



Integrated Country Strategy

Cambodia

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Approved: March 22, 2022

Table of Contents

1. Chief of Mission Priorities	1
2. Mission Strategic Framework	2
3. Mission Goals and Objectives	4
4. Management Objectives	14

1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Though U.S.-Cambodia bilateral military cooperation is at an all-time low, with only limited Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) accounting, Peacekeeping Operation (PKO) support, and demining efforts remaining, Mission law enforcement entities continue to achieve success in pursuing counter crime cases with Cambodian counterparts in areas such as sexual exploitation against children and bringing fugitives to justice. A new DEA office expanded our ability to hinder the transit of narcotics through Cambodia to the United States. Meanwhile, Cambodia's failure to address persistent trafficking in persons (TIP) challenges has earned it a spot on the TIP Report's "Tier 2 Watchlist" for three years running, and it faces a potential automatic downgrade to Tier 3 in 2022.

Our top priority will remain the protection of American citizens. Likewise, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) will remain an integral part of all we do. Our assistance and public diplomacy programs will proactively engage and support populations across the country—such as indigenous groups and religious minorities. Within the Mission, we will continue our efforts – guided by our Diversity and Inclusion Council – to celebrate the remarkable diversity we have, diversify our pool of recruits for American and local positions, and ensure small and minority-owned businesses have visibility on procurement opportunities. Meanwhile, learning lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, we will ensure the Mission community is even more resilient and prepared to handle any challenges that might come our way.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Protect American citizens and U.S. national security interests.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Capabilities of key vetted security services improved to combat threats to U.S. national security while respecting human rights.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** U.S. interests and citizens protected and regional security enhanced by countering threats to U.S. national security and defense operations.

Mission Goal 2: Expand U.S. economic prosperity and Cambodia's growth as an independent and prosperous economic partner.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Inclusive and sustainable economic growth broadened through a more resilient economy. (CDCS DO 1)
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** U.S. exports to Cambodia and Cambodian investment in the United States increased and the investment climate and regulatory environment for American businesses improved.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Health, education, and welfare of Cambodians improved through enhanced systems. (CDCS DO 2)

Mission Goal 3: Promote American ideals in support of a free and open Cambodia as part of a rules-based Indo-Pacific region.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Support for U.S. values and ideals strengthened through the amplification of independent voices.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Human rights protected and government accountability advanced through strengthening civil society and supporting rights under the Cambodian constitution. (CDCS DO 3)

Management Objective 1: Improved Mission-wide diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) results.

Approved: March 22, 2022

Management Objective 2: Management services enabled the Mission to achieve its goals while meeting the challenges of an evolving political and health environment.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Protect American citizens and U.S. national security interests.

Description | There is no higher priority across the globe than protection of U.S. citizens. This is particularly so as the COVID-19 pandemic ebbs and flows. Other threats to our national and regional security emanating from Cambodia include the PRC's efforts to expand its political influence and military footprint here and the constant menace of transnational criminal activity (particularly TIP, child sexual exploitation, and narcotics). To protect citizens and offset these threats, we will increase the capacity of vetted Cambodian security forces, government officials, and immigration units, and enhance our own capacity to respond to crises. The Mission will also work to counter state-sponsored disinformation. To maintain ties with the Cambodian military in a time of tense bilateral relations, we will continue to achieve the fullest possible accounting of Vietnam War-era missing in action U.S. personnel and support the reduction of unexploded remnants of war.

Objective 1.1 | Capabilities of key vetted security services improved to combat threats to U.S. national security while respecting human rights.

- **Objective 1.1 Justification |** The security services lack professional capacity and capability and some individuals and units have been associated with corruption and human rights abuses. Nevertheless, cooperative action with some elements of the security services is essential to achieve national security objectives. Thus, while fully respecting vetting through Leahy and other interagency processes, the Mission will develop and maintain relationships with key police and immigration units through mentorship and training both in-country and at ILEA Bangkok. Improving of professionalism and respect for human rights will help ensure that groups seeking to undermine efforts to advance diversity and inclusion efforts, or to repress underrepresented groups, do not gain in influence.

