

# FINAL SURVEY REPORT

## *Rapid Assessment on Social and Health Impact of COVID-19 Among Returning Migrant Workers in Cambodia*

November 2020





## FUNDING

This study was funded by the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) as well as IOM, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNWOMEN and the Government of Japan through UNICEF. The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the UN agencies.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .....	4
List of Figures .....	4
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....	5
FOREWORD .....	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	8
1. INTRODUCTION .....	16
1.1. Context of the Research.....	16
1.2. Purpose of the Research .....	18
2. METHODOLOGY .....	20
2.1. Sample Design.....	20
2.2. Instruments for Data Collection.....	21
2.3. Training of Interviewers.....	21
2.4. Pilot Test .....	22
2.5. Data collection and data processing.....	22
2.6. Data Analysis .....	23
2.7. Ethical Considerations.....	24
2.8. Limitations of the Study.....	25
3. FINDINGS OF QUANTITATIVE SURVEY .....	26
3.1. Sample distribution.....	26
3.2. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents .....	26
3.3. Migrants' situation in Thailand .....	29
3.3.1. Occupations and Incomes.....	29
3.3.2. Length of Stay and Living Conditions .....	30
3.4. Return to Cambodia Amid the Pandemic .....	31
3.4.1. Reason for Return to Cambodia.....	31
3.4.2. COVID-19 Assistance at the Border .....	31
3.4.3. Re-migration Plan.....	33
3.5. Living Conditions back in Cambodia .....	34
3.5.1. Relocation and Housing condition .....	34
3.5.2. Financial situation .....	35

3.5.3. Concerns and Supports .....	38
3.5.4. Engagement in housework (in Thailand and Cambodia) .....	40
3.6. Health and Social Impact of COVID-19.....	41
3.6.1. Nutritional Situation .....	41
3.6.2. Family Health Situation .....	42
3.6.3. Situation Related to COVID-19 Prevention .....	47
3.6.4. Situation Related to Maternal and Child Health.....	52
3.6.5. Situation related to Water and Sanitation.....	55
3.6.6. Situation related to Child Protection .....	58
3.7. Highlights of Quantitative Results .....	58
4. FINDINGS OF QUALITATIVE SURVEY.....	59
4.1. Sample of stakeholders/key informants .....	59
4.2. Viewpoints of stakeholders/key informants.....	59
4.2.1. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on RMW .....	59
4.2.2. Assistance to RMW and Existing Services .....	60
4.2.3. Collaboration and Coordination of Assistance .....	63
4.2.4. Challenges for the Assistance .....	64
4.2.5. Suggestions Made by SH/KI .....	66
5. DISCUSSION (ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS) .....	67
6. CONCLUSIONS .....	79
7. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	80
ANNEX 1: Bibliography.....	82

## List of Tables

Table 1: Sample Size of Quantitative Survey by Provinces .....	20
Table 2: Survey Sample Size .....	22
Table 3: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents.....	26
Table 4: IDPoor Cardholders and COVID-19 Cash Assistance .....	28
Table 5: Occupation of Migrant Workers in Thailand.....	29
Table 6: Incomes in Cambodia .....	35
Table 7: Loans and Loan Payment .....	36
Table 8: Financial Autonomy for Daily Subsistence .....	37
Table 9: Supports Received by Returnees .....	39
Table 10: Sources of Supports .....	39
Table 11: Level of Engagement in the Housework in Thailand and in Cambodia.....	40
Table 12: Time (hours) Spent on the Housework in Thailand and in Cambodia .....	41
Table 13: Existing health conditions of Respondents .....	45
Table 14: Existing Health Conditions of Respondents' Spouses or Partners .....	45
Table 15: Existing Health Conditions of Respondents' Children .....	45
Table 16: Change in mental health after the return (by gender, residence).....	47
Table 17: Favourite sources of information on COVID-19 .....	48
Table 18: Frequency of Preventive Actions Against COVID-19 Transmission (By Gender and Locality) ....	50
Table 19: Contraceptive Methods Currently Used by Respondents (By Province, Locality, Married) .....	54
Table 20: Household Sources of Drinking Water .....	56
Table 21: Household Water Treatment Methods.....	57
Table 22: Household Sanitation Facilities .....	57
Table 23: Percentage of IDPoor in the Survey Sample and General Population (By Provinces) .....	68

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Factors of Vulnerability (By Gender).....	28
Figure 2: Accompany During Migration (By Gender).....	30
Figure 3: Return of Respondents to Cambodia Over Time (By Month).....	31
Figure 4: Assistance at the Border for COVID-19 (By Gender).....	32
Figure 5: Assistance at the Border for COVID-19 (By Provinces) .....	33
Figure 6: Expected Length of Stay in Cambodia (By Gender, By Locality) .....	33
Figure 7: Expected Length of Stay in Cambodia (By Provinces).....	34
Figure 8: Purpose of Loan (By Frequency) .....	37
Figure 9: Current Concerns of Returnees and Families (Frequency) .....	38
Figure 10: Respondents Having Sufficient Daily Foods (By Gender, Province).....	42
Figure 11: Changes in Physical Health Status (By Gender, Locality) .....	43
Figure 12: Places of Medical Consultation (By Gender).....	44
Figure 13: Knowledge of COVID-19 Preventive Measures (By Gender and Locality) .....	49
Figure 14: Contraceptive Utilization (By Age, Marital Status) .....	53
Figure 15: Reasons for Not Using Contraception (Frequency) .....	55

