

Chapter 1 DEGREE OF URBANIZATION IN CAMBODIA

1.1 DEFINITION OF URBAN AREA

According to the estimation of United Nations, world's total population as of 2010 is reaching to almost 7000 million. The proportion of the people living in urban areas in the world is estimated as a half of total population of the world. The urban population is the people living in "urban areas" defined in their own countries in the estimation. The definition of urban area varies from country to country. Therefore, this estimation is not based on the urban area according to internationally uniform criteria. Commonly, an urban area is featured by a certain degree of population cluster and is a place distinguished from farm land, grass land, forest and desert. Urban areas may be called as cities or towns but the term is not normally extended to rural settlements such as small villages or hamlets. Urban areas are created and further developed by the process of urbanization.

The designation of places as urban or rural is not just a matter of academic interest, but it is vital importance for various types of planning purposes in not only governments but also private enterprises. Location of industry, roads, highways and urban facilities are needed to base on the accurate knowledge of the extent and expansion of urban areas

Also, it is found generally that variables such as age, sex, marital status, school attendance, level of education, type of economic activity, kind of industry, kind of occupation, fertility, mortality, residential conditions including housing status, etc. are different between urban and rural areas. In planning for physical and social developments, the information described above is essential.

Based on the background described above, NIS attempted the study on "Reclassification of Urban Areas in Cambodia" by help of UNFPA. The results were introduced to urban and rural presentations in the 2008 Population Census returns.

In the 1998 Population Census the designation of places as urban or rural is based only on administrative criteria, which were unsatisfactory for planning for the needs of actual urban populations. The following areas were treated as urban:

- (i) All province towns (which were whole "districts")
- (ii) Four districts of Phnom Penh municipality (the other districts were considered as rural.)
- (iii) The entire provinces of Shanoukville, Kep and Pailin, which were called Krongs

or municipalities.

On the other hand, the definition of urban used in the 2008 Population Census which is applied to communes but not districts is as follows:

- (i) Population density exceeding 200 persons per km²
- (ii) Percentage of male employment in agriculture below 50 percent.
- (iii) Total population of the commune exceeding 2000 persons.

In this report, the communes designated as urban for administrative purpose by the Royal Sub-Decree of 12 January 2008 are used as “urban” according to the purpose. Also, the “urban agglomerations”, in case where more than one adjoining commune are integrated into one urban area, are used for analysis in this report. All urban agglomerations are those listed in Table 3, “Reclassification of Urban Areas in Cambodia” (NIS 2004). For reference, new list is prepared and attached to this report.

1.2. COMPARISON OF DEGREE OF URBANIZATION WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

Urbanization is the process of change from rural area to urban area in a country or a region. Commonly, it is measured by the rate of urbanization, or urbanization rate