- **Objective 1.1 Linkages** | Mission Objective 1.1 supports Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) Priority 1: “Protect the security of the American People.” It supports the Indo-Pacific Strategy’s Objective 4: “Bolster Indo-Pacific Security.” It supports the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goal 1: “Renew U.S. leadership and mobilize coalitions to address the global challenges that have the greatest impact on Americans’ security and well-being,” including Objective 1.4: “Lead allies and partners to address shared challenges and competitors; prevent, deter, and resolve conflicts; and promote international security.” And finally, Mission Objective 1.1 supports the East Asia Pacific (EAP) Joint Regional Strategy Bureau Objective 3.4 on countering transnational crime, violent extremism, and human trafficking.
- **Objective 1.1 Risks** | A failure to achieve this objective could threaten the U.S. government’s ability to secure its borders from transnational threats, endanger counter proliferation efforts, and hinder efforts to protect U.S. citizens abroad. Mission Cambodia will address this risk by leveraging Cambodian law enforcement officials’ desire for capacity building and preference for U.S.-led training, and to be seen as contributing to regional law enforcement efforts on countering transnational threats. Partnering inadvertently with individuals or units culpable of human rights abuses could risk public perception of U.S. credibility.

Objective 1.2 | U.S. interests and citizens protected and regional security enhanced by countering threats to U.S. national security and defense operations.

- **Justification** | Transnational threats, including terrorism, and growing foreign hard and soft power influence in Cambodia are increasingly threats to U.S. and regional security interests. At the same time, the growing U.S. citizen population in the country will challenge the Mission’s ability to respond quickly in case of a major disaster or crisis (particularly outside the capital). The Mission will counter these threats by maintaining necessary ties to relevant military and security service elements, and developing a comprehensive strategic approach, using both bilateral and regional ASEAN mechanisms, to balance foreign influence contrary to U.S. interests. Internally, the

Mission will update its accountability and crisis management practices to ensure all U.S. citizens receive prompt and appropriate support.

- **Linkages** | Mission Objective 1.2 supports Interim NSS Priority 1: “Protect the security of the American People.” It supports the Indo-Pacific Strategy Objective 4: “Bolster Indo-Pacific Security.” It supports the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goal 1: “Renew U.S. leadership and mobilize coalitions to address the global challenges that have the greatest impact on Americans’ security and well-being.” And finally, Mission Objective 1.1 supports the EAP Joint Regional Strategy Bureau Objective 3.4 on countering transnational crime, violent extremism, and human trafficking.
- **Risks** | A failure to achieve this objective could threaten the U.S. government’s ability to protect the U.S. and its allies and partners’ security interest at home and in the Southeast Asia region. Mission Cambodia will mitigate these risks by maintaining ties with senior officials and through support, consultation, and collaboration with like-minded nations, allies, and partners.

Mission Goal 2 | Expand U.S. economic prosperity and Cambodia’s growth as an independent and prosperous economic partner.

Description | Cambodia becoming a more open, prosperous, resilient, and inclusive partner would support the larger USG policy objective of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. U.S. development assistance investments in sustainable economic growth, health, education, climate change, and natural resource management will improve the livelihoods and welfare of Cambodians, strengthen Cambodian sovereignty, and enhance cooperation between the United States and Cambodia. Expanding U.S. exports and improving the investment climate will promote American prosperity and influence in Cambodia.

Objective 2.1 | Inclusive and sustainable economic growth broadened through a more resilient economy. (CDCS DO 1)

- **Justification** | Economic growth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic was consistent but inequitable. Disruptions to international tourism and global supply chains have slowed economic growth. Marginalized populations left behind in the pre-pandemic economic expansion have been especially vulnerable to adverse economic impacts during the pandemic. As the economy recovers from pandemic control measures, women, youth, and marginalized and vulnerable groups are at significant risk of being left even further behind. Furthermore, without sustainable natural resource management and investments in climate smart agriculture, economic growth based on the exploitative extraction of natural resources threatens to undermine economic gains.
- **Linkages** | Mission Objective 2.1 to broaden inclusive and sustainable economic growth supports the Interim NSS as it expands economic prosperity and opportunity for both Americans and Cambodians. Mission Objective 2.1 also supports the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategy Plan Goal 1: “Renew U.S. leadership and mobilize coalitions to address the global challenges that have the greatest impact on Americans’ security and well-being” and Goal 2: “Promote global prosperity and shape an international environment in which the United States can thrive.” Mission Objective 2.1 also supports the Indo-Pacific Strategy Goal 3: “Drive Indo-Pacific Prosperity,” and the EAP Joint Regional Strategy Goal 5: “Advance more inclusive and sustainable growth and promote free, fair, and open trade and transparent investment that improves the lives of Americans and people around the world.” Mission Objective 2.1 supports Executive Order (E.O.) 13985: “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government,” and the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality: “Improve Economic Security and Accelerate Economic Growth.”

