

## **Chapter 2 FAMILY COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS**

### **2.1 CAMBODIAN FAMILY**

The family is the major unit of both production and consumption. This unit entails the strongest emotional ties, the assurance of aid in the event of trouble, economic cooperation in labor, sharing of produce and income, and contribution to ceremonial obligations. A larger grouping, the personal kindred that includes a nuclear family with children, grandchildren, grandparents, uncles, aunts, first cousins, nephews, and nieces, may be included in the household. Family organization is weak, and ties between related families beyond the kindred are loosely defined at best. There is no tradition of family names in Cambodia. Most Khmer genealogies extend back only two or three generations, which contrasts with the veneration of ancestors by the Vietnamese and by the Chinese. Noble families and royal families, some of which can trace their descent for several generations, are exceptions (Internet from Khmer household and Family Structure (<http://asiarecipe.com/camfamily.html/>)).

Legally, the husband is the head of the Khmer family, but the wife has considerable authority, especially in family economics. The husband is responsible for providing shelter and food for his family; the wife is generally in charge of the family budget, and she serves as the major ethical and religious model for the children, especially the daughters. In rural areas, the male is mainly responsible for such activities as plowing and harrowing the rice paddies, threshing rice, collecting sugar palm juice, caring for cattle, carpentry, and buying and selling cows or buffaloes and chickens. Women are mainly responsible for pulling and transplanting rice seedlings, harvesting and winnowing rice, tending gardens, making sugar, weaving, and caring for the household money. Both males and females may work at preparing the rice paddies for planting, tending the paddies, and buying and selling land.

In urban areas, the male is mainly responsible for activities such as gaining food including: armed forces, managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals, clerical support worker, service and sales worker, craft and related workers, plant and machine operator, and assembler, and elementary occupations. Women are not mainly responsible for the above activities and rather responsible for taking care of their young children.

Ownership of property among the rural Khmer is vested in the nuclear family. As descent and inheritance is bilateral, legal children might inherit property equally from their parents. The division of property is theoretically equal among siblings, but in practice the oldest child might inherit more. Each of the spouses might bring inherited land into the family, and the family might acquire joint land during the married life of the couple. Each spouse is free to dispose of his or her land with his/her free will. A will is usually oral, although a written one is preferred.

## 2.2 FAMILY COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS

### 2.2.1 Type of Family Composition of Households

Table 2.1 provides the each type of family composition of household. Total normal households consists of four types of households; A. relative households, B. other non-relative members, C. one-person household and D. other. As shown in Table 2.1, relative household is in majority (68.9 percent of total normal households). Particularly, the male-headed relative household (1,523,396 households) accounts for 78 percent of the total relative households (1,942,022 households).

**Table 2.1 Normal Households by Type of Family Composition of Households, and Household Heads by Sex, 2008**

Type of Family Composition of Households	Total	Male-Headed	Female-Headed	Total	Male-Headed	Female-Headed
<b>Total Household A+B+C+D</b>	<b>2,817,635</b>	<b>2,096,517</b>	<b>721,118</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>A. Relative Households : 1)+2)+3)</i>	<i>1,942,022</i>	<i>1,523,396</i>	<i>418,626</i>	<i>68.9</i>	<i>72.7</i>	<i>58.1</i>
1)Family Nuclei (one or two generations)	1,863,968	1,501,466	362,502	66.2	71.6	50.3
Married Couple Only	131,252	121,084	10,168	4.7	5.8	1.4
Parents with children	1,436,201	1,335,915	100,286	51.0	63.7	13.9
One Parent with children(Father/Mother with his/her children)	292,592	41,024	251,568	10.4	2.0	34.9
Couple with their parent	3,923	3,443	480	0.1	0.2	0.1
2)Extended Family Households(three or more generations)	22,263	2,251	20,012	0.8	0.1	2.8
Father/Mother with his/her children and both parents	1,700	180	1,520	0.1	0.0	0.2
Father/Mother with his/her children and one-parent	20,563	2,071	18,492	0.7	0.1	2.6
3)Other Relatives Households(Other relative members)	55,791	19,679	36,112	2.0	0.9	5.0
<i>B. Other Non-relative Members</i>	<i>8,248</i>	<i>4,992</i>	<i>3,256</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.5</i>
<i>C. One-person Household</i>	<i>99,786</i>	<i>30,741</i>	<i>69,045</i>	<i>3.5</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>9.6</i>
<i>D. Other</i>	<i>767,579</i>	<i>537,388</i>	<i>230,191</i>	<i>27.2</i>	<i>25.6</i>	<i>31.9</i>

Relative household consists of three types of households: 1) nuclear family households, 2) extended family households and 3) other relative households, and is shown for more details as follows;

#### 1)Nuclear Family Household

By definition it refers to

- (a) Household comprising a head of household and his/her spouse only. These households are 131,252 for both sexes comprising 121,084 male-headed households and 10,168 female-headed households. The male heads are in majority among them.
- (b) Household comprising a head of household, his/her spouse and unmarried children. In the 2008 census, these households amount to 1,436,201 for both sexes comprising 1,335,915 male heads and 100,286 female heads. The male head households are in majority among them.
- (c) Household consisting of a parent (widowed or divorced/separated) and unmarried children. The 2008 census obtained the number of this category of 292,592 for both sexes comprising

41,024 male heads and 251,568 female heads. The female head households are in majority among them.

