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## Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia

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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

## Contents

List of acronyms.....	5
Executive Summary .....	7
Project Background .....	7
Evaluation Purpose and Methodology .....	7
Evaluation findings .....	8
Relevance .....	8
Coherence.....	8
Effectiveness.....	8
Efficiency .....	9
Impact.....	9
Sustainability .....	10
Cross-Cutting Issues.....	10
Lessons Learned and Good Practices .....	10
Recommendations.....	11
1. Project background .....	13
Introduction.....	13
ASPC Project .....	13
Background.....	13
Aims and objectives.....	14
Institutional Framework .....	15
Key stakeholders and target groups.....	16
Key collaborators.....	17
2. Evaluation Background & Methodology .....	18
Objective and Scope of the Evaluation .....	18
Approach .....	18
Objectives .....	18
Clients .....	18
Evaluation Criteria and Questions.....	19
Methodology .....	21
Evaluation limitations and biases.....	22
3. Project implementation.....	23
Outcome 1 .....	23
Outcome 2 .....	24

Outcome 3 .....	26
4. Main evaluation findings .....	28
Relevance .....	28
Coherence .....	29
Project effectiveness .....	30
Efficiency of resource use.....	32
Impact.....	35
Sustainability .....	38
Visibility .....	39
Cross-cutting issues .....	39
5. Lessons learned & good practices .....	41
Lessons learned .....	41
Emerging good practices .....	41
6. Conclusions & recommendations.....	42
Conclusions.....	42
Relevance .....	42
Coherence.....	42
Effectiveness.....	42
Efficiency .....	43
Impact.....	44
Sustainability .....	44
Visibility .....	44
Cross-cutting issues .....	44
Recommendations.....	45
Appendices .....	47
Appendix 1. Lessons learned .....	47
Appendix 2. Emerging good practice.....	49
Appendix 3. Terms of Reference .....	50
Appendix 4. List of persons interviewed .....	67
Appendix 5. Implementation of MTE recommendations.....	71
Appendix 6: Documents consulted .....	73
Project documents .....	73
Project outputs.....	73
National documents .....	73
ILO/UN documents .....	73
Other Development Partner documents.....	74

Appendix 7. Concept note for site visits.....	75
Appendix 8: Theory of Change (reconstructed) .....	77

## List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BKK	Bangkok
CO	Country office
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DP	Development Partner
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	Decent Work Team
EQ	Evaluation Question
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GS-NSPC	General Secretariat-National Social Protection Council
HEF	Health Equity Funds
IDPoor	Identification of Poor Households Programme
ILO	International Labor Organization
MEF	Minister of Economy and Finance
MoLVT	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
MoSVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NPC	National Project Co-ordinator
NSAF	National Social Assistance Fund
NSPC	National Social Protection Council
NSPPF	National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016 – 2025
NSPPF 2.0	National Social Protection Policy Framework revised
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
P&B	Programme and Budget (ILO)
PFM	Public Finance Management
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PUNO	Participating UN organisation
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia

SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNJP	UN Joint Programme on Social Protection
UNRC	UN Resident Coordinator

## Executive Summary

### Project Background

The EU funded Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia (ASPC) project began implementation in February 2021 and ran until December 2024 with an approved budget of €5,598,535 over the four years. It is co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF, working in close collaboration with government stakeholders responsible for social protection, in particular the General Secretariat (GS) of the National Social Protection Council (NSPC); the National Social Security Fund (NSSF); the National Social Assistance Fund (NSAF) and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) in Cambodia.

The project goal is “at the end of the project, more women and men in Cambodia have access to more effective, efficient, accountable and sustainable gender-responsive social protection.” The project has three main intended outcomes.

Outcome 1 – A higher percentage of workers are covered by social security schemes

Outcome 2 - Increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes promoting improved livelihoods and well-being

Outcome 3 – Social security organisations are strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sector.

### Evaluation Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure project accountability and learn from the experience of the project which is valuable for ILO constituents and key stakeholders. The evaluation does this by assessing the achievement of the project against its plan and identifying challenges and any external factors that may have affected the project and its implementation.

The evaluation adopts the ILO’s Evaluation Guidelines as the basic evaluation framework and was conducted in accordance with OECD/DAC criteria—relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. It also assessed cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and disability inclusion. The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. Data collection included a desk review of project documents, and key informant interviews with stakeholders (EU, RGC, ILO and UNICEF project team, technical specialists, and social partners). A stakeholder workshop was also held to validate findings. The evaluation framework was based on ILO’s Results-Based Management system and adhered to the UN Evaluation Group’s ethical guidelines, ensuring representation, informed consent, and confidentiality throughout the process.

## Evaluation findings

### Relevance

In general, the project's objectives, design and approach respond to the needs, policies and priorities of all key stakeholders including the UN agencies, EU (funder), and RGC agencies. The project design addressed the basic economic and social needs of marginalized groups through its focus on improving both social security (i.e. social insurance) and social assistance for the informal sector (missing middle) and vulnerable groups.

In general, the project design was appropriate and activities remained relevant throughout the implementation period. In particular, the project remained relevant to the RGC needs considering the changes in circumstances including the new 2023 government and post-COVID economic recovery. This reflected considerable stability in the RGC commitment to building social protection systems.

### Coherence

The project brought together key UN agencies (ILO, UNICEF and UNDP) and other DPs (in particular GRET) and built on work which had been carried out such as the UNJP on social protection and the EU funded Social Protection and PFM project. The project also worked closely with Government agencies at national and local level both to implement ongoing reforms in social protection (e.g. supporting the establishment of the NSAF) and to support the development of a more coherent approach to social protection policy. The project supported UN coherence at a policy level, e.g. a joint response to NSPPF 2.0 and allowed individual agencies to focus on work in the areas of expertise.

### Effectiveness

In general, the project has been able to implement most of the outputs and activities and, in several areas, more than originally planned.<sup>1</sup> As discussed in chapter 3, the project has, for example, supported the increased coverage of workers covered by social protection schemes through the development and implementation of the voluntary health insurance scheme for self-employed workers (a majority of those now covered are women see below Table 1). The project also supported increased inclusion and coverage in social assistance and social services, e.g. development and implementation of the Family Package.

In terms of the three outcomes:

Outcome 1 – The project has achieved increased inclusion/coverage of workers that are covered by social security schemes (missing middle) and has met the PRODOC target (details below in Table 1)

Outcome 2 – The project has also increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes and again has met the PRODOC target (Table 2 below).

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<sup>1</sup> The extent to which outcomes have been achieved is discussed below under impact.



Outcome 3 – Social security organizations have been strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service but detailed metrics are lacking to measure improvements in capacity or service quality.

In general, project management appears to have been effective. However, some respondents expressed the view that the core management team was too small and that this led to weaknesses in co-ordination between the UN agencies and to limited communication with the funder and generally limited public communication as to the achievements of the project.

### Efficiency

The total budget of the project was €5,598,535 (in addition to a PUNO contribution of €530,746). The details of expenditure have been provided in different formats and in a different currency to the original budget which makes it difficult for us to comment in any detail on the extent to which expenditure has (or has not) been in line with original plans. The activities of the project have very largely been delivered. There were some delays in different activities due to COVID, the 2023 general elections (and changes in counterpart staff) and, in some cases, due to difficulties in recruiting consultants. These delays were largely outside the control of the project and by the end of the project activities have been delivered. Insofar as can be assessed, resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve immediate objectives. As noted above, a larger that the core management team might have enhanced project financial management and the efficiency of its organizational and governance structure.

### Impact

The project has had a substantial impact in supporting system change both on policy, institutional capacity but also in terms of vulnerable groups. The project has largely achieved or exceeded the targets which it set in terms of increasing social security coverage and the numbers in receipt of social assistance cash payments (see chapter 4 below). The project achieved a target for outcome 1 of 2.6 million workers covered by social security schemes and exceeded a target of 1,161,070 of households included in the cash transfer programmes. The number on cash transfer programmes is 1,533,422 households, 32% higher than the original target. There are clear causal relationships between the activities of this project (and preceding UN work on social protection) and the outcomes achieved, e.g. the project worked closely with Gret and NSSF to support the design and implementation of the voluntary health insurance scheme for self-employed workers while the project also supported the design and implementation of cash supports, in particular the Family Package.

All agencies reported positively on the impact of capacity building work though detailed metrics are not available. The project has played an important role in working with GS-NSPC and other agencies to strengthen national social protection policy. The project has also had an Important impact on the ground, e.g. informal workers now included in social security ('missing middle'), and people receiving support through the Family Package (vulnerable).

## Sustainability

The project strategy scores high in terms of sustainability. The project outputs have reflected the needs of the RGC agencies and have been closely integrated into their policy and delivery systems. Unusually for a project of this size and duration, it is possible to identify concrete impacts (see above) in terms of numbers covered and in receipt of benefits which can be clearly linked to project activities. It seems very likely that the results achieved will be sustained beyond the project through the action of the RGC and other stakeholders

This arises from a range of factors:

- Building on existing work and partnerships – Both ILO and UNICEF have a long track record of working with the social protection agencies in Cambodia and have built up good working relationships.
- High quality inputs – In general respondents were very satisfied with the quality of inputs from the project both in terms of policy, administrative supports and capacity building
- Strong government commitment – Finally, and very importantly, there has been a very strong RGC commitment to the development of a more coherent social protection system and to working closely with DPs to draw on most relevant ('best fit') international practice.

The high level of government commitment enhances the extent to which RGC agencies can sustain activities independently. Agencies draw on development partners for technical assistance but are not dependent on them as in some countries. The project (and other DP work) has sought to enhance sustainability by focussing on capacity building and institutional strengthening and this is a strategy which should be continued in future work.

## Visibility

The project has contributed to the visibility of the EU at a national level and national stakeholders generally mentioned EU support without being asked about it. This builds on the support which the EU has already provided, e.g. Budget Support and SP & PFM project. There was less awareness of EU involvement at local levels as would be expected.

## Cross-Cutting Issues

The project was relevant to gender issues, and several specific activities promoted gender equality. This varied to some extent from one area to another. However, the project did support the social protection system in becoming more gender-responsive, e.g. social security for informal workers (c. 60% of those covered by the voluntary health insurance scheme are women) and the Family Package. The project also enhanced protection for vulnerable groups including people with disability (MoSVY) and low-income workers. In some areas, such as disability identification under outcome 2, disability inclusion was clearly integrated into project interventions though this varied from output to output.

The project did promote social dialogue to a certain extent and involved employers' organization and trade unions. However, it could not be said that these were central to the design or implementation of the project. The project was also relevant to ILO

standards such as C-102 (social security) and formalization and, to this extent, the project did promote ILO Labour standards to a certain extent though it is again not clear that these standards formed a core part of the project's work. The project made significant contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1.3.1, which focuses on the proportion of the population covered by social protection systems.

## Lessons Learned and Good Practices

### Lessons Learned

The key lesson learned from this project is that UN agencies (in conjunction with other DPs) can jointly play an important role in supporting the development of a more inclusive and gender and disability responsive social protection system. In this case, both ILO and UNICEF were partners in the project but UNDP was also involved through a contribution agreement in order to draw on its expertise on formalisation of the labour force. In this case, with limited resources compared to those available to some other DPs, UN agencies have played an important role both in supporting the development of the social protection and also in ensuring that issues of gender and disability are addressed in this development. This approach built on previous experience in Cambodia in the UNJP on social protection (involving ILO, UNICEF and WHO) and the EU-funded Social Protection and PFM project co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF. This joint approach is highlighted as an emerging good practice (below).

### Emerging good practices

A key emerging good practice is bringing UN agencies (ILO, UNDP and UNICEF) together to work on social protection development in a coherent manner. This approach can help to maximise the impact that the UN overall can have on social protection. In the case of this project, there are examples of tangible results — such as expanded coverage in both social security *and* social assistance — which are directly linked to the joint collaboration approach.

As highlighted in the MTE, the implementation of the project was largely separate with ILO and UNICEF working in their own areas of expertise with different agencies (e.g. ILO with NSSF and UNICEF with NSAF) although — as highlighted in the reconstructed ToR (Appendix 8) — both did work with overarching agencies such as the GS-NSPC. However, this reflects the structure of the Cambodia social protection system, the design of the project and perhaps to some extent UN-limitations on agencies working together (different budget systems etc.).

In order to develop this joint approach further, it is recommended that it should be continued in Cambodia and other countries in the region and that the joint approach should be developed further in the future by building in more joint outputs as part of project design.

### Recommendations

1. Activities supported in the ASPC project need to be followed up by the UN agencies, e.g. registration of informal workers is obviously only a first step and considerable further work needs to be done to assess how this initiative

develops and whether it needs to move towards a more mandatory approach. Similarly, NSAF will obviously require further capacity building support at national and provincial level.

2. Future projects should ensure adequate staffing for the core project team to support essential backstopping work, communications etc.
3. As suggested in the Evaluability Assessment, future projects should include more tools for measuring capacity improvements, e.g. pre training capacity needs and post-training evaluation and or follow up with participants. Projects should also include indicators for how the project has strengthened administrative efficiency and to measure service quality/delivery
4. ILO should consider a similar joint approach in future projects in Cambodia and in other countries in the region building on the experience of the UNJP (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam) and the EU-Funded Social Protection of PFM programme (Cambodia).
5. Insofar as possible, such joint project should include more joint activities and joint outcomes as part of the project design. The detail of this would obviously depend on the particular issue but this would include ILO and the other UN agency (e.g. UNICEF) in jointly addressing and issue and carrying out joint activities in which both participated. One area to start with might include research on topics of shared interest.

Recommendation	Responsible	Priority	Timeframe	Resource implications
<b>1. Follow up project activities</b>	ILO, UNICEF	High	Immediate	Within planned resources
<b>2. Future projects should ensure adequate staffing for core project team</b>	ILO	High	Medium-long term	Can be achieved either through additional resources or through allocation of fixed resources
<b>3. Measuring capacity improvements &amp; service quality</b>	ILO, UNICEF	Medium	Medium-long term	Within planned resources
<b>4. Joint UN projects</b>	ILO, other UN agencies, UNRC	High	Medium-long term	Within planned resources
<b>5. Joint outcomes and activities</b>	ILO, other UN agencies, UNRC	High	Medium-long term	Within planned resources

## 1. Project background

### Introduction

This is the final report of the independent final evaluation of EU-funded Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia Project (KHM/21/01/EUR). The project aims to extend social protection coverage and quality of provisions (adequacy and quality of services) by improving operational capabilities of social protection institutions.

This evaluation, commissioned by the ILO, was conducted by an independent evaluation team consisting of Mel Cousins, team leader, and Chey Tech, team member, as outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR). The evaluation process was overseen by Mohammad Mohebur Rahman, who served as the evaluation manager.

### ASPC Project

#### Background

In 2017, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) adopted a National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016 – 2025 (NSPPF), building on two main pillars: social security<sup>2</sup> and social assistance. To coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NSPPF, a National Social Protection Council (NSPC) - chaired by the Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance (MEF) - and a General Secretariat (GS) based at the MEF were established. The goal of the NSPPF is to develop a strategic plan for the RGC “to ensure income security for all citizens, promote their welfare, strengthen social solidarity and maximize poverty alleviation impacts”.

