

## CHAPTER 10

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# CHAPTER 10

## Summary and Conclusions

### 10.1 Demographic Indicators

The 2008 Census data are made available taking into account the administrative changes promulgated in the Royal Sub-Decree dated 12 January 2008 and earlier Sub-Decrees. According to the census the final population of Cambodia at 00.00 hours of March 3, 2008 stood at 13,395,682 comprising 6,516,054 males (48.64 percent) and 6,879,628 females (51.36 percent). The population of Cambodia according to the 2008 census falls short of the projected population of 14.6 million for that year. Fresh projections based on the 2008 census results will be made in the near future.

According to a mid-2008 estimate about 8.6 percent of the world's population of 6.7 billion lives in Southeast Asia. Cambodia which accounted for 2.3 percent of the Southeast Asian population in 1998 continues to do so in 2008.

Cambodia's population has increased by about 1.96 million during the decade 1998-2008. The annual growth rate works out to 1.54 percent. There has been a declining trend in fertility since 2000. The total fertility rate (TFR) in Cambodia has been estimated as 3.1. The estimated Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Ratio are 60 per 1,000 live births and 461 per 100,000 live births respectively.

### 10.2 Population Distribution

The population density of Cambodia in 2008 was 75 persons per square kilometer as against 64 in 1998. The population density in Cambodia is much less than that of Southeast Asia as a whole. The urban populations of 1998 and 2008 are based on the revised definition of urban. The percentage of urban population to total population which is the measure of urbanization has increased from 18.2 in 1998 to 19.5 in 2008. Still the urbanization level in Cambodia is much less than that for Southeast Asia as a whole (46 percent).

The percentage distribution of speakers of mother tongue shows that Khmer is the predominant mother tongue in the country. According to place of birth data less than one percent of the populations were born outside Cambodia. The mother tongue data also reveals that less than one percent of the population has one of the Southeast Asia languages as mother tongue. There is therefore some near consistency in the two sets of data. Almost 99 percent of the population has returned that they were born in Cambodia. The speakers of minority languages form about three percent of the total population of the country. Buddhism is the predominant religion of Cambodia (96.9 percent).

### 10.3 Sex Ratio and Age Structure

The overall sex ratio or the sex ratio of the total population of Cambodia according to the 2008 Census is 94.7. The proportion of children (under 15 years of age) has declined from 42.8 percent in 1998 to 33.7 percent in 2008 which is indicative of declining fertility in the last decade. The age groups 55-64 and over 65 years of age have shown increasing trends thanks to a steady decline in adult mortality. The median age of the Cambodian population works out to 20.96 percent in 2008 which is about four years more than what it was in 1998 (16.82 percent). The Cambodian population which may be described as "young" appears to be moving towards the category of "intermediate age" and ultimately perhaps to the category of "Aging population".

The age dependency ratio for Cambodia has shown a declining trend during 1998-2008 indicating a reduction in the dependency burden. The decline is faster in urban areas as it has come down by about 38 percent as against about 27 percent in rural areas.

## 10.4 Marital Status

The proportion of currently married women aged 15 and over increases with age up to the age group 35-39 and declines thereafter due to increasing proportions of widowed and divorced women. The near universality of marriage in the Cambodian society is evident from the low proportion of never married persons (4 percent among males and 7 percent among females) in the age group 35-39. The singulate mean age at marriage increased from 22.5 to 23.3 for females and from 24.2 to 25.6 for males during 1998-2008. This rise in age at marriage of women could have also contributed to a certain extent to the decline in fertility during 1998-2008.

## 10.5 Literacy and Education

The successful implementation of literacy development and education programmes and the initiative taken by most of the younger generation to learn to read and write have resulted in a substantial rise in the literacy level of the population of Cambodia during 1998-2008.

The number of literate population aged 7 and more in the country has spectacularly risen from about 5.78 million to 8.96 million during the ten-year period, registering a decadal growth rate of nearly 55 percent as against the population growth rate of about 17 percent. The general literacy rate that is the percentage of literate population to total population aged 7 and more, has increased from 62.80 percent in 1998 to 78.35 percent in 2008. The urban literacy level has increased from 78.51 percent to 90.17 percent and the rural literacy rate has gone up from 59.07 percent to 75.33 percent.

It is observed that the rise in the number of adult literate population (56.94 percent) is also substantial during the decade with the increase in respect of females (65.23 percent) being much higher than that of males (49.97 percent). This increase is noted in both rural and urban areas. The urban rate of increase is higher than the rural rate for both the sexes.