- **Risks** | If Cambodia fails to diversify its economy and continues to rely on exploitation of natural resources for short term economic gains, long term economic growth will suffer, and Cambodia will struggle to meet international climate change commitments. Economic growth that does not include opportunities for women, youth, and marginalized and vulnerable groups will prevent Cambodia from reaching its national development goals, and societal inequities will persist. Failure of the USG to successfully engage with the Cambodian government on sustainable economic growth provides an opportunity for the PRC to strengthen its position as a partner of choice in the region.

Objective 2.2 | U.S. exports to Cambodia and Cambodian investment in the United States increased and the investment climate and regulatory environment for American businesses improved.

- **Justification** | U.S. businesses adhere to strong international standards in labor and environmental practices, and U.S.-branded products -- known for their high quality and reliability -- are regularly sought after by Cambodians. Additionally, the United States, as a diverse and inclusive society, is seen as a desirable partner and destination for business and education. However, Cambodia has historically not attracted significant U.S. capital due to several factors including endemic corruption, limited supply of skilled labor, high energy and logistics costs, and a lack of transparency and rule of law. Cambodia continues to increase its dependence on the U.S. market (accounting for approximately 40 percent of total exports in 2021), however, it imports most of its goods from the PRC, resulting in a large trade imbalance with the United States.
- **Linkages** | Mission Objective 2.2 to increase U.S. exports to Cambodia and improve the investment climate and regulatory environment for American businesses growth supports the Interim NSS Pillar II: "Promote American Prosperity" and Pillar IV: "Advance American Influence." Mission Objective 2.2 also supports the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goal 2: "Promote global prosperity and shape an international environment in which the United States can thrive," and Goal 4: "Revitalize the

diplomatic and development workforce and institutions.” Mission Objective 2.2 also supports the EAP Joint Regional Strategy Goal 5: “Advance more inclusive and sustainable growth and promote free, fair, and open trade and transparent investment that improves the lives of Americans and people around the world.” Finally, Mission Objective 2.2 supports Indo-Pacific Strategy Objective 1: “Advance a Free and Open Indo-Pacific” and Objective 3: “Drive Regional Prosperity.”

- **Risks** | If Cambodia fails to reduce regulatory barriers and trade restraints, address corruption and increase transparency, rule of law, and ethical business practices, it will struggle to attract high-quality investment from the United States and continue to depend on the PRC as its primary source of overseas investment. The trade deficit will also increase, exacerbating bilateral tensions. U.S. companies will consider relocating existing operations to neighboring countries and/or look for business expansion opportunities elsewhere. Strategic USG engagement and programs with public and private counterparts would help improve the regulatory environment and promote U.S. businesses and values – and offer an alternative to exploitative PRC-origin investment.

Objective 2.3 | Health, education, and welfare of Cambodians improved through enhanced systems. (CDCS DO 2)

- **Justification** | Cambodia has made significant achievements on its health, education, and child protection outcomes. However, disparities persist between rural and urban populations, and amongst marginalized and vulnerable groups. Government health expenditures have not maintained pace as out-of-pocket costs continue to rise. Meanwhile, most students face a learning crisis and do not meet the minimum mathematics and reading standards. The child protection system is also challenged with high rates of children living in institutional care and children continue to experience high rates of violence, with high poverty and low access to education being key drivers of child institutionalization. Violence against children, child trafficking, child labor, child marriage, and online child sexual exploitation remain issues of concern. In health, while Cambodia has seen many successes in infectious disease control programs, there is still

much to accomplish as the country strives to eliminate malaria by 2025, find 30,000 missing TB cases, and build systems that can sustain infectious disease achievements and programming.

