



**AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
PHNOM PENH**



MEDIA RELEASE

Vaccine Freezers, donated by Australia, keep Cambodia at the cutting edge of COVID vaccination efforts.

Phnom Penh, 28 February - 33 ultra-low temperature (ULT) freezers (-80 degree Celsius), essential equipment to strengthen Cambodia's cold chain capacity, have been delivered to the Ministry of Health's Central Medical Store in Phnom Penh. The ULT freezers, donated by the Australian Government and delivered in partnership with UNICEF, were welcomed by H.E. Prof. Dr. Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health, His Excellency Pablo Kang, the Australian Ambassador to Cambodia, and Foroogh Foyouzat, UNICEF's Representative in Cambodia.

The freezers will support the equitable roll out by the Cambodian Government of Australia's recently donated Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines. They were delivered together with another 100 freezers (-20 degrees Celsius) and other essential vaccine cold chain equipment, which will strengthen vaccine management and improve cold chain capacity across the healthcare system. These 133 freezers are part of a larger AUD35.7 million package of support from the Government of Australia, which is being delivered in partnership with UNICEF. This package includes the 2.35 million doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine delivered to the Kingdom in December.

Australia's Ambassador, H.E Pablo Kang said, "A little over one year ago the Royal Government of Cambodia and its partners started, what is now, a very successful vaccination program. It has reached almost the entire adult population, and a little over half of those adults have also received the very important booster shots." He added, "booster shots are an important part of the global vaccination effort to reduce severe illness and deaths from COVID-19. I encourage all eligible Cambodians to receive a booster to protect yourselves and your family".

The new ULT freezers will enable the longer-term storage of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines in every province, including the most remote. UNICEF teams will help to install the equipment, provide training for their use, and monitor their impact. The equipment will go on to strengthen the nation's healthcare system into the future.

Ambassador Kang noted "Australia is appreciative of the Ministry of Health and UNICEF efforts to work directly with communities to identify and reach the most vulnerable populations. We are pleased to assist the Ministry to ensure an equitable and socially inclusive campaign."

“UNICEF is proud to have worked side-by-side with the Government and partners like the Australian Embassy on Cambodia’s world-leading vaccination drive,” said Foroogh Foyouzat, UNICEF’s Representative in Cambodia. “With the generous donation from the Government of Australia, we’ll be able to continue supporting Cambodia’s fight against COVID-19 and also strengthening the health system beyond this pandemic. This additional cold chain capacity will be invaluable to Cambodia’s health services for many years ahead, such as by improving routine immunisation for children and saving countless young lives. We’re grateful to have played a part in this legacy for the future.”

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