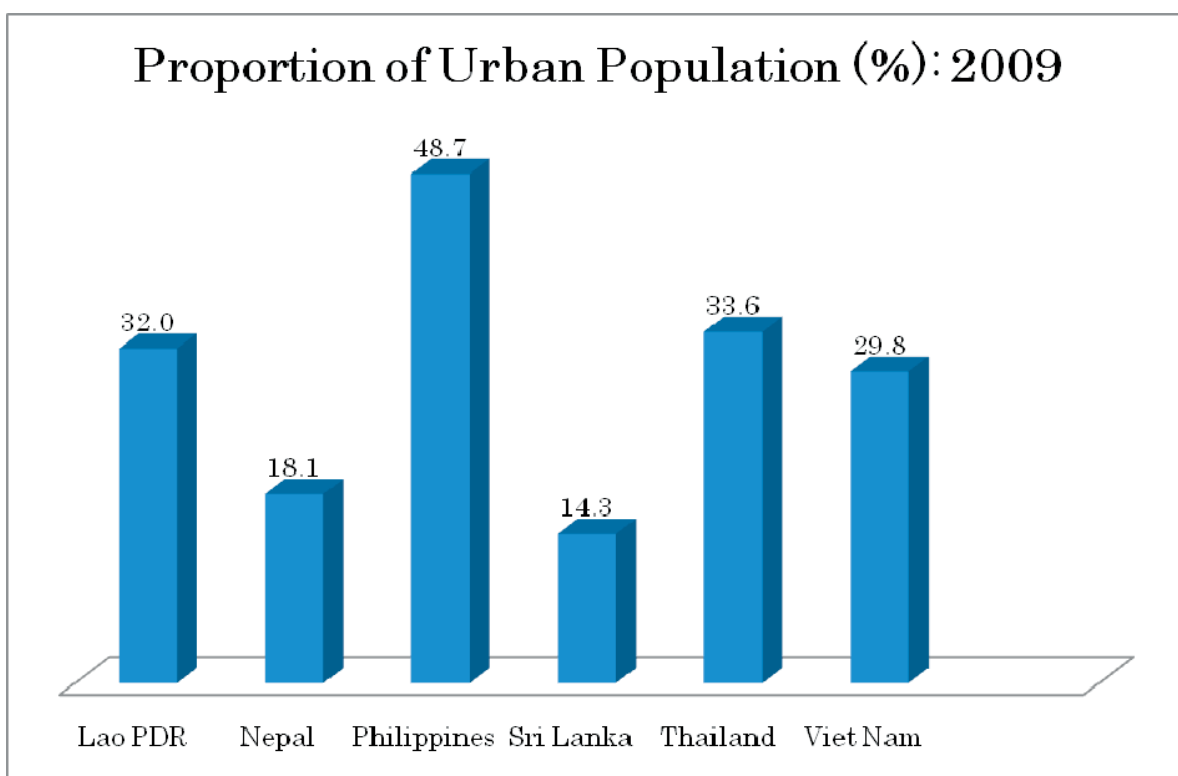
Table 1.1 Urbanization Rates:2009

	%
World	50.1
More developed regions	74.9
Less developed regions	44.6
Least developed countries	28.7
Cambodia	19.8
Lao PDR	32.0
Nepal	18.1
Philippines	48.7
Sri Lanka	14.3
Thailand	33.6
Viet Nam	29.8

UN: World Urbanization Prospects: 2009

which is the proportion of urban population against total population of a country or a region. According to United Nations' estimates as of 2009, the degree of urbanization in Cambodia is very low among the nations of the world. It is estimated as 19.8 percent against Philippines (48.7%), Thailand (33.6%), Lao PDR (32.0) and Viet Nam (29.8) , the neighboring countries of Cambodia. This is lower than the degree in the least developed countries as well as in less developed region of the world (Table 1.1, Fig.1).

Figure 1. Degree of Urbanization in Selected Countries: 2009



1.3 DEGREE OF URBANIZATION WITHIN CAMBODIA

Observing the proportion of urban population by province as of 2008, it presents the largest (93.6%) for Phnom Penh, the second highest (40.4%) for Preah Sihanouk. While it records the lowest (1.7%) for Takeo. In 1998, the same pattern of order in the degree of urbanization can be observed. Between 1998 and 2008 the rate of urbanization increased slightly from 18.3 percent to 19.5 percent for the nation. Among 24 province, 6 provinces showed the increase while 18 provinces did the decrease. The province recorded the largest increase was Siem Reap having place of tourism. Following after the province, Banteay Meanchey annexing to Thailand, showed the second largest.

While, Takeo showing the lowest degree of urbanization as of 2008 did not change in the rate of urbanization (Table 1.2).

On the other hand, urban population recorded the increase between 1998 and 2008 for all of the provinces excluding four provinces. Kaoh Kong, Kratie, Prey Veng and Pursat indicated the decrease. This means that the change during the decade in the degree of urbanization varies among provinces.

