



THE SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT OF HIV AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL IN CAMBODIA

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FOREWORD

Within Cambodia, the past decade has seen a continuous decline of HIV prevalence, thanks to strong political leadership, generous donor support, and the tireless efforts of civil society and the private sector. The results of this partnership have been impressive. National HIV prevalence is projected to drop to 0.7% by the end of 2010, down from a high of 2% in 1998.

Despite such achievements, there is still work to be done. This study demonstrates that HIV-affected households continue to face a variety of economic and social challenges. People living with HIV are frequently squeezed out of the workforce, while their children forgo educational opportunities in order to contribute to household income or fulfil caregiving roles. In addition, people living with HIV and their families often experience HIV-related discrimination, with resulting psychosocial outcomes. Furthermore, long-term consequences may be felt in relation to population and macroeconomic growth. It is therefore essential that Cambodia builds on the momentum of the past decade, and expands efforts to ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for PLHIV and their families.

Within this context, this report examines the socioeconomic impact of HIV at the household level in Cambodia, providing policy-makers and programme managers with a rich evidence base upon which to strengthen existing impact mitigation strategies, introduce new interventions, and ensure resources are utilised effectively and efficiently.

On behalf of the National AIDS Authority, I wish to thank the United Nations for supporting the study on the Socioeconomic Impact of HIV at the Household Level in Cambodia, as part of their program of support to the national HIV response. I would also like to recognise the hard work and tenacity of Sanigest Internacional and the Center for Advanced Study throughout the implementation of this study.

H.E. Dr. Teng Kunthy
Secretary General
National AIDS Authority



FOREWORD

The past decade has seen the Royal Kingdom of Cambodia undergo rapid economic development, with growth forecast to reach six percent in 2011 and Cambodia predicted to become a middle-income country by 2020. Correspondingly, overall poverty figures have dropped from 47 percent in 1993 to 30 percent in 2007. However, associated benefits have not been equitably distributed, resulting in increased inequality between urban and rural areas, and among key sub-populations.

The global financial downturn, with associated food and fuel price inflation, reminded us that macroeconomic growth alone cannot protect vulnerable populations against economic shock. Improving resilience means securing livelihoods against unpredictable natural, human, and economic shocks, as well as strengthening social protection systems.

While Cambodia has made remarkable progress in halting and reversing the national HIV epidemic and scaling up access to antiretroviral therapy and treatment for opportunistic infections, the disease continues to exact a profound impact on Cambodian households.

This study on the Socioeconomic Impact of HIV at the Household Level in Cambodia highlights the extreme vulnerability of HIV-affected households to economic shock. Findings indicate HIV-affected households face decreased income, combined with increased medical expenses, which sees households turn to poverty-inducing coping mechanism such as depletion of savings and assets and increased indebtedness, with negative impacts in relation to food security and psychosocial wellbeing, as well as the status of women and the education of children.

This report recommends the scaling up of HIV-sensitive social protection programmes in mitigating the impact of HIV on affected households, and ensuring poverty-reduction interventions reach the poorest and most vulnerable members of society.

The United Nations in Cambodia would like to thank the National AIDS Authority for supporting this critical piece of work, and congratulate Sanigest Internacional and the Centre for Advanced Study (CAS) for producing an outstanding piece of research which will continue to guide HIV impact mitigation policies and programmes for years to come.

Douglas Broderick
United Nations Resident Coordinator, Cambodia



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We are grateful for the hard work of the supervisors and the enumerators involved in the field-work for this study. Their efforts resulted in the informative results seen throughout the report.

Finally, thanks are given to the thousands of individuals throughout Cambodia who allowed their stories to be shared through this report. The photos throughout the report are representative of the lives behind the facts: people living in both HIV-affected and non-affected households. All photo credits are to UNAIDS/Oliver O'Hanlon, UNDP or Katherine Moriarty.



ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
CAS	Center for Advanced Study
CBHI	Community based health insurance
CCW	Cambodian Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
CG	Caregiver
CI	Confidence interval
CPN+	Cambodian People Living with HIV/AIDS Network
CSEIS-HIV	Cambodia Socioeconomic Impact of HIV on Households Survey 2009
CSES	Cambodia Socioeconomic Survey
CSPRO	Census and Survey Processing System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HBC	Home-Based Care
HEF	Health equity fund
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HH	Household
HIV-HH	HIV-affected household
HoH	Head of household
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
KAP	Key affected population
KHANA	Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance
MMM	Mondul Mith Chuoy Mith (Friends Helping Friends)
MTCT	Mother-to-child-transmission
NAA	National AIDS Authority

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