Cambodia has had a fragmented and under-resourced social protection (SP) system, leading to an overall low coverage, both in terms of level of benefits and population coverage. Fragmentation, relatively low coverage and scope of the social assistance programmes led to a need for integration of existing programmes into a more effective system of service delivery and cash transfer administration. The COVID period saw a significant expansion in social assistance by the RGC and studies indicate that the COVID cash transfers helped the beneficiaries to cope with adverse income shocks and reduced poverty.<sup>3</sup>

In order to support advancement of social protection in Cambodia, there was an urgent need to build capacities within Cambodia’s social protection institutions to handle the extension of social protection and increase the level of protection provided. Capacity building and technical support needed to be made in the key institutions in order for these agencies to be able to manage the increased expectation of providing better protection and the significant increase in persons covered by social protection.

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<sup>2</sup> In this report we use the terms social security and social insurance to mean the same thing.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank, *An assessment of Cambodia’s Cash Transfer program for the Poor and Vulnerable Households during COVID-19*, 2023.

These needs led to the establishment of this project which built on the previous work of the UN Joint Programme (UNJP) on social protection and the EU-funded Social Protection and PFM project co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF.

The EU funded Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia (ASPC) project began implementation in February 2021 and ran until December 2024 with an approved budget of €5,598,535 over the four years. It is co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF, working in close collaboration with government stakeholders responsible for social protection, in particular the General Secretariat for the National Social Protection Council (GS-NSPC); the National Social Security Fund (NSSF); the National Social Assistance Fund (NSAF) and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) in Cambodia.

### Aims and objectives

It aims to support RGC in expanding social protection coverage and quality of provisions (adequacy and quality of services) by improving operational capabilities of social protection institutions and the adaptability of existing schemes to the characteristics and needs of those working in the informal sector, with a particular focus on the expansion of social protection to the ‘missing middle’ of informal sector workers and the vulnerable. The project goal is “at the end of the project, more women and men in Cambodia have access to more effective, efficient, accountable and sustainable gender-responsive social protection.” These were to be achieved through three pillars of work, namely: (1) extending social security coverage to workers not covered and to improve the quality and depth of service for those that are covered; (2) improving the delivery and coordination of social security and social assistance through the modernisation of the NSSF, and supporting the building of the delivery system for social assistance thorough the single operator, and; (3) enhancing capabilities in the provision of social assistance programmes to increase inclusion of extremely poor and at risk populations into social assistance while strengthening their livelihoods and participation in the labour market.

The project has three main intended outcomes.

Outcome 1 – A higher percentage of workers are covered by social security schemes<sup>4</sup>

Outcome 2 - Increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes promoting improved livelihoods and well-being

Outcome 3 – Social security organisations are strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sector

The project’s Theory of change, reconstructed during the Mid-term evaluation (MTE), is set out at Appendix 8.

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<sup>4</sup> This is the terminology used in the PRODOC. In Progress Reports and elsewhere, ILO have used slightly different terminology: ‘Increased inclusion/coverage of workers that are covered by social security schemes’. It does not appear that anything turns on the difference in language.

The project is aligned with the goal of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC)'s National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) 2016-2025. It is in line with the Cambodia UNDAF 2019-23 Outcome 1: By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular marginalized and vulnerable populations have their basic (economic and social) needs addressed equitably as they benefit from and utilize expanded quality social services and social protection in a more resilient, fairer and sustainable society; and Accelerator 1: Strengthening capacity for implementation of the National Social Protection Policy Framework towards Poverty Eradication in Cambodia.

It aims to contribute to SDG targets, in particular, SDG 1.3: Implementing nationally appropriate social protection system and measures for all; SDG 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. It addresses the Recommendation on Social Protection Floor, 2012 (No. 202), the Minimum Standards Convention, 1952 (No. 102) and the Recommendation on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 (No. 204).

In relation to ILO country programmatic framework, it is linked with CPO KHM226 Increased quality and coverage of social protection, particularly among vulnerable groups, and contributes to ILO Programme & Budget 2024-2025 Output 7.1. Increased capacity of Member States to develop social protection strategies, policies and legal frameworks that are inclusive, gender-responsive and sustainable.

In relation to UNICEF Country Programme Document, the project is linked to the Policy and Public Finance for Children Programme framework 2019-2023 Outcome: By 2023, children and adolescents in Cambodia, including the most deprived benefit from effective social services and child-sensitive social protection system.

#### Institutional Framework

The implementation of the Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia project is led by the government, under the coordination of the Executive Committee of the NSPC. A Steering Committee (SC) was established, consisting of representatives of the implementing agencies, NSPC, a representative of a Member State (Germany) and a representative of the European Union. The role of the Steering Committee is to (i) endorse annual work plans and budgets and review indicative calendar of activities; (ii) review progress reports provided by the implementing agencies based on the results framework; and (iii) provide strategic guidance and direction on the implementation of the project.

The GS-NSPC provided general oversight and guidance for the implementation of all components of the project and supported the coordination between the project and other ministries and agencies in the RGC. National Social Security Fund (NSSF) is the main partners for the implementation of the Outcome 1 of the Project. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) and NSAF are the main partners for the implementation of the Outcome 2 of the Project.

For ILO: High-level advocacy and overall oversight of the project is ensured by the Director of the Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia and Laos with support from ILO National Coordinator in Cambodia. The ILO project team includes: (1) Program Manager who coordinated the overall implementation of the project, with close collaboration with UNICEF to ensure the consistency between the interventions, and



is responsible for coordination with focal point for the GS-NSPC and EUD for matters related with the program coordination, and ensures routine management and makes management decisions in collaboration with ILO Senior SP Specialist, CO Director and Country Coordinator; (2) ILO Senior Social Protection Specialist who is responsible for the provision of technical backstopping and overall guidance on project implementation; (3) junior Social Protection Officer who supported the Program Manager on the implementation of the technical social protection activities; (4) National Program Officer who supported the Program Manager with the coordination work required for the implementation of the project activities, and; (5) Finance and Administrative Assistant who supported the budget implementation and program management support

For UNICEF: High-level advocacy and overall oversight of the project is ensured by UNICEF Representative with support of the Communications section whereas the overall project coordination and management by the UNICEF Deputy Representative. The UNICEF project team includes: (1) Chief Policy and Public Finance for Children who ensures technical oversight and routine management and who makes management decisions in collaboration with Deputy Representatives. Responsible for coordination with the coordination bodies established to support the project; (2) Social Policy Specialist (Social Protection) who manages activities linked to social protection and collaboration with MoSVY and GS NSPC; (3&4) two Social Policy Specialists (Public Finance); (5) Community Development Officer who ensure the delivery of components of the programme linked to delivery of services including capacity building, dissemination at sub-national level and testing of the referral mechanism, and ensured monitoring and follow up on project activities linked to sub-national administrations, and; (6) Programme Associate who provides management support.

#### Key stakeholders and target groups

The key national stakeholders for this project include the EU Delegation, the GS-NSPC within the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the National Social Assistance Fund, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) and national tripartite partners including the Cambodian Federation of Employers (CAMFEBA), industry groups such as the Garment Manufacturing Association of Cambodia (GMAC), the trade unions and other professional organizations, particularly those representing workers in the informal sector.

The key target groups for this project are the vulnerable population in Cambodia which includes all Cambodians who are not socially protected by any social protection schemes. Through this project, workers in the informal economy, who are often earning an income just above the poverty line and are not protected through social security, were to be brought into the social security schemes. In social assistance, the focus was on expanding the coverage of the poor and vulnerable to poverty, within the context of large portion of Cambodian population living in near poverty.



### Key collaborators

In addition to ILO and UNICEF, the project agreed a Collaboration Agreement with UNDP to produce evidence on the benefit of formalization, carry out technical assistance to support the RGC to design and implement schemes to increase formalization and to support workers in the informal economy to be registered and enrolled into social security schemes. The project also agreed an Implementation Agreement with the NGO Gret to support the development and roll-out of a voluntary health insurance scheme for self-employed workers and dependents.

## 2. Evaluation Background & Methodology

### Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

#### Approach

The final evaluation was carried out in line with standard UNEG guidelines including the UNEG guide on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations and in line with the evaluation protocols of the EU, ILO and UNICEF. It was conducted in compliance with the principles, norms, and standards for project evaluations as outlined in the *ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed. (Nov 2020)*. The overall objective of this Final evaluation is to assess the relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, of the project as well as the contribution to gender equality and disability inclusion and the visibility of the EU.

#### Objectives

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to: (1) assess the achievement against the project objectives and intermediate and immediate outcomes and identify existing needs and gaps; (2) examine the project contribution towards generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection system, and draw lessons learned and identify good practices from the project's intervention; (3) propose recommendations to inform design of future similar project to increase its relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the action.

The evaluation covered all activities of the project from its inception in February 2021 to its conclusion in December 2024. It included a detailed analysis of the project's alignment with Cambodia's social protection needs. The evaluation addresses cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, disability inclusion, and non-discrimination. By achieving these objectives, the evaluation aims to provide critical insights and recommendations that will support the ongoing development of robust and inclusive social protection systems in Cambodia.

The conceptual framework of the final evaluation is consistent with ILO's Results- Based Management (RBM) system and applies the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria to establish the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the Programme. The ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation and their technical and ethical standards and the Code of Conduct for Evaluation of the UN System are established within these criteria.

#### Clients

The primary clients of this evaluation are:

<b>UN Partners: ILO, UNICEF</b>
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<b>Government Counterparts:</b> GS-NSPC, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), the National Social Assistance Fund (NSAF), the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)
<b>Social Partners:</b> Cambodian Federation of Employers (CAMFEBA), Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Unions, Cambodian Labour Confederation.
<b>European Union Delegation</b>

## Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation assessed the project based on the OECD/DAC criteria (relevance, validity, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability) and cross-cutting concerns. In this evaluation, we also consider the issue of visibility, i.e. the extent to which has the project contributed to the image/visibility of the EU in the country.

The proposed evaluation questions to be addressed in this evaluation (as revised in the Inception phase) are:

Criteria	Evaluation Questions
<b>RELEVANCE AND VALIDITY OF DESIGN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project met the national partners/institutions' needs, policies, and priorities, considering the changes in circumstances (new government, post COVID economic recovery, etc)?</li> <li>• Are the revised project strategies (as per the MTE recommendations) sound to achieve the project objective? What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving its objectives?</li> <li>• Is the reconstructed theory of change valid?</li> </ul>
<b>COHERENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent have the collaboration been improved (from the midterm) between the implementers (ILO and UNICEF) and between the project and other stakeholders and development partners involved in the Social Protection sphere? To what extent and how have these improved synergies contributed to improve synergies between SS and SA?</li> </ul>
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project achieved the immediate outcomes and intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome 1 – An Increased inclusion/coverage of workers that are covered by social security schemes (Strategic Pillar 1) extending social security coverage to workers not covered and to improve the quality and depth of service for those that are covered;</li> <li>• Outcome 2 - Increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes promoting improved livelihoods and well-being (Strategic Pillar 3) enhancing capabilities in the provision of social assistance programmes to increase inclusion of extremely poor and at-risk populations into social assistance while strengthening their livelihoods and participation in the labour market.</li> <li>• Outcome 3 – Social security organizations are strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sector/ (Strategic Pillar 2) improving the delivery and coordination of social security and social assistance through the modernisation of the NSSF, and supporting the building of the delivery system for social assistance thorough the single operator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project achieved the planned objectives, i.e. increased coverage and inclusion of (1) social security schemes and improved the adequacy and quality of service (2) poor and vulnerable men and women in social assistance and complementary programmes?</li> <li>• What are the main constraints, problems and areas that need further attention at the final term? What should be done or done more by the project to promote advancement of social protection and to expand Social Security and Social Assistance to the poor and the vulnerable in Cambodia?</li> <li>• To what extent had the MTE recommendations been implemented?</li> </ul>
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How efficiently have the joint project been managed in terms of its human / financial resources and organizational / governance structure?</li> <li>• Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve immediate objectives?</li> </ul>
<b>IMPACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project produced a catalytic effect in terms of generating system change or long termed, lasting change across the Cambodia's social protection systems, especially in relation to extending Social Security and Social Assistance to the targeted groups?</li> <li>• What needs to be done to better measure the impact?</li> </ul>
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the strategy adopted by the project contributed to sustainability of the social protection system?</li> <li>• How likely will the results be sustained beyond the project through the action of Government and other stakeholders?</li> <li>• How could synergies be further maximized and coherence enhanced?</li> <li>• What needs to be done to increase the impact of the programme?</li> </ul>
<b>VISIBILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent and how well has the project contributed to the image/visibility of the EU in the country by the end of the project?</li> </ul>
<b>CROSS CUTTING ISSUES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project on track to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as to improved access to social protection among those who belong to vulnerable groups (e.g. informal and vulnerable workers, including young women working in the garment sector, and people with disabilities)?</li> <li>• To what extent have the SS and SA become more gender responsive, as a result of the project's support and interventions? To what extent had the gender issues outlined by the midterm evaluation, been addressed and tackled?</li> <li>• To what extent has the project enhanced social protection for diverse vulnerable workers and groups including people with disabilities and integrated disability inclusion into its interventions?</li> <li>• To what extent did the project enhance social dialogue and tripartism and promote ILO Labour standards?</li> </ul>

## Methodology

The evaluation adopts the ILO's Evaluation Guidelines as the basic evaluation framework. It was carried out in accordance with ILO standard policies and procedures, and complies with evaluation norms and follows ethical safeguards.

The evaluation applied a mixed-method approach, including: desk review of project documents and its products; analysis of results against the logical framework; analysis and testing of the reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC); in-depth and semi-structured interviews, focus groups and discussion groups; participant observation during site visits, and stakeholders' validation workshop. This allowed for triangulation of information to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings and analysis, and the ability to capture the achievement of expected and unexpected outcomes.

Methods included:

- Desk review of project documents, reports, studies and data sources (Appendix 6)
- Examination of the project's Logical Framework (LogFrame) and reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC) (Appendix 8)
- Key informant interviews (both online and in-person) with tripartite constituents, ILO and UNICEF project team, technical specialists, EU, national and local government representatives, and other stakeholders (see Appendix 4). Informants are selected based on their relevance to project activities, expertise in social protection and policy development, balanced representation of different groups, availability, diversity, and their specific roles in the project.
- Site visits and focus group discussions with beneficiaries in two provinces (Appendix 8)
- Stakeholder workshops/meetings/consultation for critical reflection and validation of findings

The evaluation mainstreamed gender equality and human rights as a cross-cutting concern and followed the ILO's Guidance Note 3.1 on integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation.

The evaluation followed the [UNEG Guide on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluation](#) to make sure the evaluation applies a human rights-based approach and gender equality mainstreaming principles to the evaluation process. The Evaluation Manager and EVAL HQ ensured the quality of the evaluation report meet quality standard. The evaluation report is considered final only upon the approval of ILO Evaluation Office.

The evaluation process was carried out in several phases, including an inception phase, a data collection phase, and an analysis and reporting phase.

### Evaluation limitations and biases

This is a standard end-of-project independent evaluation. As such, the evaluation team was not previously involved in the project and had no control over the availability of data. Given these constraints, the evaluation relies on interviews and existing available data (data collected by the project or available from the key stakeholders).

In terms of the impact assessment, it is difficult, in many cases, to measure the impact which social protection work (and indeed much development work) has at a macro level. While it is easy to measure the *outputs* of work (in terms of reports, training, actuarial studies, etc.) it is much more difficult to measure long-term *outcomes* such as improvements in living standards. However, in the case of this project, data is available as to changes in the numbers of people in receipt of cash assistance and in numbers registered for health insurance which can, at least in part, be directly attributed to the project's work.

In general, it is also difficult to measure efficiency in a concrete manner. The main available data is the overall budget and we do not have comprehensive data as to human resource inputs. However, this is a general constraint and an assessment has been made on the basis of the available data.

