

Figure 4.10. Percentage Distribution of Population by Broad Age Group in Provinces (Total), 2008

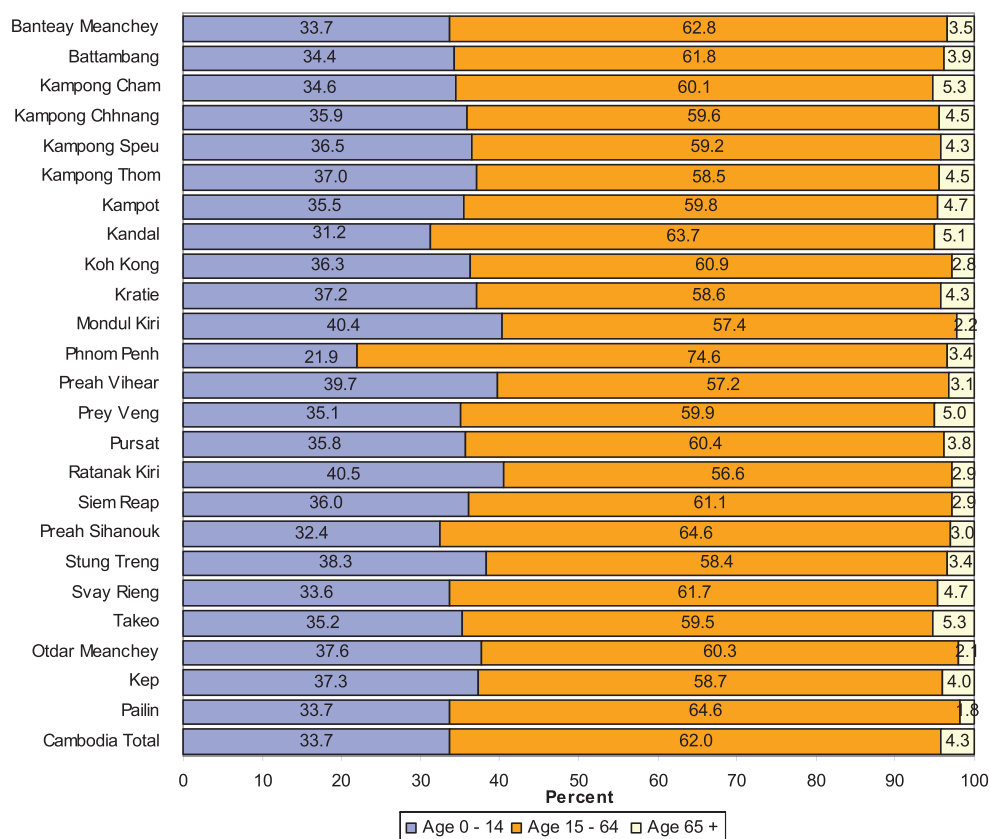


Figure 4.11. Percentage Distribution of Population by Broad Age Group in Provinces (Urban), 2008