- **Linkages** | Mission Objective 2.3 supports the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategy Plan Strategic Objective 1.1: “Leadership in strengthening global health security and supports the JSP’s strengthening educational outcome.” The United States leverages financial contributions from the Global Fund and the Global Partnership for Education and strengthens the effectiveness of international partnerships, such as those with the World Health Organization. This objective also aligns with the EAP Joint Regional Strategy Bureau Objective 2.1: “Build sustainable and resilient health systems to detect and respond to emerging challenges, including current and future pandemics” as activities are greatly focused in strengthening systems for infectious disease control, management, and elimination. On the same note, Mission Objective 2.3 is echoed in the Interim NSS, U.S. assistance strengthens health systems, prevents disease, improves health security and nutrition, and ensures high-quality and equitable education and opportunities for students and youth, including indigenous communities. Mission Objective 2.3 also supports the E.O. 13985: “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”. It is also fully aligned with the EAP Joint Regional Strategy Bureau Objective 5.4: “Strengthen human capital, including for marginalized and underrepresented groups, to advance regional prosperity,” and finally, Mission Objective 2.3 also supports the Indo-Pacific Strategy Goal 2: “Build connections within and beyond the region.”
- **Risks** | Health systems staff are diverted from core duties to assist with the COVID-19 recovery. Schools and other centers of learning are partially or fully closed for extended periods, affecting learning outcomes and academic achievement. A general redirection of financial resources to address COVID-19 erodes investments and gains in existing safety nets in health, education, and child protection. Existing policy reforms for increased transparency (e.g., data sharing) and accountability (decentralization) also lose momentum.

Mission Goal 3 | Promote American ideals in support of a free and open Cambodia as part of a rules-based Indo-Pacific region.

Description | Promotion and support for American ideals furthers U.S. foreign policy goals, advances U.S. interests and values, and enhances U.S. national security. We will work across the Mission to promote democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the face of increased restrictions on civil society. Laws and regulations should be reached transparently and applied fairly to counter nepotism and corruption. Freedoms of expression and association, the right to peaceful assembly, a free press, an active civil society, and tolerance of dissenting views are vital components of democratic governance. Through promotion of American ideals, we counter authoritarian models that do not value diversity and inclusivity and repress underrepresented groups.

Objective 3.1 | Support for U.S. values and ideals strengthened through the amplification of independent voices.

- **Justification |** Citizens cannot promote meaningful reform as the Cambodian government continues to restrict freedoms of expression and association as well as target activists and political opposition figures. Our partnership with Cambodia cannot reach its full potential unless the government improves protection of these fundamental freedoms and upholds its international obligations. The Mission will work directly and indirectly with key individuals and groups to amplify their independent voices and build their capacity to effectively highlight abuses and push for reform. The Mission will empower them to help combat dis- and misinformation about the United States and its objectives in Cambodia and regionally.
- **Linkages |** Mission Objective 3.1 links directly to Goal 3 of the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategy Plan: “Strengthen democratic institutions, uphold universal values, and promote human dignity,” and more specifically, objectives 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.5. It also supports the Indo-Pacific Strategy Goal 1: “Advance a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

- **Risks** | Even the most independent voices are increasingly inclined to self-censor to avoid arrest on baseless charges. Our support of these partners may increase the risk of these individuals and organizations being accused of foreign interference and arrested or dissolved. If this objective fails, it will be easier for the government to enact restrictive or exploitative laws and policies and for the government and its international supporters to publish disinformation about the United States and its activities in Cambodia and regionally.

