ACF Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation



Alliance of Champions
for Food Systems Transformation

Cambodia
Progress framework



About The ACF

The Alliance of Champions (ACF) is a strategic coalition of ambitious countries driving Food System Transformation, taking a 'whole of government' approach, and inspiring others to go further and faster to deliver better outcomes for people, nature, and climate, in accordance with Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement.

This framework sets out the progress made in following up on the COP28 Emirates Declaration.

ACF members exchange experiences – highlighting both successes and challenges – and communicate on progress (ACF Terms of Reference) showcasing national policies and initiatives, for inspiration and presentation at COPs and other international forums, emphasizing that food system transformation is not a linear journey.

These progress frameworks are authored by the ACF Secretariat, in consultation with governments, and aim to capture implementation of membership commitments to strengthen national food system pathways, follow up on sustainable development and climate goals, and demonstrate progress on priority interventions in the 10 ACF action areas.



1. Country Background

RATIONALE FOR CAMBODIA'S MEMBERSHIP

Cambodia is a founding member of the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF). As H.E. Dr Eang Sophalleth, Minister of Environment for Cambodia, said at the ACF's launch:

> *"Achieving food security and nutrition and addressing climate change can only be done if food systems are transformed. Cambodia is honoured to be a founding member of the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation, and we look forward to working with others to demonstrate what is possible."*

Cambodia has actively participated in the international food systems architecture. They committed to scaling up financing for sustainable food systems at the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021, produced an ambitious food systems road map and have embedded a food systems approach by setting up strong mechanisms for cross-Government working.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Cambodia's economy, accounting for 17% of GDP, 35% of land use and 36% of employment. Casava, rice, maize , cashews and lychees are Cambodia's top five commodities produced. Rice is the country's main agricultural commodity and export, complemented by other key crops such as cassava, maize, mung bean, and soybean. Cambodia is also endowed with the largest freshwater lakes and rivers in Southeast Asia, providing fertile ground for the expansion of aquaculture production. The country benefits from favourable land, climate, and rainfall conditions.

Three-quarters of Cambodia's 6.8 million farmers are categorised as small-scale farmers. But Cambodia's agriculture is changing as the number of farmers decline, and farms get larger and more mechanised, leading to increased productivity.

Challenges:

Senior Minister H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun recently summarised Cambodia's food system challenges in the Cambodia Voices of Progress as follows:

"Rising malnutrition, land degradation, water scarcity, and vulnerability to climate shocks could deepen inequality and threaten our hard-won development gains. The transition is not optional - it is urgent, and it is our shared responsibility."

- **Malnutrition** rates are declining but remain high among children under five: 22% children were considered stunted, 16% underweight, and 10% wasted in 2025. Malnutrition rates vary drastically by province, with the highest figures found in hilly border regions.
- Cambodia is also one of the **most disaster-prone countries in Southeast Asia**, extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The impacts of climate change, which are resulting in reduced crop yields, income loss, and food insecurity. Limited access to climate information and early warning systems exacerbate these challenges, leaving communities unprepared for extreme events.

2. Progress against commitments

01

Strengthen national visions and food systems transformation pathways, inclusive of ten priority action areas and consistent with science-based targets.

The Cambodian Government has integrated the ten ACF priority action areas into its National Pathways and is developing sectoral strategies to deliver on its overarching Pentagon Strategy Phase I (2023–2028) for Growth, Employment, Equity, Efficiency, and Sustainability. The strategy aims to strengthen social protection and ensure food security and nutrition for all. This is underpinned by:

- The National Agricultural Development Policy 2022-2030.
- Cambodia's 3rd National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2024-2028, which was launched in April 2025. This integrates all ten ACF priority action areas, plus an additional two - promoting informed consumer choice and engagement of the private sector.
- The Second Cambodia Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development, which is due to be published shortly. Priority areas identified by the Roadmap to 2030 include:
    - Resilient, Inclusive and Profitable Food Systems
    - Safe and Health-Promoting Food Environments
    - Healthy and Sustainable Diets for All
    - Empowerment of Women, Youth, and Marginalized Groups
    - Strengthened Food System Governance and Digital Systems

Other key documents include the Fast track roadmap for Improving Nutrition 2023-2030, the National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2022-2030, the National Social Protection Policy Framework (2024 – 2035), the Policy on School Feeding 2024-2035, and the National Policy on School Health 2019 and accompanying Action Plan 2021-2030.