In terms of adult literacy rate Cambodia has shown a fairly good increase during 1998-2008. Yet, barring Laos, Cambodia's adult literacy rate is the lowest in the Southeast Asia region, though there are a few countries in Asia which have lower adult literacy levels than Cambodia. The female literacy rate which formed about 72 percent of the male literacy rate in 1998 constitutes 83 percent of the male literacy rate in 2008 indicating a narrowing of the gender gap in literacy.

The level of education of the population may be viewed from the angle of educational attainment of the population aged 25 and more who should have, in a majority of cases finished their education. In the levels from Primary (completed) to Beyond Secondary, the numbers and proportions gradually decrease and the proportions of females are always less than those of males. It is therefore clear that there is generally large scale drop outs both among males and females as they advance from grade to grade and this phenomenon is more common among females.

The census results underscore the need to mount renewed efforts to achieve universal literacy and education for all in Cambodia. In rural areas the literacy level lags behind the urban level. There are many villages without school. Special attention has to be paid to stop or minimize the school drop outs especially among girls at the primary level itself and improve the literacy and educational levels of women. Notwithstanding the impressive increase in the literacy level in the decade, the general educational level of the population continues to be very low.

## 10.6 School Attendance

The number of children aged 6 and more attending school or educational institution in Cambodia have increased from 2,488,235 to 3,390,690 (36.27 percent) during 1998-2008. In the urban and rural areas the increases are from 573,941 to 697,760 (21.57 percent) and from 1,914,294 to 2,692,930 (40.67 percent)

respectively. The proportion of children aged 6 and more who are attending school has also increased during 1998-2008 indicating increasing school enrollments.

The proportion of females attending school continues to be less than the corresponding proportion for males both in the urban and rural areas. The gap has however reduced in 2008 compared to 1998. In the age group 6-14 at the national level there is virtually no difference between the proportions of school attendance by males and females in 2008 though there was considerable difference in 1998. The difference in proportions between the sexes is the highest in the age group 15-19 as it was in 1998 also. The proportion attending school or any educational institution declines sharply after the age of 14.

It is also observed that in general the proportion attending school is higher among the urban residents presumably due to availability of better facilities for higher studies and training in urban centers like Phnom Penh and better motivation in cities to pursue higher studies. This calls for increasing such opportunities in rural areas also.

### **10.7 Economically Active Population (Labour Force)**

Men and women form 48.84 and 51.16 percent respectively of the total economically active population in Cambodia. The economic activity rates at the national level for persons aged 7 and over have increased as follows during the decade 1998-2008: from 55.5 to 61.7 percent for both sexes, from 56.5 to 62.5 percent for males and from 54.6 to 60.9 percent for females. If persons aged 10 and over are considered, women seem to enter and exit the labour force at an earlier age than men. The male economic activity rate continues to be a little higher than that for females during the decade. The economic activity rates are higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas both in respect of males and females presumably due to higher participation of persons in farm labour in rural areas and higher proportion of school attendance in urban areas. This phenomenon was noticed in 1998 also. In the urban areas of the country the economic activity rate for males is higher than that for females while the opposite trend is noticed in the rural areas. The unemployment rate in Cambodia has shown a downward trend during the decade (from 5.3 to 1.7 percent for both sexes, 4.7 to 1.5 percent for males, and 5.9 to 1.8 percent for females). The unemployment rates are lower in the rural areas than in the urban areas owing to the absorption of a large number of workers in the agriculture sector in the countryside.

For the sake of international comparability the economic activity rates are calculated for the “working” age group of 15 to 64 by sex and urban-rural residence. It is observed that the economic activity rate among the population of this age group in Cambodia has been almost unchanged during the decade at the level of 79 to 80 percent. In the case of males it has marginally declined. Female economic activity rate has slightly increased. The number of economically active females in the age group 15-64 forms 51.20 percent of the total economically active population in that age group. This is a fairly high proportion judged by the world standard. The economic activity rate of females in Cambodia (78.47 percent) is the highest in the Southeast Asia region.

The analysis of the status in employment reveals that unpaid family workers and own account workers together constitute about 83 percent of the employed population in Cambodia. This indicates that most of the employed persons in Cambodia are in the informal or the unorganized sector. Employed children (age less than 15) constitute 1.35 percent of the total employed in 2008 as against 1.47 percent in 1998. Most of the employed population at the national level (90 percent) is employed in local private enterprises. In the age group 15-59, male employment is in a much higher proportion in Government service compared to female employment. On the other hand, in the urban areas in the same age group foreign enterprises provide jobs to a higher proportion of employed women than that of men.

