



## AUSTRALIAN SUPPORT FOR CAMBODIA'S COVID-19 MEDICAL RESPONSE

Australia is providing well-planned and comprehensive support for Cambodia's COVID-19 medical response. These measures complement our efforts to strengthen Cambodia's economic and social resilience. We are empowering the Cambodian Government, civil society and private sector to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce its impact on the health of the Cambodian people.

Australia is providing **A\$50 million** to strengthen Cambodia's public health system. This money will help reduce the spread of COVID-19, provide **care for COVID-19 patients** and **maintain access to healthcare for Cambodians** with other medical issues, amid higher strain on health systems. This support, delivered through the Health Equity and Quality Improvement Project (H-EQIP), is improving the quality of medical care in more than **1,300 health facilities** nationwide by enabling them to access larger amounts of public funding.

Through H-EQIP and the IDPoor initiative, Australia is helping ensure **2.4 million poor Cambodians** have access to free healthcare. Australia is also supporting the construction of **new provincial hospitals in Pailin and Oddor Meanchey** and **45 new community health centres** across the country.



This Cambodian family can access free healthcare and social protection payments through Australian-supported programs that strengthen Cambodian Government systems (GIZ / Conor

**Rather than using an old-fashioned donor-recipient approach, Australia's cooperation aims to build systems and institutions which empower Cambodians** to respond to COVID-19 in a coordinated and impactful manner. Over 20 years, this has helped build modern **financial management systems** and **service delivery standards** for hospitals and health centres across Cambodia. Australia also helps ensure Cambodia's health system is more **responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups**, including indigenous peoples, women and people with a disability.

In addition to this long-term systemic support, Australia has also provided direct support for Cambodia's medical response to COVID-19, including:

1. Funding for the Cambodian Ministry of Health (MoH) to purchase **medical equipment and 20 ambulances** (through H-EQIP) so suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases can be transported securely to health facilities;
2. More than A\$2 million to **strengthen disease surveillance and response** in Cambodia, delivered by Population Services International and the Mérieux Foundation, including to **enhance Cambodian laboratory capacity**;
3. Contributing **epidemiological expertise** to assist MoH's COVID-19 case response and contact tracing:
  - a) Australia's Regional Health Adviser worked alongside MoH staff on **contact tracing** early in the response
  - b) ASEAN-Australia Health Security Fellows based at the **Pasteur Institute in Cambodia** supported the MoH's management of Westerdam passengers and one is supporting MoH's **COVID-19 response team**.
4. Australia is a major supporter of Gavi, the Global Vaccine Alliance (\$300 million). Gavi is working to establish a global COVID-19 vaccine facility to ensure developing **countries like Cambodia have equitable vaccine access**.

In addition, Australian research and development facilities, including the University of Queensland and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory, are lending their experience and resources to the global effort to **develop diagnostic tests and vaccines** for COVID-19.

It is not easy to take a photo of much of our support or put Australian branding on it, but **the systems we have built in partnership with Cambodia are critically important**. As well as for responding to COVID-19 directly, Australian support means that the provision of other types of health services can continue, which is also **vital for saving lives during a pandemic**.



## AUSTRALIA: A TRUE PARTNER FOR CAMBODIA IN BUILDING RESILIENCE

Australia is supporting Cambodia's resilience to the economic and social impacts of COVID-19. These measures complement our support for Cambodia's medical response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Australia is a **long-standing partner** for socio-economic development in Cambodia. Since helping to bring peace to the country in the early 1990s, we have provided over A\$1.3 billion in aid to support Cambodia's development. This cooperation has positioned us well to support Cambodia's **economic and social resilience in the face of COVID-19**:

**Economic stimulus and social protection:** The IDPoor national poverty database is the **backbone of the Cambodian Government's COVID-19 cash transfers** to poor and vulnerable households, reaching at least **560,000 households** with a total of US\$25 million per month. Australia has provided more than A\$14 million over ten years to build and maintain Cambodia's IDPoor system. The cash transfers using IDPoor are now **supporting national economic and social stability in a time of crisis** while also channelling support to the poorest Cambodians – **a strong and equitable outcome** built on years of Australia-Cambodia development cooperation. Australia, German GIZ and the Ministry of Planning are working to ensure **households falling into poverty due to the pandemic do not miss out** on support.



Agriculture is vital for Cambodia's social and economic resilience during and after COVID-19. This rural area was cleared of landmines with Australian support (UNDP / Kimheang Tuon)

Australia is also partnering with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to build the capacity of Cambodia's Ministry of Economy and Finance to **anticipate and respond to the economic impacts of COVID-19** on vulnerable groups. Moving forward, Australia and UNDP will work with Cambodian partners to examine options to boost e-commerce and implement sustainable social protection measures to help rebuild a resilient and inclusive economy for the Cambodian people. Australia is also supporting **research by local think tanks** on how COVID-19 is affecting the livelihoods of Cambodians in order to support **evidence-informed policymaking** in response.

**Delivering access to piped water:** Frequent handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19, so Australia's work to roll out piped water to homes, businesses, schools and health centres in rural Cambodia is particularly important. Australia's Investing in Infrastructure (3i) program, valued at A\$49 million, is providing access to **clean piped water for over one million Cambodians**. 140,000 people already have access to clean piped water for the first time due to this program's unique financing model for Cambodian piped water businesses. Australia is also funding NGOs such as WaterAid and iDE to support the Cambodian Government to develop and implement a national **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy** – now more critical than ever.

**Boosting food security and rural incomes:** Australia's A\$84 million agricultural value chain program, CAVAC, provided specialised advice to help the government maintain **food security** and resolve **supply chain issues** in the face of COVID-19 disruption. CAVAC is also working with farmers, businesses and government to **boost agricultural productivity, diversify crops and target new markets**, all of which is critical given the number of Cambodian workers entering the agriculture sector due to job losses elsewhere. CAVAC has already built irrigation schemes providing 12,000 Cambodian farmers with year-round access to irrigated water, and is supporting 135,000 farmers to improve their farming practices. Australia's **ongoing support for land-mine clearance** does more than save lives: it is providing ongoing employment during the crisis and releasing land for productive use.

**Services for vulnerable groups and local communities:** Australia's A\$15 million ACCESS program is working with Cambodian Government agencies and civil society to ensure services are available for **people with disability** and **women experiencing violence** during the crisis. ACCESS is also supporting people with disability to obtain **personal protective equipment and disability-accessible communications materials** on COVID-19. A range of Australian NGOs are working with local communities to provide **food kits and hygiene materials to poor households** and to **disseminate information on hygiene practices**, including in remote north-eastern provinces.