02

Update NDCs, NBSAPs, LT-LEDS in line with updated pathways

Cambodia's new NDC3.0 fully integrates the ACF's ten priority action areas and is the first in the region to include a dedicated section on food systems. It outlines specific food systems interventions costed at USD45 million, alongside USD960 million for agriculture and USD123 million for forests and other land use. Food systems are positioned not as an add-on, but as a central pillar of Cambodia's adaptation and climate resilience strategy

Key food systems interventions in Cambodia's NDC3.0 include measures to:

- **Increase the affordability and availability of healthy diets**: this includes improving access to nutritious foods, regulating unhealthy products, and linking nutrition to social protection programmes. Action on diets is included in the food systems section.
- **Improve livelihoods**: this includes enhancing the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities and contributing to climate resilience through improved forest management practices. The updated NDC also includes a standalone section on livelihoods and adaptation.
- **Increase resilience:** through strengthening livestock resilience, keeping climate-related losses under 5%, breeding 53,000 cattle via artificial insemination, managing 22,000 ha of smart fodder systems, and expanding climate-resilient livestock breeds.
- **Protecting and restore nature**: the updated NDC commits to halve deforestation rates by 2030, expand forest cover, and scale up agroforestry. and restore aquatic ecosystems - restoring over 96,000 ha, improving native aquaculture species, and stronger management of 344 community fishery reserves, plus promotion of good aquaculture practices and enhanced aquatic rice-field diversity resilience.
- **Scale climate-smart agricultural practices:** with the aim of covering 20% of farmland and diversifying 30% with high-value, climate-resilient crops.
- **Cut food loss and waste:** through research, policy development, and pilots that encourage reuse and value addition across the food chain.
- **Support innovation:** by developing climate-resilient crop varieties: conserving 2,000 varieties annually and ensuring 20% of farmland adopts high-yield, climate-resilient types.

03

Progress on targets and priority interventions in the 10 ACF action areas

This Progress Framework and the accompanying Progress Snapshot fulfil the reporting requirement.

Action Area 1	Indicator	Progress Made
 **Increase the affordability and availability** of nutritious, diversified and sustainably produced foods (including blue foods, nutrient rich foods, alternative proteins, pulses, legumes, fruits and vegetables), without sacrificing yields	**Outcome:** Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the total (percent) (3-year average)	**2022 - 2024** 40% FAOSTAT **(Baseline) 2021 - 2023:** 43.2% FAOSTAT
	Process: Coordination of actions and policies across two or more sectors dealing with climate change, agricultural development, dietary guidelines, food procurement, and food security at national, regional and local level	"Healthy and Sustainable Diets for All" is one of the four priorities identified in revised Cambodia's Second Food Systems Roadmap. The Cambodian Government is committed to **making healthy diets and safe foods accessible to everyone** by: • **Improving availability and diversity**: Enhanced agricultural productivity and diversification, development of agro-industry, research and innovation, food safety measures, food fortification, value addition, commercialization, and infrastructure upgrades in local markets. • **Enhancing accessibility**: Expansion of social assistance programs targeting vulnerable individuals and households, including cash transfers, the Homegrown School Feeding Programme, and in-kind distribution of fortified foods • **Shaping healthy food environments:** Guiding consumers toward healthy choices through regulations on food marketing (including breast-milk substitutes) and promoting robust national dietary guidelines and standards. • **Affordability of healthy foods,** establishing a food reserve system to help stabilize prices and routine monitoring and analysis of food prices to inform policy and ensure price stability.