About 80 percent of the employed population who has a secondary economic activity is engaged only in unpaid family enterprises. The distribution by secondary activity is more or less similar in respect of both males and females as for Cambodia as a whole. It is in the age group 35-49 of the employed persons that

the proportion of employed persons with a secondary activity is the maximum (56 percent) closely followed by those in the higher age groups.

In the rural areas the percentage of employed persons with a secondary economic activity is higher (61 percent) and in urban areas it is lower (13 percent) than the country average.

It is gratifying to note that the proportion of population working in the primary industrial sector (agriculture) has declined during the decade (from 77.53 to 72.30 percent) and the proportions in the Secondary (from 4.24 to 8.54) and Tertiary sectors (18.23 to 19.16 percent) have increased. This means that overcrowding in the agricultural sector is gradually declining and the employment is becoming diversified. Yet in the case of women the proportion employed in the primary sector (75.11 percent) is higher than that of men (69.37 percent).

There is also a rural-urban differential. The tertiary sector continues to absorb 60 percent of the employed population in the urban areas and the primary sector absorbs nearly 85 percent (87 percent in the case of women) of the employed population in the rural areas.

Among occupations about 71 percent of employed persons are skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers. This is followed by, service and sales workers (about 9 percent). Craft and related workers, and workers in elementary occupations account for 7.24 and 4.69 percent respectively. Due to want of higher education and professional training as well as lack of opportunities, persons working as professionals, technicians, managers etc. are in very small proportions among the employed population. The proportion of women (about 4 percent) in the managerial, professional and other white collar jobs is less than that of men (about 8 percent) though both are low. It is noted that most employed persons work outside their homes in the same district where they are residing. Those who work at their respective homes form 2.8 percent. This percentage is 2.41 for males and 3.17 for females.

## 10.8 Migration

The census provides useful information on migrants. A migrant is defined as a person who has moved to the place of enumeration from another village (or another country) which was the person's last previous residence. The percentage of migrants to total population of Cambodia is 26.52. It is 57.93 in the urban areas and 18.90 in the rural areas. Among the migrants in 2008, males (50.46 percent) and females (49.54 percent) are almost in equal proportions.

Though the proportion of migrants from within the province of enumeration is the highest both in 1998 and 2008, an increasing trend is noticed in 2008 in inter-province migration of both males and females.

Migrants who have changed their residence for the reason "family moved" continue to be the highest during the decade. The proportion of female migrants is higher under this reason. Movement for employment connected reasons is also comparatively high both among males and females.

In the urban areas, most of the persons enumerated had migrated from the rural areas (64 percent). On the other hand a large majority of migrants in the rural areas are from other rural areas (89 percent). The proportion of rural migrants in the urban areas has been almost stationary during the decade 1998-2008. If the total internal migrants are classified according to migration streams rural to rural movement is predominant with 50.87 percent in 2008. Rural to urban movement takes the second position with 27.53 percent.

About 54 percent of the internal migrants to the place of enumeration have stayed there for less than ten years. The remaining 46 percent are long-term residents for 10 years and more.

In 2008, the proportion of migrants in the urban areas in the five years preceding the census (42.39 percent) is higher than that of rural areas (30.75 percent). Women's migration into urban areas was predominant during this period, that is, during 2003-2008. Among the migrants in the age group 15-29

during the three years preceding the census (2005-2008) the percentage of females was approximately 55. The high proportion of females belonging to this age group among urban migrants in the period 2005-2008 may mainly be attributed to a large number of young women garment workers who moved into urban areas in Phnom Penh and Kandal from other provinces.

About 86.66 percent of the migrants are in the working age group 15-64. Among the migrants nearly three fourths are employed in 2008. Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers form 49 percent of such migrants. Following this category albeit with much lower proportion, are service and sales workers (15.83 percent) and craft and related workers (11.46 percent). These categories together form 76.33 percent of the economically active migrants. This proportion is 68.51 among males and 85.87 percent among females. The literacy rate of migrants is higher than that of the population as a whole. The level of education of migrants is in general higher compared to that of general population.

## **10.9 Physically Challenged Population**

For the first time a question on physical and mental disability was included in the 2008 census questionnaire. There are 192,538 disabled persons in Cambodia of which 56.3 percent are males and 43.7 percent are females. The disabled persons form 1.44 percent of the country's population. The disabled among males and females form 1.66 and 1.22 percent respectively in Cambodia. The incidence of disability is higher in the rural areas (1.52 percent) than in the urban areas (1.09 percent).