### 3. Project implementation

This section provides an overview of the implementation of the project at country focusing on key actions. In this chapter we set out some of the key activities implemented by the project and results achieved. Obviously, this is not intended to be a comprehensive account of all activities which will be found in the project's final report. An assessment of the project activities under the evaluation criteria is contained in Chapter 4.

#### Outcome 1

Outcome	Target
<b>A higher percentage of workers are covered by social security schemes</b>	The PRODOC set a target for outcome 1 of 2.6 million workers covered by social security schemes (with a base line of 1.6 million). The most recent data for social security coverage (NSSF) indicate that as of mid-December 2024, 2,680,00 persons were covered by social security of whom 2,530,000 were workers (of whom 55.2% are women). Given that the data do not include workers covered by way of Health Equity Funds (HEF) which were included in the baseline data, this would indicate that the target for this outcome has been achieved.
Output	Key actions
Output 1.1. – Evidence demonstrating the potential macro and enterprise impact of social security on the Cambodian economy and poverty	ILO-UNDP joint report <i>Understanding the Paths to Formalization in Cambodia</i> which has helped to inform the development of policy on formalisation of the Cambodian labour force in the National Strategy for the Development of the Informal Economy 2023-2028  ILO also supported the GS-NSPC in developing an operational plan on the social security formalization in line with the National Social Protection Policy Frameworks and NSDIE 2023-2028. The plan has been approved and will be officially launched in Q1 2025
Output 1.2 – Social security schemes are adapted to the needs and contributory capacity of self-employed and workers in micro and small enterprises	Technical assistance (together with Gret) to the design and implementation of voluntary insurance of self-employed in the NSSF Health Insurance scheme launched in August 2023. This included policy design and actuarial assessment of likely costs in

	<p>addition to support with implementation (training, capacity building, public communications, etc.)</p> <p>For output 1.2 there was a target of 500,000 self-employed workers insured and this has almost been achieved by mid-December and will probably be surpassed in the coming months as the numbers of self-employed persons registered continues to rise.</p>
Output 1.3 – Existing social security schemes such as the NSSF health insurance scheme and Health Equity Fund have extended coverage to dependents and are guaranteeing higher level of protection in relation to contributory capacity	Development of policy notes for the extension of health insurance to dependents, the definition of the dependents and the actuarial costing of the extension. This led to the launch of voluntary coverage for such dependents in August 2023
Output 1.4 – Communication measures to inform the general public on the new schemes are developed and implemented	Development of a NSSF Communications Strategy (2022) and subsequent support to NSSF in publicising the voluntary scheme for the self-employed
Output 1.5 – Innovative registration schemes involving other relevant government partners and national partners such as CAMFEBA and trade unions is piloted	Support (with Gret) to a pilot project with NSSF to register informal workers from transport sector into the social security fund through the worker unions
Output 1.6 – Policy options are developed to help female garment sector workers stay in employment	A study on the care provision needs of female garment sector workers was conducted and disseminated in 2023

## Outcome 2

Outcome	Target
<b>Increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes promoting improved livelihoods and well-being</b>	For outcome 2, the PRODOC set a target of 1,161,070 of households included in the cash transfer programmes. The numbers on cash transfer programmes (as set out in Table 2 below) amount to 1,533,422 households which is 32% higher than the original target.
<b>Output</b>	<b>Key actions</b>



Output 2.1 - Regulatory and institutional capacity to deliver the Family Package of Social Assistance are strengthened <sup>5</sup>	<p>Technical support - including development of the NSAF Strategic Plan 2024-2028 and capacity development- to the newly established National Social Assistance Fund (NSAF established in 2023). Supports also included developing the Operational Manual for the Family Package and TVET Cash Transfer Programme and communication material production and dissemination for the roll-out of these programmes. The project also provided capacity building and administrative support for the national and subnational stakeholders, including provincial, communes/sangkat and health centres officials.</p> <p>Project also supported MoSVY and local administrations in disability identification building on previous UNICEF work</p>
Output 2.2 – Core and complementary social protection policy options and programmes are developed to support socio-economic inclusion of the poor and vulnerable	Support to the integration of the Cash Transfer Programme for Pregnant Women and Young Children under 2 (CTP-PWYC) into the Family Package; technical support to develop a Social and Behaviour Change Communication guideline to promote health and nutrition through a participatory action approach with relevant stakeholders and NGOs; development of a high-level framework for Cash Plus and Shock Responsive Family Package
Output 2.3 – Vulnerability identification, targeting and M&E of the CT programmes are strengthened to promote inclusion of the hard to reach and vulnerable in the CT programmes	ICT platform for the Family Package was designed, tested, and supplemented with an operational manual; IT support for new TVET programme for youths from IDPoor households and at-risk households; ongoing support for M&E systems
Output 2.4 - Referral mechanism for the cash transfer programmes and selected complementary services is designed and tested	A framework for the Cash Plus programme was drafted in 2023. The programme design of the Family Package, in conjunction with complementary programmes (Cash Plus), began at the end of 2024, with completion expected in 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Implemented in April 2024 by the RGC, the Family Package integrates existing and planned social assistance benefits – the Cash Transfer for Pregnant Women and Children under Two, Cash Transfer for Children from Poor Households in Primary and Secondary Schools, Cash Transfer for Persons with Disabilities and the planned Cash Transfer for Elderly People – and introduces a Cash Transfer for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS. The programme also replaces the COVID-19 Cash Transfer Programme.

Output 2.5 - Options linking the cash transfer programmes with promotion of livelihood skills are designed and tested	A mapping assessment is one component of activity 2.4 within the Cash Plus design. This assessment identifies available services and mechanisms to link the Family Package with other complementary services and the promotion of livelihood skills.
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### Outcome 3

Outcome	Target
<b>Social security organisations are strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sector</b>	The target was 'Capacity of the social security institutions are higher based on independent organisation review of the institution'. While stakeholder interviews are positive about improvements in capacity, no such independent organisation review was carried out
Output	Key actions
Output 3.1 – A 5-year ICT strategic plan to support the new business capabilities and the needs of extending social protection and the consistent provision of high-quality services is developed by NSSF	Review of NSSF business processes leading to NSSF Modernization Readiness Assessment Final Report and review of NSSF ICT architecture;  Risk Management Framework for the Social Security Regulator was developed in 2023
Output 3.2 – New ICT applications supporting NSSF core processes and schemes developed from this project are built and operational.	This output was cancelled following the Project Steering Committee in 2022 as the needs from the national stakeholders were outside the logical frame of the project and the technical competencies of the ILO
Output 3.3 – Collaboration between NSSF and other relevant government and national partners to actively share data to extend social protection coverage and improve service delivery is enhanced	Technical assistance to NSSF to support the implementation of Cambodia Data Exchange Platform (CAMDX) which allowed the sharing of data between ministries and NSSF
Output 3.4 – Human capacity of social security institutions is enhanced through a comprehensive HR strategy, a performance management framework and a learning & development framework.	Technical support including trainings to NSAF, NSSF, MoLVT, MoSVY, GS-NSPC, SSR and Social Partners including attendance at several ILO ITC course in Turin. This output also included the development of actuarial and investment capabilities (including work to develop an investment policy) in social security (NSSF)  13 (1 woman) officials from MLVT, GS-NSPC, MISTI, MEF and NSSF participated in a study mission on Formalization to Singapore.

	The project also supported a study tour of 11 officials (4 women) to Malaysia to examine Business Formalization and Social Security registration procedures
Output 3.5 – Digital social protection is enabled through improved data sharing between institutions supporting the social protection programmes	The project supported NSSF to improve its reporting of data as a first step to improve data sharing

## 4. Main evaluation findings

### Relevance

- *To what extent has the project met the national partners/institutions' needs, policies, and priorities, considering the changes in circumstances (new government, post COVID economic recovery, etc)?*
- *Are the revised project strategies (as per the MTE recommendations) sound to achieve the project objective? What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving its objectives?*
- *Is the reconstructed theory of change valid?*

In general, the project's objectives, design and approach respond to the needs, policies and priorities of all key stakeholders including the UN agencies, EU (funder), and RGC agencies. The project design addressed the basic economic and social needs of marginalized groups though its focus on improving both social security and social assistance for the informal sector (missing middle) and vulnerable groups.

From a UN perspective, the project was in line with the Cambodia UNDAF 2019-23 Outcome 1: By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular marginalized and vulnerable populations have their basic (economic and social) needs addressed equitably as they benefit from and utilize expanded quality social services and social protection in a more resilient, fairer and sustainable society; and Accelerator 1: Strengthening capacity for implementation of the National Social Protection Policy Framework towards Poverty Eradication in Cambodia.

In the case of the ILO, the project contributed to P&B Outcome 8 on "Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all", including to informal and vulnerable workers as part of comprehensive social security systems and the Cambodia Decent Work Country Program (2019-2023) priority 2, contributing to CPO KHM226 Increased quality and coverage of social protection, particularly among vulnerable groups. The Project was also linked to the Recommendation on Social Protection Floor, 2012 (No.202), the Minimum Standards Convention, 1952 (No.102) and the Recommendation on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 (No.204). In the case of UNICEF, the project was in line with UNICEF's Cambodia Country Programme 2019-2023 which prioritised social protection and public financing for children under output 1 of the Outcome five on policy and public finance for children.

The project aligned with the RGC needs, policies, and priorities as reflected originally in the Rectangular Strategy Phase IV which outlined national development priorities for 2019–2023 and the current Pentagonal Strategy (2023) and the National Social Protection Policy Framework. It is also aligned with the focus of social protection agencies such as GS-NSPC, NSSF and NSAF.

In the case of the funder, the EU, the project was seen as a response to COVID and built on the work of the Social Protection and PFM project (also funded by the EU) which continued until September 2023 and on the support provided by the EU to the Cambodian social protection system through EU Budget Support.

In general, the project design was appropriate and activities remained relevant throughout the implementation period. In particular, the project remained relevant to the RGC needs considering the changes in circumstances including the new 2023 government and post-COVID economic recovery. This reflected considerable stability in the RGC commitment to building social protection systems.

In terms of the tripartite constituents, the project has included activities involving employers and trade unions but some respondents felt that they could have been more actively involved.

The project theory of change (as reconstructed during the MTE) appears to remain valid and no further revisions to the ToC were considered necessary as part of the final evaluation. In relation to the Evaluation Question (EQ) as to whether the revised project strategies (as per the MTE recommendations) were sound to achieve the project objective, there do not appear to have been any significant changes in project strategies post-MTE but, given our overall positive conclusions as to the effectiveness and impact of the project (see below) it does not appear that there was a need to put in place alternative strategies.

## Coherence

- *To what extent have the collaboration been improved (from the midterm) between the implementers (ILO and UNICEF) and between the project and other stakeholders and development partners involved in the Social Protection sphere? To what extent and how have these improved synergies contributed to improve synergies between SS and SA?*

The project brought together key UN agencies (ILO, UNICEF and UNDP) and other DPs (in particular Gret) and built on work which had been carried out such as the UNJP on social protection and the EU funded Social Protection and PFM project. The project also worked closely with Government agencies at national and local level both to implement ongoing reforms in social protection (e.g. supporting the establishment of the NSAF)<sup>6</sup> and to support the development of a more coherent approach to social protection policy.

The project supported UN coherence at a policy level, e.g. a joint response to NSPPF 2.0 and allowed individual agencies to focus on work in the areas of expertise. This reflected the structure of social protection in Cambodia and the design of the project (PRODOC) which largely envisaged that ILO and UNICEF would engage with their long-standing partners (NSSF and MoSVY (now NSAF) respectively).

While the MTE took the view that it would be desirable to improve collaboration between the project partners, we do not see that it would have been possible to make significant changes in how the project was implemented at this stage given the project design and the existing structure of the Cambodian social protection system which is currently divided into social security and social assistance with different agencies responsible for both. As noted, both ILO and UNICEF did work with GS-NSPC

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<sup>6</sup> The NSAF was established in 2023 and was largely in place by September 2024. About 70% of the staff are new and not previously involved in social protection issues which gives an indication of the level of capacity building required.

which plays a co-ordination role in relation to the development and implementation of social protection in Cambodia. We note that there were few (if any) issues raised by stakeholders in relation to the level of collaboration between the project and other stakeholders and development partners involved in the social protection sphere.

By supporting the different agencies including GS-NSPC and by providing a coherent policy approach to social protection reform (e.g. the response to NSPFF 2.0), the project supported improved synergies between social security and social assistance policies and agencies.

### Project effectiveness

- *To what extent has the project achieved the immediate outcomes and intermediate outcomes*
  - *Outcome 1 – An Increased inclusion/coverage of workers that are covered by social security schemes (Strategic Pillar 1) extending social security coverage to workers not covered and to improve the quality and depth of service for those that are covered;*
  - *Outcome 2 - Increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes promoting improved livelihoods and well-being (Strategic Pillar 3) enhancing capabilities in the provision of social assistance programmes to increase inclusion of extremely poor and at-risk populations into social assistance while strengthening their livelihoods and participation in the labour market.*
  - *Outcome 3 – Social security organizations are strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sector/ (Strategic Pillar 2) improving the delivery and coordination of social security and social assistance through the modernisation of the NSSF, and supporting the building of the delivery system for social assistance thorough the single operator.*
- *To what extent has the project achieved the planned objectives, i.e. increased coverage and inclusion of (1) social security schemes and improved the adequacy and quality of service (2) poor and vulnerable men and women in social assistance and complementary programmes?*
- *What are the main constraints, problems and areas that need further attention at the final term? What should be done or done more by the project to promote advancement of social protection and to expand Social Security and Social Assistance to the poor and the vulnerable in Cambodia?*
- *To what extent had the MTE recommendations been implemented?*

In general, the project has been able to implement most of the outputs and activities and, in several areas, more than originally planned.<sup>7</sup> As discussed in chapter 3, the project has, for example, supported the increased coverage of workers covered by social protection schemes through the development and implementation of the voluntary health insurance scheme for self-employed workers (a majority of those

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<sup>7</sup> The extent to which outcomes have been achieved is discussed below under impact.

now covered are women see below Table 1). The project also supported increased inclusion and coverage in social assistance and social services, e.g. development and implementation of the Family Package.

In terms of the three outcomes:

Outcome 1 – The project has achieved Increased inclusion/coverage of workers that are covered by social security schemes (missing middle) and has met the PRODOC target (details below in Table 1)

Outcome 2 – The project has also increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes and again has met the PRODOC target (Table 2 below).

Outcome 3 – Social security organizations have been strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service but detailed metrics are lacking to measure improvements in capacity or service quality.

There was a strong focus on capacity building both to social security and social assistance agencies at national (and in the case of social assistance) local level. and very significant numbers of trainings provided to NSSF, NSAF and other agencies. Both agencies have provided IT, business process and capacity building supports to a wide range of agencies including GS-NSPC/Social Security Regulator, NSSF, NSAF, ID-Poor, MoLVT, MoSVY, civil society (through the SP4ALL network) and social partners. UNICEF have also provided supports at a local level to communes/sangkat and health centres officials.

There are one or two areas where implementation has been less than originally planned. Output 3.2 (New ICT supporting core social security processes and schemes are developed and operational) was dropped by agreement with NSSF as the needs of the national stakeholders were outside the logical frame of the project and the technical competencies of the ILO. Output 3.5 (Digital social protection is enabled through improved data sharing between institutions supporting the social protection programmes) is obviously a potentially very ambitious area. In practice, it appears to have been interpreted in a more limited manner as applying to improved publication of social protection data as a first step in data sharing. However, in comparison with the activities outlined in the PRODOC, this is one outcome where the project appears to have made limited progress.

