



Validation Workshop

VULNERABILITY PROFILE OF CAMBODIA & STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF EROSION OF GTF SECTOR ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

Hotel Cambodiana

30 May-1 June 2023

Annotated agenda

1. Background

The Vulnerability Profile (VP) of Cambodia is mandated by General Assembly resolution 59/209 of 20 December 2004, which states that “after a country has fulfilled the criteria for graduation for the first time, UNCTAD is mandated to prepare a vulnerability profile on the identified country to be considered by the Committee for Development (CDP) at its following triennial review.

First included in the United Nations list of least developed countries (LDCs) in 1991, Cambodia, was found pre-eligible for graduation by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) at its 2021 triennial review. At its 2024 triennial review, the CDP will decide whether to recommend Cambodia for graduation.

The inception mission to officially launch the process of preparing Cambodia’s national Vulnerability Profile was undertaken by UNCTAD on 10-12 August 2022, following which UNCTAD has completed the present draft for national validation. UNCTAD will also present initial findings of a study on the implications for women’s employment of the erosion of Cambodia’s garments industry.

2. Objectives

The objective of the Workshop is to validate the VP and thereby identify key elements towards a national roadmap for graduation with momentum centred on addressing and mitigating key identified vulnerabilities. There is growing understanding and consensus on the need to build and strengthen the economic resilience of national economies and to further structural transformation as the basis for sustainable and impactful development progress.

With the view to facilitate the informed identification of feasible policies to build strategic resilience against internal and external vulnerabilities, the Workshop will provide a deeper understanding of the key areas of vulnerability and attendant consequences identified in the VP.

Interactive discussions in each working session are intended to enable a deeper understanding of the challenges raised by the VP. Issues to be interrogated include:

- The key areas of vulnerabilities that must be tackled
- The prospects, opportunities and challenges Cambodia is likely to face in the road to graduation and as a graduated LDC
- The policy options and strategies necessary to address identified challenges, including related constraints on productive capacities and structural economic transformation
- Potential limitations in institutional capacity, including the importance of inter-ministerial coordination
- The role of development partners in supporting Cambodia in its efforts to build productive capacities and achieving developmental momentum

DAY 1: Tuesday, 30 May 2023

09:00 - 09:30 Registration

09:30 - 10:00 Opening remarks

Moderator: Secretariat, National Committee on Graduation

- Ms. Alissar Chaker, UNDP Resident Representative, Cambodia
- Mr. Arunabha Ghosh, CDP Rapporteur for Cambodia
- Mr. Junior Davis, Head, Policy and Research Branch, ALDC, UNCTAD
- H.E. Chhay Than, Senior Minister, Minister of Planning, and Chair of Cambodia's Graduation Committee

10:00 - 10:30 *PHOTO OPPORTUNITY AND COFFEE BREAK*

10:30 - 11:00 Orientation Session: Primer on the VP process, the graduation process and study on GTF

WORKING SESSIONS

Working Session I Prosperity: Situation analysis and key vulnerabilities

Moderator: H.E. Phan Phalla, Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance

This session discusses Cambodia's development trajectory benchmarked against regional trends and early observable impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and identifies key issues for structural transformation and productive capacities deserving strategic policy attention

11:00 - 11:45 Presentation by:

Ms. Matfobhi Riba, Economic Affairs Officer Division for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes, UNCTAD (20 mins)

Discussants: Dr. Khou Vouthy, Technical Deputy Director General, NBC
Ms. Sumitra Jayaseelan, Assistant Director IAI & NDG, ASEAN Secretariat (25 mins)

11:45 - 13:00 Interactive debate

13:00 - 14:00

LUNCH BREAK

Working Session II

People and Planet: Key vulnerabilities linked to social development the environment

Moderator: Dr. Khem Borin, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

The session will discuss the VP findings on the situation analysis and associated vulnerabilities linked to key indications on social development and environmental threats.

14:00 - 14:45 Presentation by:

Ms. Matfobhi Riba, Economic Affairs Officer Division for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes, UNCTAD (20 mins)

Discussants: H.E. Dr. Mok Sarom, Deputy Director General, MoEYS
H.E. Chan Sopha, Director General, MISTI
H.E. Heng Chanthoeun, Deputy Director General, MoE
(25 mins)

14:45 - 15:30 Interactive debate

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee break

Working Session III Findings of study on the implications of GTF erosion

UNCTAD has undertaken a special analysis on the risk of erosion of women's economic empowerment and options for mitigating the consequences from graduation impacts on the garments and footwear sector in Cambodia. This session will present the findings of the study and implications for sustaining realized socio-economic gains, including their relevance for industrial policy in Cambodia.

