG Administrations and Line Departments	FAO, ILO, EU, World Vision, private sector
	Establish training programs in two pilot areas	Number of youth trained	Training report	2017	TCCECCD / GCWG	FAO, ILO, EU, World Vision, private sector
	Introduce Saving for Change Program for youth as a pilot	Number of youth involved in saving for change program. ²⁴ Target 1500	Report OXFAM MIS	2016-20	OXFAM TCCECCD / GCWG	Local partners,, OXFAM
	Strengthen capacity of youths who have dropped out of school about small enterprise	No. of youths trained % of trainees report their business is operating Target 350, 25% report business operating	Report OXFAM MIS	2016-19	OXFAM	Local partners, OXFAM, TCCECCD / GCWG

²⁴ Financial inclusion and resilience for poorest people: poorest people do not have a formal bank account. With few viable means to save, these individuals and their families are vulnerable to life-threatening hardships. Community-based savings groups – saving for change - are designed to provide a mechanism for resilience.

Young people (aged 15-17) know about links between agriculture and climate change, disaster preparedness, and emergency response	Develop training material for young people on climate change adaptation in agriculture	Training materials developed	Copy of printed training materials	2016	TCCECCD / GCWG	ADB-SNV, UNDP, World Bank, Plan International, UNEP
	Conduct training for young people on agriculture and climate change adaptation.	Number of young people trained.	Training report	2017-19	TCCECCD / GCWG	ADB-SNV, UNDP, World Bank, Plan International
	Organize Youth Forum on agriculture, livelihoods, climate change adaptation etc.,	Youth Forum established	Report of event	2016-20	TCCECCD / GCWG	FAO, ILO, UNDP, OXFAM, ADB, UNICEF, World Vision

Objective 4: Strengthen institutional capacity, resources and commitment within MAFF to ensure effective mainstreaming of childhood development and child safety in agriculture						
Outcome Indicator:						
-The need of childhood development and protection is integrated in policies, strategies and budget of MAFF (Budget Strategic Plan, MAFF)						
- No. of joint projects/programs and cooperation with partners and line ministries (Agreements)						
Child Development and Protection is mainstreamed in all MAFF departments	Disseminate childhood development and protection policy and strategic framework within MAFF	Number of dissemination sessions 3 session/yr: 1 National 2 Provincial level Total 150 participants/yr.	Session Report Participant List	2016-17	TCCECCD / GCWG	EU, FAO, Save the Children
	Develop detailed action plan in each Administration, Line Department, PDA etc on mainstreaming child development and protection	Actions Plans with budget Target: All Administrations and line departments, PDA	Action Plans and budgets	2017	Administrations, Line Departments and PDA TCCECCD / GCWG EU, FAO, ILO Spanish (Spain, International Sort	
	Monitor the implementation of the Childhood Development and Protection policies and plans	6 monthly reports	Report	2016-20	TCCECCD / GCWG	Administrations Line Departments and PDA

The members of the Technical Coordination Committee on ECCD (TCCECCD) and focal points in MAFF have sufficient expertise, skills and resources to fulfil its task on advocacy, awareness raising, planning, building partnerships for children in agriculture	Organise an annual reflection workshop for Ministry leaders and DPs on mainstreaming the policy and strategic framework on child development and protection	Annual workshop held (5 in total)	Workshop report	2016-20	TCCECCD / GCWG	ILO, FAO, World Vision, UNICEF, UNDP, EU
	Build capacity and technical skills on children in agriculture among members of TCCECCD and Provincial focal points	2 sessions per year	Report	2016-20	TCCECCD	FAO, ILO, Save the Children, Oxfam, Plan International
	Build capacity about project management, advocacy and leadership among members of TCCECCD and Provincial focal points	1 National level, 2 Provincial level	Report	2016-17	TCCECCD	FAO, ILO, Save the Children, Oxfam, Plan International
	Conduct study visits inside and outside Cambodia on Childhood Development and protection in agriculture	2 in Cambodia, 1 abroad per year	Report	2017-20	TCCECCD	FAO, ILO, Save the Children, Oxfam, Plan International
	Disseminate the Childhood Development and Protection policy and strategic framework to MAFF leaders and officials	Conduct a dissemination workshop	Workshop report	2016	TCCECCD	FAO, ILO, EU,
MAFF leaders and staff know and implement policy and strategy on childhood development and protection						

	Cooperate with ILO on awareness raising on child labour – offer awareness raising course.	1 National – 30 people 2 Provincial – 60 people	Training report	2017	TCCECCD	ILO
	Put the Policy and Strategic Framework and other relevant documents on the MAFF website	Available on website	Copy on website	2016-20	TCCECCD	
	Integrate childhood development and gender dimension into curricula of National Agriculture schools	Childhood development and protection and gender issues are covered in agriculture courses	Curricula of the National Agriculture Schools	2018-20	TCCECCD	FAO could collaborate with others.