Stakeholders generally reported that the assistance provided was of high quality given UN and DP expertise in the areas of work. However, there was some (albeit limited) feedback that the level of quality varied somewhat depending on the ability and local knowledge of external consultants employed by the project.

Factors which contributed to the project's effectiveness included:

- Expertise of key agencies (ILO, UNICEF, UNDP and Gret)
- Well-designed project reflecting the needs of stakeholders
- Building on existing work and on high levels of co-operation between UN/DPs, RGC and civil society (SP4ALL)

- Very strong commitment from RGC to developing social protection in Cambodia as part of a broader developmental approach

Constraints and challenges in implementing activities included:

- COVID-19 Impact – This led to disrupted face-to-face interactions, reducing engagement opportunities and delaying implementation in the early stages of the project.
- National Elections (2023) – This also led to some delays in project implementation
- Limited size of core project team (ILO) given the size of the project and the range of tasks involved (communications, quality control, liaison, etc.).

In Appendix 5, we set out an assessment of the extent to which the MTE recommendations been implemented based on information provided by the project. While there are nominally five MTE recommendations, in practice several recommendations contain separate numbered recommendations but the numbered recommendations frequently also include immediate, medium-term and more long-term recommendations. In general, most of the recommendations in the MTE which were mainly of a technical nature (relating to specific work activities) have been implemented in part. It is not clear to us that one more substantive recommendation (Recommendation 3. UNICEF and ILO should take action and opportunities to strengthen visibility of the linkages between social assistance and social security through more explicitly joint work by ILO and UNICEF) was implemented to any significant extent but it is also not clear that it would have been feasible to do so in the context and timeframe and having regard to the lack of joint activities in the original PRODOC.

In general, project management appears to have been effective. However, some respondents expressed the view that the core management team was too small and that this led to weaknesses in co-ordination between the UN agencies and to limited communication with the funder and generally limited public communication as to the achievements of the project.

### Efficiency of resource use

- *How efficiently have the joint project been managed in terms of its human / financial resources and organizational / governance structure?*
- *Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve immediate objectives?*

The total budget of the project was €5,598,535 (in addition to a PUNO contribution of €530,746). This was broken down (in the PRODOC) as €2,978,558 for ILO and €2,619,977 for UNICEF (excluding PUNO contribution). The original budget (as set out in the PRODOC) is as follows (in €):



Budget for the Action	Total	ILO	UNICEF
Costs	€	€	€
1. Human Resources	1,470,376	674,305	796,071
2. Supplies, commodities and materials	3,390	3,390	0
3. Equipment, vehicle and furniture	68,814	28,814	40,000
4. Contractual services	2,865,883	1,740,000	1,125,883
5. Travel -programme monitoring	49,780	16,780	33,000
6. Transfer of grants to counterparts	1,185,159	335,000	850,159
7. General operating and other direct costs	34,250	3,971	30,000
7.1 Communication	50,928	30,508	20,420
8. Subtotal direct eligible costs of the Action (1-7)	5,728,580	2,832,768	2,895,533
9. Indirect costs (maximum 7% of 7, subtotal of direct eligible costs of the Action)	400,702	198,294	202,687
10. Total costs: (8+9)	<b>6,129,282</b>	3,031,062	3,098,220
PUNO Contribution	530,746	52,503	478,243
<b>TOTAL less PUNO Contribution</b>	<b>5,598,535</b>	<b>2,978,558</b>	<b>2,619,977</b>

A budget breakdown has been provided separately by ILO and UNICEF (EU funding only and in US\$).

The ILO component is as follows:

Outcome	Totals (\$)			
	Budget	Actuals	Encumbrances	Balances
Outcome 1	1,164,125.05	1,070,248.31	10,387.75	83,488.99
Outcome 2 (UNICEF)	0	0	0	0
Outcome 3	848,380.61	652,899.22	17,421.20	178,060.19
Programme Management Cost	1,028,630.33	960,854.50	39,141.90	28,633.93
Programme Support Cost	212,879.51	187,880.19	0	24,999.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,254,015.50</b>	<b>2,871,882.22</b>	<b>66,950.85</b>	<b>315,182.43</b>

The ILO component indicates a significant underspend of over \$315,000 which is mainly due to an underspend of \$178,000 on outcome 3.

The UNICEF component is as follows:

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)									
Details of Expenditures (\$)									
		Incurred Expense				Cumulative			
Description		2021-2023	2024			Expenditure	Commitments*		
Staff and Other Personnel Costs		242,470.59	306,979.21			549,449.80	0.00		
Supplies and Commodities		0.00	41,031.24			41,031.24	0.00		
Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture		0.00	50.00			50.00	0.00		
Contractual Services		524,481.53	389,162.67			913,644.20	88,979.80		
Travel		14,523.35	24,873.59			39,396.94	0.00		
Transfers and Grants to Counterparts		481,197.69	555,906.07			1,037,103.76	0.00		
General Operating + Other Direct Costs		31,694.47	25,018.74			56,713.21	0.00		
<b>Total Programmable Cost</b>		<b>1,294,367.63</b>	<b>1,343,021.52</b>			<b>2,637,389.15</b>	<b>88,979.80</b>		
Indirect support cost 7%		90,605.73	94,011.51			184,617.24			
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,384,973.36</b>	<b>1,437,033.03</b>			<b>2,822,006.39</b>			
* "Commitments" include undelivered purchase orders, payment commitments for implementing partners and travel advances approved but not yet paid. The amounts shown in this column represent the status and value of the commitment as at the date the report is produced. As goods are received and commitments in respect of implementing partners and travel advances are paid these amounts will be added to "incurred expense".									

As can be seen, the details of expenditure have been provided in different formats and in a different currency to the original budget which makes it difficult for us to comment in any detail on the extent to which expenditure has (or has not) been in line with original plans.

As noted elsewhere, the activities of the project have very largely been delivered. There were some delays in different activities due to COVID, the 2023 general elections (and changes in counterpart staff) and, in some cases, due to difficulties in

recruiting consultants.<sup>8</sup> These delays were largely outside the control of the project and by the end of the project activities have been delivered. Insofar as can be assessed, resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve immediate objectives. As noted above, a larger that the core management team might have enhanced project financial management and the efficiency of its organizational / governance structure.

## Impact

- *To what extent has the project produced a catalytic effect in terms of generating system change or long termed, lasting change across the Cambodia's social protection systems, especially in relation to extending Social Security and Social Assistance to the targeted groups?*
- *What needs to be done to better measure the impact?*

The project has had a substantial impact in supporting system change both on policy, institutional capacity but also in terms of vulnerable groups. All agencies reported positively on the impact of capacity building work though detailed metrics are not available. The project has played an important role in working with the GS-NSPC and other agencies to strengthen national social protection policy. The project has also had an Important impact on the ground, e.g. informal workers now included in social security ('missing middle'), and people receiving support through the Family Package (poor and vulnerable).

As noted above (Tables 1 and 2), the project has largely achieved or exceeded the targets which it set in terms of increasing social security coverage and the numbers in receipt of social assistance cash payments. There are also clear causal relationships between the activities of this project (and preceding UN work on social protection) and the outcomes achieved, e.g. as noted the project worked closely with Gret and NSSF to support the design and implementation of the voluntary health insurance scheme for self-employed workers while the project also supported the design and implementation of cash supports, in particular the Family Package.

The PRODOC set a target for outcome 1 of 2.6 million workers covered by social security schemes (with a base line of 1.6 million). The most recent data for social security coverage (NSSF) are set out in Table 1 below. This indicates that as of mid-December 2024, 2,680,00 persons were covered by social security of whom 2,530,000 were workers (of whom 55.2% are women). Given that the data below do not include workers covered by way of Health Equity Funds (HEF) which were included in the baseline data,<sup>9</sup> this would indicate that the target for this outcome has been achieved.

For output 1.2 there was a target of 500,000 self-employed workers insured and, as set out below, this has almost been achieved by mid-December and will probably be

<sup>8</sup> For example, it was originally planned that the pilot voluntary registration for health insurance would be in place in 2022 but this was not commenced until late 2023.

<sup>9</sup> Some informal sector workers (agriculture, etc.) who are not yet covered by NSSF would be covered by HEF if they hold ID-Poor.

surpassed in the coming months as the numbers of self-employed persons registered continues to rise.

**Table 1: Current Status of NSSF Members as of December 17, 2024**

Social Security		Updated number of NSSF members		
		Members	Female	% women
Mandatory Contribution	Individuals in Public sector	504,296	150,590	29.9
	Individuals under the labour law	1,553,032	957,818	61.7
<b>Total (1)</b>		<b>2,057,328</b>	<b>1,108,408</b>	<b>53.9</b>
Voluntary healthcare	Self-employed	472,953	288,897	61.1
	Dependents	148,184	84,975	57.3
	<i>Spouses</i>	<i>39,308</i>	<i>31,926</i>	<i>81.2</i>
	<i>Children</i>	<i>108,876</i>	<i>53,049</i>	<i>48.7</i>
<b>Total (2)</b>		<b>621,137</b>	<b>373,872</b>	<b>60.2</b>
<b>Total (1) &amp; (2)</b>		<b>2,678,465<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>1,482,280</b>	<b>55.3</b>

Source: ILO

The PRODOC (outcome 1) also set a target of 5 million persons covered by social security schemes. It appears that this is intended to mean ‘covered by social insurance’ and, if so, this target has not been achieved. It would seem to have been a very ambitious target. We understand that the target of 5 million was intended to include dependents (in addition to workers). However, the enrolment of dependents had not proceeded as fast as originally expected, given how the scheme has been implemented.

For outcome 2, the PRODOC set a target of 1,161,070 of households included in the cash transfer programmes. The numbers on cash transfer programmes are set out in Table 2 below. This shows that (adding rows 2, 3, 4, and 5), the total amounts to 1,533,422 households which is 32% higher than the original target.

<sup>10</sup> By the end of Q1 2024, the total figure was 2,743,989.

Table 2: Social Assistance Cash Transfer Programmes in Cambodia

1	Cash Transfer for Pregnant Women and Children under 2	June 2019- March 2024	People	373,172
2	Cash Transfer for household living with livelihood challenge in lockdown target areas	Jun 2021-Oct 2021	Household	129,666
3	Cash transfer for IDPoor during Covid-19	June 2020- March 2024	Household	714,152
4	Cash Transfer for At-risk households affected by 2022 flooding	December 2022- March 2023	Household	127,706
5	Cash Transfer for At-risk households affected by global inflation	December 2022- April 2023	Household	561,898
6	Social Assistance Family Package Cash Transfer for IDPoor households and Vulnerable	From April 2024 - Ongoing	Household	672,892
	<i>Pregnant Women and Children under 2</i>		People	9,314
	<i>Elderly</i>		People	323,348
	<i>People with Disability</i>		People	30,135
	<i>People living with HIV/AIDS</i>		People	3,217
	<i>School Children (starting date for integration with the Family Package, January 2025)</i>		People	354,534
7	TVET Cash Transfer for Youth from IDPoor and At-Risk households	From Jan 2024 - Ongoing	People	30,261

Source: UNICEF

The FGDs with the beneficiaries of cash transfers in two provinces indicated that these cash transfers (and linkages to social services) had a positive effect on well-being including improved food and clothes and better access to health care and medication. While these FGDs are obviously not statistically representative, they are consistent with previous studies of the impact of cash transfers during COVID such as the NSPC and World Bank studies.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, the project has not only produced high-quality technical outputs, such as reviews, reports, and recommendations, but it has also been able to translate these into concrete policy reforms. In his way, the project – building on previous UN work – has supported a catalytic effect in generating system change and long-term, lasting change across the Cambodia's social protection systems, especially in relation to extending social security and social assistance to the targeted groups. In terms of strengthened institutional frameworks, the project has also contributed significantly to building the capacity of the newly established NSAF.

Social protection agencies (both at national, provincial and commune level) generally expressed positive feedback regarding the project, particularly valuing the additional support and knowledge they have gained, which they have applied in their work. The skills and insights acquired through the project are likely to serve as catalysts for future change.

<sup>11</sup> NSPC, Policy Brief Number 10 on the Tracking the Impacts of the Cash Transfer Program for the Poor and Vulnerable Household during COVID-19, 2024; World Bank, An assessment of Cambodia's Cash Transfer program for the Poor and Vulnerable Households during COVID-19, 2023

While it has been possible to measure the impact of the programme on beneficiaries through the data reported above (Tables 1 and 2), one area where it would have been useful to have more concrete data is in relation to the project's capacity building activities under Outcome 3.<sup>12</sup> In our interviews with key stakeholders, as noted, feedback was generally positive. However, it would be useful to have more concrete metrics which could help to design future capacity building activities (and to fine-tune them during project implementation). We agree with the recommendation in the Evaluability Assessment that future projects should include more tools for measuring capacity improvements, e.g. pre training capacity needs and post-training evaluation and or follow up with participants.<sup>13</sup> We also agree that future PRODOCs should include indicators as to how the project has strengthened administrative efficiency.

Similarly, although the PRODOC refers to quality of services, the targets relate primarily to coverage or are output-related and there are no specific targets as to service quality. One can assume that quality of services provided was enhanced by capacity building activities (e.g. Family Package digital platform) and that, for example, NSAF would not have been able to deliver services (or deliver them so quickly) without project supports. As noted above, the FGDs found that beneficiaries were positive about the cash supports provided. However, it would have been beneficial to have specific data and targets on service delivery/quality.

### Sustainability

- *To what extent has the strategy adopted by the project contributed to sustainability of the social protection system?*
- *How likely will the results be sustained beyond the project through the action of Government and other stakeholders?*
- *How could synergies be further maximized and coherence enhanced?*
- *What needs to be done to increase the impact of the programme?*

The project strategy scores high in terms of sustainability. The project outputs have reflected the needs of the RGC agencies and have been closely integrated into their policy and delivery systems. Unusually for a project of this size and duration, it is possible to identify concrete impacts (see above) in terms of numbers covered and in receipt of benefits which can be clearly linked to project activities. It seems very likely that the results achieved will be sustained beyond the project through the action of the RGC and other stakeholders

This arises from a range of factors:

- Building on existing work and partnerships – Both ILO and UNICEF have a long track record of working with the social protection agencies in Cambodia and

<sup>12</sup> The PRODOC sets a target for outcome 3 of 'Capacity of the social security institutions are higher based on independent organisation review of the institution'. However, no such reviews have been carried out.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, the approach carried out by Gret in its assessment of training provided to NSSF staff involved in extending social insurance to self-employed: Human-Centered Design (HCD) Training: Advanced for Self-Employed (A4S), 2024.

have built up good working relationships. As noted, both agencies have been involved in previous joint work on social protection through the UNJP and the Social Protection and PFM project.

- High quality inputs – In general respondents were very satisfied with the quality of inputs from the project both in terms of policy, administrative supports and capacity building
- Strong government commitment – Finally, and very importantly, there has been a very strong RGC commitment to the development of a more coherent social protection system (as set out in the NSPPF and now in the new Pentagonal Strategy (2023))<sup>14</sup> and to working closely with DPs to draw on most relevant ('best fit') international practice.

The high level of government commitment enhances the extent to which RGC agencies can sustain activities independently. Agencies draw on development partners for technical assistance but are not dependent on them as in some countries. The project (and other DP work) has sought to enhance sustainability by focussing on capacity building and institutional strengthening and this is a strategy which should be continued in future work.