Table 1.2 Urban Population and Percent of Total Population: 1998 and 2008

Province	Urban Population		% of total	
	2008	1998	2008	1998
Cambodia	2,614,207	2,095,074	19.5	18.3
Banteay Meanchey	181,396	135,415	26.8	23.4
Battambang	180,853	177,018	17.6	22.3
Kampong Cham	118,242	117,563	7.0	7.3
Kampong Chhnang	43,310	41,703	9.1	10.0
Kampong Spueu	54,505	48,034	7.6	8.0
Kampong Thom	31,871	31,382	5.1	5.5
Kampot	48,274	45,250	8.2	8.6
Kandal	195,898	146,047	15.5	13.6
Kaoh Kong	36,053	41,808	30.7	36.0
Kratie	35,964	36,354	11.3	13.8
Mondul Kiri	4,859	2,730	8.0	8.4
Phnom Penh	1,242,992	950,373	93.6	95.1
Preah Vihear	10,679	7,827	6.2	6.6
Prey Veang	33,079	35,304	3.5	3.7
Pursat	25,650	27,180	6.5	7.5
Ratanak Kiri	19,317	11,256	12.8	11.9
Siem Reap	174,265	102,708	19.4	14.8
Preah Shihanouk	89,447	66,723	40.4	38.9
Stueng Traeng	17,022	15,141	15.2	18.7
Svay Rieng	17,029	16,991	3.5	3.6
Takaev	14,456	13,659	1.7	1.7
Otdar Meanchey	18,694	12,081	10.1	17.7
Kep	4,678	4,017	13.1	14.0
Pailin	15,674	8,510	22.2	37.2

1.4 URBAN PRIMACY IN CAMBODIA

All of communes located within Municipality Phnom Penh, or Capital Province was designated as urban according to the sub-decree. Accordingly, whole territory of Phnom Penh can be regarded as urban. The proportion of population of Phnom Penh presented 9.9 percent of the total national population in 2008. In 1998 it was 8.7 percent. It can be said that during the decade the increase of the proportion contributed to the increase of national urbanization rate. Also, the proportion of urban population occupied by the nominal urban population of Municipality Phnom Penh is 50.8 percent, while the proportion of urban population occupied by the substantive urban population of Phnom Penh is 47.5 percent (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3 Urban Primacy of Phnom Penh

	Urban Population and Primacy Rate	
	2008	1998
Cambodia	2,614,207	2,095,074
Phnom Penh (U)	1,242,992	950,373
%	47.5	45.4
Phnom Penh (T)	1,327,615	999,804
%	50.8	47.7

Those proportions are called as “**urban primacy rates**”. Compared with 1998, it can be known that Cambodia’s urban primacy rates, or urban primacy increased in 2008. In such case, Capital Phnom Penh is called as “**Primate City**” of Cambodia nominally and substantively.

Table 1.4 presents urban primacy rates in selected countries as of 2009 by preparing the data derived from “World Urbanization Prospects, the Revision 2009” by UN. According to this table, urban primacy rate (52.2 %) of Phnom Penh shows the second highest following after Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia (57.6%), exceeding the primacy rates of Vientiane (43.6%), Tokyo (42.4%), Dakha (31.9%), and Bangkok (31.0%). In 20th century, urban primacy of Bangkok, Thailand was very famous as an example of prototype of primate city. In 21st century, it can be said that Phnom Penh became the prototype of primate city. As described later, the large cities following after Phnom Penh in terms of size of population, are the urban areas of Siem Reab and Battambang with around 150,000 inhabitants. Municipality Phnom Penh exhibits its prominent position as primate city in Cambodia.

Table 1.4 Urban Primacy of Selected Cities in Asia: 2009.

Urban Agglomeration	Urban Primacy Rate (%)	Country where UA belonged	Urbanization Rate (%)
Ulan Bator	57.6	Mongol	59.5
Phnom Penh	52.2	Cambodia	52.0
Vientiane	43.6	Laos	27.4
Tokyo	42.4	Japan	66.0
Dakha	31.9	Bangladesh	25.7
Bangkok	31.0	Thailand	32.3
Manila	26.2	Philippines	48.1
Seoul	25.4	Republic of Korea	81.3
Ho Chi Minh	22.9	Viet Nam	27.3
Karachi	20.3	Pakistan	34.5
Kathmandu	18.8	Nepal	15.9
Jakarta	9.3	Indonesia	43.1
Kuala Lumpur	8.1	Malaysia	67.6
Delhi	6.0	India	28.7
Shanghai	2.7	China	42.5

UN: World Urbanization Perspectives, The 2009 Revision