## 2) Extended Family Household

The household refers to the household consisting of a nuclear family as well as parents, or married children or other related members. In 2008 the extended family households amount to 22,263, comprising 2,251 male heads and 20,012 female heads. The female head households are in majority among them.

## 3) Other Relative Household

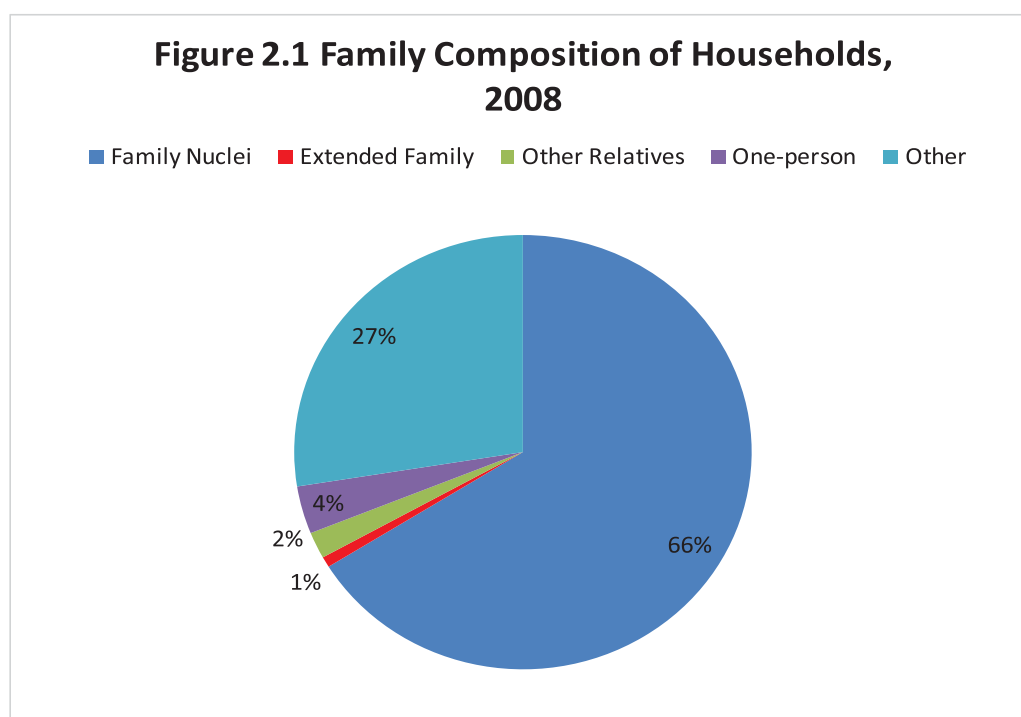
The household refers to the household consisting of a head of household and members related to the head, but not included the categories above mentioned. In 2008 these households amount to 55,791 for both sexes comprising 19,679 male heads and 36,112 female heads. The households with female heads and other relatives are twice as many as the ones with male heads and other relatives.

## B. Other Non-Relative member household (Unrelated member household)

By definition, the household refers to the household consisting of a head of household and members unrelated to the head. In 2008 the other non-relative member households amount to 8,248 for both sexes comprising 4, 992 male heads and 3,256 female heads. The male head households are in majority among them.

## C. One-person household.

It refers to the household of a person of the two sexes with his/her marital status of single, divorced, widowed or separated living economically active or inactive. In the 2008 population census, the



number of “one-person households” is 99,786 for both sexes comprising 30,741 male heads and 69,045 female heads. It is to be noted that “one-person households” with female-heads is in majority among them.

Figure 2.1 presents family composition of households. It is noted that family nuclei accounted for about 66 percent, while one-person households accounted for about 27 percent. The proportion of other types of family composition was relatively very small.

### **2.2.2 Family Composition of Households by Province**

In every province, relative households, particularly nuclear families are in majority. Phnom Penh has the least share of the relative households (55.5 percent). In contrast, Pursat has the greatest share (75.1 percent) in 2008. The proportion of other relative households in Phnom Penh is the highest among provinces (5.9 percent), this means that other relatives live together in the same dwelling. The proportion of non-relative households is less than 0.5 percent in most provinces. Only Phnom Penh and Preah Sihanouk have shown 1.5 percent and 1.2 percent. Female-headed households are characterized by relatively lower proportion of nuclear families and higher proportion of extended, other relatives and “one-person households”, compared to male-headed households (see Annex Table 5).

Map 3 shows the proportion of “one-person households.” It is found that the proportion is lower in Ratanak Kiri (1.8 percent) and Preah Vihear (1.9 percent) located at remote outer fringe of nation. In contrast, both Svay Rieng and Prey Veng where located near Phnom Penh, have higher proportion (4.9 percent).

Map 4 shows the proportion of nuclear family households. It is found that the proportion is higher in Pursat(73.0 percent), Otdar Mean Chey (72.6 percent). In contrast, the proportion is lower in Phnom Penh (49.1 percent). It is caused by the high proportion of “other households” (39.3 percent) in Phnom Penh.