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	Antenatal care
CDHS	Cambodia Demographics and Health Survey
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRL	Indochina Research (Cambodia) Co., Ltd
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IUD	Intrauterine device
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PHD	Provincial Health Department
PNC	Postnatal care
QC	Quality controls
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RMW	Returning Migrant Workers
SH/KI	Stakeholder/Key informant
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization



## FOREWORD


Migration is an increasingly important economic lifeline and a factor driving social mobility for families in Cambodia. Over the last fifteen years, internal and international migration has been one of the most significant transformational changes in Cambodian society and the trend is set to continue. Migration offers opportunities and poses challenges for migrants and their families, especially children. As a powerful driver of sustainable development migration helps fill labour market gaps, promotes cultural exchange and skills transfer, and ensures that businesses can flourish. In the countries of origin, migrants' income, sent in the form of remittances constitutes a critical lifeline for millions of individual households, helping families raise their living standards above subsistence and vulnerability levels although some of them have experienced challenging and dangerous situation and exploitation in the destination countries. Families left behind tend to use this income to satisfy basic needs, such as food, access to medical care and/or to repay debt.

As Thailand began to curb COVID-19 by reducing its economic activities and closing its borders, more than 120,000 Cambodian migrant workers have crossed the border from Thailand to Cambodia since March 2020. The mass return of migrants has led to socio-economic repercussions on their families and communities. A big proportion of non-poor households, who sit just above the poverty line, constitute the main group of migrants looking for better livelihood opportunities in neighboring countries. Their return to Cambodia with no jobs means their family and host communities can easily slide back to poverty, particularly in the context of the projected contracting economy.

Migrant workers' access to social protection is fraught with challenges and shortcomings. Legislative barriers limiting migrant workers' access to social security benefits are compounded by the fact that social security systems cover only part of the labour force. A worker's specific immigration status, including when a person is an undocumented migrant worker, may make them ineligible for accessing benefits. Factors such as nationality, residence or documentation requirements, being employed in the informal economy, or other administrative barriers may also prevent migrant workers from being covered by social security systems of either the host or the home country.

The *Rapid Assessment on the Social and Health Impact of COVID-19 Among the Returning Migrant Workers* led by UNFPA on behalf of the UN team and funded by MPTF, UNFPA, IOM, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, UNAIDS and the Government of Japan and conducted in collaboration with the National Committee on Counter Trafficking in Persons (NCCT) and relevant ministries, aimed to produce evidence to identify and formulate new policies and strategies to effectively respond to the impact of COVID-19 on the returning migrants in Cambodia. We hope that the findings and recommendations from this assessment will help inform stakeholders to respond to the challenge of building back better through developing concrete short-term, immediate and long-term action plans to support migrants, their families and children

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Indochina Research team and all the people who contributed to this study. Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to MPTF, UNFPA, IOM, UNICEF, UNWOMEN and UNAIDS for providing technical and financial support for the successful completion of this research.



H. E. Chou Bun Eng

(Secretary of State, Ministry of Interior)

Permanent Vice Chair of the National  
Committee on Counter Trafficking in  
Persons

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *Rapid Assessment on Social and Health Impact of COVID-19 Among Returning Migrant Workers* was led and managed by UNFPA in close collaboration with the National Committee on Counter Trafficking in Persons (NCCT) and in consultation and technical and financial support from IOM, UNICEF, UN Women and UNAIDS.

The assessment has been concluded through a collaborative inter-agency process and involved many partners and stakeholders at national and provincial levels as well as local non-governmental organizations. This publication would not have been possible without their committed collaboration and valuable contributions.

Firstly, UNFPA Cambodia would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Mrs. Chou Bun Eng, Secretary of State, Ministry of Interior and permanent NCCT Vice Chair for her strong leadership and support on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia. The NCCT team played and continues to play a crucial coordinating role among key stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels to support the returning migrants.

The study was conducted by Indochina Research Co., Ltd. (IRL). UNFPA is grateful to Dr. Thor Rasoka, research Advisor and Ms. Hong Sineath, research manager of IRL and other field data collectors for their assistance in carrying out this study.

UNFPA Cambodia would like also to extend its sincere gratitude to the UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Pauline Tamesis and her team for the effective coordination and leadership, the United Nations (UN) COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) and its secretariat for the generous funding, as well as IOM Cambodia, UNICEF Cambodia, UNWOMEN Cambodia and UNAIDS Cambodia for the financial and technical support throughout the entire process.

Finally, UNFPA wishes to recognize the invaluable contribution made by the returning migrants themselves and other key stakeholders who voluntarily spent their time, participated in the study, and provided insightful information for this assessment.

We hope that this report is useful and provides tangible evidence for policy makers,

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_19488](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_19488)