In the rural areas 1.76 percent among males is disabled as against 1.29 percent among females. The corresponding percentages in the urban areas are 1.26 and 0.93 percent. Thus the difference in proportions of disabled males and females is lesser in the urban areas. Among the handicapped population in the country about 32 percent is congenitally disabled. Hence a majority of the disabled in Cambodia are those who became disabled after birth. This may include victims of war, land mines and other accidents. While the persons with disability "in seeing" form the highest proportion among those disabled since birth, disabled persons in movement predominate among the persons disabled after birth. This holds true for both males and females.

The median age of the disabled population works out to 35.28. This is much higher than that of the general population (20.96 percent). The disabled population in Cambodia may, therefore, be described as an "old population".

In general, those who suffer from different physical handicaps are mostly in the age cohort 15-29 which represents people born during the troubled years 1979-1993 following the Khmer Rouge regime. Disability in hearing and in movement acquired after birth are more prevalent among elders aged 60 and more (35.52 percent) and among those in the age group 45-59 (29.21 percent) respectively. Following the age group 15-29, children in the age group 0-14 have a high proportion of mentally ill persons since birth.

The economic activity rate of 71.28 of the disabled population in the working age group 15-64 is less than the national average of 79.95 for the general population. The census results reveal that the disabled population deserves special attention in education, employment and health care. The census statistics when analyzed further will go a long way in providing useful data for the successful implementation of the schemes for the welfare of the disabled population.

## **10.10 Housing and Household Characteristics**

The number of residential buildings in Cambodia has increased from 1,989,828 in 1998 to 2,637,654 in 2008. This increase works out to 32.6 percent. In Cambodia as a whole 95.7 percent of residential buildings are wholly residential.

Based on the building materials of roof and wall it has been found that only 57 percent of the residential and partly residential buildings are permanent. About one quarter of the buildings are semi-permanent constructions and 18.5 percent are temporary structures. In the rural areas nearly half the number of structures is either temporary or semi-permanent.

The number of normal households has increased by 30.32 percent during the decade. This is nearly 82 percent more than the decadal population growth rate of 16.66 percent. The average size of households has decreased from 5.2 in 1998 to 4.7 in 2008 at the national level. In the urban areas it has declined by 0.6 during the decade which is slightly higher than the decrease in the rural areas (0.5). This decreasing trend in the size of households combined with a steep increase in the number of households in the country points to a shift from the system of joint and extended family towards nuclear family.

About 26 percent of households are headed by females both in 1998 and 2008. A majority of them are of age ranging from 30 to 59. Female heads of households in this age range form about 68 and 64 percent in 1998 and 2008 respectively. It is computed from 2008 Census data that about 43 percent of them are widowed, divorced or separated, about 8 percent are never married and about 49 percent are currently married.

It is noted that as much as 92 percent of normal households live in their own dwellings. The corresponding proportions in the urban and rural areas are 77 and 96 percent respectively. A majority of households (72.5 percent) occupy one room. In the urban areas 57.9 percent households occupy one room, 23.8 percent live in two-roomed dwellings, 10.2 percent have three-roomed dwellings and 8 percent households occupy dwellings with four and more rooms.

### *Drinking Water*

As in the 1998 Census, information on amenities and facilities available to households was collected in the 2008 Census. Nearly 47 percent of households in Cambodia have access to improved water sources in 2008. This proportion was 21 percent in 1998. In the urban areas a higher percentage of households are having this facility. Further, more than two thirds of the urban population has drinking water supply within their premises. But in the rural areas only about 30 percent of the households have a source of drinking water within their premises. It is therefore a matter of top priority to provide safe drinking water to all the population within or very close to their premises.

### *Source of Light*

Electricity (including city power, generator and both) as a source of light is used only by 26.39 percent of the households as against 15.11 percent in 1998. While 87 percent of the households in the urban areas are served by electricity, only 13.11 percent of households have this amenity in the rural areas.

### *Toilet Facility*

There has been an improvement in the availability of toilet facilities as one third of the households in the country have this facility in their premises as against about 15 percent in 1998. This facility is available for 81.46 percent of the urban households and only for 23.24 percent of the rural households. A majority of households with toilet facility in the urban areas have sewerage connection to toilet. In the rural areas about 45 percent of households with toilet facility have their toilet connected to septic tank. Only about 28 percent have sewerage connection in rural areas.

### *Cooking Fuel*

Firewood continues to be the main cooking fuel in rural areas with about 94 percent using it.

### *Assets Owned by Households*

Information on type and number of assets owned by households was collected in the 2008 Census for the first time. This provides approximate indicators of the economic condition of the people. A television is owned by 58 percent of households, motorcycles by 44 percent and bicycles by 64 percent of households. Internet is only accessible to 1 percent of households. The possession of some of the assets reflects the changes taking place in the social and cultural life of the people of Cambodia.