

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1. The 2008 General Population Census of Cambodia

Commencing from 1998, the Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to conducting a general population census every ten years in accordance with the U.N. recommendations and the Statistical Law of Cambodia. Such a census would include some aspects of housing census also. Accordingly the 2008 General Population Census of Cambodia was conducted on a *de facto* basis with reference to 3 March, 2008, exactly ten years after the previous census was held. This census also referred to as the 2008 Census in this report, was the second one since Cambodia became a democratic country and the first census of the twenty first century.

#### 1.1 The Calendar of Census Operations

The main census operations were conducted according to the following calendar:

Dates	Activity
February 29 to March 2, 2008 (3 days)	House listing Operations
March 2, 2008 Night	Enumeration of Homeless/Transient etc. population
March 3 to 13, 2008 (11 days)	2008 Census Enumeration with March 3 (00-00 hours) as reference time
March 13 to 15, 2008	Collection of filled-in census records at field offices
March 16 to 20, 2008	Receipt of filled-in census records at the NIS, Phnom Penh

There were two main census questionnaires: - (i) the house list (Form A) and (ii) the household questionnaire (Form B). A few census forms were also to be filled-in by enumerators. Buildings with households were first listed in Form A. This was done three days ahead of the main enumeration along with updating the EA map (29 February to 2 March 2008). Form B, which is the main census questionnaire, was filled-in by enumerators after interviewing each household between March 3 and March 13. Specimen copies of the two questionnaires are attached as Annexes 1 and 2.

#### 1.2 Field work

The 2008 census covered 2.8 million households spread over the different terrains of 24 Provinces (including Phnom Penh municipality) of the country. The enumeration was carried out during the 11-day census enumeration period. In addition to households living in dwellings, those staying in institutions like hotels, hostels, pagodas, hospitals and prisons were also enumerated. Special arrangements were made to enumerate the homeless population, transient population and those found in boats on the night of 2 March 2008.

### 1.3 The Geographic Frame

Thanks to peace and stability in the country, the 2008 Census of Cambodia could be conducted in the entire country comprising, at the census time, 24 provinces, 185 districts, 1,621 communes and 14,073 villages (excluding some settlements which were treated as villages for census purposes).

It has to be noted here that at the time of the 1998 Census it was not possible to enumerate the population of four small areas of the country as they were insecure due to war at that time. These were: (i) Whole district of Anlong Veang in Otdar Meanchey province (ii) Samlout in Battambang province (iii) Veal Veang in Pursat province and (iv) Village of Ou Beichoan of Ou Chrov district in Banteay Meanchey province. The total estimated population (45,000) of the omitted areas was allocated as follows: 10,000 to Otdar Meanchey province; 2,000 to Banteay Meanchey province; 23,000 to Battambang province and 10,000 to Pursat province. This estimation was based on reports from the Directors of Planning of the provinces concerned.

### 1.4 Re-classification of Urban Areas

The classification of places as urban or rural is not a matter of mere academic interest, but is of great importance for planning purposes. For the 1998 census of Cambodia the following areas were treated as urban:

- (i) All provincial towns (which were whole districts)
- (ii) Four districts of Phnom Penh Municipality (the other three were considered rural)
- (iii) The then existing entire provinces of Sihanouk ville, Kep and Pailin which were called Krong.

The designation of places as urban was based only on administrative criteria. This was not considered satisfactory for planning for the needs of actual urban populations. There were a number of problems in the classification of urban areas following the above definition. The main problem was that areas were classified at the level of province and district. Under this classification, provincial towns encompassed large areas of farmland, wasteland, and un-inhabited areas including mountainous terrain. A more refined definition of urban areas required designation of urban or rural at a lower administrative level - the commune or, ideally, the village. It was decided by the Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Cambodia, that a classification of urban areas was needed that was consistent with Cambodian conditions, and optimum for planning purposes.

A study was therefore undertaken by the NIS during 2002-2004 with expert guidance to reclassify urban areas. The study attempted to provide recommendations about a classification of urban places based on a consistent set of criteria utilizing the 1998 census data on population and workers in agriculture. After careful consideration of all relevant aspects, field study and consultation with agencies concerned the study decided to apply the following criteria to every commune so as to treat it as urban:

- (a) Population density exceeding 200 per km<sup>2</sup>
- (b) Percentage of male employment in agriculture below 50 per cent
- (c) Total population of the commune should exceed 2,000.

The study's recommendations were accepted by the Royal Government of Cambodia, and subsequently adopted for the 2008 census. For details of this study one may refer to the publication of NIS, Ministry of Planning on "Reclassification of Urban Areas in Cambodia" (November 2004).