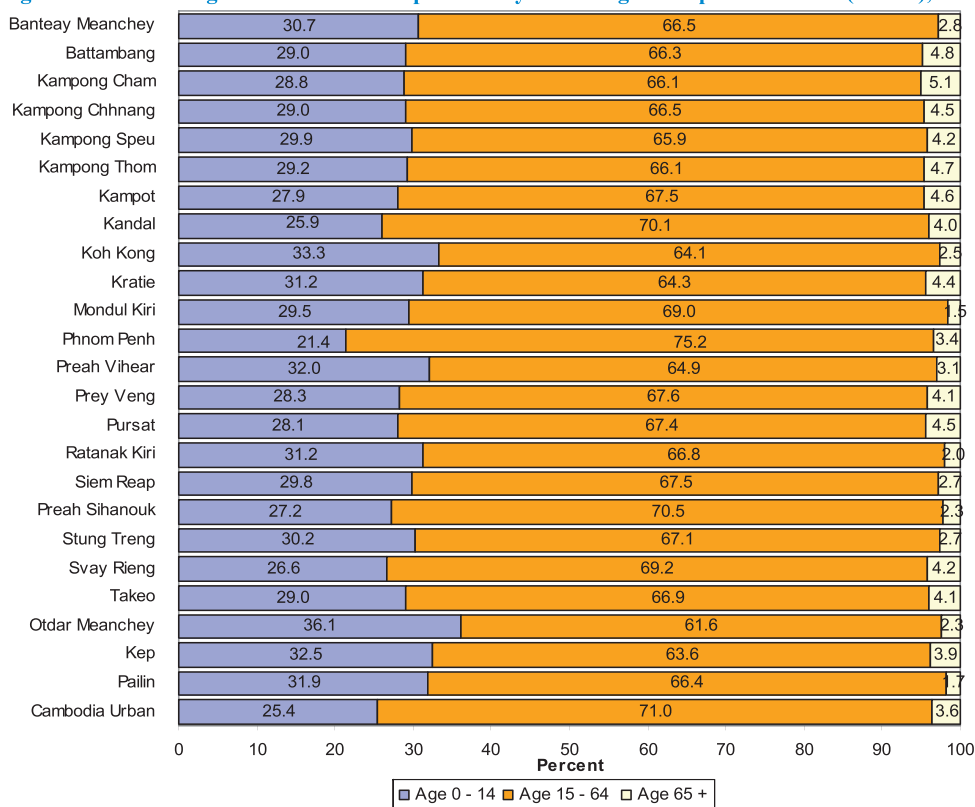
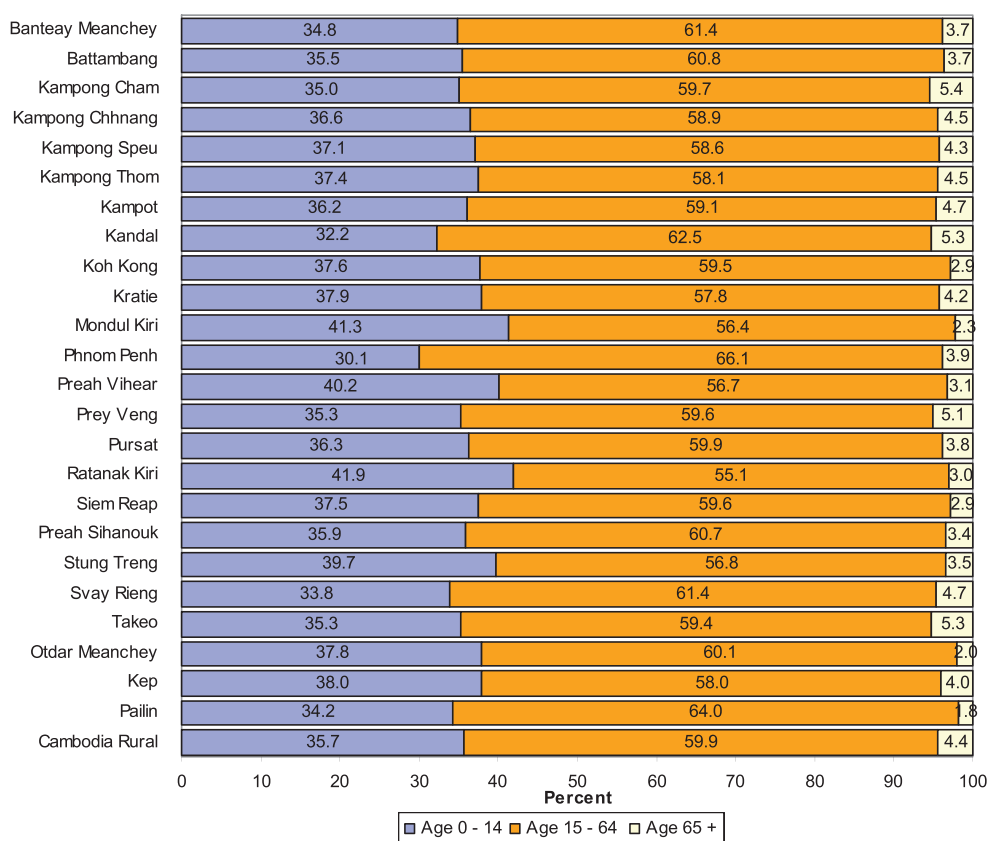