Action Area 2	Indicator	Progress Made
 **Improve livelihoods** for those working throughout food supply chains, including increasing incomes, creating jobs and economic opportunity, including for youth, and ensuring a just transition for producers and for rural and coastal communities.	**Outcome:** UNDP Multidimensional Poverty Index (% of population)	**2021 / 2022 Data** 16.6% UNDP Multidimensional Poverty index for Cambodia 2024 **Baseline data (2022 if annual data sets)** 45.0% (2010) Cambodia Country Poverty Analysis 2014
	Process: Measurable value for total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector (SDG 2.a.2) and complementary national actions to improve livelihoods	The Government of Cambodia is working to **improve livelihoods across the food supply chain** through a range of initiatives: • **Extending Agricultural Support**: Deploying Commune Agricultural Officers to all agricultural communes and supporting the development of modern agricultural cooperatives in rural areas. • **Youth Skills Development**: Providing vocational and technical training for young people from poor and vulnerable households. • **Rural Economic Diversification**: Offering training in crop production, animal and fish farming, and other livelihood skills. • **Inclusive, Nutrition-Sensitive Value Chains**: Promoting food systems that are more equitable and nutrition-focused. • **Women's Empowerment**: The Women's Empowerment Program focuses on providing skills and techniques for raising chickens, growing vegetables, handicrafts, tourism services and other services. • **Income Growth through Trade**: Supporting increased earnings through exports and market access.

Action Area 3	Indicator	Progress Made
 **Build and enhance the resilience of food systems** and their associated supply chains, reducing exposure to climate-, energy- and water-related risks, protecting vulnerable communities and actively promoting climate-smart agriculture.	**Outcome:** Irrigated area as a percentage of total farmland	**2022 data:** 61.37% [1,889,112 ha of the country's total farmland of 3,078,220 ha.] Statement from MOWRAM **(Baseline) 2018 data:** 42% (1 32 million ha of the country's total farmland of 3,078,220 ha.) JICA Evaluation
	Process: Coordination of actions and policies across two or more sectors dealing with climate change, agricultural development, dietary guidelines, food procurement, and food security at national, regional and local level.	Cambodia's NDC 3.0 outlines a range of climate-smart agricultural measures aimed at enhancing resilience and productivity. These include improved management and intermittent flooding of rice fields, mechanized direct-seeded rice, better rice straw management, and integrated, site-specific nutrient management. The NDC also promotes agro-ecological practices, such as reduced tillage and sustainable agriculture, alongside improved livestock waste management and optimized fodder and feeding practices. Collectively, these measures are designed to strengthen the adaptive capacity of the agricultural sector to climate change and other environmental shocks. In addition, Cambodia is implementing a range of complementary resilience measures: • **Improved Irrigation and Water Management**: Between 2020 and 2025, Cambodia invested $165 million in rehabilitating and developing irrigation systems, significantly increasing the proportion of irrigated land. • **Early Warning Systems and Anticipatory Action**: Strengthening MoWRAM-led systems to better prepare for and respond to climate and disaster risks. • **Adaptive Social Protection**: Expanding social protection programs to safeguard food security and nutrition during disasters, enhancing resilience against life-cycle socioeconomic risks and shocks. • **Food Reserve Systems and Rice Fortification**: Initiatives such as Green Trade and rice fortification support food security. • **Resilient Infrastructure**: Construction of climate-resilient rural roads, improved data collection and mapping of road networks. • **Strengthening Adaptive Capacity**: Enhancing the ability of communities and systems to respond to climate change impacts.