Objective 3.2 | Human rights protected and government accountability advanced through strengthening civil society and supporting rights under the Cambodian constitution. (CDCS DO 3)

- **Justification** | As Cambodia gears up for local and national elections in 2022 and 2023, space is shrinking for civil society actors, opposition political parties, and an independent media. The judicial system is increasingly politicized. A democratic Cambodia that respects human rights and is responsive to its people will be a better partner for the United States and our allies, and a stronger counter against non-democratic forces in the region. To achieve this, Cambodians must increase and coordinate action to advance democratic processes, defend rights, and monitor public institutions, to spur greater government responsiveness and respect for civil liberties. In a fraught environment, focused development assistance will underpin the Mission's approach. In the runup to the elections, the government could enact new laws and regulations to further restrict civil liberties, free speech, and political and human rights. The government could expand its definition of issues that are deemed "political" (and thus off limits for discourse) and could begin penalizing citizens for feedback on topics like public services or the national budget.
- **Linkages** | Mission Objective 3.2 links directly to Goal 3 of the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategy Plan: "Strengthen democratic institutions, uphold universal values, and promote human dignity," as well as supports the Interim NSS's tenet of joining "likeminded allies and partners to revitalize democracy the world over." Furthermore,

MO 3.2 links with the EAP Joint Regional Strategy Bureau Objective 4.4: “Promote transparency and accountability, a human-rights centered rule of law, and access to justice to counter internal and external authoritarian influence and coercion, corruption, and the abuse of power” through capacity building and legal assistance support to rights defenders and finally, Mission Objective 3.2 also supports the Indo-Pacific Strategy Goal 1: "Advance a free and open Indo-Pacific."

- **Risks |** If the objective is not achieved, Cambodia risks further democratic backsliding and existential threats to its autonomy, stability, and prosperity and the government will be increasingly emboldened to ignore its citizens’ demands and concerns.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Improved Mission-wide diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) results.

- **Justification** | A great Mission benefits from the participation, knowledge, and opinions of diverse employees and by ensuring that its programming and diplomatic engagement address underserved communities. Management proposes revising hiring practices to recruit candidates from underserved populations in a variety of ways - job fairs and chat sessions; showing candidates how to complete a job application; targeting specific populations in Cambodia to recruit to apply for jobs and internships; and amending position requirements where possible to recruit candidates who have great potential but lack specific experience. Other initiatives will focus on helping small and minority-owned businesses bid on procurements, ensuring accessibility on campus, and recognizing individual employee contributions to diversity and inclusion. When employees embrace and model diversity, they work more cohesively to achieve Mission goals and develop skills that make them better U.S. government employees.
- **Linkages** | Management Objective 1 supports the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goal #4: Revitalize the diplomatic and development workforce and institutions, as well as E.O. 14035 and E.O. 13985.
- **Risks** | The Mission becomes less productive if we fail to recruit and hire applicants from the broadest array of backgrounds. Effectiveness and morale will suffer if diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility initiatives do not gain momentum. Mission employees will fail to develop skills that will benefit their careers and the USG as a whole.

Management Objective 2 | Management services enabled the Mission to achieve its goals while meeting the challenges of an evolving political and health environment.

- **Justification** | The goal of all Management platforms is to provide efficient and effective services. Contemporary challenges such as the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and a renewed regional focus from Washington make it imperative that Management decides which improvements will benefit mission employees most broadly; which have limited value; and which changes make the most sense given limited resources. We must ensure that Embassy employees have the tools and knowledge needed to use telework capabilities and expanded online communication options effectively to collaborate and achieve Mission goals. Efforts are already underway to streamline and improve the Mission mobile phone policy, adjusting to an evolving local telecommunications environment. "Tightsizing" the cubicle area on the chancery's 2nd floor, with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations support, will bring us up to date and allow us to increase the number of cubicles to accommodate increased staffing demands from new agency arrivals and the expanded programming needs of existing offices. Finally, we will focus on a variety of programs – speaker series, smoking cessation, Fit U.S. Embassy, and others - addressing personal and professional development, as well as work-life balance, to retain staff and attract new talent.
- **Linkages:** Management Objective 2 supports the FY 2022 – 2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goal #4: Revitalize the diplomatic and development workforce and institutions.
- **Risks** | Our efforts focus too much on productivity and not enough on effectiveness. We “overpromise” results when resources are insufficient to accomplish plans. Failure of personal and professional development programs hurt morale and welfare. Inadequate numbers of Mission employees are fully equipped to be productive during long telework stretches should another pandemic or other crisis hit suddenly.