In terms of maximising synergies, enhancing coherence and increasing the impact of the project, this will be enhanced by ongoing ILO and UNICEF work with the key social protection agencies. For example, the NSAF is still at an early stage of development and clearly will need ongoing support in developing its capacity across Cambodia. The extension of social security to the self-employed is also at an early stage and further work will be necessary to ensure that registration leads to continued membership of the scheme and sustainable financing. Follow on work which will support sustainability in some areas is already close to implementation, e.g. the Global Accelerator project which will commence in Cambodia in early 2025.

### Visibility

- *To what extent and how well has the project contributed to the image/visibility of the EU in the country by the end of the project?*

The project has contributed to the visibility of the EU at a national level and national stakeholders generally mentioned EU support without being asked about it. This builds on the support which the EU has already provided, e.g. Budget Support and SP & PFM project. There was less awareness of EU involvement at local levels as would be expected.

### Cross-cutting issues

- *Is the project on track to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as to improved access to social protection among those who belong to vulnerable groups (e.g. informal and vulnerable workers, including young women working in the garment sector, and people with disabilities)?*

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<sup>14</sup> The Pentagonal Strategy identifies strengthening the social protection system as a key priority within the first strategic pentagon: human capital development.

- *To what extent have the SS and SA become more gender responsive, as a result of the project's support and interventions? To what extent had the gender issues outlined by the midterm evaluation, been addressed and tackled?*
- *To what extent has the project enhanced social protection for diverse vulnerable workers and groups including people with disabilities and integrated disability inclusion into its interventions?*
- *To what extent did the project enhance social dialogue and tripartism and promote ILO Labour standards?*

The project was relevant to gender issues, and several specific activities promoted gender equality. This varied to some extent from one area to another.<sup>15</sup> However, the project did support the social protection system in becoming more gender-responsive, e.g. social security for informal workers (c. 60% of those covered by the voluntary health insurance scheme are women) and the Family Package.<sup>16</sup>

The project also enhanced protection for vulnerable groups including people with disability (MoSVY) and low-income workers. In some areas, such as disability identification under outcome 2, disability inclusion was clearly integrated into project interventions though this varied from output to output.

The project did promote social dialogue to a certain extent and involved employers' organization and trade unions. However, it could not be said that these were central to the design or implementation of the project. The project was also relevant to ILO standards such as C-102 (social security) and formalization and, to this extent, the project did promote ILO Labour standards to a certain extent though it is again not clear that these standards formed a core part of the project's work.

The project made significant contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1.3.1, which focuses on the proportion of the population covered by social protection systems.

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<sup>15</sup> In terms of the reports reviewed (Appendix 6), some reports make extensive reference to gender issues (e.g. Extending social protection for workers in Cambodia, 2023; Gret reports on the self-employed and social insurance) whereas others make very limited reference (e.g. NSSF Policy Paper on Extension of Health Coverage to Dependents even though gender issues would appear to be central to this policy).

<sup>16</sup> It is not clear to us that gender issues outlined by the midterm evaluation (e.g. data disaggregation) have been fully addressed.



## 5. Lessons learned & good practices

This section looks at the lessons learned and emerging good practices in line with ILO guidance (see also Appendices 1 and 2).<sup>17</sup>

### Lessons learned

The key lesson learned from this project is that UN agencies (in conjunction with other DPs) can jointly play an important role in supporting the development of a more inclusive and gender and disability responsive social protection system. In this case, both ILO and UNICEF were partners in the project but UNDP was also involved though a contribution agreement in order to draw on its expertise on formalisation of the labour force. In this case, with limited resources compared to those available to some other DPs, UN agencies have played an important role both in supporting the development of the social protection and also in ensuring that issues of gender and disability are addressed in this development. This approach built on previous experience in Cambodia in the UNJP on social protection (involving ILO, UNICEF and WHO) and the EU-funded Social Protection and PFM project co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF. This joint approach is highlighted as an emerging good practice (below).

### Emerging good practices

A key emerging good practice is bringing UN agencies (ILO, UNDP and UNICEF) together to work on social protection development in a coherent manner. This approach can help to maximise the impact that the UN overall can have on social protection. In the case of this project, there are examples of tangible results — such as expanded coverage in both social security *and* social assistance — which are directly linked to the joint collaboration approach.

As highlighted in the MTE, the implementation of the project was largely separate with ILO and UNICEF working in their own areas of expertise with different agencies (e.g. ILO with NSSF and UNICEF with NSAF) although — as highlighted in the reconstructed ToR (Appendix 8) — both did work with overarching agencies such as the GS-NSPC. However, this reflects the structure of the Cambodia social protection system, the design of the project and perhaps to some extent UN-limitations on agencies working together (different budget systems etc.).

In order to develop this joint approach further, it is recommended that it should be continued in Cambodia and other countries in the region and that the joint approach should be developed further in the future by building in more joint outputs as part of project design.

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<sup>17</sup> See [http://www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS\\_165981/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_165981/lang--en/index.htm)

## 6. Conclusions & recommendations

### Conclusions

#### Relevance

In general, the project's objectives, design and approach respond to the needs, policies and priorities of all key stakeholders including the UN agencies, EU (funder), and RGC agencies. The project design was appropriate and activities remained relevant throughout the implementation period. In particular, the project remained relevant to the RGC needs considering the changes in circumstances including the new 2023 government and post-COVID economic recovery. This reflected considerable stability in the RGC commitment to building social protection systems.

In terms of the tripartite constituents, the project has included activities involving employers and trade unions but some respondents felt that they could have been more actively involved. The project theory of change (as reconstructed during the MTE) appears to remain valid and no further revisions to the ToC were considered necessary as part of the final evaluation.

#### Coherence

The project brought together key UN agencies (ILO, UNICEF and UNDP) and other DPs (in particular Gret) and built on work which had been carried out such as the UNJP on social protection and the EU funded Social Protection and PFM project. The project also worked closely with Government agencies at national and local level both to implement ongoing reforms in social protection (e.g. supporting the establishment of the NSAF) and to support the development of a more coherent approach to social protection.

The project supported UN coherence at a policy level, e.g. a joint response to NSPPF 2.0 and allowed individual agencies to focus on work in the areas of expertise. This reflected the structure of social protection in Cambodia and the design of the project (PRODOC) which largely envisaged that ILO and UNICEF would engage with their long-standing partners.

#### Effectiveness

The project has been able to implement most of the outputs and activities and, in several areas, more than originally planned. As discussed in chapter 3, the project has, for example, supported the increased coverage of workers covered by social protection schemes through the development and implementation of the voluntary health insurance scheme for self-employed workers (a majority of those now covered are women). The project also supported increased inclusion and coverage in social assistance and social services, e.g. development and implementation of the Family Package.

The ILO and UNICEF have also strengthened social security organisations in terms of business processes and capacity building. There was a strong focus on capacity building and the project provided IT, business process and capacity building supports to a wide range of agencies including GS-NSPC/Social Security Regulator, NSSF, NSAF, ID-Poor, MoLVT, MoSVY, civil society (through the SP4ALL network) and social partners. UNICEF have also provided supports at a local level to communes/sangkat and health centres officials.

Stakeholders generally reported that the assistance provided was of high quality given UN and DP expertise in the areas of work. However, there was some (albeit limited) feedback that the level of quality varied somewhat depending on the ability and local knowledge of external consultants employed by the project.

Factors which contributed to the project's effectiveness included:

- Expertise of key agencies (ILO, UNICEF, UNDP and Gret)
- Well-designed project reflecting the needs of stakeholders
- Building on existing work and on high levels of co-operation between UN/DPs, RGC and civil society (SP4ALL)
- Very strong commitment from RGC to developing social protection in Cambodia as part of a broader developmental approach

Constraints and challenges in implementing activities included:

- COVID-19 Impact – This led to disrupted face-to-face interactions, reducing engagement opportunities and delaying implementation in the early stages of the project.
- National Elections (2023) – This also led to some delays in project implementation
- Limited size of core project team (ILO) given the size of the project and the range of tasks involved (communications, quality control, liaison, etc.).

In general, project management appears to have been effective. However, some respondents expressed the view that the core management team was too small and that this led to weaknesses in co-ordination between the UN agencies and to limited communication with the funder and generally limited public communication as to the achievements of the project.

#### Efficiency

The details of project expenditure have been provided in different formats and in a different currency to the original budget which makes it difficult for us to comment in any detail on the extent to which expenditure has (or has not) been in line with original plans. The ILO component indicates a significant underspend of over \$315,000 which is mainly due to an underspend of \$178,000 on outcome 3.

However, the activities of the project have very largely been delivered. There were some delays in different activities due to COVID, the 2023 general elections (and changes in counterpart staff) and, in some cases, due to difficulties in recruiting consultants. These delays were largely outside the control of the project and by the

end of the project activities have been delivered. Insofar as can be assessed, resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve immediate objectives.

### Impact

The project has had a substantial impact in supporting system change both on policy, institutional capacity but also in terms of vulnerable groups. As outlined in chapter 4, the work of the project directly contributed to increases in the number of persons insured by NSSF (a majority of whom were women) and to an increase in households in receipt of cash transfers. These were largely in line with the targets set in the original PRODOC. All agencies reported positively on the impact of capacity building work though detailed metrics are not available. The project has played an important role in working with GS-NSPC and other agencies to strengthen national social protection policy.

### Sustainability

The project scores high in terms of sustainability. This arises from a range of factors:

- Building on existing work and partnerships
- High quality inputs
- Strong government commitment

Follow on work which will support sustainability is already close to implementation, e.g. the Global Accelerator project which will commence in Cambodia in early 2025.

### Visibility

The project has contributed to the visibility of the EU at a national level and national stakeholders generally mentioned EU support without being asked about it. This builds on the support which the EU has already provided, e.g. Budget Support and SP & PFM project. There was less awareness of EU involvement at local levels as would be expected.

### Cross-cutting issues

The project was relevant to gender issues, and several specific activities promoted gender equality. This varied to some extent from one area to another. However, the project did support the social protection system in becoming more gender-responsive, e.g. social security for informal workers (c. 60% of those covered by the voluntary health insurance scheme are women) and the Family Package. The project also enhanced protection for vulnerable groups including people with disability (MoSVY) and low-income workers.

The project did promote social dialogue to a certain extent and involved employers' organization and trade unions. However, it could not be said that these were central to the

design or implementation of the project. The project was also relevant to ILO standards such as C-102 (social security) and formalization and, to this extent, the project did promote ILO Labour standards to a certain extent though it is again not clear that these standards formed a core part of the project's work. The project made significant contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1.3.1, which focuses on the proportion of the population covered by social protection systems

## Recommendations

1. Activities supported in the ASPC project need to be followed up by the UN agencies, e.g. registration of informal workers is obviously only a first step and considerable further work needs to be done to assess how this initiative develops and whether it needs to move towards a more mandatory approach.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, NSAF will obviously require further capacity building support at national and provincial level.
2. Future projects should ensure adequate staffing for the core project team to support essential backstopping work, communications etc.
3. As suggested in the Evaluability Assessment, future projects should include more tools for measuring capacity improvements, e.g. pre training capacity needs and post-training evaluation and or follow up with participants. Projects should also include indicators for how the project has strengthened administrative efficiency and to measure service quality/delivery
4. ILO should consider a similar joint approach in future projects in Cambodia and in other countries in the region building on the experience of the UNJP (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam) and the EU-Funded Social Protection of PFM programme (Cambodia).
5. Insofar as possible, such joint project should include more joint activities and joint outcomes as part of the project design. The detail of this would obviously depend on the particular issue but this would include ILO and the other UN agency (e.g. UNICEF) in jointly addressing and issue and carrying out joint activities in which both participated. One area to start with might include research on topics of shared interest.

Recommendation	Responsible	Priority	Timeframe	Resource implications
<b>1. Follow up project activities</b>	ILO, UNICEF	High	Immediate	Within planned resources
<b>2. Future projects should ensure</b>	ILO	High	Medium-long term	Can be achieved either though

<sup>18</sup> These issues include monitoring trends in registration and continued payment of contributions and in use of services; and the funding of the scheme. Gret reports (Appendix 6) have outlined a range of specific issues to be addressed.

Recommendation	Responsible	Priority	Timeframe	Resource implications
<b>adequate staffing for core project team</b>				additional resources or through allocation of fixed resources
<b>3. Measuring capacity improvements &amp; service quality</b>	ILO, UNICEF	Medium	Medium-long term	Within planned resources
<b>4. Joint UN projects</b>	ILO, other UN agencies, UNRC	High	Medium-long term	Within planned resources
<b>5. Joint outcomes and activities</b>	ILO, other UN agencies, UNRC	High	Medium-long term	Within planned resources

## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Lessons learned

#### ILO Lesson Learned Template

**Project Title: Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia**

**Project TC/SYMBOL: KHM/21/01/EUR**

**Name of Evaluator: Mel Cousins & Chey Tech**

**Date: 9 January 2025**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	The key lesson learned from this project is that UN agencies (in conjunction with other DPs) can play an important role in supporting the development of a more inclusive and gender and disability responsive social protection system.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	This approach built on previous experience in Cambodia in the UNJP on social protection (involving ILO, UNICEF and WHO) and the EU-funded Social Protection and PFM project co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF. However, prior experience is not an essential precondition where the agencies are prepared to co-operate and work together
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	People in poverty, vulnerable groups including women and people with disabilities
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	Need for a co-ordinated approach between UN agencies
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Co-ordination by UN agencies can contribute to a more coherent national social protection policy, and avoid duplication and gaps in support

<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	Insofar as possible, joint activities should be built in to the project design, i.e. activities involving ILO and other UN agencies. Budget and reporting issues also need to be borne in mind in designing the project, i.e. the specific budgeting, accounting and reporting requirements of different agencies
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## Appendix 2. Emerging good practice

**ILO Emerging Good Practice Template****Project Title: Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia****Project TC/SYMBOL: KHM/21/01/EUR****Name of Evaluator: Mel Cousins & Chey Tech****Date: 9 January 2025**

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

<b>GP Element</b>	<b>Text</b>
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	A key emerging good practice is bringing UN agencies (ILO, UNDP and UNICEF) together to work on social protection development in a coherent manner
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	In the Cambodian case, the EGP built on previous experience. However, this would not seem to be essential given a willingness to work together. A similar approach could be adopted in other countries in the region where several have previous experience of such an approach through the UNJP.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	The involvement of a range of different UN agencies allows each to bring their own expertise to the complex field of social protection in a coherent manner. A coherent approach by UN agencies can also support a more unified and consistent policy approach by government
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	In this case, the joint approach meant that there was an impact both through the social assistance system (e.g. Family Package) and the social security system (e.g. registration of informal workers for health insurance).
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	A similar approach could be adopted both for future projects in Cambodia and in other countries in the region where several have previous experience of such an approach through the UNJP.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	A joint approach with other UN agencies can help to achieve ILO goals, e.g. P&B Outcome 8: Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	This approach is in line with the One-United Nations approach and with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Cambodia 2024-2028 aim to 'promote efficient coordination within the United Nations and to ensure achievements and measurable progress'.