Action Area 4	Indicator	Progress Made
Improve gender parity and income equality, including increased protection of IPLCs rights and access to land, water and resources.	**Outcome:** Share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land (SDG 5.a.1) (% female land owners	**No comparative data set up to 2020, so 2020 data provide a baseline.** **(Baseline) 2020 data:** 52.8% FAOSTAT
	Process: How the national food system transformation pathway considers active participation from diverse stakeholders, including women, farmers, consumers, and civil society.	Cambodia has a current food systems transformation pathway that explicitly features gender equality, youth empowerment and greater equity for marginalised groups. The pathway will be published by the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development as the *Second Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development 2025-2030* shortly. To **improve gender parity and income equality** the Royal Government of Cambodia is working to: • **Enhance agency and decision-making**: Strengthen the role of women, adolescent girls, gender-diverse groups, youth, and the most vulnerable in shaping food and nutrition systems. • **Promote equitable practices:** Encourage family- and community-level actions to eliminate discriminatory gender norms, ensuring fair access to food and nutrition services. • **Increase women's participation in food systems:** Support women's involvement in marketing, infrastructure, and service provision to maintain product quality, quantity, and reduce food loss. • **Support education and awareness programs:** Implement the Women's Awareness Raising Program on Food Security and Nutrition and operate nursery classes since 2018. • **Expand civic engagement**: Promote inclusive participation in development and decision-making at all levels In addition, the Royal Government of Cambodia committed in 2024 to double cash transfers for pregnant and lactating women and children under two years, addressing concerns that previous amounts were insufficient to meet nutrition needs.

Action Area 5	Indicator	Progress Made
Protect and restore nature, including forests, peatlands, oceans, freshwater habitats, wetlands and coasts, as well as other natural ecosystems, thus supporting biodiversity and contributing to climate change mitigation.	**Outcome:** Terrestrial and Marine protected areas (% of total territorial area)	**2024 data:** 31.8% World Bank Data **(Baseline) 2022 data:** 31.8% World Bank Data
	Process: Measurable targets for the protection and restoration of biodiversity within forests, peatlands, oceans, freshwater habitats, wetlands, and coasts, that are consistent with the Global Biodiversity Framework.	Cambodia **exceeds the territorial coverage target of 30% under the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)** for area-based conservation. The Royal Government of Cambodia is **actively working to protect and restore nature** through a variety of initiatives: • **Agro-ecological transitions and landscape approaches** to safeguard ecosystem services, including the conservation of protected areas, deforestation restrictions, and forest and wetland restoration. • **Community-based conservation**, including the development of forest and fisheries communities and Community Protected Areas, with active participation from Indigenous communities, such as the Community Action for Sustainable Forests. • **Reforestation campaigns**, such as the annual planting of 1 million trees. • **Regional cooperation**, working within ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Subregion to promote environmental protection, natural resource conservation, biodiversity preservation, and sustainable development. • **Enhanced natural resource management** through conservation, preservation, and restoration initiatives. • **Environmental education programs**, such as Sala Baitong / Forest Education, to raise awareness and foster sustainable practices. Additionally, Cambodia's NDC 3.0 outlines commitments to restore, conserve, and manage mangroves, flooded forests, and aquatic habitats as part of its climate adaptation strategy.

Action Area 6	Indicator	Progress Made
Increase the share of land, ocean and freshwater under nature positive, ecosystem-based, and sustainable management practices (including agroecological, regenerative and other sustainable agricultural approaches).	**Outcome:** Agriculture area under organic agriculture	**2023 data:** 35 543 hectares FAOSTAT **(Baseline) 2022 data:** 30 694 hectares FAOSTAT
	Process: Measurable national targets for increasing the share of land, ocean, and freshwater under agroecological, regenerative, and other sustainable agricultural approaches, consistent with the Global Biodiversity Framework.	In June 2025, the Prime Minister outlined "Four Simplified Policy Principles", which included sustainable growth alongside food security, resource sufficiency, and abundance. The government continues efforts to manage and conserve agricultural land, addressing challenges such as soil degradation, erosion, nutrient depletion, and water quality deterioration. These measures aim to enhance soil health, productivity, and carbon storage to ensure long-term agricultural sustainability. Cambodia is scaling up sustainable practices through a variety of approaches: • **Improving agrifood systems**: Making them more efficient, climate-adapted, inclusive, formalized, and safe. For example, the PEARL Project (2023–2029) helps farmers adapt to climate change, improve agricultural practices, increase market access, boost productivity, and connect to high-value crops like rice and cashews. • **Promoting smart and sustainable agriculture**: Including Good Aquaculture Practice (GAqP) and Global Alliance on Health and Pollution (GAHP) standards, organic production, and deforestation-free agricultural systems. • **Regulating natural resource use**: Addressing illegal exploitation and promoting agroforestry practices. • **Holistic food system transformation**: Initiatives such as Future Food Together engage rural communities, retailers, consumers, and government bodies to implement solutions along the agri-food supply chain. • **Educational initiatives**: Promoting school gardening and youth engagement in sustainable agriculture.