Figure 4.12. Percentage Distribution of Population by Broad Age Group in Provinces (Rural), 2008



4.3.5 The Working Age Population

As may be seen from Table 4.3 the percentage of working age population (aged 15-64 years) of Cambodia has increased from 53.7 percent in 1998 to 62.0 percent in 2008. From the Single- Year Age Tables of the 1998 and 2008 Censuses (Annex 6) it is found that the percentage of working age population has increased from 51.6 percent to 60.9 percent in the case of males and from 55.7 percent to 63.1 percent for females during 1998-2008. In other words both in respect of males and females there have been substantial increases in the working age populations. It is also noted that the gap in the proportions of males and females has reduced from about 4 points in 1998 to 2 points in 2008.

Among the provinces the proportion of working age population ranges from about 57 percent in the provinces of Mondul Kiri, Preah Vihear and Ratanak Kiri to about 75 percent in Phnom Penh (Figure 4.10). The percentage of working age population is higher than the national average in each of the following five provinces: Banteay Meanchey, Kandal, Phnom Penh, Preah Sihanouk and Pailin. The main reason for this phenomenon may be migration of adult workers to these areas from other provinces. In the remaining nineteen provinces each, the proportion is lower than the national average.

4.3.6 The Elderly Population

The proportion of the elderly population (aged 65 years and over) in the country as a whole has increased from 3.5 percent in 1998 to 4.3 percent in 2008 i.e. by less than one percentage point (Table 4.3). In 2008 the percentage of the elderly among females is higher than that among males by 1.43 percentage points. Among the provinces, the percentage of elderly population varies from less than 3 percent in Koh Kong, Mondul Kiri, Ratanak Kiri, Siem Reap, Preah Sihanouk, Otdar

Meanchey and Pailin to 5 percent or little more than that in the provinces of Kampong Cham, Kandal, Prey Veng and Takeo. The remaining provinces have proportions in the intermediate range (Figure 4.10).

The elderly persons may be further classified as young-old (age 65-74 years), medium-old (age 75-84 years) and the oldest-old (age 85 years and over). Table 4.6 compiled from Priority Table A1-1 at Annex 6 gives the number of persons in each category by sex and its percentage to the total for Cambodia according to the 2008 Census. A large majority of the elderly is found in the young-old category. The medium-old and the oldest old categories account for about 28 percent and 6 percent of the total elderly population respectively. Among the elderly as a whole and in each of the sub-categories, women outnumber men. The sex ratio of the elderly population is 67.48. In the young-old, the medium-old and the oldest-old categories the sex ratios are 69.79, 64.38 and 57.77 respectively.

Table 4.6. Classification of the Elderly Population by Category and Sex, Cambodia 2008

Category of the Elderly		Population		
		Both Sexes	Males	Females
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)
Total	Number	571,300	230,192	341,108
	Percent	100	100	100
Young-Old	Number	375,784	154,459	221,325
	Percent	65.78	67.1	64.88
Medium Old	Number	162,490	63,640	98,850
	Percent	28.44	27.65	28.98
Oldest-Old	Number	33,026	12,093	20,933
	Percent	5.78	5.25	6.14

4.3.7 Categorization of Cambodia's population based on Age Structure

The median age and measures like the proportion of aged persons, the proportion of children under 15, the aged-child ratio or the ratio of the number of elderly persons to the number of children, are used as the basis for describing a population as “young” or “old”. Populations with median age under 20 are considered as “young” and those with 30 or more are treated as “old”. Those with medians in the range of 20 to 29 are categorized as of “intermediate” age. On this basis Cambodia comes under the “intermediate” category.