## Appendix 3. Terms of Reference

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### FINAL JOINT INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

#### OF THE ADVANCING SOCIAL PROTECTION IN CAMBODIA PROJECT

##### Key Facts

<b>Project Title</b>	Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia
<b>ILO TC project code</b>	KHM/21/01/EUR
<b>Donor</b>	European Union
<b>Total approved budget</b>	5,598,535 EUR (ILO and UNICEF)
<b>ILO Administrative unit</b>	DWT/CO-Bangkok
<b>ILO Technical Units</b>	SOCPRO
<b>Type and scope of Evaluation</b>	Final joint independent evaluation
<b>Evaluation dates</b>	January 2023 to May 2023 (Field mission takes place in March 2023)
<b>Project Duration</b>	1 February 2021 – 31 December 2024 (47 months)
<b>Evaluation Manager</b>	Rahman, Mohammad Mohebur, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, ILO -CO_Dhaka
<b>TORs preparation date</b>	August 2024

## Contents

TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	50
Key Facts.....	50
1. Introduction.....	51
2. Background of the Project and the Context.....	51
About the Project .....	53
Links to International and National Development Priorities and Outcomes .....	56
Project Management Team Set-up .....	56
Stakeholders and Target Groups .....	57
3. Purpose, objectives, and users of the evaluation .....	58
4. Scope and Criteria and Key Evaluation Questions for the Final Evaluation .....	59

5. Methodology .....	60
6. Main Deliverables.....	61
7. Management Arrangements and Workplan .....	62
Evaluation Timeline .....	63
8. Qualifications of the Evaluation Team .....	64
9. Legal and Ethical Matters .....	65
10. All relevant evaluation guidelines can be found accessing the following links:.....	66

## 1. Introduction

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) calls for Expression of Interest from team of an International evaluator (IE) and national evaluator (based in Cambodia) to conduct a Final joint independent evaluation of the EU-funded **Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia** project, co-implemented by the ILO and UNICEF.

The final evaluation will be carried out in line with standard UNEG guidelines including UNEG guide on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations and in line with the evaluation protocols of the EU, ILO and UNICEF. It will be conducted in compliance with the principles, norms, and standards for project evaluations as outlined in the *ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed. (Nov 2020)*. The overall objective of this Final evaluation is to assess the relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, of the project as well as the contribution to gender equality and disability inclusion and the visibility of the EU. The specific objectives are to: (1) assess the achievement against the project objectives and intermediate and immediate outcomes and identify existing needs and gaps; (2) examine the project contribution towards generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection system, and draw lessons learned and identify good practices from the project's intervention; (3) propose recommendations to inform design of future similar project to increase its relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the action.

The evaluation team will report to the Evaluation Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, based in the ILO's CO-Dhaka, who will be managing the overall evaluation process with oversight provided by the ILO's evaluation office. The evaluation manager has no prior involvement with the project at any level.

## 2. Background of the Project and the Context

In 2017, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) adopted a National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016 – 2025 (NSPPF), building on two main pillars: social security and social assistance. To coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NSPPF, a National Social Protection Council (NSPC) chaired by the Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance (MEF) and a General Secretariat (GS) based at the MEF were established respectively. The goal of the NSPPF is to develop a strategic plan for the RGC “to

ensure income security for all citizens, promote their welfare, strengthen social solidarity and maximize poverty alleviation impacts”.

The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) is responsible for the administration of the social insurance schemes with 2.6 million members from the public and private sectors being covered (as of 2020). Until recently, the Social Security law only covered workers in companies with more than 8 people employed, which excluded a large part of workers. With the new law, provisions were included to cover self-employed and since January 2018, workers in companies with 8 or less workers are also covered. The recently approved Social Security Law includes provisions for pensions (contributory - the launch of the scheme is expected to take place in 2021) and for unemployment insurance. However, the existing NSSF schemes and operational modalities are not yet adapted to deal with this new group of workers, particularly those working in the informal economy and those moving between formal and informal jobs. According to ILO preliminary estimates from the most recent Labour Force Survey (LFS), informal employment accounted for 88% of total employment, corresponding to 7 million persons.

In the meantime, the current social assistance measures are in the early stages of their development and also limited, with only two national poverty targeted programmes (scholarship programme and cash transfer for poor pregnant women and children 0-2 years old) currently implemented at scale. The disability allowance programme is in early stages of development, with low coverage and adequacy of benefits. In the area of health, the Health Equity Fund is the key social protection tax-funded programme, targeting the poor and covering approximately 3.2 million people. Even so, households bear about 60% of the country's health expenditure out of their own pocket, creating perverse incentive to forgo care and an additional push factor into poverty.

Cambodia currently has a fragmented and under-resourced social protection (SP) system, leading to an overall low coverage, both in terms of level of benefits and population coverage. Fragmentation, relatively low coverage and scope of the social assistance programmes proffers a demand for integration of existing programmes into a lean and more effective system of service delivery and cash transfer administration. This objective is spelled out in the NSPPF's focus on the development of a family package of social assistance and creation of a single operator model for social assistance. The RGC and General Secretariat of the National Social Protection Council (GS-NSPC) have recently started the process of developing the family package of integrated social assistance services to address current fragmentation and build a more effective and sustainable social assistance system.

Government social protection measures to mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 include implementing a temporary cash transfer scheme for poor families identified through the government's Identification of Poor Households Program (IDPoor). The cash transfer is for approximately 560,000 households, providing between US\$10 and US\$50.

Considering the policy framework in place, reinforced by the current decisions as part of the COVID-19 response, a central element in the success of extending coverage will be the capacity to ensure inclusion of the near poor, the missing middle and the vulnerable who are not covered by existing ID-Poor registration. These groups of population include the informal

and urban workers not covered by NSSF, who face the risk of not being captured under a mechanism such ID Poor. These workers are also not covered by the existing schemes offered by NSSF.

In order to support advancement of social protection in Cambodia, there is an urgent need to build capacities within Cambodia's social protection institutions to handle the extension of social protection and increase the level of protection provided. Capacity building and technical support needs to be made in the key institutions such as the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) amongst others, in order for these institutions to be able to manage the increased expectation of providing better services and the exponential increase in persons covered by social protection.

#### About the Project

The EU funded Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia (ASPC) project began implementation in February 2021 and will run until December 2024 with an approved budget of €5,598,535 over the four years. It is co-implemented by ILO and UNICEF, working in close collaboration with government stakeholders responsible for social protection, in particular the General Secretariat (GS) of the National Social Protection Council (NSPC); the National Social Security Fund (NSSF); the National Social Assistance Fund (NSAF) and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) in Cambodia. It aims to extend social protection coverage and quality of provisions (adequacy and quality of services) by improving operational capabilities of social protection institutions and the adaptability of existing schemes to the characteristics and needs of those working in the informal sector, with a particular focus on the expansion of social protection to the 'missing middle' and the vulnerable. The project goal is "at the end of the project, more women and men in Cambodia have access to more effective, efficient, accountable and sustainable gender-responsive social protection." These will be achieved through three pillars of work, namely: (1) extending social security coverage to workers not covered and to improve the quality and depth of service for those that are covered; (2) improving the delivery and coordination of social security and social assistance through the modernisation of the NSSF, and supporting the building of the delivery system for social assistance through the single operator, and; (3) enhancing capabilities in the provision of social assistance programmes to increase inclusion of extremely poor and at risk populations into social assistance while strengthening their livelihoods and participation in the labour market.

The project has three main intended outcomes.

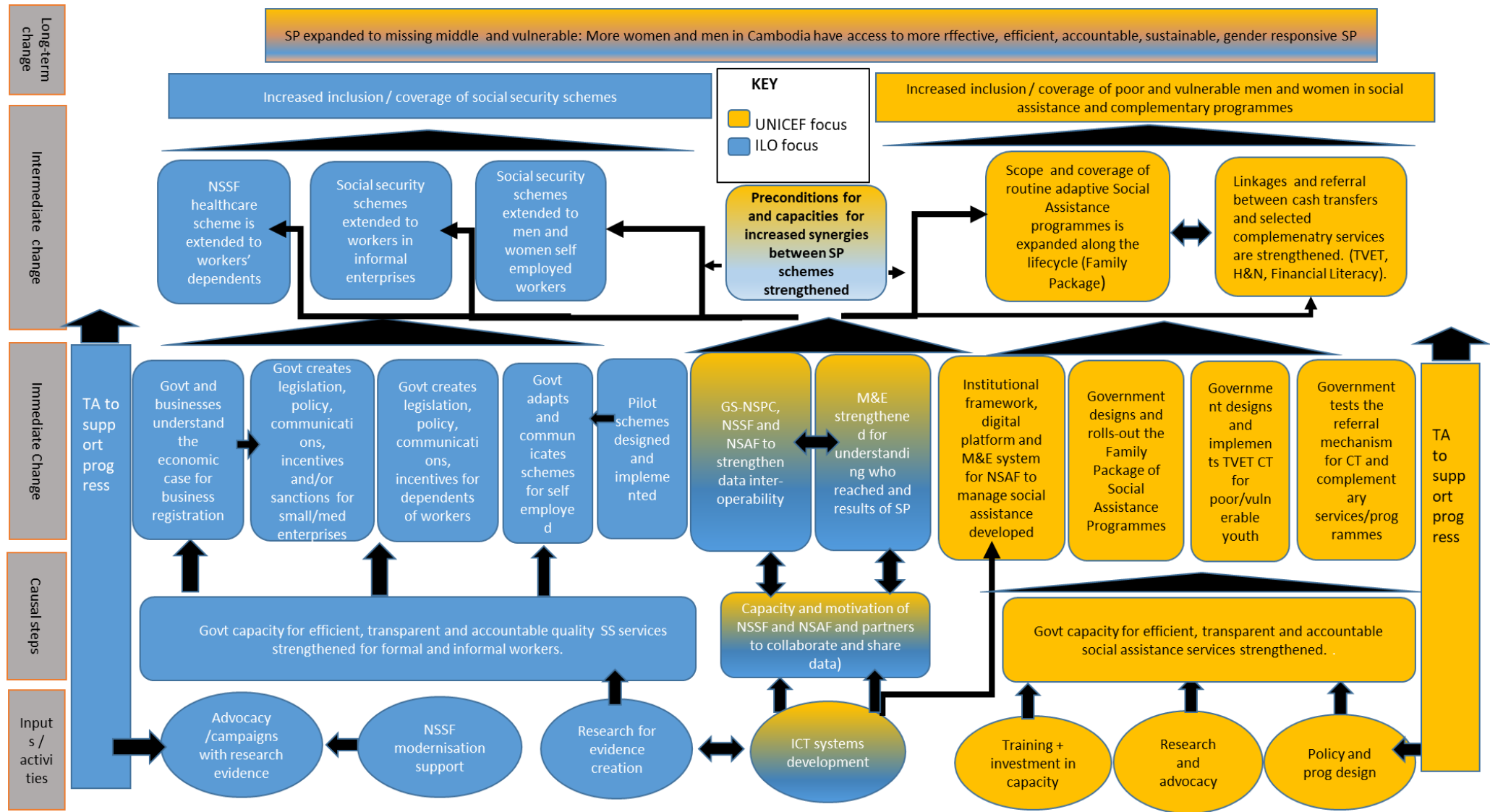
Outcome 1 – A Increased inclusion/coverage of workers that are covered by social security schemes

Outcome 2 - Increased inclusion and coverage of poor and vulnerable population in social assistance and complementary programmes promoting improved livelihoods and well-being

Outcome 3 – Social security organisations are strengthened with improved business processes and tools to increase coverage and quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sector

The diagram below presents the **Theory of change** of **Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia**, reconstructed during the Mid term evaluation (Final version September 2023):

## Theory of change of Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia



## Links to International and National Development Priorities and Outcomes

The project is aligned with the goal of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC)'s National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) 2016-2025. It is in line with the Cambodia UNDAF 2019-23 Outcome 1: By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular marginalized and vulnerable populations have their basic (economic and social) needs addressed equitably as they benefit from and utilize expanded quality social services and social protection in a more resilient, fairer and sustainable society; and Accelerator 1: Strengthening capacity for implementation of the National Social Protection Policy Framework towards Poverty Eradication in Cambodia.

It will contribute to SDG targets SDG 1.3: Implementing nationally appropriate social protection system and measures for all; SDG 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. It addresses the Recommendation on Social Protection Floor, 2012 (No.202), the Minimum Standards Convention, 1952 (No.102) and the Recommendation on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 (No.204).

In relation to ILO country programmatic framework it will be linked with CPO KHM226 Increased quality and coverage of social protection, particularly among vulnerable groups, and contribute to ILO Programme & Budget 2024-2025 Output 7.1. Increased capacity of Member States to develop social protection strategies, policies and legal frameworks that are inclusive, gender-responsive and sustainable.

In relation to UNICEF Country Programme Document, the project is linked to the Policy and Public Finance for Children Programme framework 2019-2023 Outcome: By 2023, children and adolescents in Cambodia, including the most deprived benefit from effective social services and child-sensitive social protection system

### Project Management Team Set-up

The implementation of the Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia project is led by the government, under the coordination of the Executive Committee of the National Social Protection Council of Cambodia (NSPC)<sup>19</sup>. Under the supervision of the NSPC, the implementation of the different components will be done in strict coordination with the line ministries, including the central and subnational levels.

The Steering Committee (SC) was established, consisting of representatives of the implementing agencies, NSPC, a representative of a Member State (Germany) and a representative of the European Union. The role of the Steering Committee encompasses: (i) endorse annual work plans and budgets and review indicative calendar of activities; (ii) review progress reports provided by the implementing agencies based on the results framework; and (iii) provide strategic guidance and direction on the implementation of the project.

The GS-NSPC will provide general oversight and guidance for the implementation of all components of the Project and will support the coordination between the project and other ministries and agencies in the RGC. Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation

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<sup>19</sup> To coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NSPPF, a National Social Protection Council (NSPC) chaired by the Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance (MEF) and a General Secretariat (GS) based at the MEF were established in 2017 and 2018 respectively.



(MoSVY) is the main partners for the implementation of the Outcome 2 of the Project. National Social Security Fund (NSSF) is the main partners for the implementation of the Outcome 3 of the Project.

For ILO: High-level advocacy and overall oversight of the project will be ensured by the Director of the Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia and Laos with support from ILO National Coordinator in Cambodia. The ILO project team comprises of five (5) members including: (1) Program Manager who coordinate the overall implementation of the project, with close collaboration with UNICEF to ensure the consistency between the interventions, and is responsible for coordination with focal point for the GS-NSPC and EUD for matters related with the program coordination, and ensures routine management and makes management decisions in collaboration with ILO Senior SP Specialist, CO Director and Country Coordinator; (2) ILO Senior Social Protection Specialist who is responsible for the provision of technical backstopping and overall guidance on Project implementation; (3) One junior Social Protection Officer will support the Program Manager on the implementation of the technical social protection activities; (4) One National Program Officer who support the Program Manager with the coordination work required for the implementation of the project activities, and; (5) one Finance and Administrative Assistant who support the budget implementation and program management support

For UNICEF: High-level advocacy and overall oversight of the project is ensured by UNICEF Representative with support of the Communications section whereas the overall project coordination and management by the UNICEF Deputy Representative. The UNICEF project team comprises of six (6) members including: (1) Chief Policy and Public Finance for Children who ensures technical oversight and routine management and who makes management decisions in collaboration with Deputy Representatives. Responsible for coordination with the coordination bodies established to support the project; (2) Social Policy Specialist (Social Protection) who manages activities linked to social protection and collaboration with MoSVY and GS NSPC; (3&4) two Social Policy Specialists (Public Finance) manages activities linked to costing and budget planning for family package and supports Social Policy Specialist NOC in development of the M&E framework, data collection and analysis ; (5) Community Development Officer who ensure the delivery of components of the programme linked to delivery of services including capacity building, dissemination at sub-national level and testing of the referral mechanism, and will ensure monitoring and follow up on project activities linked to sub-national administrations, and; (6) Programme Associate who provides management support.