Action Area 7	Indicator	Progress Made
Reduce all GHG emissions throughout the entire food value chain (including from AFOLU and energy sectors, and including post-farm and consumption-related activities); increase carbon removal activities in the AFOLU sector; and scale land mitigation opportunities in line with Paris Agreement targets.	**Outcome:** GHG emissions (total) % of the world total	**2023 data:** 48.77 (0.09% of world total) EU report 2024 **(Baseline) 2022 data:** 47.60 EU report 2024
	Outcome: Agri-food systems greenhouse gas emissions (kT CO_2eq)	**2022 data:** 60,807 kiloton FAOSTAT **(Baseline) 2021 data:** 63,288 kiloton FAOSTAT
	Process: Nationally established, measurable GHG reduction targets specifically for the entire food value chain, encompassing Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Uses (AFOLU), energy sectors, post-farm, and consumption-related activities	Cambodia's NDC 3.0 sets ambitious, Paris-aligned mitigation targets across five key sectors, including agriculture, forestry and other land use (FOLU), and waste. The country aims to reduce emissions by • 16% by 2035 under the 'Unconditional' scenario, using its own resources, and by • 55% under the 'Conditional' scenario, contingent on external funding. The NDC sets an unconditional GHG reduction target of 8% for forestry and other land use (FOLU), rising under the conditional scenario to 148%. Key actions include: • Agriculture: Promote climate-smart practices, notably Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) for rice, which reduces water use, improves water management, lowers chemical inputs and residue burning, and expands biogas adoption. • FOLU: Halve deforestation by 2030, expand forest cover, and scale up agroforestry

Action Area 8	Indicator	Progress Made
 **Reduce food loss and waste**.	**Outcome:** Food waste kg/capita/year	**2021 data:** Food waste kg/capita/year 86 kg/capita/year or 1 423 397 tonnes/year UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2021 **2024 data:** 85 kg/capita/year or 1 419 831 tonnes/year UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2024
	Process: Evidence of actions, policies, and partnerships aimed at reducing food loss across the food supply chain	The Government of Cambodia has committed to reducing f**ood loss and waste** in its NDC3.0. Current efforts include: • **Cooperative actions along the food chain**: Engaging stakeholders and consumers to reduce food loss and waste, manage potential risks, and ensure food safety through public guidelines and enforced standards. • **Waste reduction and recycling initiatives**: Promoting the recycling of waste and reducing plastic bag use through campaigns targeting schools, community-based eco-tourism, and factories. Pilot projects, such as composting kitchen waste at four schools in Sihanoukville, demonstrate practical implementation. • Circular Economy Strategy: Focused on Clean, Green, and Sustainable principles, aiming to minimize waste, enhance resource efficiency, and promote sustainable consumption and production (more details on implementation pending). • Roadmap on Sustainable Consumption and Production (2022–2035): Provides strategic guidance for reducing environmental impacts across the economy, including sustainable production practices, efficient use of resources, and the promotion of eco-friendly consumption patterns.