16:00 - 14:45 Presentation by:

Ms. Matfobhi Riba, Economic Affairs Officer Division for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes, UNCTAD (20 mins)

Discussants: H.E. The Chhun Hak, Director General, MoWA

H.E. Rith Vuthy, Deputy Director General of CRDB/CDC

Mr. Arron Goldman, Better Factories Initiative, ILO

(25 mins)

16:30 - 17:00 Interactive debate

END OF DAY 1

DAY 2: Wednesday, 31 May 2023

Working Session IV Group work Expanding quality entrepreneurship and strengthening FDI linkages to promote economic resilience

Moderator: Mr. Yusuke Tateno, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP

Participants will be divided into two groups to discuss the recommendations captured in VP section 4. One group will focus on sub-section 4.1 and the other on sub-section 4.2. Groups will be given 40 minutes. Each group will nominate a rapporteur for the purposes of reporting on the outcome of group discussions in plenary the following morning.

09:00 -11:00 GROUP WORK

10:00 - 10:30 Coffee break

Working Session V Group Work Report Back: Expanding quality entrepreneurship and strengthening FDI linkages to promote economic resilience

Moderator: Yusuke Tateno, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP

The session focuses on the reporting on outcomes of group work and the related interactive debate.

11:00 - 12:00 Presentation on group work and discussion

12:00 - 13:30 LUNCH BREAK

Panel Debate: Peace and Partnerships: Interactions with trade preferences and the mobilization of development finance

Moderator: Matfobhi Riba, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD

This session will discuss critical political economy issues that impact on development partnerships, critical changes associated with loss of LDC status, and the possibilities of securing extensions on existing and new forms of international support beyond graduation.

13:30 - 15:30 Interventions by panelists (maximum 10 minutes each):

- Development partnership prospects (H.E. Huot Pom, Under Secretary of State, MEF and H.E. Youn Heng, Director of Department, CIB/CDC)
- Private sector stakeholder perspectives on loss of LDC status and perceptions of threats from low-carbon transition (Chamber of Commerce of Cambodia – to be confirmed)
- Private sector preparedness for low-carbon transition (Mr. Sok Narin, Country Representative, UNIDO)
- Can new RTAs compensate for potential losses from CBAM/loss of LDC preference markets and rising wages (Mr. Kong Sotheara, Deputy Director, Ministry of Commerce/Mr. Arunabha Ghosh, CDP Rapporteur)
- Cambodia’s utilization of trade preferences, what the future holds (Stefano Inama, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD)

Interactive Discussion

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee break

Working Session VII Roadmap on graduation with momentum

Moderator: Mr. Junior Davis, Head PARB/ALDC, UNCTAD

This session will explore priority actions for building developmental momentum in the transition towards graduation. The national roadmap/action plan for graduation is a key output of the Validation Workshop. It forms the basis on which bespoke advisory services that UNCTAD can consider making available to the 2021 cohort of LDCs pre-qualified for graduation.

16:00 - 17:30 Breakout sessions on graduation roadmap/action plan

END OF DAY 2

DAY 3: Thursday, 1 June 2023

Moderator: Mr. Arunabha Ghosh, CDP Rapporteur for Cambodia

09:00 - 09:45 Plenary on graduation roadmap
Presentation by Rolf Traeger, Chief, LDC Section, UNCTAD

09:45 - 10:00 Completion of work evaluation questionnaire

10:00 - 10:30 Coffee break

Moderator: Mr. Junior Davis, Head PARB/ALDC, UNCTAD

10:00 - 10:30 Wrap up and workshop closing

- Presentation by UNCTAD: Summary of key take-away messages and information on follow up activities by UNCTAD benefitting Cambodia
- Observations by Mr. Arunabha Ghosh, CDP Rapporteur for Cambodia
- Way forward: Presentation by H.E. Dr. Poch Bunnak, Ministry of Planning

Closing remarks

- Chair of Cambodia's Graduation Committee (Ministry of Planning)
- Ms. Alissar Chaker, UNDP Resident Representative, Cambodia
- H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce

12:30 LUNCH BREAK

End of technical workshop