#### Stakeholders and Target Groups

The key national stakeholders for this project include the General Secretariat of NSPC within the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the National Social Assistance Fund, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT), the Ministry of Commerce, and national tripartite partners including the Cambodian Federation of Employers (CAMFEBA), industry groups such as the Garment Manufacturing Association of Cambodia (GMAC), the trade unions and other professional organizations, particularly those representing workers in the informal sector.

The key target groups for this project are the vulnerable population in Cambodia which includes all Cambodians who are not socially protected by any social protection schemes. Through this

project, workers in the informal economy, who are often earning an income just above the poverty line and are not protected through social insurance, will be brought into the social security schemes. In social assistance, focus will be on expanding the coverage of the poor and vulnerable to poverty, within the context of large portion of Cambodian population living in near poverty.

The EU is the donor and a key stakeholder of the project. The Programme Manager (Good Governance, Human Rights and Decent Jobs), the Delegation of the European Union to the Kingdom of Cambodia, is a main focal point for the overall project coordination.

### 3. Purpose, objectives, and users of the evaluation

The purpose of the final evaluation is to promote accountability and learning to support improvement in the project. The overall objective of this Final evaluation is to assess the relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, of the project as well as the contribution to gender equality and disability inclusion and the visibility of the EU. The specific objectives are to: (1) assess the achievement against the project objectives and intermediate and immediate outcomes and identify existing needs and gaps; (2) examine the project contribution towards generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection system, and draw lessons learned and identify good practices from the project's intervention; (3) propose recommendations to inform design of future similar project to increase its relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the action.

The main users of this final independent evaluation will include:

User	Intended Use
<b>UN Partners:</b> ILO, UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide accountability and learning from the project.</li> <li>• provide an opportunity to make modifications to ensure the achievement of outcomes and objectives within the lifetime of the project.</li> <li>• Inform on how to most effectively support the RGC and key stakeholders (including national stakeholders, UNs and the EU) to improve SP.</li> </ul>
<b>Government Counterparts:</b> General Secretariat of NSPC, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT), the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide accountability on achievements of the initiative</li> <li>• Inform on the project's commitment to continue improving its programming in support SP in Cambodia</li> <li>• Reflect on evaluation findings in as much as they also relate to jointly implemented interventions</li> <li>• Engage together with the project in the response to the evaluation recommendations</li> <li>• Provide the necessary information for potential scale up of the interventions.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Partners, Non Government Organizations, and other organizations:</b> Cambodian Federation of Employers (CAMFEBA), Garment Manufacturing Association of Cambodia (GMAC), Association of Transportation and Informal Workers and Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association, GIZ and EU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on evaluation findings in as much as they also relate to jointly implemented interventions</li> <li>• Provide accountability on achievements of the initiative</li> <li>• Inform on areas that need support and improvements to better support results for SDGs and SP</li> </ul>
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide accountability and learning from the project</li> </ul>

User	Intended Use
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform on areas that need support and improvements to better support results for SDGs and Social Protection that can be used in funding decisions</li> </ul>

#### 4. Scope and Criteria and Key Evaluation Questions for the Final Evaluation

The scope of the final evaluation covers the entire project from inception to the evaluation date. Where possible, interviews should be taken with real (ultimate) beneficiaries and recipients.

With regard to geographical coverage, the evaluation will cover the national level and pilot provinces (if relevant).

Below is the list of the evaluation criteria and suggested evaluation questions.

RELEVANCE AND VALIDITY OF DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project met the national partners/institutions' needs, policies, and priorities, considering the changes in circumstances (new government, post covid economic recovery, etc)?</li> <li>• Is the revised project strategies (revised as per the MTE recommendations) sound to achieve the project objective? What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving its objectives?</li> <li>• Are there any areas or project activities that need to be modified to maximize its achievement of development objective?</li> <li>• Is the reconstructed theory of change valid?</li> </ul>
COHERENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent have the collaboration been improved (from the mid term) between the implementers (ILO and UNICEF) and between the project and other stakeholders and development partners involved in the Social Protection sphere? To what extent and how have these improved synergies contributed to improve synergies between SS and SA?</li> <li>• How could synergies be further maximized and coherence enhanced?</li> </ul>
EFFECTIVENESS (including effective management arrangement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project achieved the immediate outcomes and intermediate outcomes as laid out in the reconstructed Theory of Change?</li> <li>• To what extent has the project achieved the planned objectives, i.e. increased coverage and inclusion of (1) social security schemes AND (2) poor and vulnerable men and women in social assistance and complementary programmes?</li> <li>• What are the main constraints, problems and areas that need further attention at the final term? What should be done or done more by the project to promote advancement of social protection and to expand Social Security and Social Assistance to the poor and the vulnerable in Cambodia?</li> <li>• To what extent had the MTE recommendations been implemented?</li> </ul>
EFFICIENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How efficiently have the joint project been managed in terms of its human / financial resources and organizational / governance structure?</li> <li>• Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve immediate objectives?</li> </ul>
SUSTAINABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the strategy adopted by the project contributed to sustainability of the social protection system?</li> <li>• How likely will the results be sustained beyond the project through the action of Government and other stakeholders?</li> </ul>
IMPACT ORIENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent is the project likely to produce a catalytic effect in terms of generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection systems, especially in relation to extending Social Security and Social Assistance to the poor and the vulnerable?</li> <li>• What needs to be done to increase the impact of the programme and to better measure the impact?</li> </ul>

VISIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent and how well has the project contributed to the image/visibility of the EU in the country by the end of the project?</li> </ul>
CROSS CUTTING ISSUES INCL. GENDER EQUALITY and disability inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project on track to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as to improved access to social protection among those who belong to vulnerable groups (e.g. informal and vulnerable workers, including young women working in the garment sector, and people with disabilities)?</li> <li>• To what extent have the SS and SA become more gender responsive, as a result of the project's support and interventions? To what extent had the gender issues outlined by the midterm evaluation, been addressed and tackled?</li> <li>• To what extent has the project enhanced social protection for people with disabilities and integrated disability inclusion into its interventions?</li> </ul>

## 5. Methodology

The evaluation will apply a mixed-method approach, including: desk review of project documents and its M&E products; analysis of results against the logical framework; analysis and testing of the reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC) to see if it holds true, and to explore the linkages between different levels of change; contribution analysis to determine progress against intended results and attribution analysis to the extent possible; systems analysis of the social protection system; financial analysis; in-depth and semi-structured interviews, focus groups and discussion groups; participant observation during site visits, and stakeholders' validation workshop.

The project conducted an evaluability assessment and mid term independent evaluation between Q1 and Q2/2023. The mid term evaluation provided (1) an assessment of the project's progress achieved with project implementation against project objectives and performance indicators adopted; (2) identified and address any major obstacles that may have arisen; (3) examined the current and future role of the project in contributing towards generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection systems; (4) drew lessons learned and identify good practices from the two years of the project's intervention, as well as (5) proposed recommendations to inform modifications of the project to increase its relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation, and sustainability, in the second half of the project. **The final evaluation would capitalize on these resources, among other M&E resources of the project.**

The final independent evaluation shall be conducted, keeping gender equality and human rights as one of the key concerns. GE implies applying gender analysis by involving both men and women in the consultation and evaluation's analysis, inclusion of gender in the analysis and justification of project documents, reviewing of project's objectives and indicators in line with its sensitivity towards gender; and assessing outcomes in terms of its role in improving lives of women and men.

The analysis of gender-related concerns will be based on the ILO [Guidance note 3.1. Integrating gender equality in M&E](#). The evaluation will be conducted in compliance with the principles, norms, and standards for project evaluations as outlined in the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed. (Nov 2020).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS\\_168289/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_168289/lang--en/index.htm)

The evaluation will also integrate gender equality and non-discrimination, disability inclusion, human rights, international labour standards, tripartism and social dialogue, and environmental sustainability as crosscutting themes throughout its deliverables and process. In this regard, it will be guided by EVAL guidance notes on gender, norms and tripartism, stakeholder participation. The evaluation will consult the [UNEG Guide on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations to make sure the evaluation](#) applies HRBA and gender equality mainstreaming principles to the evaluation process.

## 6. Main Deliverables

The evaluators will deliver the following main outputs:

- Deliverable 2.1: Inception report

The evaluators will draft an inception report upon the review of the available documents and Skype briefings/initial discussions with the project team, relevant ILO and UNICEF officials/specialists and, if required, the EU. The inception report will include the final evaluation questions, data collection methodologies and techniques, and evaluation tools as well as a completed evaluation question matrix (See illustrative sample in [Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report](#) Page 3). The methodology should clearly state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation of specific group of stakeholders. The inception report will be prepared in accordance with the EVAL [Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report](#), and approved by the evaluation manager.

- Deliverable 2.2: Stakeholders' validation workshop/presentation on preliminary findings of the evaluation

At the end of the data collection exercise, the evaluation team will present POWERPOINT file detailing preliminary findings of the evaluation and proposed evaluation recommendations, at the stakeholders' workshop arranged virtually through Webex. The project team will provide necessary administrative and logistic support to organize this stakeholder workshop.

- Deliverable 2.3: Draft evaluation report

The draft evaluation report should be prepared in accordance with the EVAL [Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report](#). The draft report will be improved by incorporating evaluation manager's comments. Then the evaluation manager will circulate the draft report to key stakeholders including the project team, the ILO and UNICEF officials concerned with this evaluation, the EU and national partners for comments.

- Deliverable 2.4: Final evaluation report with evaluation summary (in a standard ILO format)

The evaluators will incorporate comments received from the ILO and other key stakeholders into the final report. For finalisation purposes, the evaluator has to ensure that it is done in accordance with the EVAL [Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report](#)

The reports and all other outputs of the evaluation will be produced in English. All draft and final reports, including other supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data should be provided in electronic version compatible with WORD for Windows. The report should not be more than 50 pages (excluding annexures). Findings, gaps and results should have a logical flow, be credible and clearly presented.

The draft reports will be circulated to key stakeholders and partners of the project, relevant tripartite constituents, and the ILO and UNICEF staff and specialists for their review. Comments from all the stakeholders will be consolidated by the Evaluation Manager and will be sent to the evaluation consultant to incorporate them into the revised evaluation report. The evaluation report will be considered final only when it gets final approval by the ILO's Evaluation Office. The quality of the report will be assessed against the relevant EVAL Checklists ([Checklist 4.9 Rating the quality of evaluation report](#)).

Draft and Final evaluation reports should include the following sections:

1. Cover page (ILO template to be provided)
2. Acronyms
3. Executive Summary (*standard ILO format*) with key findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons and good practices
4. Description of the project and its intervention logic
5. Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation
6. Methodology and evaluation questions
7. Limitations
8. Presentation of findings for each criteria
9. A table presenting the key results (i.e. figures and qualitative results) achieved per objective (expected and unexpected)
10. Conclusions and recommendations (including to whom they are addressed)
11. Lessons learned, potential good practices<sup>21</sup> and models of intervention/possible future direction
12. Appropriate Annexes (list of meetings and interviews, TOR, and other relevant documents, lesson learn and good practice using standard ILO format).

## 7. Management Arrangements and Workplan

An M&E Officer from CO-Dhaka will be the **Evaluation Manager**. Evaluation Team leader reports to the evaluation manager. The evaluation manager is responsible for completing the following specific tasks:

- Draft and finalize the evaluation TOR with inputs from key stakeholders including ILO and UNICEF team (draft TORs to be circulated for comments);
- Develop a call for expression of interest and manage selection of an independent Evaluation Team in coordination with Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL);
- Brief the evaluator on ILO evaluation policies and procedures;
- Initial coordination with the joint programme team on the development of a field mission schedule and a preliminary result workshop;
- Approve the inception report;
- Circulate the first draft of the evaluation report for comments by key stakeholders;
- Ensure the final version of the evaluation report address stakeholders' comments (or an explanation why any comment has not been addressed) and meets ILO requirements, and;
- Share the report with ILO EVAL for the final approval.

## ILO and UNICEF project teams

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<sup>21</sup> Good practices refer to good approaches or practices of this project which can be further built upon by the project in the future and can also be replicated in other similar projects

The ILO, as lead agency, will handle administrative and contractual arrangements with the evaluator and provide logistical and other assistance as required. Primary responsibilities of the ILO and UNICEF project team include:

- Provide comments on the development of the ToRs;
- Provide joint programme documents and materials to the ILO National Programme Coordinator and Evaluation Manager;
- Provide list of interviewees and their contact details;
- Help schedule interviews/consultations when needed;
- Be on hand and available to provide information, written inputs, and face to face interviews as requested;
- Participate in the internal debriefing meeting and the stakeholders' validation workshop;
- Provide comments to refine the evaluation deliverables including the draft inception reports, and draft evaluation reports.

### The European Union

The Delegation of the European Union to the Kingdom of Cambodia, will:

- Provide inputs on the development of the ToRs;
- Provide comments to refine the evaluation deliverables including the draft inception reports, and draft evaluation reports;
- be a key informant and provide the evaluation team with information during key informant interview sessions;
- Participate in the stakeholders' validation workshop.

### Evaluation Team

The evaluation will be conducted with the support of a team of consultants. The Evaluation Team will have the final responsibility for the evaluation report and ensure the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency, and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. The Evaluation Team will agree on the distribution of work and schedule for the evaluation and stakeholders to consult. It is expected that the report will be written in an evidence-based manner.

The Evaluation Team reports to the ILO's Evaluation Manager.

### Evaluation Timeline

Timeline	tasks	Responsible person	#workdays IE	#work days for NE
August 2024	Draft a ToRs	EM		
August 2024	Review of draft ToRs by stakeholders (including ILO staff and specialists, UNICEF, EU and national partners)	stakeholders (including ILO staff and specialists, UNICEF, EU and national partners)		
Sept-Oct	ToRs advertisement	ILO EVAL		
11 - Oct	Selection of consultants/	EM + REO		

11 Oct	procurement process			
21 – 27 Oct	Inception phase (desk review + Interview with project stakeholders from ILO and UNICEF)	Evaluator	8	7
28 Oct – 1 Nov	EM and project team review draft Inception report	EM+Project		
04- 22 Nov	Data collection	Evaluator	5	10
02 December	Internal debriefing	Evaluator	1	1
3-8 Dec	Draft final evaluation report	Evaluator	6	2
09-13	EM and Project team conduct 1 screening of draft evaluation report	EM+Project		
14 – 15	Evaluator addresses comments into the draft evaluation report	Evaluator	1	1
16-17 Dec	EM and Project team conduct 2nd screening of draft evaluation report	EM+Project		
- 18 – 19 December	Stakeholder review of draft evaluation report	Stakeholders		
20 Dec	Stakeholder validation workshop to present key findings from the evaluation	Evaluator	1	1
21-29 Dec	Evaluator address/integrate the stakeholders' comments into draft evaluation report	Evaluator	1	1
30 Dec	Submission the evaluation report to ILO	Evaluator		
		TOTAL	23	23

## 8. Qualifications of the Evaluation Team



The Evaluation Team leader has the responsibility to undertake the evaluation and deliver all the required deliverables as per this TOR. The table below described desired competencies and responsibilities for an evaluation team leader and team member.