Action Area 9	Indicator	Progress Made
Realign public financial and policy incentives to promote low emission, resilient, nature positive production and healthy diets.	**Outcome:** The agriculture orientation index for government expenditure[1]	**2023:** 0.08 FAO SDG Data **(Baseline) 2022 data:** 0.06 FAO SDG Data
	Process: Implemented public financial or policy incentives that specifically incentivize low-emission farming practices and support the production of food for healthy diets	The Government of Cambodia is working to **realign public financial and policy incentives** to promote low-emission, resilient, nature-positive production and healthy diets through a range of measures: • **Food fortification policy**: Enhancing nutritional quality and public health outcomes. • **Fiscal reform and green growth promotion**: Using financial incentives to support sustainable agriculture and environmentally friendly practices. • **Tax reforms for healthy diets**: Encouraging the consumption of nutritious foods while discouraging unhealthy dietary choices. • **Strengthened governance and stakeholder engagement**: Improving climate change policies and ensuring the active participation of all relevant actors in decision-making processes.

1 The agriculture orientation index (AOI) for government expenditure is a ratio that measures how much a government prioritizes agriculture in its spending relative to the sector's share of the economy. It is calculated by dividing the share of government expenditure allocated to agriculture by the share of agriculture's value added to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). An AOI greater than 1 means the government spends more on agriculture than its economic size would suggest, while a value less than 1 indicates the opposite.

Action Area 10	Indicator	Progress Made
Accelerate innovation through increased investments in R&D and digital technology.	**Outcome:** Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)	**2023:** 120% The Global Economy Cambodia **2022:** 113% SDG 9.5.1
	Process: Documented national strategies, programs, and actions to promote agricultural innovation and adoption.	Cambodia is actively promoting innovation across agriculture, from production to processing and marketing by: • Strengthening local agricultural extension support: A programme is underway to place a Commune Agricultural Officer in every agricultural commune, supported by a newly designed curriculum. • Modernizing agriculture: Through water management, pest control, and the adoption of improved crop varieties. • High-quality seed development: A programme is in place for the production and dissemination of high-quality seeds as part of the broader agricultural modernization effort. • Investment and incentives: Targeting youth, education, digitalization, mechanization, enterprise, and SMEs through programmes run by the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation and partnerships with the private sector. • Capacity building and R&D support: Supporting research, innovation, and technology adoption in agriculture. • Technological adoption and value addition: Promoting mechanization, digital tools, value-added processing, and rice fortification. • Digital learning initiatives: Implementing digital schools and digital libraries to enhance knowledge and skills development.

3. Investment in Food System Transformation

DOMESTIC INVESTMENT

The Ministry of Rural Development was allocated USD 341.5 million (1.398 trillion riel) in the 2025 budget. In May 2025 the Cambodian government announced a $35 million budget allocation to support agricultural development from 2025 to 2027, offering low-interest loans to strengthen agricultural quality and enhance market competitiveness. Cambodia's banks and MFIs channel over USD 5.8 billion in agricultural lending.



INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT

Cambodia has secured significant international investment and donor support since joining the ACF including:

- In September 2024 Cambodia signed a **new Country Partnership framework** with the World Bank for 2025-2029
- In May 2025, the European Investment Bank approved **a €60m loan**, paired with a €20m EU grant, to modernize agriculture, improve farmer market access, and upgrade value chains
- In July 2025 the Green Climate Fund approved a **USD 270m programme** to support Climate Adaptive Irrigation and Sustainable Agriculture for Resilience
- In June 2024 **USD 360,000** from the SDG fund for *"Transforming Cambodia's food systems to become more sustainable, inclusive and resilient*' to support the development of the Food Systems Roadmap



4. Priorities for the next 12 months

Cambodia is looking for USD 360m investment over the next 5 years to deliver across the six priority areas of their food systems roadmap:

1. Climate-Smart and Nutrition-Sensitive Value Chains
2. Sustainable Aquatic Food Systems
3. Food Safety Systems
4. Food Fortification
5. School Feeding and School Food Environments
6. Social and Behaviour Change for Healthy and Sustainable Diets





For more information about the Alliance of Champions for Food System Transformation:

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