Policy Idol

The Crisis of a Century: COVID in Cambodia

GLHLTH 750 Global Health Policy and Systems
Country Profile

Population: 16.01 million people

Major industries:
- Agriculture
- Textiles
- Tourism
Population Breakdown

**Figure 1.** Share of People Living in Urban Areas

Source: UN World Urbanization Prospects (2018)

Note: Urban populations are defined based on the definition of urban areas by national statistical offices.

**Figure 2.** Population Density (ppl/sq km)

Current COVID-19 Situation

First Case: 28 Jan 2020
Cases: 119
Recovered: 63
Active: 61
Deaths: 0

- Closure of schools, public places
- Stopped religious gatherings
- Designated a reference laboratory for testing (IPC)
- 3 hospitals and 25 provincial hospitals can test
  - ~570,000 people per facility if distributed evenly

Source:
https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6
Healthcare Infrastructure

- Cambodia’s health system is relatively fragmented
  - Policy from MoH has to go through multiple layers to reach the districts/communities
- Quality and delivery of lower levels vary by region
  - Lots of autonomy at District level
- Strong reliance on Community Health Workers for delivery of many services

Sources:
# Healthcare Infrastructure

WHO Public Health Emergency Preparedness out of a score of 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparedness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R.1.1 National multi-hazard public health emergency preparedness and response plan is developed and implemented</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.1.2 Priority public health risks and resources are mapped and utilized</td>
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<th>Emergency response operations</th>
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<tr>
<td>R.2.1 Capacity to activate emergency operations</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.2.2 Emergency operations centre operating procedures and plans</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.2.3 Emergency operations programme</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.2.4 Case management procedures are implemented for IHR (2005) relevant hazards</td>
<td>1</td>
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Country Response Timeline

January 28, 2020
First Case

March 7, 2020
Second official case

March 14, 2020
Start working and schooling from home
Ban visitors from high risk countries

March 17, 2020
cases double from 12 to 24

March 23, 2020
Largest overnight increase

March 31, 2020
Government Announces Draft Bill

March 18, 2020
citizens encouraged to stay at home

Source: Cano, 2020
April 2, 2020 9:00PM EDT

Cambodia: Emergency Bill Recipe for Dictatorship

COVID-19 Crisis Pretext for Hun Sen to Seek Unlimited Powers, Go After Critics

Source: https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/02/cambodia-emergency-bill-recipe-dictatorship#
“The draft law comes amid a longstanding crackdown by the Cambodian government on civil society, the media, critics, and the opposition.”

Draft Law:
- impose confinement, quarantine, conscription and evacuation
- manage, seize and handle properties
- set prices on necessities and services
- conduct surveillance and monitoring through telecommunication systems
- prohibit dissemination or publication of information that may cause fear or social chaos
SE Asia Response: Lessons Learned

Successes

Singapore (HIC): 1,623 cases, 6 deaths
- Launched massive temperature screening in public spaces (e.g. malls)

Vietnam (MIC): 255 cases, 0 deaths
- Centralized efforts on containment
- Clear public messaging

Challenges

Philippines (LMIC): 4,076 cases, 203 deaths
- Lack of centralized coordination and action between national government and MOH
- Sudden shift to drastic action:

Malaysia (UMIC): 4,228 cases, 67 deaths
- Initial nonchalance by government delayed major action

Case data from John Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center as of April 9th, 2020
# Stakeholder Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Supportive</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Opposed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Power</strong></td>
<td>World Bank, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Medium Power</strong></td>
<td>research organizations, business leaders - telecom/health industries, *National Public Health Emergency Operations Center</td>
<td>Healthcare workers</td>
<td>Business leaders - non-essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Power</strong></td>
<td>Volunteers, community</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>community</td>
</tr>
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*Strengthen National Public Health Emergency Operation Center*  
(World Bank, 2020)
National Public Health Emergency Operation Center (NPHEOC)

- Strengthen NPHEOC to close the gap
  - Additional staff
  - Funding through Cambodian government
  - Designate reporting guidelines for national, provincial, and operational districal levels of healthcare
  - Power to reallocate resources: PPE and equipment
    - Engage textile industry

(Balajee et al. 2017)
Policy Approach

- Evaluate programs
- Re-prioritize resource allocation

- Establish checkpoints
- Awareness campaigns
- Production and distribution of PPE and equipment
- Reallocation of funds for vulnerable groups

- Clear communication from national and international health authorities
- Close the gap of healthcare levels

- Home quarantine/shelter in place
- Close businesses
- Public messaging

(Ebrahim et al. 2020)
Implementation Plan

Enforce shelter in place
- Designate workforce to ensure compliance
- Non-essential businesses to be shut off
- Social distancing to be strictly maintained

Administer country wide checkpoints
- Drive thru screening
- Checkpoints at grocery stores/pharmacies

Awareness campaigns
- Telecom industry to support setting up helplines
- Innovative ways to spread information across rural populations

Production of PPE and gear
- Textile workforce and factories to prioritize and shift production
- Safe work environments for mass production

Reallocation of funds for vulnerable groups
- Essentials to be distributed
- Unemployed benefits offered
- Subsidies for small businesses to sustain employees
Funding

- US, $2,000,000.00
- Smart Axiata (COVID 19 Relief Fund), $1,000,000.00
- World Bank, $34,000,000.00
- Cambodian Gov't: Low Interest Loans, $50,000,000.00
- Cambodian Gov't: Ministry of Health, $30,000,000.00
- Cambodian Gov't: Garment Workers, $98,000,000.00
- Cambodian Gov't: Other, $622,000,000.00
Funding Breakdown: by aim

- **Shelter in Place**
  - Cambodian Gov't
  - World Bank
- **Check Points**
  - Cambodian Gov't (MOH)
  - World Bank
- **PPE**
  - Cambodian Gov't
- **Awareness Campaigns**
  - Smart Axiata
  - US Gov't
- **Funds for Vulnerable People**
  - Cambodian Gov't
  - World Bank
Conclusion

- Centralized action through NPHEOC
  - Enforce shelter in place
  - Establish country wide checkpoint
  - Awareness campaign
  - Production of PPE and other resources to sustain economy
  - Reallocation of funds for vulnerable groups
- Creating a comprehensive and sustainable structure for epidemics and pandemics in the future even after COVID-19 has passed.


World Bank. “World Bank Approves $20 Million for Cambodia’s COV