<b>Team leader:</b>	
Responsibilities	Profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Conduct final evaluation and deliver all deliverables under this TOR</li> <li>✓ Desk review of programme documents and other related documents</li> <li>✓ Develop evaluation instrument and draft inception report</li> <li>✓ Virtual interviews with project team and specialists of PUNOs</li> <li>✓ Undertake a field visit in Cambodia</li> <li>✓ Facilitate stakeholders' workshop/ debriefing with the programme and key stakeholders</li> <li>✓ Draft evaluation report</li> <li>✓ Finalize evaluation report</li> <li>✓ Draft stand-alone evaluation summary and lessons learned and good practice as per standard ILO format</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has no previous engagement in the design and delivery of <i>the</i> project</li> <li>• Experience conducting at least 3 evaluability assessments and 5 evaluations of project/programme of similar nature.</li> <li>• Has minimum of ten years of experience in M&amp;E and in conducting programme or project evaluations.</li> <li>• Has knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.</li> <li>• Has proven knowledge of the social protection systems, as well as the political and economic context of Cambodia</li> <li>• Holds substantial working experience in implementing and /or conducting evaluation for projects pertaining to social protection.</li> <li>• Proven experience in conducting gender analysis</li> <li>• Holds knowledge of the ILO/UNICEF's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming.</li> <li>• Has excellent report writing skills in English.</li> </ul>
<b>Team member:</b>	
Responsibilities	Profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Desk review of programme documents and other related documents</li> <li>✓ Assist the team leader in developing evaluation instrument and drafting inception report</li> <li>✓ Take part in the interviews with key stakeholders and assist in note taking during interview</li> <li>✓ Undertake a field visit in Cambodia</li> <li>✓ Assist the team leader in facilitating stakeholders' workshop/ debriefing with the programme and key stakeholders</li> <li>✓ Contribute to the drafting of the evaluation report, and other outputs prepared by the team leader</li> <li>✓ Participate in and jointly facilitate the stakeholders workshop</li> <li>✓ Provide interpretation for the IE during the evaluation data collection as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khmer nationality with relevant qualifications in Law, Business Administration, International Development, Social Sciences or other relevant fields.</li> <li>• Holds no previous involvement/engagement in the design and delivery of the project</li> <li>• Has minimum eight years of experience in M&amp;E and/or conducting programme or project evaluations.</li> <li>• Has knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.</li> <li>• Has proven knowledge of international labour and environmental standards, sustainable enterprises, and working with representative employers and workers organizations.</li> <li>• Knowledge of, and experience in gender issues will be an advantage;</li> <li>• Has excellent analytical skills and communication skills;</li> <li>• Has good report writing skills in English.</li> </ul>

## 9. Legal and Ethical Matters

The evaluation will comply with UN Norms and Standards. The TOR is accompanied by the code of conduct for carrying out the evaluations. UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed. It is important that the evaluator has no links to programme management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of evaluation.

Ownership of the data from the evaluation rests jointly between the ILO, UNICEF and the consultants. The copyrights of the evaluation report rests exclusively with the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentation can only be made with the agreement of the ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

10. All relevant evaluation guidelines can be found accessing the following links:

1. [Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report](#)
2. [Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report](#)
3. [Checklist 4.9 Rating the quality of evaluation report](#)
4. [Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's Covid-19 response measures through project and programme evaluations](#)
5. [Guidance note 4.5 Stakeholders participation in the ILO evaluation](#)
6. [Guidance note 3.1. Integrating gender equality in M&E](#)
7. [Guidance Note 3.2: Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate](#)
8. [Code of conduct form \(To be signed by the evaluator\)](#)
9. [UNEG integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations](#)
10. [United Nations Evaluation Group. 2008. \*Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation in the UN System\*](#)
11. [United Nations Evaluation Group. 2014. \*Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations\*](#)
12. [United Nations Evaluation Group. 2016. \*Norms and Standards for Evaluation\*](#)
13. [United Nations Evaluation Group. 2018. \*UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator - Technical Note and Scorecard\*](#)
14. [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed., \(Nov 2020\)](#)

## Appendix 4. List of persons interviewed

Name	Position	Agency
<b>Donor</b>		
<b>Ms. Olivia Gervasoni</b>	Programme Manager Good Governance, Human Rights and Decent Jobs	EU Delegation
<b>Ms. Francesca Ciccomartino</b>	Former Programme Manager	EU Delegation
<b>Government partners</b>		
<b>Ms Than Kennaroit</b>	Director of the Social Security Department	GS-NSPC
<b>Mr. Yunan Re</b>	Research Dept	GS-NSPC
<b>Ms. Kanhary Heang</b>	Communications officer	GS-NSPC
<b>Ms. Chanliza Lor</b>	Social Security Regulator	GS-NSPC
<b>Mr. Sophanith Lay</b>	Policy department	GS-NSPC
<b>H.E Sim Sothun</b>	Delegated Government. Director General of NSAF	NSAF
<b>Mr. Sao Yeng</b>	Director of Information Management Department	NSAF
<b>Mr. Yoeun Hongchhat</b>	Director of Director of Service Management and Benefit Provision	NSAF
<b>Mr. San Ratana</b>	Director of Disability Welfare Department	MoSVY
<b>H.E Keo Ouly</b>	Director of ID Poor Identification Department	MoP
<b>Mr Oliver Schell</b>	Adviser to ID Poor Department	MoP

<b>Mr Yasak Ly</b>	Director of District/Municipality and Commune/Sangkat Administrative Affairs, Ministry of Interior	MOI
<b>Mr. Heng Kongmeng</b>	Department of District/Municipality and Commune/Sangkat Administrative Affairs	MOI
<b>Mr. Rathcheat Sarou</b>	Department of District/Municipality and Commune/Sangkat Administrative Affairs	MOI
<b>H.E Kuoch Somean</b>	Secretary of state, MoLVT	MoLVT
<b>Sakuna Houn</b>	Official	MoLVT
<b>Seyha Kaing</b>	Official	NSSF
<b>Ms Sievleang Ly</b>	Official	MoLVT
<b>Mr. Ouk Samonn</b>	Director of Customer Service and Public Relations Department	NSSF
<b>Mr. Srel Sithat</b>	Deputy Director of Budget Department	NSSF
<b>Mr Keat Putnarith</b>	Director of Investment department	NSSF
<b>Ms Chea Chenchen</b>	Deputy Director of Investment department	NSSF
<b>Ms Ith Phalline</b>	Deputy Director of Investment department	NSSF
<b>Sub-national government partners</b>		
<b>Ms. Phea Sok San</b>	Director of NSAF Branch	Siem Reap
<b>Mr. Chuon Ratan</b>	Deputy Director of NSAF Branch	Siem Reap
<b>Mr. Moun Heat</b>	Chief of Social Assistant Office	Siem Reap
<b>Mr. Vann Narong</b>	Director of NSAF Branch	Preah Vihea
<b>Mr. Long Porsea</b>	Director of NSAF Branch	Preah Vihea
<b>Mr. Chea Bunchhoeurn</b>	Chief of the Accounting office	Preah Vihea
<b>Ms. Soum Srey</b>	HC focal point, Kandaek Health Center	Siem Reap

<b>Mr. Pot Vuthy</b>	Director of HC, Kandaek Health Center	Siem Reap
<b>Ms. Dim Yasrey</b>	Commune focal point, Kandaek	Siem Reap
<b>Ms. Chhoeurn Sophea</b>	HC focal point, Phnom Daek Health Center	Preah Vihea
<b>Mr. Van Phan</b>	HC staff, Phnom Daek Health Center	Preah Vihea
<b>Mr. Chek Phal</b>	Commune focal point, Romtum	Preah Vihea
<b>Mr. Prak Seng</b>	Commune focal point, Romtum	Preah Vihea
<b>Development partners/social partners</b>		
<b>Dr Ivan Gonzalez</b>	Country Economist	UNDP
<b>Mr Theara Khoun</b>	Social Policy Specialist	UNDP
<b>Mr Thibaut Hanquet</b>	Project Manager	GRET
<b>Mr. Sin Sopharith</b>	SP Program Manager and Secretariat of SP4All Network.	OXFAM Cambodia
<b>Implementing agencies</b>		
<b>Mr Sophorn Tun</b>	National Coordinator	ILO
<b>Mr Finn Koh</b>	Programme Manager, Social Protection	ILO
<b>Ms Sokgech Heng</b>	National project coordinator	ILO
<b>Mr. Kenichi Hirose</b>	Senior Specialist in Social Protection	ILO
<b>Ms. Lisa-Marie Ouedraogo-Wasi</b>	Chief of Social Policy	UNICEF
<b>Mr Kimsong Chea</b>	Social Policy Specialist	UNICEF
<b>Ms Sovannary Keo</b>	Social Policy Specialist	UNICEF
<b>Social partners</b>		

<b>Mr Ath Thon</b>	Former President of CLC and now deputy director of C.CAWDU (Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Unions)	Cambodian Labour Confederation
<b>Ms Meng Navy</b>	Program Officer and Researcher,	CLC
<b>Mr Tep Sophoan</b>	General Manager	CAMFEBA

## Appendix 5. Implementation of MTE recommendations

Recommendation	Assessment
1.1: ILO should undertake a candid review of the timeline available to ASPC; the causal steps necessary to achieve objectives; and realistic targets. This review should include assessing potential for a No Cost Extension	Partially implemented. NCE was not possible due to EU funding instrument
1.2: ILO should take action as soon as possible to support implementing the NSSF communications strategy to attract voluntary (or, where relevant, compulsory) contributions from self-employed groups and the dependents of NSSF contributing members through public and social media	Implemented
1.3: The NSSF should develop promotional materials, in the forms of printed posters, brochure/or leaflets, containing the key information on how to register, eligibility criteria and procedural steps, and including the benefits members can expect to receive from mandatory or voluntary schemes.	Implemented
1.4: ILO should continue to advocate for progress with amendments to legislation for extending health insurance to dependents of the NSSF's registered members via compulsory contribution, as a preferred option. Meanwhile, the shorter-term option for voluntary contributions should be carefully promoted	Partially implemented
2.1 UNICEF should collaborate with the GS-NSPC, and NSAF in making the separated data for Emergency CTs and the Routine CTs more distinct, visible and available for ASPC project monitoring and reporting, as well as more broadly for NSAF and GS-NSPC	Partially implemented
2.2: UNICEF should continue to seek opportunities to support ongoing work to develop and promote the integration of MIS system/or data-sharing platform into the Single National Registry of the Social Protection's Beneficiaries	Partially implemented
3. UNICEF and ILO should take action and opportunities to strengthen visibility of the linkages between SA and SS through more explicitly joint work by ILO and UNICEF	Not implemented but not clear that it was feasible in the context and timeframe
4.1: ILO and UNICEF should work with the social protection institutions to make gender disaggregation consistently visible and available in SA and SS monitoring systems and to support stronger gender integration	Not implemented

5.1: UNICEF and ILO should continue to support the further institutional strengthening of NSAF; NSSF and GS-NSPC including with a long-term strategy on how skills can be maintained and renewed internally.	Partially implemented



## Appendix 6: Documents consulted

### Project documents

PRODOC

Progress Reports to December 2023

Evaluability Assessment report, July 2023

Mid-Term Evaluation report, July 2023

UNDP, Final Project Report 2024

Gret, Final Technical Progress Report, 2024

### Project outputs

Assessment of the Cambodian NSSF Health Insurance schemes, 2023

Assessment of the NSSF ICT 5-year strategic plan & identification of measures for implementation

Extending social protection for workers in Cambodia, 2023

NSSF Communications Strategy and Action Plan

NSSF Modernization Readiness Assessment Final Report

NSSF Policy Paper on Extension of Health Coverage to Dependents

Social Security Regulator Risk Management Framework

Understanding the Paths to Formalization in Cambodia (UNDP), 2023

### National documents

National Social Protection policy framework (2016-2025)

Review of the Cambodia National Social Protection Policy framework

Pentagonal Strategy, 2023

NSPC, Policy Brief Number 10 on the Tracking the Impacts of the Cash Transfer Program for the Poor and Vulnerable Household during COVID-19, 2024

### ILO/UN documents

ILO Programme and Budget

Kingdom of Cambodia Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2019-2023 & 2024-2028

United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2019- 2023

United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) 2024-2028

#### Other Development Partner documents

Advanced Social Security Schemes for the Self-Employed (A4S): A4S Sharing Workshop Report 2024 (Gret)

Advanced Social Security Schemes for the Self-Employed (A4S): A4S Closing Workshop Report 2024 (Gret)

Human-Centered Design (HCD) Training: Advanced for Self-Employed (A4S), 2024 (Gret)

World Bank, An assessment of Cambodia's Cash Transfer program for the Poor and Vulnerable Households during COVID-19, 2023

## Appendix 7. Concept note for site visits

### Evaluation background

This is the final evaluation of the ILO-UNICEF project Advancing Social Protection in Cambodia (funded by the EU). It is carried out in line with UN guidelines. The specific objectives of the evaluation are to: (1) assess the achievement against the project objectives and outcomes and identify existing needs and gaps; (2) examine the project contribution towards generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection system, and draw lessons learned and identify good practices from the project's intervention; (3) propose recommendations to inform design of future similar project.

The evaluation will review key documents and meet with key stakeholders to establish their views on these issues.

### Site visits

It is proposed to hold site visits to two provinces which will be visited by the national evaluator Mr Chey Tech: Siem Reap and Preah Vihea province. This is planned for the third week of November, i.e. 18-22 November 2024.

Within the two provinces the national evaluator will visit an urban and rural commune/Sangkat in each province.

Interviews will be carried out with

- 1) Provincial NSAF officials
- 2) Commune/Sangkat focal point and health centre staff
- 3) In addition, the evaluator will conduct FGD with beneficiaries of Social Assistance Family Package which will be arranged by UNICEF in coordination with NSAF.

A work plan is set out below:

Day	Task
Monday, 18/11/2024 (AM)	Travel from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap
Monday, 18/11/2024 (PM)	Interview with provincial NSAF in Siem Reap
Tuesday, 19/11/2024 (AM)	FGD with beneficiaries in urban Sangkat
Tuesday, 19/11/2024 (PM)	Interview with Commune focal point and HC staff in Urban Sangkat
Wednesday, 20/11/2024 (AM)	Travel from Siem Reap to Preah Vihea
Wednesday, 20/11/2024 (PM)	Interview with provincial NSAF in Preah Vihea
Thursday, 21/11/2024 (AM)	FGD with beneficiaries in rural commune
Thursday, 21/11/2024 (PM)	Interview with Commune focal point and HC staff in rural commune

Friday, 22/11/2024	Travel from Preah Vihea back to Phnom Penh
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### Questions for local government staff:

What supports did you receive from UNICEF under the ASPC project (e.g. training/capacity building, other supports)?

To what extent has these supports met your needs, policies, and priorities?

How effective have these supports been in supporting your work?

What was the most effective input and were there any things which could have been done better?

To what extent is the project likely to produce a catalytic effect in terms of generating system change across the Cambodia's social protection systems, especially in relation to extending Social Assistance to the poor and the vulnerable?

Were you aware that the project as funded by the EU? To what extent and how well has the project contributed to the image/visibility of the EU in Cambodia?

How likely will the results be sustained beyond the project through the action of Government and other stakeholders?

Is the project on track to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as to improved access to social protection among those who belong to vulnerable groups

To what extent has the project enhanced social protection for people with disabilities and integrated disability inclusion into its interventions?

### Topics for FGDS:

Who are the people participating in the FGD?

What types of cash support do they receive?

How did they receive cash support and has this changed in the last year or so?

What is their engagement with the NSAF, e.g. how do they claim cash support and how do they receive payments?

Do they receive other social services, e.g. health care, disability services, etc? Is this linked to cash supports?

What works well and what could be improved?

What are their main needs in terms of social services including social assistance?

What would you like to see improved in the future?

Are there gender-related priorities they believe should be addressed?

Are there unique social service needs for women or other vulnerable groups within their community?

Are there specific challenges faced by women or other groups when accessing these services (NSAF)?

## Appendix 8: Theory of Change (reconstructed)