Further to the study an additional minor revision was made for the sake of uniformity of the principle that commune would be the lowest unit for examining whether an area should be classified as urban or rural based on the criteria adopted. Thus the partly urban communes mentioned below were treated as wholly urban: Ta Pung, Ta Meun and Kouk Khmum communes of Thma Koul district and Anlong Vil commune in Sangkae district in Battambang province; Soutip commune of Cheung Prey district and Chrey Vien commune of Prey Chhor district in Kampong Cham province.

## **2. The Royal Sub-Decrees on Administrative Area changes**

With the promulgation of the Royal Sub-Decree Number 18 ANKR BK of 12 January 2008 and earlier Sub-Decrees, many administrative changes were introduced by the Royal Government after the 2008 census was taken, including re-naming certain provinces and districts, shifting of communes from one district to another within a province, formation of new districts and cities within a province by regrouping communes, shifting of a few communes ( wholly and partly) from Koh Kong province to Preah Sihanouk province, and converting province headquarter districts into Kongs.

According to the new administrative frame Cambodia comprises 23 provinces, one Municipality (Phnom Penh), 8 Khan (within Phnom Penh Municipality), 159 Districts (within 23 Provinces), 26 Kongs or Cities (within 23 Provinces), 1417 Communes (within 159 Districts), 204 Sangkats (within Phnom Penh and 26 Kongs or cities) and 14,119 villages (within Communes and Sangkats).

Taking into account all aspects of re-coding and tabulation it was decided that the 2008 Census Priority Tables would be generated on the basis of the Sub-Decree Changes (New frame). The 1998 Census priority tables would also be revised adopting the new frame to enable comparison of the two sets of data. It was recognized that this method of presentation incorporated the Sub-Decree changes and provided data according to the new administrative frame.

The difference between the old and new administrative frames does not affect the 1998-2008 national level comparisons and province level comparisons except in the case of Koh Kong and Preah Sihanouk provinces. At district and commune levels, however, there are several changes between the old and new frames.

For the purpose of measuring urbanization, only communes declared as urban based on demographic criteria according to the 2004 study referred to in the previous section are treated as urban. According to the Sub-decrees, the 23 province headquarters (barring Phnom Penh Municipality or *Reach Theany*) and the three newly formed cities of Paoy Pet (Banteay Meanchey province), Soung (Kampong Cham province) and Bavet (Svay Rieng province) are called *Kongs* or cities. Since urban classification in the census is done at the level of commune applying the demographic criteria, Phnom Penh Municipality and each Krong may have either all the Sangkats as urban or have some Sangkats urban and some rural.

### **3. Data Processing**

The CSPro package was used for data entry and computer editing as well as tabulation. The manual coding and editing of the census schedules were organized in three stages. First the enumerator's summary statements were scrutinized and edited followed by data entry. This provided the basis for the provisional census results (population by sex at national and provincial levels). The second stage related to coding and editing of the main census questionnaire (Form B). This was followed by editing of the House list (Form A) at the third stage.

#### **3.1 The Tabulation Plan**

In consultation with data users, NIS decided to produce 70 basic priority tables for the 2008 Census (see Annex 3). Taking into account the different levels of production of these tables, the total number of priority tables in the 2008 Census works out to 73,151. This is a huge increase (more than six times) from the 11,513 priority tables produced during the 1998 Census. These tables cover most of the topics included in the census questionnaire and their cross-classification should satisfy most of the requirements of data users.

The production of priority tables was followed by the preparation of additional tables called supplementary tables proposed by the data users, and other tables produced in the course of in-depth analysis.

### **4. Analysis of Data and Dissemination of the census results**

The findings of the census are being successfully disseminated through electronic products and printed reports, and by way of dissemination seminars and workshops organized at the national and provincial levels. On-line dissemination also forms part of the dissemination activities. The programme of main publications and electronic products containing the results of the 2008 Census is given in Annex 4 indicating the status of the release of each product. However census analysis is not confined to the Government alone. Universities, scholars, demographers, institutions and data users may also use and analyse the data in their own way according to their needs and interests. They will be encouraged to contact the Census Data Users' Service Centre (DUSC) for any additional information, tables or reports. The vastness of the data and the various cross-classifications and tabulations that could be made with the census tables and the micro data permit unlimited scope for the census analysis exercise.

### **5. The Present Report**

This report pertains to the analysis of nuptiality in Cambodia as revealed by the results of the 2008 Census. The tables given in the text are compiled from the priority tables and special tables produced in the course of the analysis. Priority Table A2 on Population by Marital Status, 5-year Age Group and Sex, Cambodia 2008 (reproduced as Annex Table 1 in this report) serves as the main source for most of the tables given in the text, unless otherwise stated. The corresponding Table of the 1998 Census of Cambodia is Priority Table A1 published in the NIS Report 1999 (see References).