A population with 10 per cent or more of persons aged 65 years and over is considered old and one with less than 5 percent is considered “young”. The percentage of persons of aged 65 or more in Cambodia in 2008 is 4.3 (Table 4.3). Hence the population of Cambodia falls under the category of “young” population on this basis. If the proportion of children (under 15) is under 30 per cent in a population it is categorized as “young” population. If the proportion is between 30 and 40 it is to be treated as of “intermediate age”. If it is 40 per cent and over the population is “young”. As children form 33.7 per cent of the total population in Cambodia (Table 4.3), Cambodia comes under the category of “intermediate” population. The aging index called aged- child ratio is also regarded as an indicator of a young or old population and of a population that is aging or becoming young. It is the ratio of the number of elderly persons (65+) to the number of children (0-14) expressed as a percentage. For Cambodia it is calculated as 12.7 for 2008. Table 4.7 presents this index in respect of each province by residence for 1998 and 2008.

Table 4.7 Aged-Child Ratio: Cambodia and Provinces by Residence, 1998 and 2008

Cambodia/Province	1998			2008		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Cambodia	8.07	8.01	8.09	12.66	14.00	12.42
Banteay Meanchey	5.74	5.62	5.77	10.34	9.04	10.76
Battambang	7.13	8.57	6.75	11.28	16.46	10.37
Kampong Cham	10.08	10.74	10.04	15.42	17.54	15.29
Kampong Chhnang	8.24	9.12	8.15	12.56	15.69	12.31
Kampong Speu	7.22	7.01	7.24	11.74	14.02	11.59
Kampong Thom	8.02	9.28	7.96	12.16	15.94	12.00
Kampot	7.90	8.42	7.86	13.22	16.36	13.00
Kandal	10.35	8.86	10.57	16.34	15.53	16.45
Koh Kong	4.58	4.00	4.91	7.63	7.65	7.63
Kratie	9.23	9.62	9.17	11.45	14.26	11.16
Mondul Kiri	5.12	2.02	5.42	5.49	5.16	5.51
Phnom Penh	8.53	8.58	7.74	15.65	15.91	12.87
Preah Vihear	6.67	5.38	6.76	7.87	9.60	7.78
Prey Veng	8.80	8.90	8.80	14.35	14.62	14.34
Pursat	5.94	7.49	5.83	10.65	16.05	10.36
Ratanak Kiri	7.92	3.83	8.46	7.14	6.35	7.23
Siem Reap	5.47	6.97	5.24	7.97	9.14	7.74
Preah Sihanouk	5.28	4.43	5.74	9.21	8.47	9.59
Stung Treng	7.03	4.73	7.51	8.76	8.89	8.74
Svay Rieng	7.18	7.54	7.16	13.97	15.87	13.91
Takeo	8.93	7.55	8.96	14.94	14.01	14.96
Otdar Meanchey	4.48	4.14	4.55	5.52	6.51	5.42
Kep	7.87	6.83	8.03	10.77	11.96	10.62
Pailin	2.91	3.07	2.84	5.25	5.42	5.20

As population with aged-child ratio under the value of 15 is described as young Cambodia's population has to be treated as young from this point of view. Among the provinces, Kampong Cham, Kandal and Phnom Penh Municipality contain comparatively older population as the aged-child ratio is above 15 in each of them.

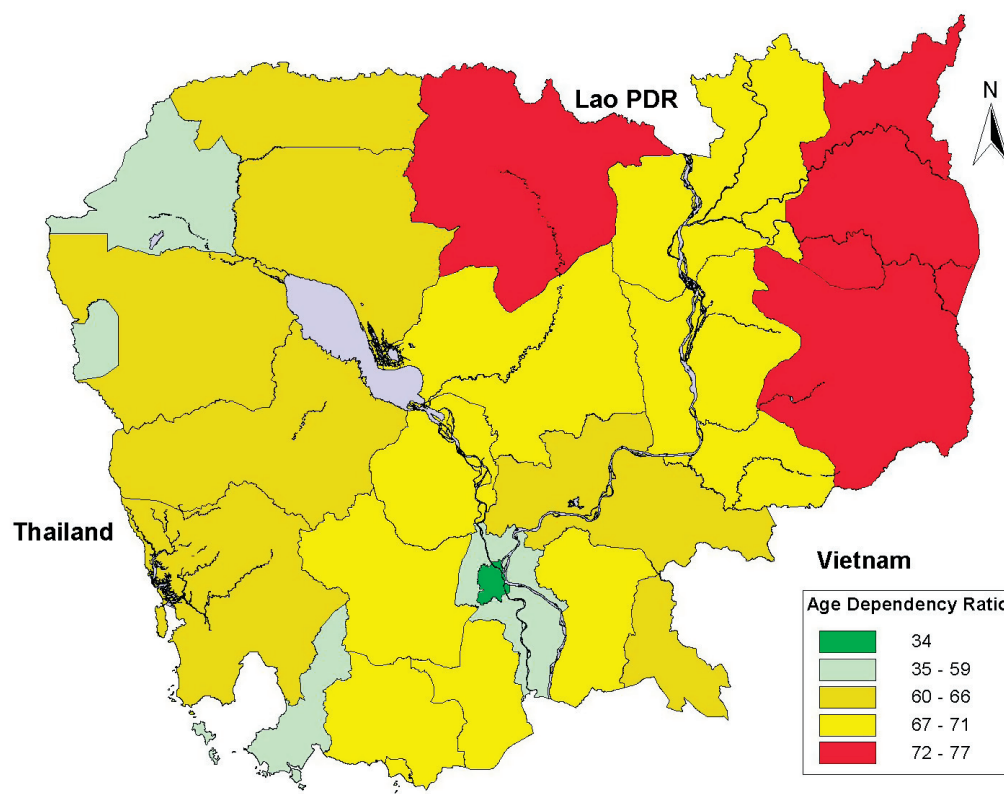
Taking into account all these indices at the National level, the Cambodian population may be described as “young” that appears to be moving towards the category of “intermediate age” and ultimately perhaps to the category of “Aging population” in the long run. It has to be pointed out here that aging of a population is different from aging of individuals, an increase in the longevity of individuals or an increase in the average length of life in respect of a population.

5. Age Dependency Ratio

The differences observed in the proportions of children, aged persons and the persons of working age are accounted for jointly by the index called age dependency ratio. It is defined as the ratio of the combined child population and aged population to the population of the intermediate age. The formula for the age dependency ratio relates to the number of persons under 15 and 65 and over to the number 15 to 64:

$$\frac{P_{0-14} + P_{65+}}{P_{15-64}}$$

Map 4: Age Dependency Ratio by Province, 2008



The age - dependency ratio for Cambodia has shown a declining trend during 1998-2008 (Table 4.8) 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. The dependency ratio is lower in the urban areas in all the provinces.

Table 4.8.Age Dependency Ratio: Cambodia and Provinces by Residence, 1998 and 2008

Cambodia/Province	1998			2008		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Cambodia	86.15	65.71	91.44	61.19	40.79	67.06
Banteay Meanchey	88.19	78.56	91.35	59.25	50.33	62.78
Battambang	90.57	79.74	93.92	61.91	50.93	64.48
Kampong Cham	86.31	71.56	87.58	66.37	51.25	67.64
Kampong Chhnang	92.79	80.40	94.26	67.77	50.44	69.73
Kampong Speu	95.10	83.83	96.15	68.93	51.73	70.52
Kampong Thom	91.61	74.64	92.71	71.03	51.23	72.23
Kampot	93.82	78.44	95.40	67.15	48.18	69.09
Kandal	86.56	75.79	88.37	56.97	42.73	59.89
Koh Kong	72.40	71.75	72.77	64.17	55.95	68.09
Kratie	81.65	71.93	83.31	70.78	55.41	72.96
Mondul Kiri	85.26	86.35	85.16	74.23	45.00	77.32
Phnom Penh	56.08	54.72	87.76	33.99	32.95	51.38
Preah Vihear	90.85	80.35	91.63	74.92	53.99	76.51
Prey Veng	86.92	69.71	87.66	66.96	47.96	67.74
Pursat	100.12	80.84	101.87	65.48	48.27	66.82
Ratanak Kiri	91.86	82.79	93.16	76.61	49.73	81.41
Siem Reap	91.65	77.86	94.26	63.62	48.18	67.85
Preah Sihanouk	83.49	68.53	94.45	54.72	41.90	64.81
Stung Treng	87.88	72.67	91.75	71.36	49.00	76.11
Svay Rieng	92.39	75.38	93.08	62.02	44.57	62.74
Takeo	92.85	70.72	93.29	68.04	49.46	68.40
Otdar Meanchey	101.52	78.42	107.29	65.87	62.36	66.27
Kep	99.07	89.12	100.79	70.27	57.30	72.41
Pailin	70.90	52.15	84.33	54.89	50.64	56.15

It is the lowest in Phnom Penh Municipality. Besides the capital, it is lower than the national average in the provinces of Banteay Meanchey, Kandal, Preah Sihanouk and Pailin (See Table 4.8 and Map 4).

6. Projected Sex-Age Structure

The National Institute of Statistics has made provisional population projections of Cambodia for the future years on a scientific basis after making basic estimates of fertility, mortality and migration from available sources and most importantly on the basis of the 2008 census results. These projections are preliminary and the final projections may vary slightly. However the sex-age structure is not likely to change in the final projections.

The projected sex-age structures of Cambodia for the years 2020 and 2030 (mid-year) are shown in the age pyramids (Figures 4.13 and 4.14). Table 4.9 gives the projected mid-year population and the percent distribution of the population by sex and five-year age group for the years 2020 and 2030.

It is observed that the percentage of children in the population will decrease to 26.9 and 24.31 in 2020 and 2030 respectively from its present level of 33.72 percent mainly due to decline in fertility. There will be gradual increases in the proportion of the working age population and the elderly over the years.

Figure 4.13 Population Pyramid, Cambodia 2020

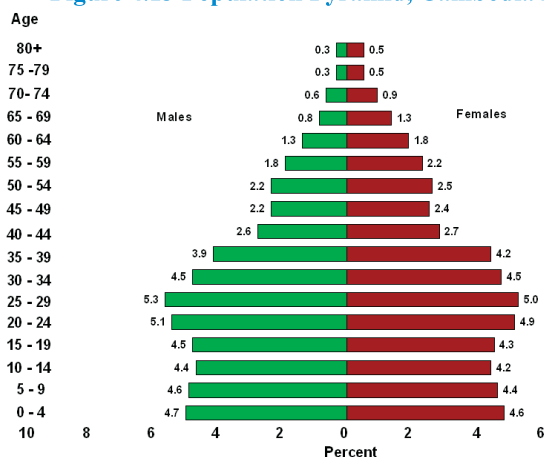


Figure 4.14 Population Pyramid, Cambodia 2030

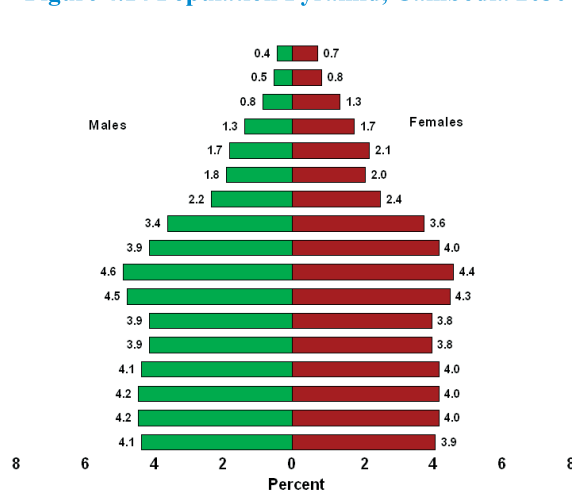


Table 4.9. Population Projection and Percent Distribution by Five-Year Age Group and Sex, Cambodia, 2020 and 2030 (Provisional)

Age Group	2020			2030		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
(1)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Number	16,014,841	7,847,245	8,167,596	17,669,810	8,703,651	8,966,159
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
0- 4	9.27	9.63	8.93	7.97	8.26	7.70
5-9	9.01	9.33	8.70	8.15	8.43	7.89
10-14	8.62	8.93	8.33	8.19	8.45	7.94
15-19	8.74	9.10	8.40	8.03	8.26	7.82
20-24	9.99	10.41	9.59	7.67	7.86	7.48
25-29	10.35	10.85	9.87	7.73	7.96	7.52
30-34	9.00	9.10	8.90	8.81	9.08	8.55
35-39	8.09	8.00	8.17	9.09	9.43	8.76
40-44	5.31	5.24	5.37	7.86	7.86	7.85
45-49	4.57	4.46	4.66	6.99	6.83	7.15
50-54	4.71	4.50	4.92	4.52	4.40	4.64
55-59	3.97	3.68	4.24	3.79	3.63	3.95
60-64	3.06	2.57	3.54	3.79	3.52	4.05
65-69	2.20	1.73	2.65	3.00	2.68	3.31
70-74	1.45	1.19	1.71	2.10	1.68	2.51
75-79	0.88	0.70	1.05	1.28	0.94	1.61
80+	0.78	0.58	0.97	1.02	0.74	1.29

6.1 Policy Implications

The overall increase in the working age population up till now and the projected increase in the future have serious implications on the youth and the unemployment situation in the country. In developed countries the phenomenal rise in the working age population due to demographic transition had proved to be a “demographic dividend” for some time. But in the case of Cambodia, it is a great challenge to absorb the growing labour force in productive work. Due to limited opportunities in the rural areas, rural-urban migration of poor families is increasing day by day.

According to the Background paper on “Migration and Development in Cambodia” prepared by NCPD (November 2009), Cambodia has been exporting migrant workers to other countries in Asia and the Gulf countries. Cambodian international labour migration is referred to in Cambodia’s NPRS as follows: “Labour export has been an option for reducing poverty in several of Cambodia’s Asian neighbours such as the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. The policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) is to encourage official labour exports to increase welfare, enhance skills, reduce unemployment and increase state revenues”.

In this context, it would be appropriate to mention that the RGC is also implementing measures to create more jobs and ensure better working conditions for the labour force. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training of the RGC has set out the five-year Action Plan for the years 2009 to 2013 as follows:

Priority 1: Creating Jobs

Priority 2: Ensuring better working conditions

Priority 3: Promoting the enforcement of the Law on Social Security scheme

Priority 4: Developing capacity building on the technical and vocational skills for people

Priority 5: Expanding and strengthening gender mainstreaming in labour and vocational training sectors

Priority 6: Strengthening institutions, partnership, work efficiency and accountability

Another welcome step in this regard is the proposal of the RGC to adopt soon the Cambodia National Youth Policy. The term “Youth” covers all young men and women with Cambodian nationality aged 15 to 30. It would include students and those in the labour force. Nearly 28 percent of the country’s population falls in the category of youth. The RGC recognizes that investment in youth is critical to promote the development of young Cambodians as individuals with capacity and will to contribute to the realization of its Rectangular Strategy and long term vision of development. The Youth Policy is expected to provide the necessary infrastructure as well as the required conditions and supportive environment under which a comprehensive plan for youth can be developed and implemented.

Declining fertility and reduced number of children is potentially powerful tool for reducing poverty. The overall poverty level in Cambodia has decreased from 34.7 percent in 2004 to 30.1 percent in 2007. The Mid-Term Review 2008 on NSDP (2006-2010) of Cambodia has concluded that “much more concerted efforts would be needed to reduce overall poverty levels to 25 percent in 2010 and 19.5 percent by 2015”.

If successfully implemented with national efforts and through global support, these progressive steps as well as achievements of CMDG targets are likely to result in the full utilization of the available labour force in the process of economic development of the country. Measures for the care of the elderly may also become increasingly necessary with the rise in their proportion in course of time.